GUIDE TO THE AW11 KERALA FILE

[The AW11 Kerala File is concerned with the peoples and cultures of the State of Kerala in southern India, with particular emphasis on the Nayar caste of Malabar. The file contains 13 sources, all of them in English, ranging in publication date from 1909 to 1963. The principal sources are 1: Gough, 6: Fawcett, 9: Iyer, and 13: Thurston and Rangachari. 1: Gough, by an ethnologist, is an analysis of the traditional Nayar kinship system - the data being supplemented by 2: Gough on the Central Kerala Nayar and 3: Gough on the North Kerala Nayar. 6: Fawcett is a general survey of the Malabar Nayars, concentrating on physical anthropology, subsistence and material culture. 9: Iyer is a general survey of the Nayar caste by an Indian anthropologist. 13: Thurston and Rangachari, the oldest source processed, is another survey of the Nayar by Indian government anthropolologists. 4: Gough and 7: Gough present data on Nayar cults on the dead and female initiation rites. 5: Mehra discusses Nayar snake worship; 8: Panikkar describes some aspects of Nayar life; and 10: Nakane analyzes the Nayar family in the context of its disintegrating matrilineal system. 11: India presents background social and technical data on the State of Kerala as a whole, and 12: Peter gives an extended analysis of Nayar polyandry.

As indicated, the emphasis in the file is on the Nayar caste, and more especially on the functions of the institution of polyandry within the caste. Thus, the file is strong on materials relating to Nayar

social organization, but relatively weak in the coverage of other aspects of culture. In addition, there is the problem of focus; most of the material again is on the Nayar, but there is also material on other castes and groups within the state of Kerala. This should be taken account of when making comparisons.

A number of marking decisions have been made for this file. Among them are: 634 and 635 are used for different kinds of units depending on whether the reference is to modern or historical political subdivisions of Kerala; vamsham (iilam), either patrilineal clans or matrilineal descent groups, have been placed in category 614; the taravad (patrilineal and matrilineal clans) have generally been placed in category 613, but sometimes also in 614 and 592 depending upon the context; the tali-tying ceremony for a pre-pubescent girl has been placed in Category 588. The file was processed between the years 1955 and 1969].

[Information on the regional divisions of the Indian sub-continent will be found in Chapter XIII, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

631 of Travancore and the Travancore legislative assembly, with headquarters in the capital, Trivandrum. On July 1st, 1949, by order of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi, the two southern states were integrated as the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Cochin retired from office, and the Maharaja of Travancore became for the duration of his life the first Rajpramukh of the new united state. The State now has its headquarters and government offices [5] at Trivandrum.

• 101 Despite these partly accidental political divi-
197 sions, the Malabar Coast is a discrete cultural area. Malayalam, (a Dravidian language strongly influenced in vocabulary by Sanskrit) which became distinguished as a deviant dialect of Tamil about the twelfth century, is the mother-tongue of all but a few immigrant Tamil groups in south Travancore. The area has also had some degree of political unity in the distant
174 past as the ancient kingdom of Kerala. The early history of Kerala is unknown. It was ruled by the Perumals, a succession of kings who seem to have come from outside Kerala and who may have been feudatories in the wider em-
175 pire of Chera. Their government came to an end sometime between the fourth and eleventh centuries A.D. After this Kerala was split into many petty kingdoms under indigenous Rajas of Nayar stock, having matrilineal descent. These continually fought each other and, from 1498, with the coming of the Portuguese and later the Dutch, English and French, made various alliances with these powers to gain their

174 those of Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad,
131 Kadattunad, Calicut, and Walluvanad (in what is now Malabar District), Cochin (the modern Cochin State) and to the south, the various feudatory chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore. By 1496 when the Portuguese arrived, however, the Zamorin (king) of Calicut, who had gained power by extensive Arab trade, had temporarily conquered the Walluvanad and Cochin kingdoms and reduced their rulers to the status of vassal lords. The Portuguese, allied with the Cochin Raja, drove back the Zamorin northward our of Cochin during the 16th century. From then on, wars between the major kingdoms were incessant for the next three centuries. The English reached Malabar in 1615, the Dutch in 1639, and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or other kingdom and took part in successive battles until, in 1763, the northern half of the coast was temporarily overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean invasions ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the British East India Company, and the establishment of the modern British political organization.

101 [9] Today, the coast is still divisible into three major areas, distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, by slight differences of dialect, dress and dietetic habits, and more marked differences in ritual beliefs and practices, and most markedly, by differences in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The nothern area is that of the modern North Malabar District, north

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former kingdoms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and part of Kurumbranad. The central area comprises the modern South Malabar District and Cochin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall differences of custom and social structure were connected with major political boundaries in the period of native rule. Though divisible into separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the whole of North Malabar District was temporarily overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and 17th centuries. The central area at one period or another was all conquered by the Zamorins and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while the whole southern area eventually became subject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these three major areas, a somewhat different political system operated, [10] and in accordance with this the higher castes, especially the Nayars, were differently divided into subcastes with separate administrative functions: each of these subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship because of failure to differentiate between the three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas they in fact had three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes. Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a separate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[844] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[114] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized as a legal, economic or residential unit.

[133] In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[570] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

F. Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P. iii]

PREFATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of those who have not seen the first article of this series of notes on some of the people of Malabar, I wish to repeat that it is an "attempt to describe the people as they actually are, and not as they are supposed to be in the books on Hinduism, which, for the most part, tell us of *Hinduism as it is not* in Southern India. Books have not been consulted or used anywhere, except where the fact has been notified." It is a product of original work during three years and a half spent in Malabar. My thanks are offered to the many gentlemen, natives of Malabar, who have in the kindest manner helped me—Mr. M. Krishnan (Malayalam Translator to Government), Messrs. O. Vasava Menon, C. P. Raman Menon, U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, M. Raman Menon, T. K. Gopal Panniker, T. Kannan, Achutan Nâyar, and many others. Also I have to thank Mr. Badcock of Tellicherry for assistance. The proofs have been through the hands of several Nâyars, and every precaution has been taken to ensure accuracy of facts.

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[1901.] F. FAWCETT.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

devolves through the men, the degrees between which marriage is prohibitive are inherited through the women.*

But the circumstance that inheritance through women was once, perhaps, the rule in Southern India cannot be accepted as of itself proof that the Nâyars are identical with the Dravidians, as the people of Southern India are commonly called. It is not yet time to say whether they are or are not. To the ordinary visitor their outward appearance, customs, habitations, mode of life generally, are very different from what he sees in the Telugu or Tamil countries; for Malabar, "the west coast," is as unlike the rest of the Presidency as Burma. The only other district of the Madras Presidency which resembles Malabar, is Ganjám, more particularly the northern part of it, where the people are almost entirely Aryan. The resemblance between these, the Uriyas of Gumsoor and thereabouts, a fine fighting stock, and the Nâyars of Malabar is very striking. It is not, perhaps, a mere coincidence that in these two furthest remote corners of the Presidency alone, the people at large are to be seen wearing umbrella hats to protect them from the sun.

The Nâyars are divided into clans, (we will call them clans for want of a better term), many of which intermingle through marriage, but some of them are endogamous. The precise number of these clans cannot be given, as it is disputed whether certain of them have a right to belong to the cognate Nâyar body. The names of the clans which have come directly under my measuring instruments are these :—

Kiriyattil.	Kitâvu.
Sûdra.	Pallichan.
Kurup.	Muppathinâyiran.
Nambiyâr.	Vlyâpâri or Râvâri.
Úrâli.	Attikkurissi.
Nalliôden.	Mânavallan.
Viyyûr.	Vengôlan.
Akattu Chârna.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Chârna.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Âmayengolam.
Vangilôth.	

This list is not in order of priority.

* An example of this custom existing in another land may be quoted here from a modern book—'The Caroline Islands,' by F. W. Christian, 1899: "Descent is traced through the mother—a custom tolerably common amongst the Oceanic races in general. Members of the same tipu or clan cannot marry." (Page 74.)

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar

[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

588

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tāliketukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost 564 all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine 121 this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North 611 Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the 591 double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, 121 a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much 588 controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of [175] the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about [127] twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was [114] carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout. [101]

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. [114] While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. [122]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breadths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note 1.

8:Panikkar 1-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar

gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharavad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intelligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following:

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patrilocal* system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—*The Origin of the word "Nāyars."*

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 614 174 825 771 [161] It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a community of 3½ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattus*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred serpents. [784] There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 174 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "G" to "Y" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 699–70.

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[P. 1]

CHAPTER I.

—:o:—

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS).

Introduction.

THE NAYARS are an interesting caste of people, forming a considerable portion of the population of the Cochin State; they constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of the pure "*Sudras of Malayala*". They were mostly nobles who engaged neither in handicraft, nor in commerce, nor in any other occupation but that of arms, which they always carried; and no one could be called a Nayar who was not of noble lineage. They were in fact the magnates of the rulers of Kerala, and exercised as much authority over their inferiors as their rulers did over them. They formed in ancient times a warlike race with military leaders and civil administrators of all kinds. Very much influenced as they are by modern civilisation, their customs widely differ from those of other people, in marriage, family and social organizations, as also in maternal filiation. These customs, which are primitive, are being tenaciously retained by them; and they are even now, as they have always been, a unique people whose customs may appear peculiarly strange to foreigners.

101 564 [554] [177] [178]

The word *Nayar*, which is the honourific plural of *Nayan*, is derived from *Nayaka*, which means a leader of the people; and the name, which in the widest sense at present includes a large number of sub-castes quite distinct from one another, may have been given by a class of Brahmans called the Nambuthiris [1] to the Nayars proper, who formed a military class in ancient times. Some consider it to be more correct to derive *Nayars* from *Nagas* (snakes or snake-worshipping Nagas or Scythians) from the worship of the Nagas or snakes which has been the characteristic cult of the community.

1. See account of the Nambuthiris.

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101 564 [173] Origin and tradition of the caste.

According to *Kerala Mahatmyam*, the Nayars are said to be the descendants of the union of the junior members of the Nambuthiri families with the Devagandarva and Rakshasa women brought in by Parasurama from extra-terrestrial regions. The *Keralotpatti* regards them as the descendants of the Sudras who accompanied the Brahman immigrants from outside Kerala.

101 564 174 Some consider that the Nayars came from Tibet where polyandry prevails, while others consider them to be a very early division of the Newars of Nepal. The mere existence of polyandry in Tibet is not sufficient to suggest a racial identity, nor is the form of polyandry prevailing amongst the Nayars the same as that found amongst the Tibetans; [1] but the marital relations, mode of inheritance and other customs, as well as the style of architecture of Nepal, closely connect them with the Nayars, and go to show a common origin. [2]

101 174 In the serpent worship of the Nayars, and also their matriarchal customs, others have found traces of a Scythian origin. It is said that the Dravidian languages retain a more intimate connection with the Scythian or Turanean tongues. Philology also comes in to support this view. It is said that Tamil and its cognate tongues were founded upon the ancient Asura or Dravidian speech, and this is strongly confirmed by the fact that the language of the Brahuis, a tribe on the borders of Sind, has been found to be closely allied to them. "The Brahuis' language", says Dr. Caldwell, "enables us to trace the Dravidian race to the southern confines of Central Asia, and that this country was the home of the Nagas to which race apparently belonged the founders of the Dravidian kingdoms." It may therefore be safely concluded that the Dravidians of South India were of the same stock as the Nagas of the North, and to these tribes of Naga colonists belonged the original serpent worshipping Nayars.[3] "The name Dravidian Races," says Friedrich Ratzel, "fits only the Tamils, Telugus, and Canarese of Southern India, remoter kindred of the dark aboriginal population to whom Aryan population brought the religion of Brahma, a high civil order and of course the opportunity of extensive intermixture. The selection of the term is connected

1. The Evolution of Marriage, Letourneau, page 80.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, C. F. Oldham, page 158.
3. The Sun and the Serpent, Chapter VII, pages 160-165.

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with its use in the sacred writings of the old Indians, where it is applied to the old Kshatriyas on the east coast of the Deccan who had fallen to the rank of Sudras. As a rule, however, all are called Dravidians who are not Aryan or Semitic and speak agglutinative languages like Tamil. They are distinguished by their dark colour, Mongolian features, and smooth hair. "The nucleus of the Tamil race was indeed," says Grant, "devoted to the nomad life, the fundamental institution of Turanean existence, but the hypothesis of their close connection with the population of Tibet has not attained the rank of scientific certainty." [1]

The passage, quoted above, supports the general consensus of opinion, that the Malayalam language is an offshoot of Tamil, and that the Nayars are the immigrants from the Tamil country.

It has always been a matter of controversy whether Malayalam is the mother, sister, or daughter of Tamil. The popular opinion seems to be, that it is the archaic form of Tamil before it became a written language, and this corresponds with the information derived from the Greek writers that the country was known by the name of Limurike, Tamilike or Tamil country. [2]

Relying mainly on literary evidence, Mr. Kanakasabha Pillay has attributed a Mongolian origin to the whole Dravidian race of Tamils, among whom he includes the Nayars, but anthropometric results point otherwise. [3]

As has been seen, many distinguished authorities are unanimously agreed that the Nayars belong to the Dravidian race with no doubt a considerable admixture of Aryan blood, but the date of their arrival in Malabar cannot be accurately determined.

It is assumed by some writers that the Aryans were conquerors who reduced *Asuras* (Dravidians) to slavery. Whatever might have been the fate of the aborigines, the *Asuras* were not subdued by the Aryans, and never became their serfs or dependants, but were converted gradually to Aryan usages by a regular fusion. Bishop Caldwell supports this view and says, that the subjugation of the Dravidians by the Aryans is

1. Races of Mankind, Vol. III, page 350.
2. Malabar Law and Custom, Introduction, page 2.
3. The Tamils, eighteen hundred years ago.

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796 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation,
184 birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the people. The battle was fought with the result already mentioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Konga-
796 pada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by
184 the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Nâduvázhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

[101] [174]

1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

said, by dividing it up between the rajas of Travancore, Cochin, Kolattiri, Kurumbranad, Walluvanad and others. To the Zamorin of Calicut, who was later to become so famous, he left only his sword with the recommendation to "die, kill and annex". The latter potentate and his descendants took the injunction seriously and very quickly in the two following centuries, the 14th and 15th, assumed a leading role on the Kerala stage. They encouraged Arab trade in spices and other commodities, and by their scrupulous honesty and absolute security of commerce, obtained and held it for fully two hundred years. 175

It was then that the first Europeans arrived on the scene. The Portugese came to beign with, in an attempt to break the Moors' monopoly of Far Eastern products. Coming into conflict with their Mohammedan rivals and with their protégé the Zamorin, they successfully supported the raja of Cochin against these and thus gained a footing on the coast while taking over command of the sea. They were only forced out by the Dutch in the 17th century (although they still hold Goa further north, to this day), and the Dutch in turn were superseded by the British and the French, who settled respectively at Tellicherry and at Mahe, from which fortified places they fought each other for supremacy in the pepper trade for another two centuries.

In the 18th century, the Mohammedan rulers of Mysore descended on Kerala and, after forcibly converting a great number of its inhabitants to Islam, annexed large tracts of it. Tipu Sultan, however, the ally of Napolean, fell foul of the British East India Company, which eventually defeated him at Seringapatnam in 1792. British supremacy in Kerala dates from that year and a system of farming out revenue to the local rajas was instituted. It proved to be a mistaken method of collection, and was the cause of the serious rebellions of Kerala Varma, Raja of the Padinnara Kovilagam of Kottayam, the Pazhassi raja, otherwise known as Pychy raja, in 1797 and from 1800 to 1805. With their termination, the British took over direct administration of Malabar, while leaving Cochin and Travancore to that of their rajas. They were to keep it until 1947 when India was given her independence. 175 631 648

Two years later, the States of Travancore and Cochin were merged to form a United State under the Maharaja of Travancore. In 1953, France finally relinquished her hold on Mahe, and in 1957, the whole coastal region from South Canara to Cape Comorin became the State of *Kerala* which we know today. The name has been variously interpreted as meaning either "land of coconut trees" or "land of the Cheras", an ancient Hindu dynasty of south India. [101]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India. 595* 591 [589] [582]

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first. 595* [656] [428]

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns. 595* 178

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.") 595* [103] [101] [564]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

177 595 Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

671 *Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.*

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

[101] [564] [428] Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

[585] Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

snake-bite, the Nāyādis wear a brass toe-ring. And, when engaged in catching rats in their holes, they wear round the wrist a snake-shaped metal ring, to render them safe against snakes which may be concealed in the hole.

The Nāyādis who live within the jurisdiction of the Kavalapāra Nāyar near Shoranūr wear the kuḍumi (front lock of hair), as there are no Māppillas (Muhammadans) to molest them. The Kavalapara Nāyar was at one time an important chief, and directed all Nambutiri jenmis (landlords) who held land within his jurisdiction to bind themselves not to let the land to Māppillas. Nāyādis of other parts are not allowed by the Māppillas to wear the kuḍumi, and, if they do so, they are taken for Parayans and professional sorcerers, and beaten.

Some Nāyādis have become converts to Christianity, others to Muhammadanism, and maintain themselves by begging for alms from Muhammadans. They are called Thoppyitta (cap-wearing) Nāyādis.

The priest of the Nāyādis is called Mūppan. His appointment is hereditary, and he enquires into all matters affecting the community, and can excommunicate a guilty person.*

Average height, 155 cm.; nasal index, 86.

Nāyar.—"The Nāyars," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "are a Dravidian caste, or rather a community, for we find several distinct elements with totally different occupations among the people who call themselves by this title. The original Nāyars were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia, but the present Nāyar caste includes persons who, by hereditary

101 564 463 [174] [701]

* This note is based mainly on articles by Mr. S. Appadorai Aiyar and Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyar.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Nayar

occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the community that surrounded them. This process of assimilation is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners, and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

101 174 collectors of royal taxes, and to have grievously oppressed Xavier's converts among the fishermen of Travancore.* Dr. Caldwell, alluding to Xavier's letters, says † that these Badages were no doubt Vadages or men from the North, and is of opinion that a Jesuit writer of the time who called them Nayars was mistaken, and that they were really Nayakans from Madura. I believe, however, that the Jesuit rightly called them Nayars, for I find that Father Organtino, writing in 1568, speaks of these Badages as people from Narasinga (a kingdom north of Madura, lying close to Bishnaghur).‡ Bishnaghur is, of course, Vijayanagar, and the kingdom of Narasinga was the name frequently given by the Portuguese to Vijayanagar. Almost every page of Mr. Sewell's interesting book on Vijayanagar bears testimony to the close connection between Vijayanagar and the West Coast. Dr. A. C. Burnell tells us that the kings who ruled Vijayanagar during the latter half of the fourteenth century belonged to a low non-Aryan caste, namely, that of Canarese cow-herds.§ They were therefore closely akin to the Nayars, one of the leading Rajas among whom at the present time, although officially described as a Samanta, is in reality of the Eradi, *i.e.*, cow-herd caste.‖ It is remarkable that Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro, in the memorandum written by him in 1802 ¶ on the Poligars of the Ceded Districts,

* Father Coleridge's Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier.

† History of Tinnevelly. ‡ Coleridge's Xavier.

§ Burnell, Translation of the Daya Vibhaga, Introduction. *Vide* also Elements of South Indian Palæography (2nd ed., p. 109), where Dr Burnell says that it is certain that the Vijayanagar kings were men of low caste.

‖ *Vide* Glossary, Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, p. 2, and Day's Land of the Permauls, p. 44

¶ Fifth Report of the Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, II, 499, 530. Reprint by Higginbotham, Madras.

when dealing with the cases of a number of Poligars 101 ●
who were direct descendants of men who had been chiefs 174
under the kings of Vijayanagar, calls them throughout his report Naique or Nair, using the two names as if they were identical. Further investigation as to the connection of the Nayars of Malabar with the kingdom of Vijayanagar would, I believe, lead to interesting results." In the Journal of the Hon. John Lindsay (1783) it is recorded * that "we received information that our arms were still successful on the Malabar coast, and that our army was now advancing into the inland country; whilst the Nayars and Polygars that occupy the jungles and mountains near Seringapatam, thinking this a favourable opportunity to regain their former independence, destroyed the open country, and committed as many acts of barbarity as Hyder's army had done in the Carnatic."

"Some," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes in a note 101
on the Nāyars of Travancore, "believe that Nāyar is derived from Nāga (serpents), as the Aryans so termed the earlier settlers of Malabar on account of the special adoration which they paid to snakes. The Travancore Nāyars are popularly known as Malayāla Sūdras—a term which contrasts them sharply with the Pāndi or foreign Sūdras, of whom a large number immigrated into Travancore in later times. Another name by which Nāyars are sometimes known is Malayāli, but other castes, which have long inhabited the Malayālam country, can lay claim to this designation with equal propriety. The most general title of the Nāyars is Pillai (child), which was once added to the names of the Brāhman dwellers in the south. It must, in all probability, have

* Lives of the Lindsays. By Lord Lindsay, 1849.

101 been after the Brāhmans changed their title to Aiyar (father), by which name the non-Brāhman people invariably referred to them, that Sūdras began to be termed Pillai. We find that the Vellālas of the Tamil country and the Nāyars of Travancore called themselves Pillai from very early times. The formal ceremony of paying down a sum of money, and obtaining a distinction direct from the Sovereign was known as tirumukham pitikkuka, or catching the face of the king, and enabled the recipients to add, besides the honorary suffix Pillai, the distinctive prefix Kanakku, or accountant, to their name. So important were the privileges conferred by it that even Sanku Annavi, a Brāhman Dalava, obtained it at the hand of the reigning Mahārāja, and his posterity at Vempannūr have enjoyed the distinction until the present day. The titles Pillai and Kanakku are never used together. The name of an individual would be, for example, either Krishna Pillai or Kanakku Rāman Krishnan, Rāman being the name of the Karanavan or the maternal uncle. A higher title, Chempakaraman, corresponds to the knighthood of mediæval times, and was first instituted by Mahārāja Marthanda Varma in memory, it is said, of his great Prime Minister Rāma Aiyyan Dalawa. The individual, whom it was the king's pleasure to honour, was taken in procession on the back of an elephant through the four main streets of the fort, and received by the Prime Minister, seated by his side, and presented with pān-supāri (betel). Rare as this investiture is in modern times, there are many ancient houses, to which this title of distinction is attached in perpetuity. The title Kanakku is often enjoyed with it, the maternal uncle's name being dropped, *e.g.*, Kanakku Chempakaraman Krishnan. Tambi (younger brother) is another title prevalent in

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6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kanada AW10
Kerala AW11

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with an output of 5–600 m. tiles a year; local sailing coasters supply markets from Karachi to Colombo, and there is some export via Bombay to E Africa, Persia, and Malaya. But competition from Malabar and, much more serious from cement and asbestos roofing is adversely affecting the industry, which appears to be declining.[40] Other industries are of little importance: iron-founding (ancillary to the tile factories), and soap, based on local and imported copra; Mangalore is the main port for the Laccadive islanders. A feature of some interest is the prominence of Portuguese names among the larger concerns, both in coffee-curing and in tile-making.

Kerala

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Both physically and culturally Kerala is one of the most distinctive regions of India.[41] Historically it has been somewhat isolated from the rest of the Peninsula, but accessible to maritime influences. Homogeneous in speech, it is probably more caste-divided than any other area, and it is here that 'untouchability' developed the more fantastic extremes of 'unapproachability' and even 'unseeability', while the Nairs who form the bulk of the minor gentry preserve a matrilinear organisation in which both polygamy and polyandry play a part.[42] Perhaps by reaction against caste, the region has the highest percentage of Christians in all India—28·8 in Cochin and 32·3 in Travancore. This element long antedates the vigorous Portuguese missions, which succeeded in bringing into the Roman fold most of the 'Syrian' (i.e. Nestorian) Christians, whose traditions go back to St Thomas the Apostle; there were Christian communities 1500 years ago. The 'White Jews' of Cochin are another ancient fossil kith; their number is only a few hundreds, but their origin is claimed to be from a Solomonic colony and is undoubtedly very ancient. But there is no end to the ethnographical fascinations of Kerala.

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The Physical Setting

Tokens of uplift are numerous and decisive, including the existence of coral reefs below the alluvium some miles from the present coast.[43]

[40] U. Hammaba, *ibid.*, 291–99.

[41] Based mainly on a series of papers by G. Kuriyan in *JMGA* and *IGJ*: "The Industrial Crops of Kerala" (XI (1937), 283–90 and XII (1937), 1–8); "Population and its Distribution in K." (XIII (1938), 125–46); "The Geographic Basis of the Legendary Origin of K." (XVI (1941), 340–54); "Some Aspects of the Regional Geography of K." (XVII (1942), 1–41). On Cochin I am indebted for first-hand information to Sir Robert Bristow, CIE, to whom the development of the modern port is largely due.

[42] The best easily accessible account for geographers is in C. D. Forde, *Habitat, Economy and Society* (1934 and later eds.), Ch. XIII. See also G. Slater, *Southern India* (1936), Chs. XVI–XVII.

[43] Legend ascribes the formation of Kerala to the impatience of a local saint ("during the thousandth year after the [biblical] flood") with the unspecified improprieties of his aged mother. He threw an axe from Gokarna (near Goa) over the sea; it flew to Cape Comorin and the sea retreated beneath its flight. This does correspond with the actual area of emergence.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many au-
611 thors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hy-
564 pergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by con-
[554] trast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy.
[197] Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region ex-
[171] hibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from struc-
[184] tural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

• 101 The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people.
564 Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which
613 group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad*, used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of endogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan*.[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava*, "to do" in Sinhalese.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

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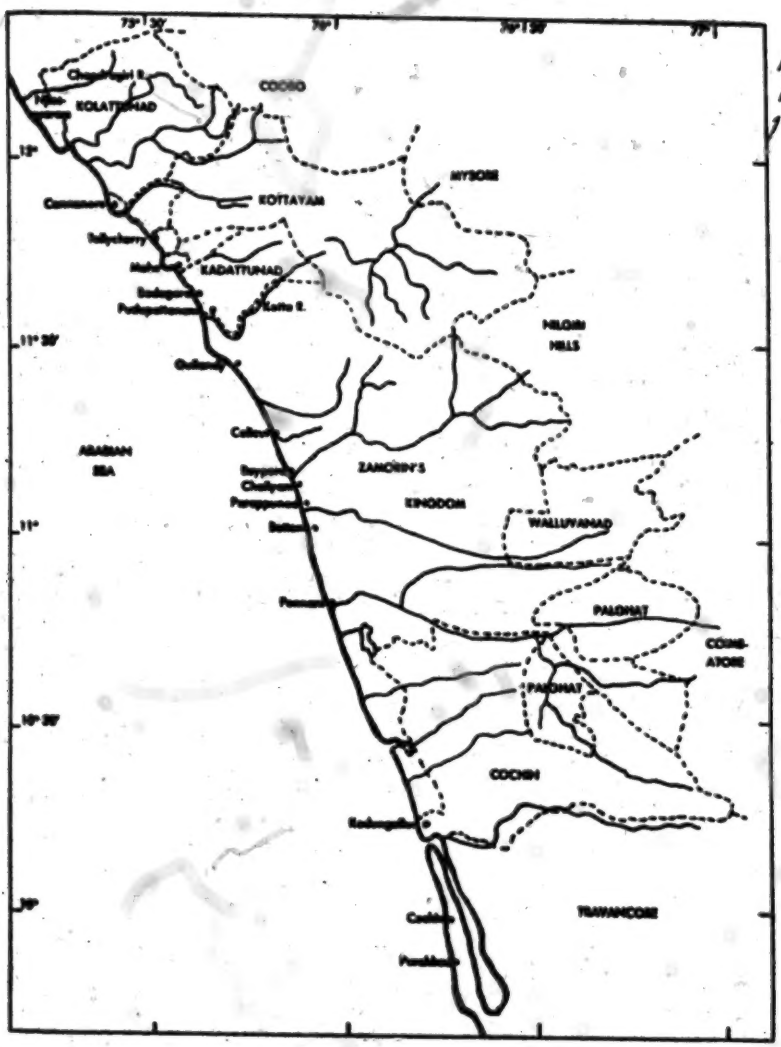

Fig. 6-1. Rough boundaries of the Kingdoms of Central and North Kerala in the mid-eighteenth century. (Adapted from C. A. Innes, 1908: 44–45.)

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP I

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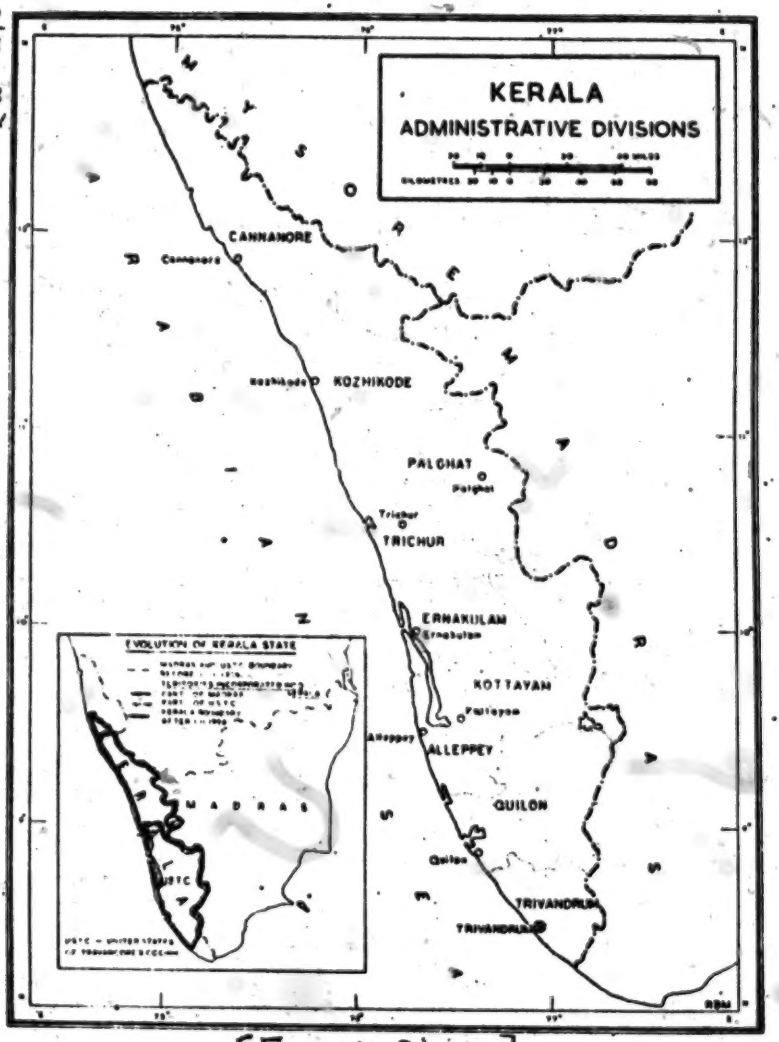

[Frontis Piece]
[facing p. 1]

[P. 3]

MAP 2

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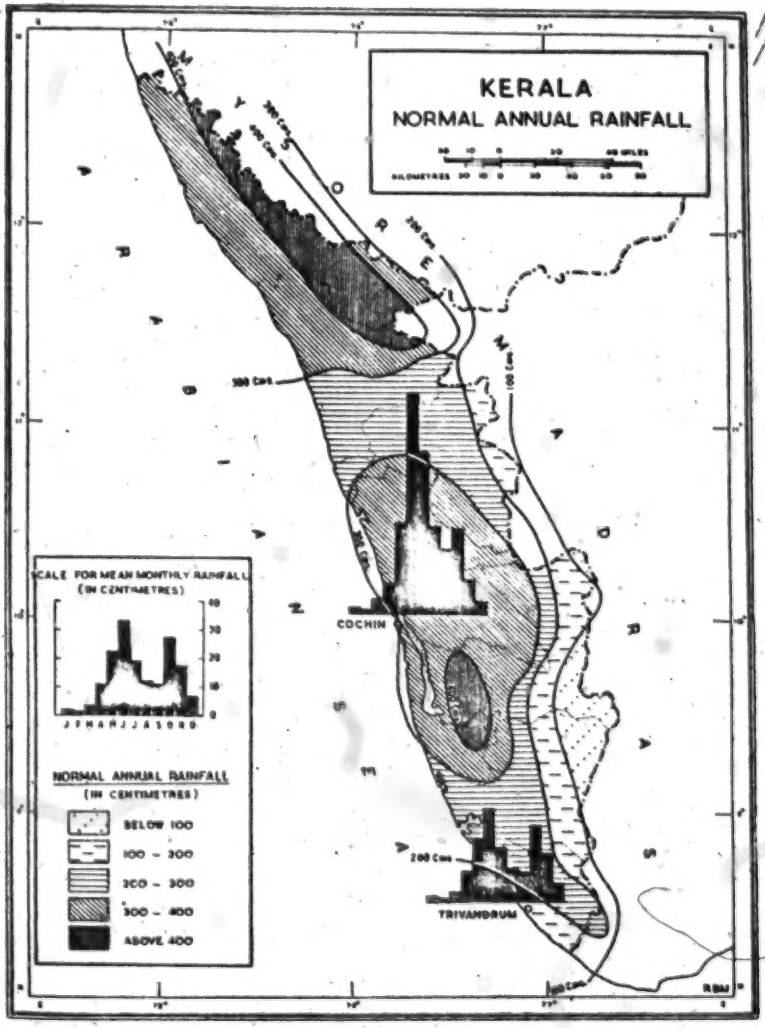

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 5]

MAP 3

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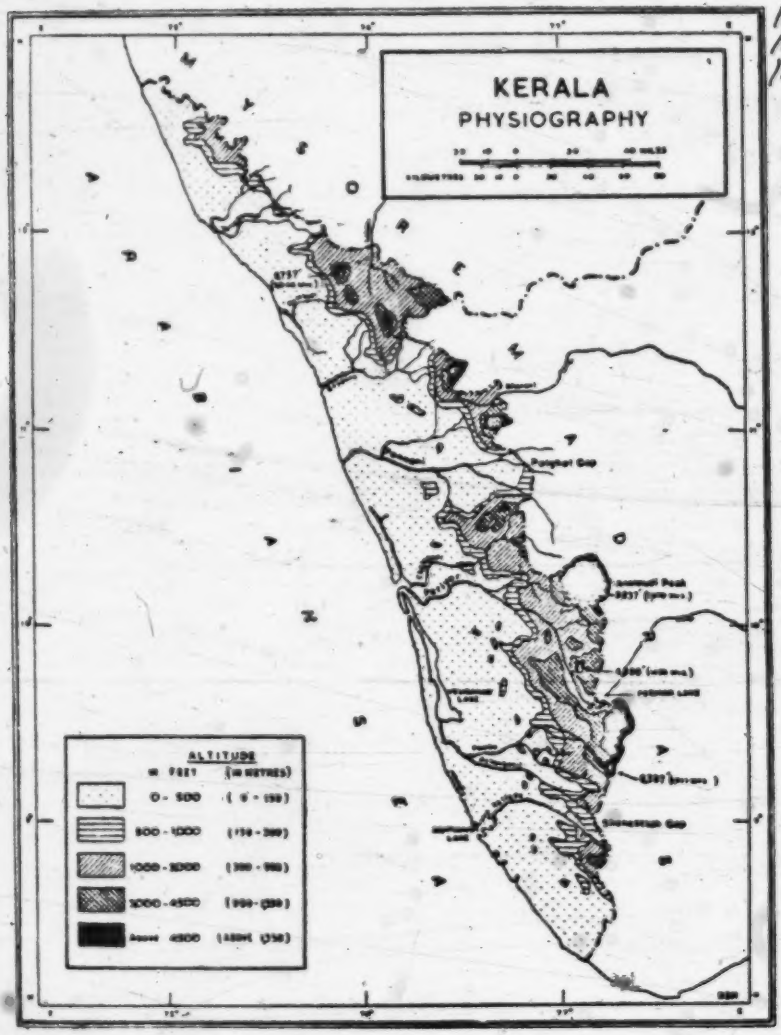

[P. 7]

KERALA

CHANGING PATTERN OF DENSITY OF POPULATION, 1951-1961

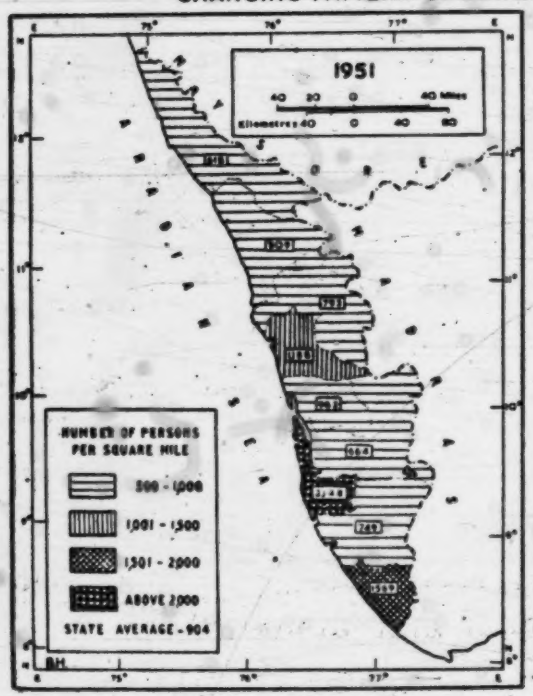

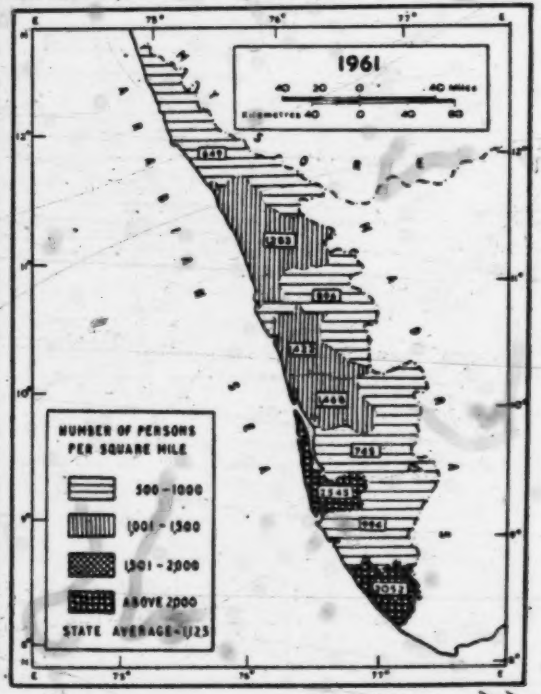

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[P. 23]

MAP 5

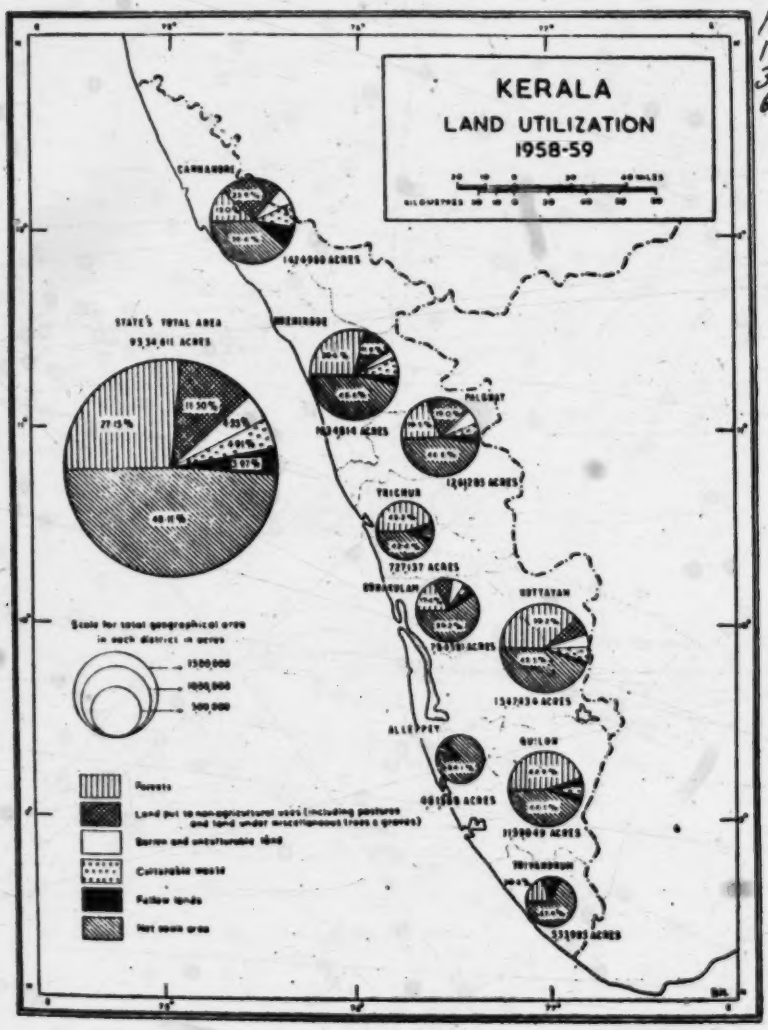

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 26]

MAP 6

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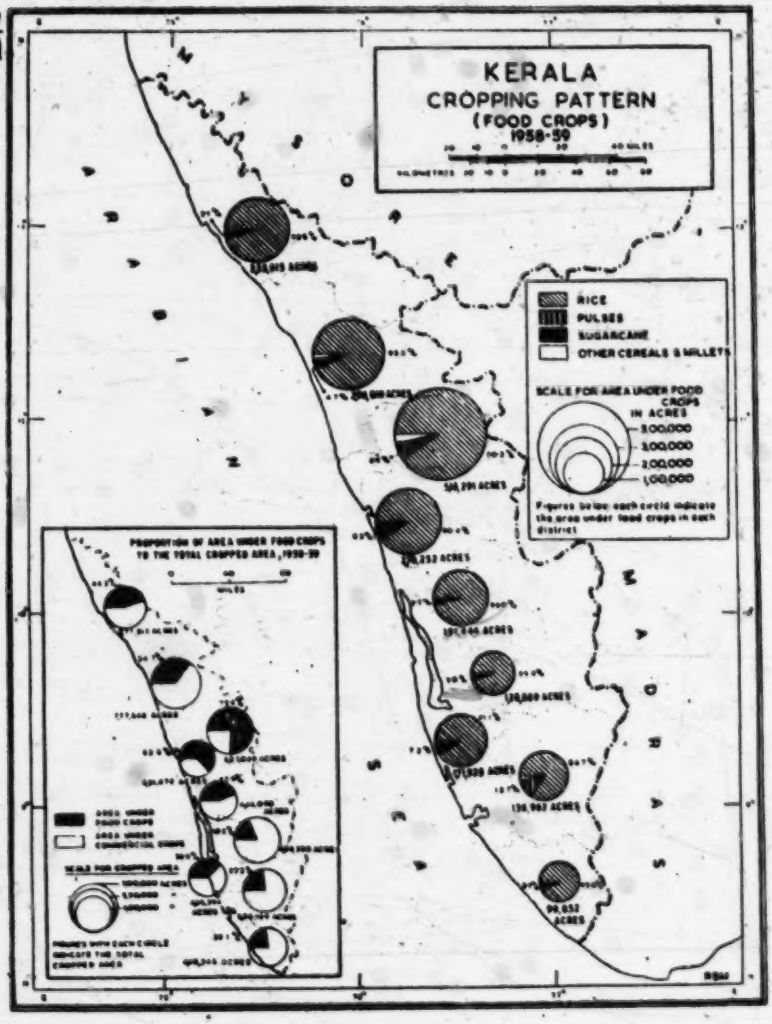

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 27]

MAP 7

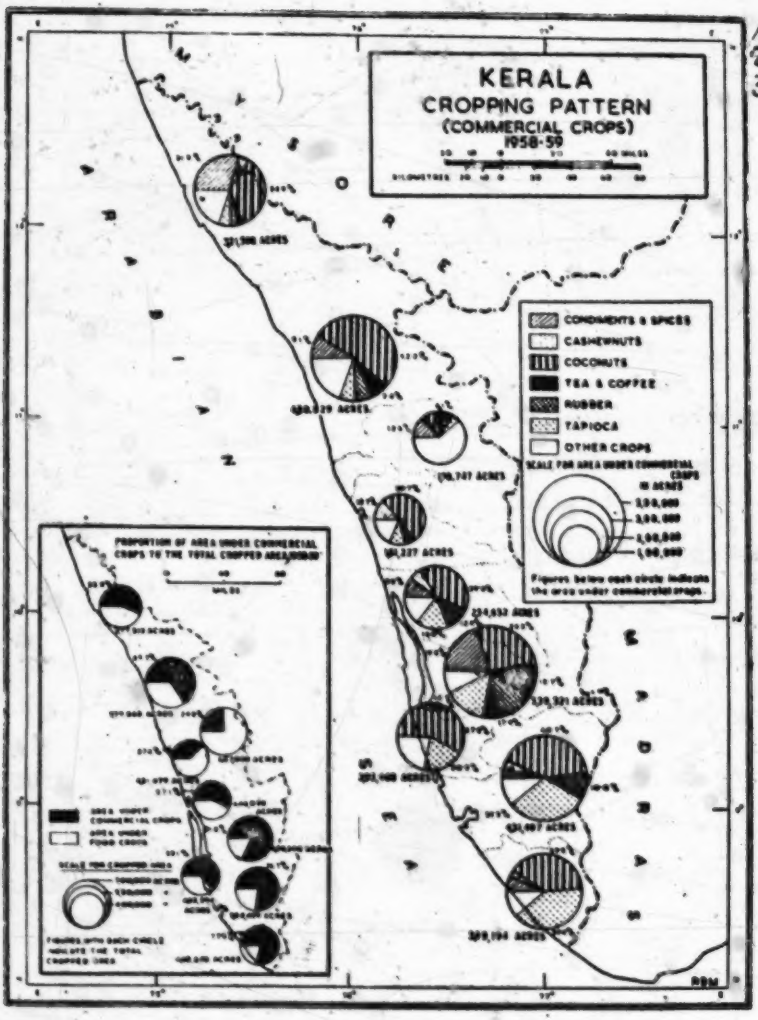

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 66]

MAP 8

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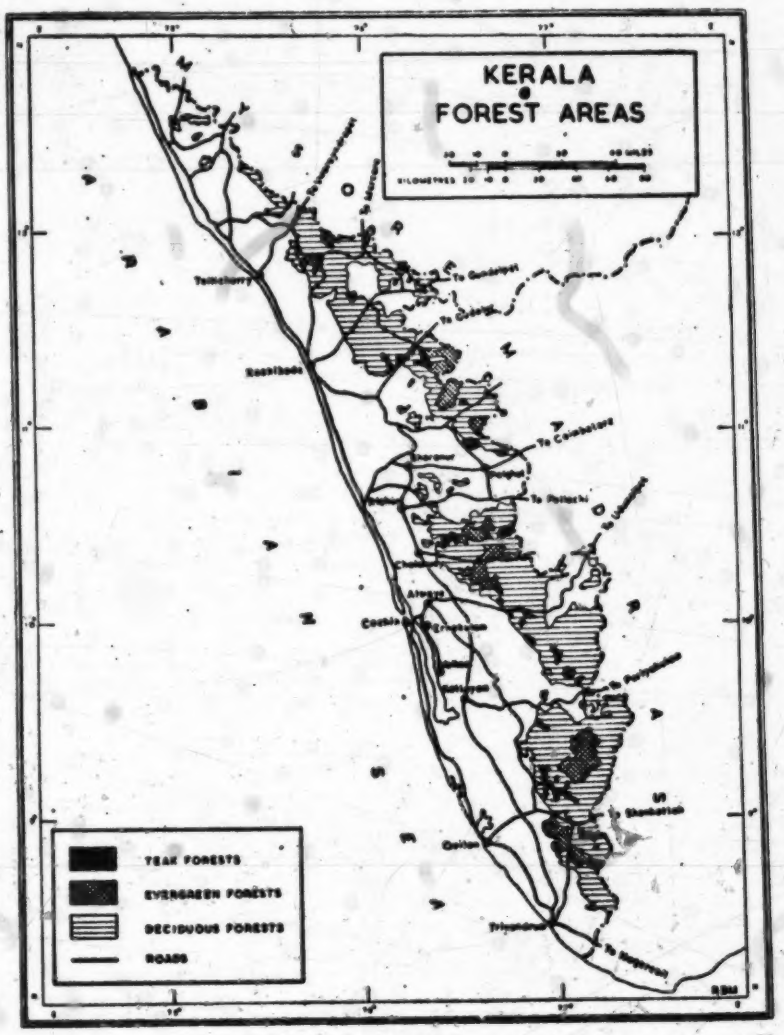

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 9

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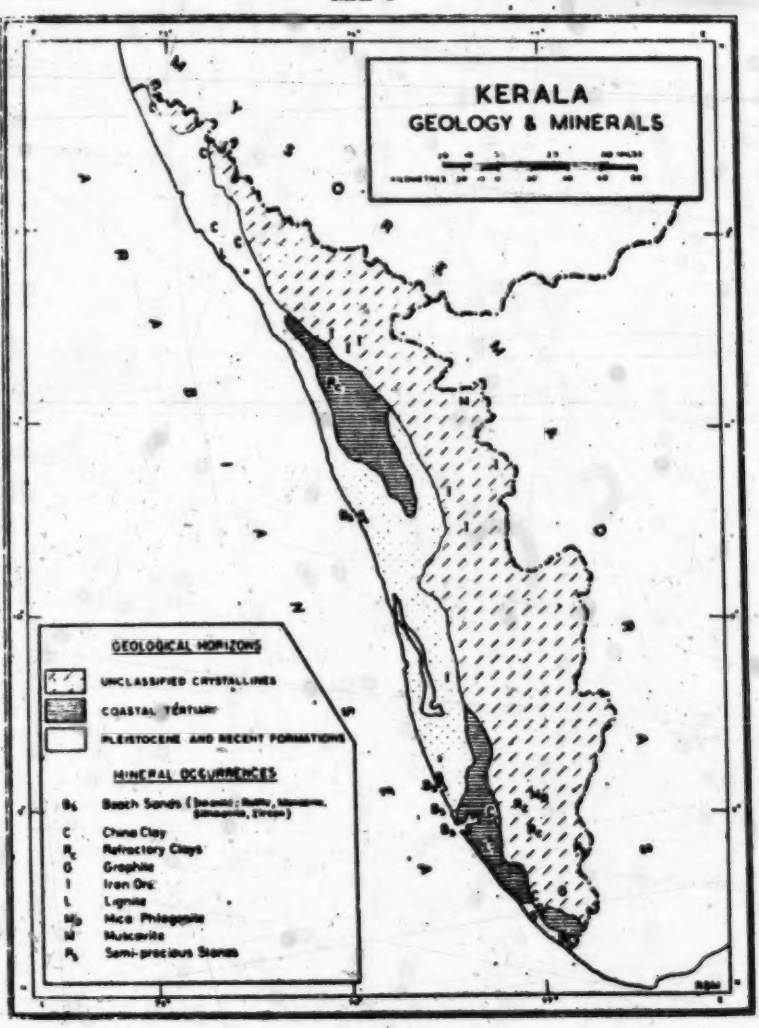

MAP 10

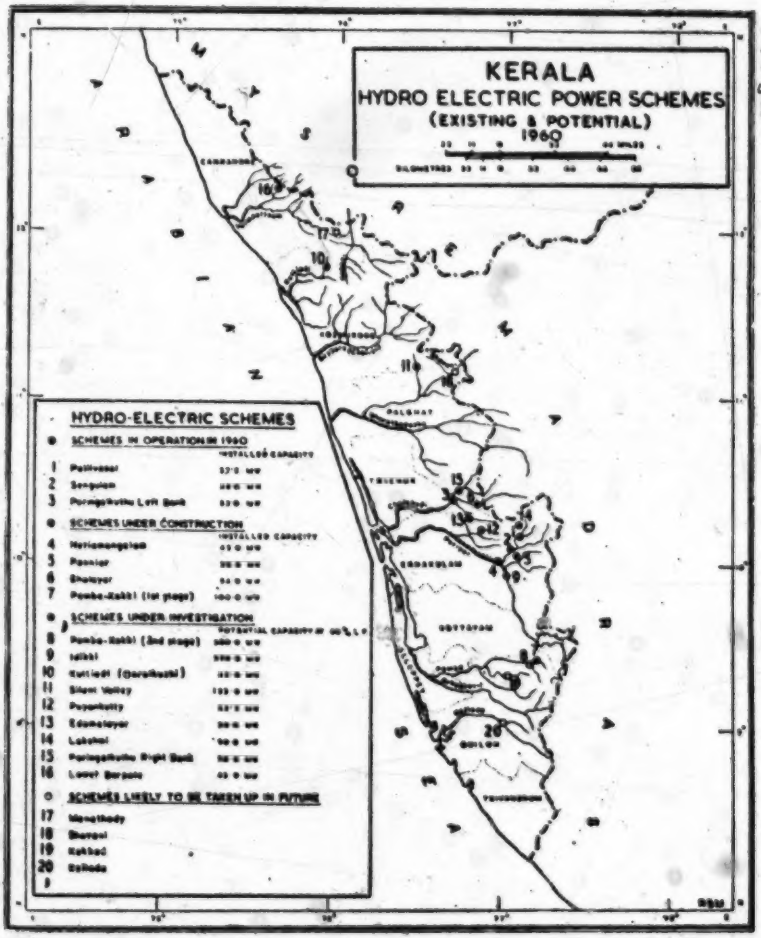

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 11

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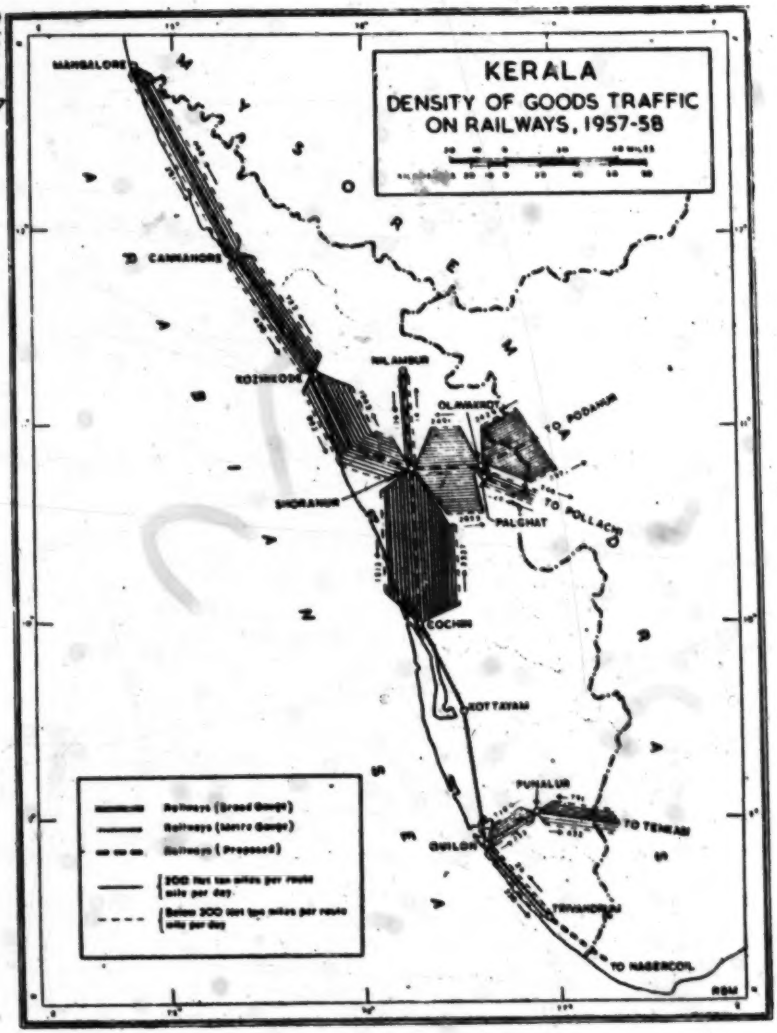

[P. 129]

MAP 12

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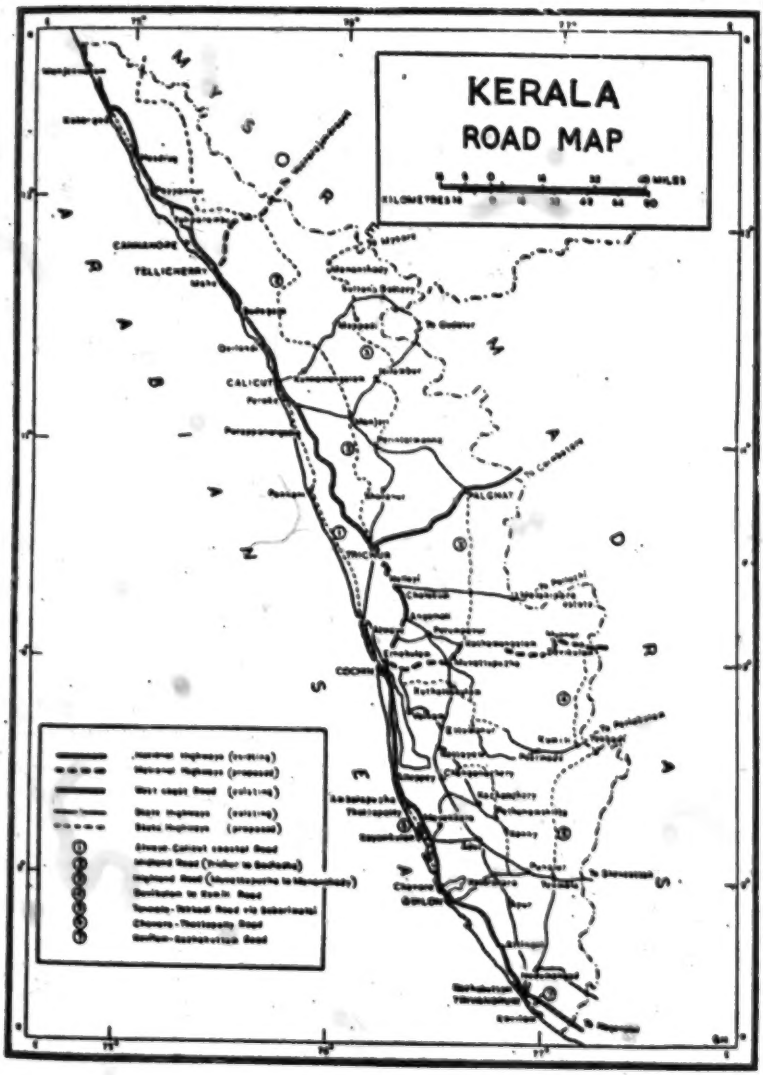

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A-W11 Kerala A W11

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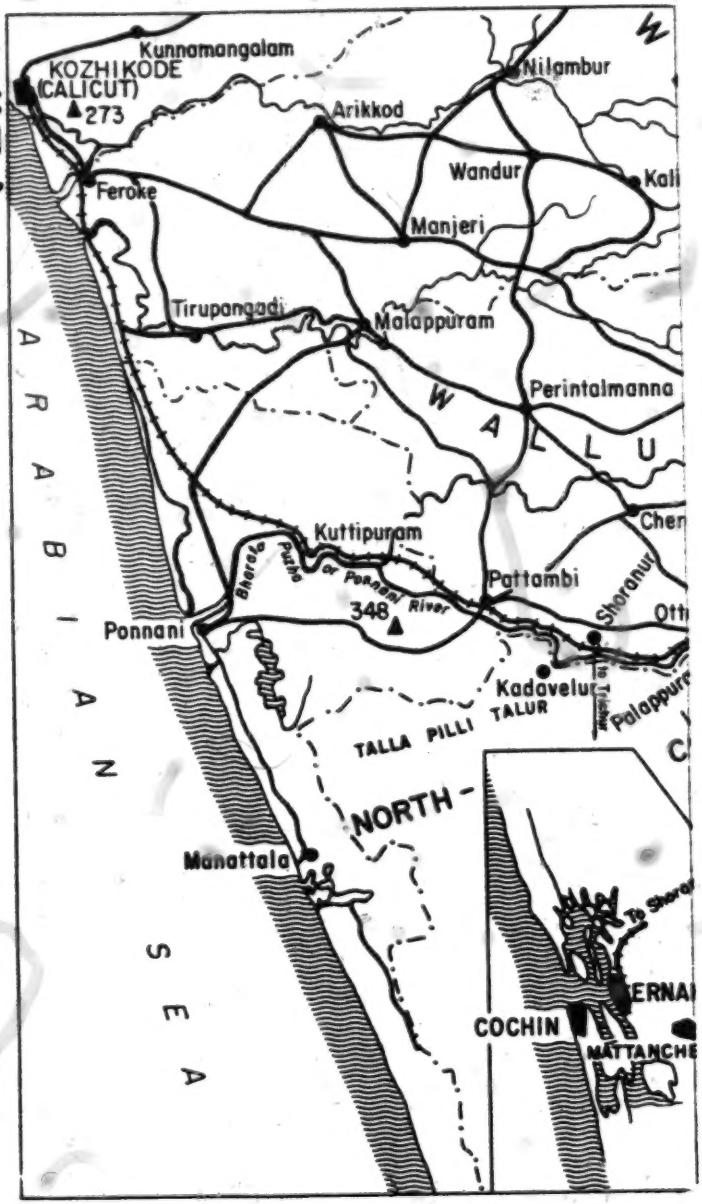

Map II. Map of South Malabar and North Cochin in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-A]

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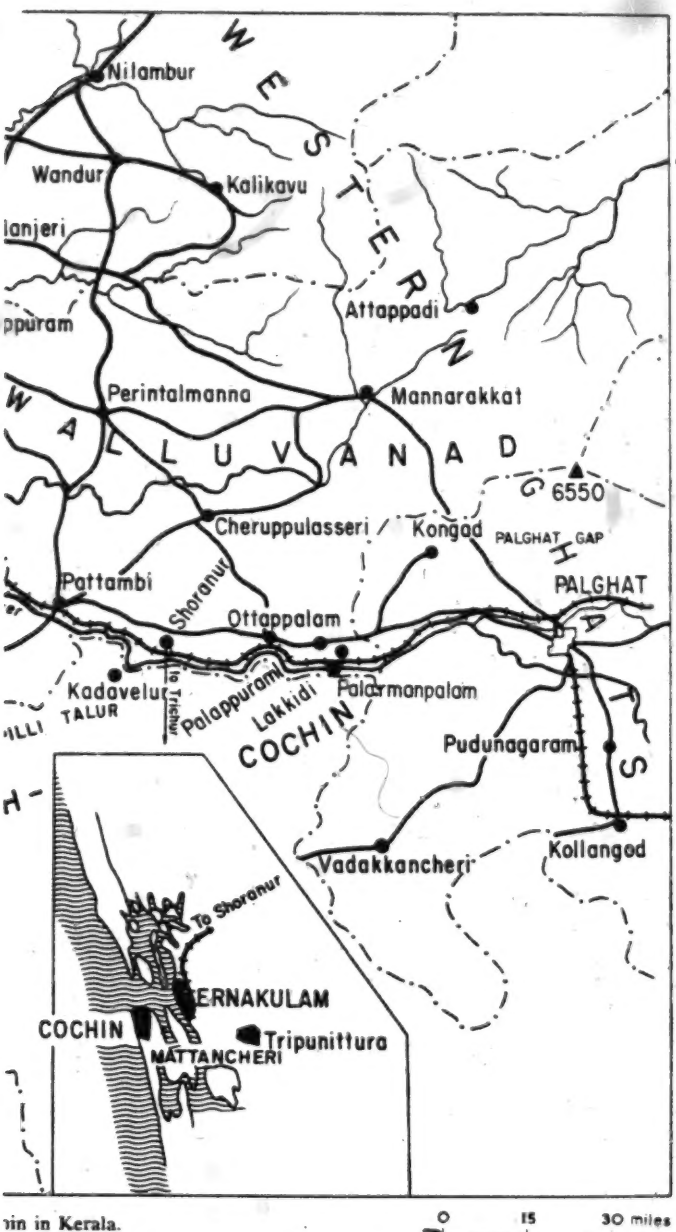

ain in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-B]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

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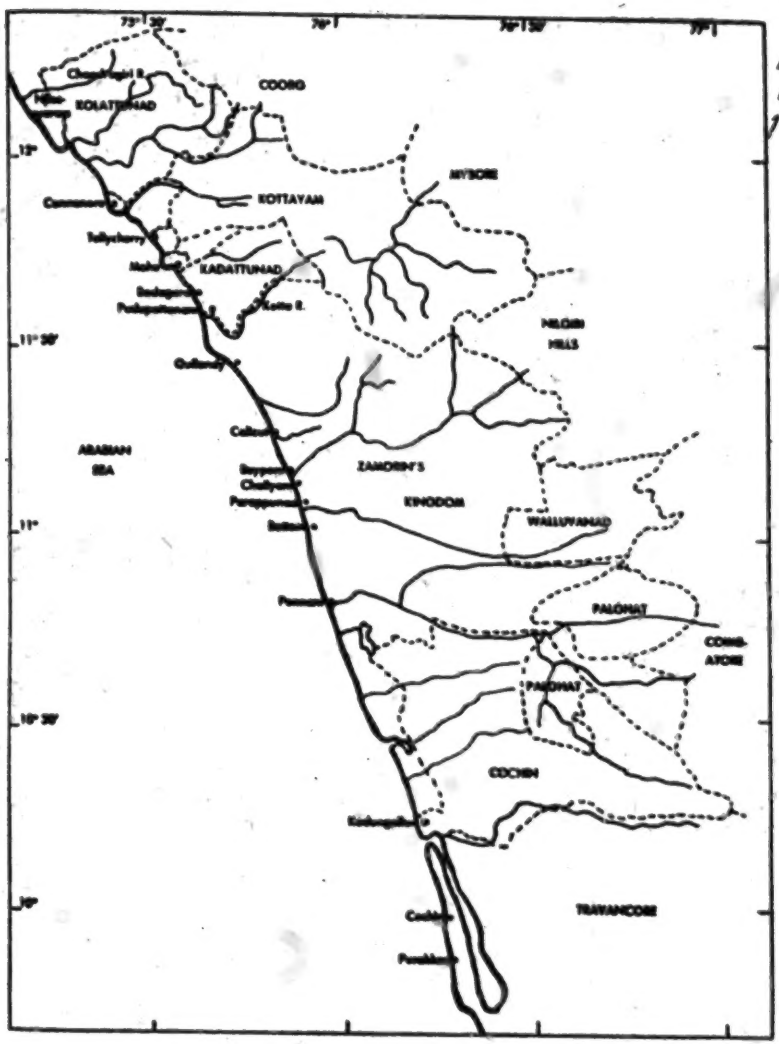

Fig. 6-1. Rough boundaries of the Kingdoms of Central and North Kerala in the mid-eighteenth century. (Adapted from C. A. Innes, 1908: 44–45.)

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 1

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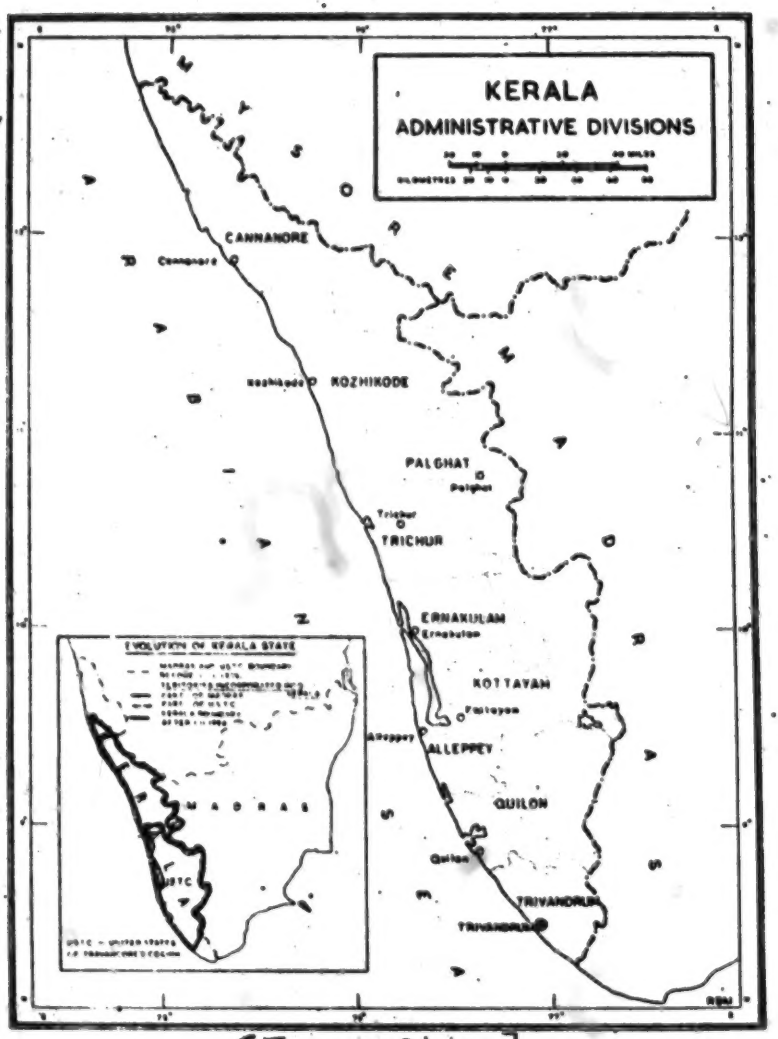

[Frontis Piece]
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[P. 5]

MAP 3

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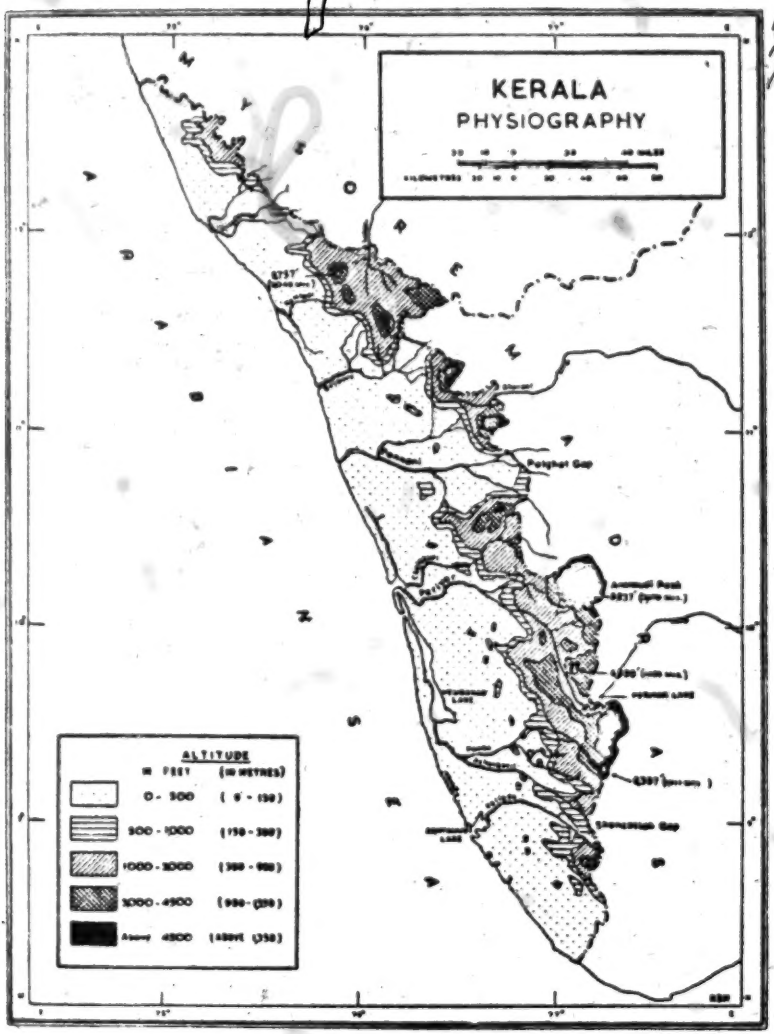

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 66]

MAP 8

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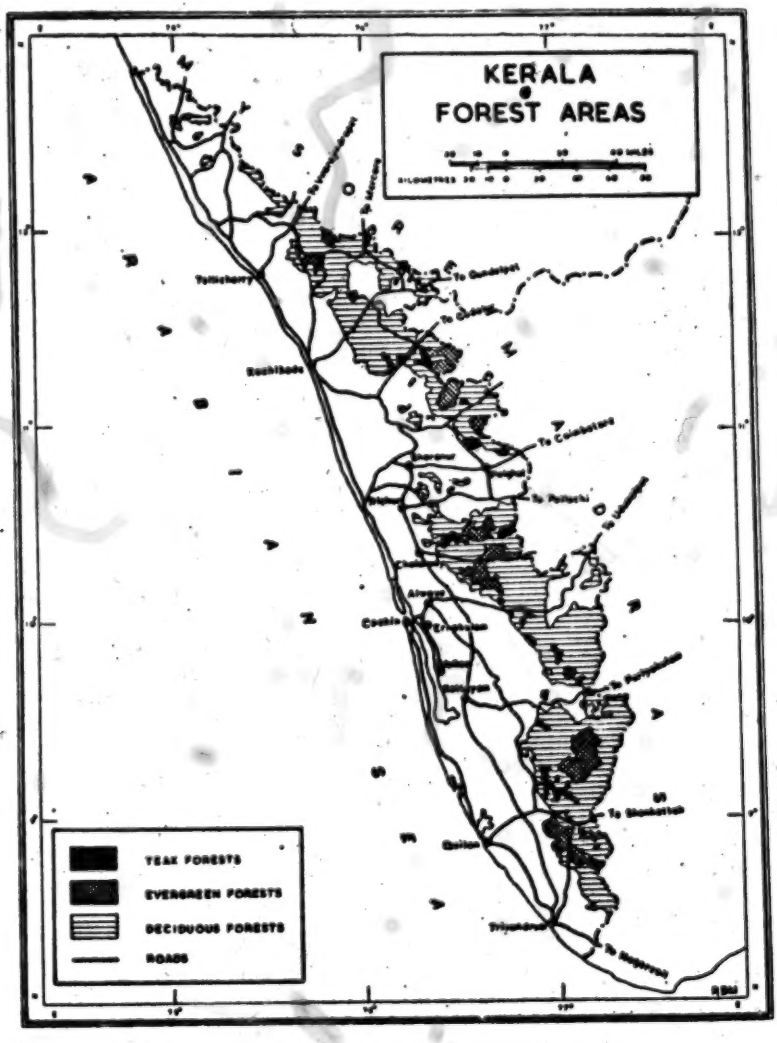

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres. 489 439 496 491

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans. 438 494 605

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres. 433* 438 489

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers. 442 335 426 471 465 437

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha. 435 404 366 103

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one. 366 251 262 443 366

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both 438* 442 443

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 11

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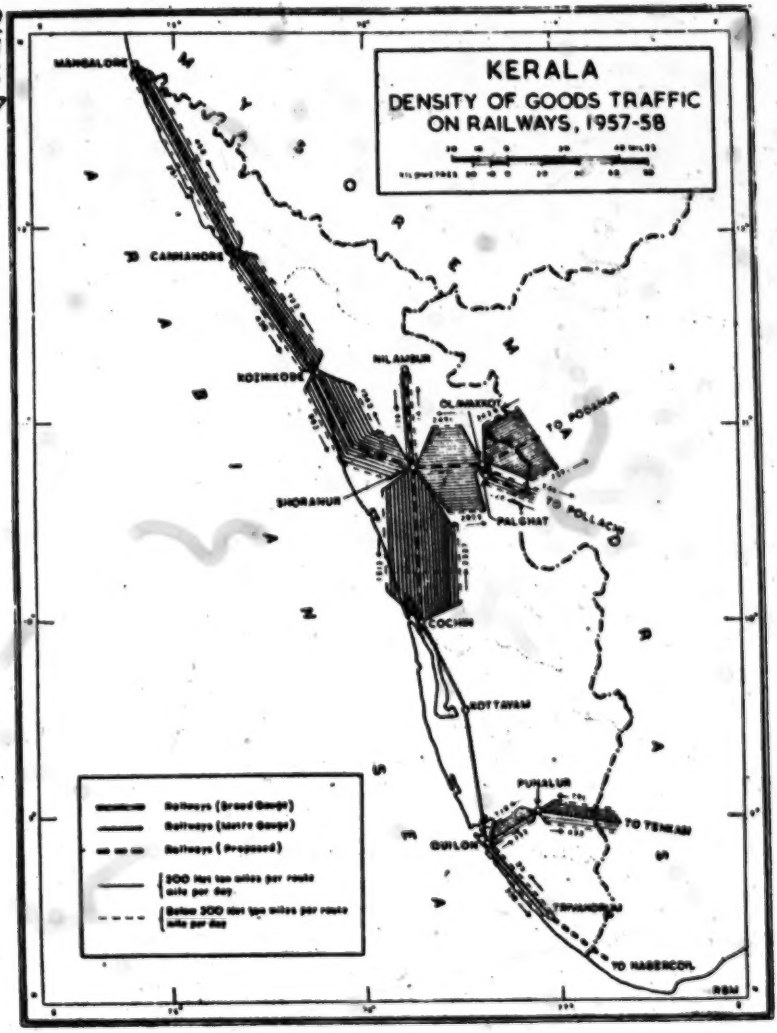

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 129]

MAP 12

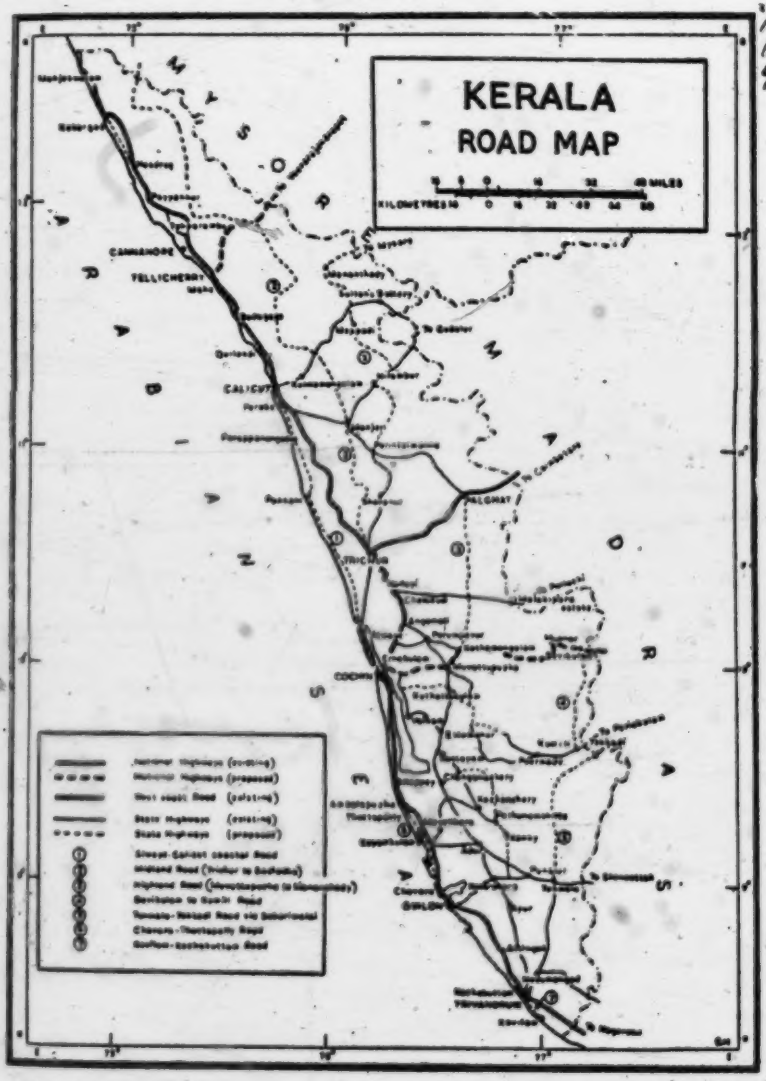

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

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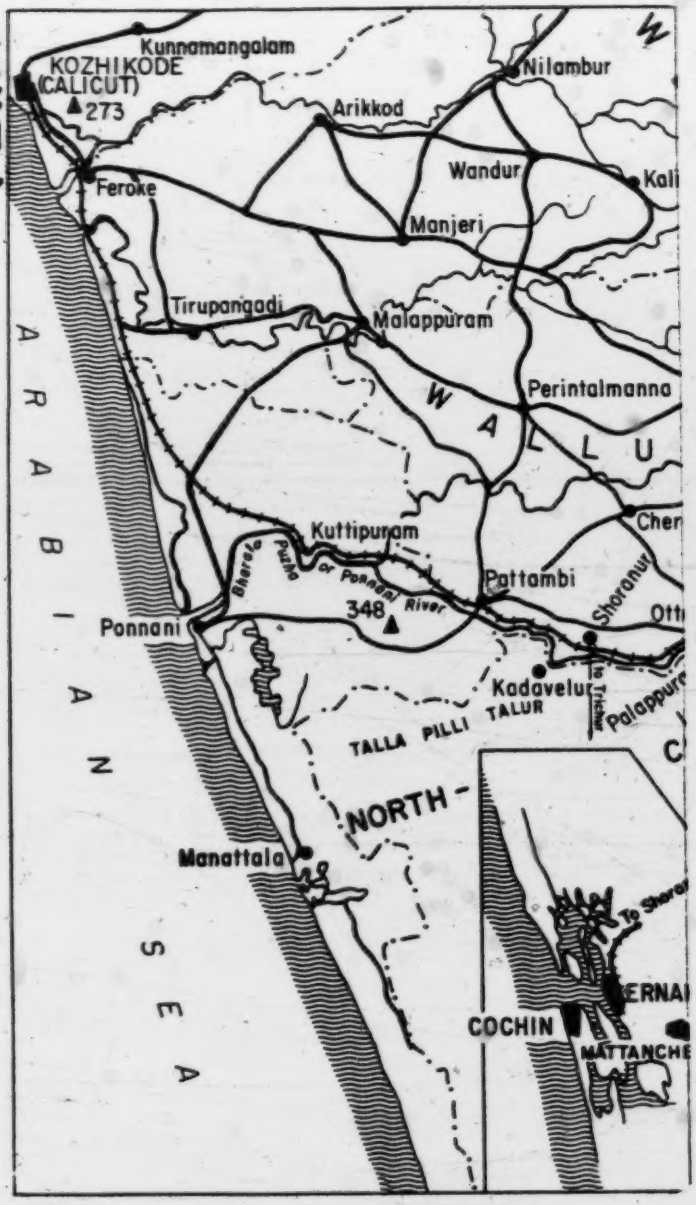

Map II. Map of South Malabar and North Cochin in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-A]

I2:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

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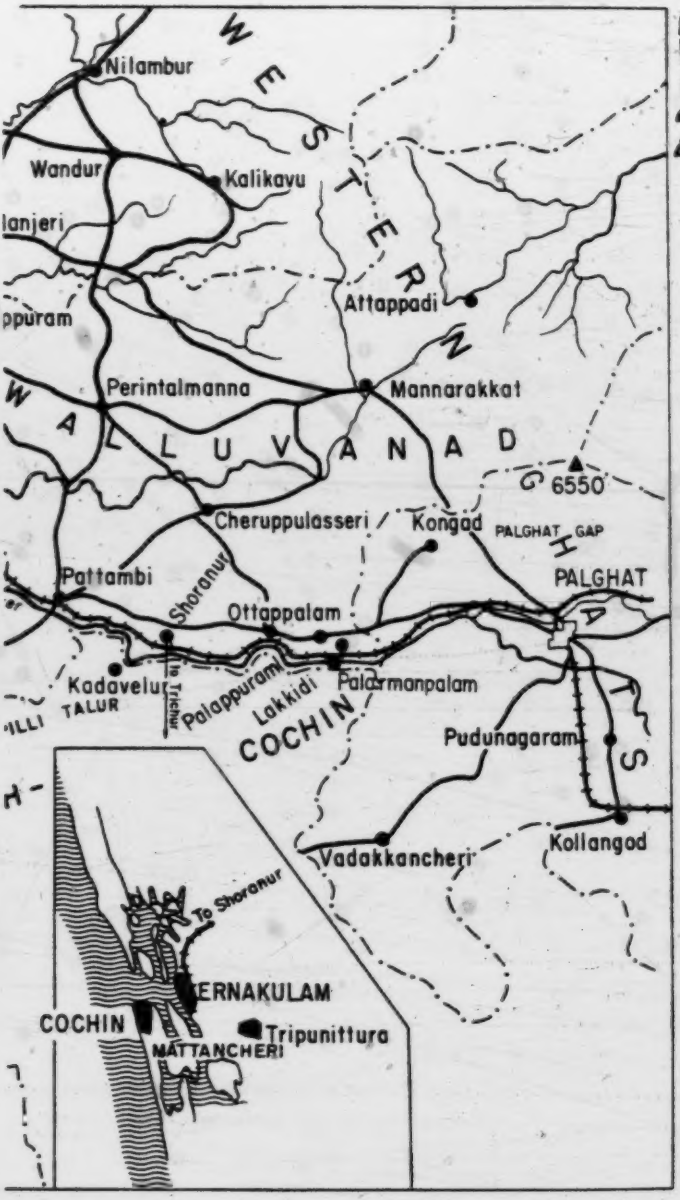

in in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India. 595* 591 [589] [582]

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first. 595* [656] [428]

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns. 595* 178

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.") 595* [103] [101] [564]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

[For definitions and explanations of native terms see Index, category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India, pp. 789-821.]

● 104

sambandham - institutionalized form of sexual union between men of a higher caste and women of a lower one.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February. 105 241

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves. 105 427 [423] [104]

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them. [104] [243] [466] [464]

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants [104]

amsham---a local area; a small county
anandravan---the eldest male member of the taravad is called Karanavan. All male members who are junior to him are called anandravan.
kaniyan--astrologer
karakkars--villagers
karanavan--senior male of the women's taravad
kāvadi--food offerings (milk or fish)
kulams--exogamous subdivisions of the castes
kuttams--Nayar assemblies (political)
mach champikkar--the masters of ceremonies at a Nayar Tali-kettu (in Travancore)
manavalan (pillai)--bridegroom
mantrams--magical verses
mattu (change)--a rite or service performed following childbirth for purification purposes (by members of the mannan castes for Nayars).
nambudri--chief priests (Brahman)
sambandham--an alliance between a man and woman by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to do so as man and wife.

104

sanchayanam--the disposal of the cremated remains of a dead person on the 14th day after the initial funeral

sēshakriya--offerings made to the spirit of a dead person

stānis--chieftains of the Nad

tarwād (taravād)--a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor

vitu--a Nayar house (including grounds)

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P. 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

105 In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
184 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
[133] absent from the village in military training or wa[illegible] Women remained on their ancestral
[595] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[114] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of
[212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also
[871] very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is
[212] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography.
● 105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala
564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or
[463] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With
[565] them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

of the Brahmins. There are something like sixty four subdivisions of these people, from those ranking highest, in north Malabar, to the non-military, low caste ones of the south and of the Palghat taluk. Because of their very close relation to the Nambudri Brahmins which I shall describe below in detail, it can hardly be said that the Nayars are equal in caste to Sudras elsewhere in India. This is no doubt the reason for which, not only is their true position in the Hindu caste scale generally overlooked, but also why they themselves have a proud and self-assured bearing quite unlike that of the fourth and lowest caste in other parts of the country. 105 564

With the Nayars, the end of the list of caste Hindus is reached. Below come the *outcastes* who, despite their condition, are also graded in accordance with rank. First of these are the Tiyas. These bear different names in the various parts of Kerala, but there seems to be general agreement that they are really all one and the same people. Thus the name Tiya seems reserved for them in north Malabar with the exception perhaps of former north Cochin (Thiyyas); in Palghat, they are known as Iruvans, in south Malabar as Thandans and some as Irava-Panikkars; in south Cochin and north Travancore as Chovans, while in the rest of Travancore they go by the generic name of Iravas (sometimes spelt Izhuvas).

Next are the artisans or Kammalans of which there are properly only four main subdivisions. Their associates, also artisans and craftsmen, are roughly grouped into fourteen different communities. [463]

The Kammalans are followed by another category composed of farm-hands, the Cherumas and Pulayas, and a dozen or so different kinds of aboriginals, jungle and hill folk who are rarely encountered on the coast or in the cultivated area, and have to be sought for in the foothills and jungles of the Western Ghats. [563]

Non-Hindu inhabitants of Kerala include Moslems and Christians, of whom the greater number belong to the first of these two religious communities. They are both known locally as Mappillas, the first as Jonaka Mappillas and the others as Nasrani Mappillas. It is from this name, meaning "mother's son" or "bridegroom" or again "great child", that the more familiar *Mopla* for the Kerala Mohammedans has been coined. All are of the Sunni persuasion, while the Christians belong to a great number of varied denominations; some of them are Roman Catholic (the majority), others "Romo-Syrian" (Uniat), Orthodox Syrian, Malankara Syrian, Assyro-Chaldean (Nestorian), Mar Thomas, and of the Protestant United Church of south India. 105 563 795

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 563 [795] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [784] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [784] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [765] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 564 581 428 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam* property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger sons.

105 564 611 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the [428] case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [492] [115] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 564 [58] Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 564 588 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible. 105 564 588

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish. 105 564 588 428 [648] [614]

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union. 105 588

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an [183] unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February. 105 241

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves. 105 427 [423] [104]

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them. [104] [243] [466] [464]

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants [104]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and [423] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as [869] to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state.
564 Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[829] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[893] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[963] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[964] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aboriginals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
954 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

1: Gough, E. Kathleen. The Traditional Kinship System of the Nayars of Malabar. Prepared for the Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Kinship, Harvard University, 1954.

Pp. 103; 1 chart; 2 maps. [HRAF MS: has 105 pp.]

Loan copy from G. P. Murdock

[The author, an anthropologist, draws on original field data and on published literature to present this historical-functional analysis of Nayar kinship structure. A brief survey of the history of the Malabar coast reveals that there have traditionally been three major political areas, a different kinship system having been associated with each. The author sets out to discuss the traditional and modern political structure and the Nayar kinship system of the Central area of South Malabar and Cochin. She shows how the area is differentiated into sub-castes, each having separate administrative functions, and each having its kinship system, influenced by occupation, relationship to the land, and historical traditions. There follows a detailed analysis of the traditional economic system, political administration, and the lineage system. The fullest discussion, however, is of the traditional kinship system. Gough presents evidence of a coming about of a modern bilateral system. A concluding section deals

1: Gough, E. Kathleen.

with the structure of royal lineages. The HRAF manuscript is a typed copy of a mimeographed original. Original page numbers appear in brackets in the text. Map I from the original has not been reproduced. --Analyst]

Field date: none
Analyst: R. H. Ewald

Evaluation: Ethnologist--4, 5
Processed in 1956

2: Gough, Kathleen. Nayar: Central Kerala. In, David M. Schneider and Kathleen Gough, eds., Matrilineal Kinship, pp. 298-384, 742-746. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961.

Bibliography.

Yale: Nkc90 961S. DLC: GN480.4. S37 1961. DLC card no.: 61-7523.

/In this article on the Nayar caste of Central Kerala, the author, a professional anthropologist, presents a clear concise analysis of kinship and matrilineal descent, coupled with a lucid account of Nayar political structure. After a brief introduction dealing with the ecology and cultural history of the area, a discussion is presented on the various caste groups of Central Kerala, its economic system, warfare and law, Nayar clan organization, lineages and property groups, interpersonal kinship relations (e.g., woman-son, father-daughter), marriage, prerequisites of the kinship system of commoners, kinship in the aristocratic matrilineal castes, a list of kinship terms, and modern changes brought about in the social organization of the Nayars. Primary emphasis in the source is on a description of the lineage system and its function in the society, rather than on the theoretical basis of its existence./

Field date: 1947-1949 Evaluation: Ethnologist-4, 5
Analyst: John Beierle Processed in 1964-1968

3: Gough, Kathleen. Nayar: North Kerala. In, David M. Schneider and Kathleen Gough, eds., Matrilineal Kinship, pp. 385-404, 746-748. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1961.

Bibliography.

Yale: Nkc90 961S. DLC: GN480.4.S37 1961. DLC card no.: 61-7523.

/The material contained in this source is basically similar in general format and content to that appearing in 2: Gough, this file, except that here the emphasis is on the Nayar caste of North Kerala rather than of those living in the Central Kerala area discussed previously. The author, a professional anthropologist, begins this paper with a sketch of Kerala ecology and geography, discusses briefly the economic and political systems of North Kerala, and then proceeds to an intensive study of Nayar matrilineal units--clans, subclans, lineages and property groups. This in turn is followed by a comparative study of recent developments and changes in the social organization and property systems between North and Central Kerala. The paper concludes with an examination of various kinship relations among the Nayar, specifically in regard to matrilineal kin, marriage, the father and his kin, and affines. A list of kinship terms completes this section./

Field date: 1947-1949
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-4, 5
Processed in 1964-1968

4: Gough, E. Kathleen. Cults of the Dead among the Nayars. Journal of American Folklore, Vol. 71, pp. 446-478. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1958.

Yale: Nkg10 J82 71.

/The author presents here a socio-psychological analysis of Nayar cults of the dead in terms of their role structure and social function in relation to the economic and legal institutions of the people, and "...the emotional content of the cult to that of certain relationships among the living." A complete study of the two cults is then presented, the first being that of the lineage ghosts, and the second the cult of alien ghosts (i.e. related to the death of individuals prematurely or by violence). The author summarizes her data on the lineage ghost cult by saying that it served indirectly to maintain correct relationships within the taravad, for "...a karanavan who respected and correctly propitiated his own forbears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders." Secondly, the lineage ghosts" ...provided some sanctions against a karanavan's ill treatment of his wards." Thirdly, the cult offers one explanation for the occurrence of misfortunes in the society, and indicates the means by which they may be allayed. Since the taravad's collective responsibility for its misfortunes makes the ghost a common threat to all members, the cult thus has the tendency to unite its members.

4: Gough, E. Kathleen.

In regard to the cult of the alien ghosts, the author believes that it serves the function of handling the aggression which arose between castes, and also, whether sorcery was actually practiced or not, the belief that it could be used against him by a member of a lower caste acted as a deterrent to the Nayar authority in his exploitation of these castes. Thus, through sorcery and witchcraft, the alien ghosts were able to prevent injustice. Finally, this cult helped to maintain unity among the various castes by directing their hostilities away from one another and focusing them on a common enemy--the supernatural ghosts.

The work concludes with a discussion of the various modern changes taking place in the cults of the dead.

Footnotes appearing in the text will be found in categories 113 and 116, pp. 477-478./

Field date: 1947-1949, 1952
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1966-1968

5: Mehra, J. D. Snake Worship among the Nayars of South India. Man in India, Vol. 36, pp. 132-139. Ranchi, Bihar, 1956.

Bibliography.

Yale: Nk10 M32 36-37.

/This source presents general information on the beliefs and practices of snake worship among the Nayar people of southern India. The author, a professional anthropologist at the University of Delhi, discusses the distribution of the "snake cult" in India, the general beliefs about snakes which have brought about a deification of these reptiles, and the concomitant establishment of shrines, temples and sacred groves as places of worship. Ceremonies of worship, both on the community level and within the household, are described in this source, with special emphasis on three important ones in connection with serpent worship, these being the sarpa yaga, the sarpa tulal, and the sarpa preeti./

Field date: no date
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1966

6: Fawcett, F. Nayars of Malabar. Madras Government Museum, Bulletin, Vol. 3, No. 3. Madras: Government Press, 1915.

Pp. vi /HRAF pagination/, 185-323; 11 plates (VII-XVII); 2 appendices; bibliography.

Yale: AOS D312 v.3[3].

/The author of this work, former Superintendent of the Government Railway Police in Madras, compiled this book from his experiences in Kerala over a period of time of three and a half years spent in Malabar. The first part is composed of anthropometric measurements and physical descriptions of various Nayar castes--Kiriattil, Urali, Vattakkad, Sudra, Nambiar, Purattu Charna, Akattu Charna, and Kurup--and of the various similarities and differences between these groups. The remainder of the work is devoted to a study of various aspects of Nayar ethnography, such as marriage, birth, post-natal ceremonies and events, death, religion, serpent worship, religious festivals (Onam, Vishu and Thiruvathira), games, house types, astrology, magic and witchcraft, supernatural beings, and related protective magic, and finally a description of several famous Malabar magicians./

Field date: ca. 1900

Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Government Official-5

Processed in 1964

7: Gough, E. Kathleen. Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 85, pp. 45-80. London, 1955.

1 chart; bibliography.

Yale: Nk10 4R81 83-85.

/This paper presents a lengthy discussion of the similarities and differences of the Tali-rite (a form of "ritual" marriage for the pre-pubescent girl), between four ethnic groups in Kerala each with a different form of kinship system, these groups being "...the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin." The author summarizes her findings of the above in a chart at the end of the source (chart 1, p. 79). After the author has completed her examination of the Tali-rite as practiced by the four groups noted above, she attempts to interpret the rite from the standpoint of psychoanalytic theory, in particular, in light of Ernest Jones's theory that "...the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form." The remainder of the source, part 5, is devoted to an analysis of the data in terms of these psychoanalytic constructs./

Field date: 1947-1949
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1966

8: Panikkar, K. M. Some Aspects of Nayar Life. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 48, pp. 254-293. London, 1918.

Yale: Nk10 R81 v.48.

/This source consists of a series of notes on various aspects of Nayar ethnography which the author believes had not been sufficiently dealt with up to that time by other authors writing on the Nayars. These notes provide information on village organization, family life, marriage customs, birth and funeral ceremonies, religion and magic, and material culture. The source concludes with a few additional notes on the origin of the word "Nayar," and a critique of Rivers's theory on the comparable origin of the Todas and Nayars, and on McLennan's theory of Nayar polyandry. Of particular interest in this source is the author's strong denial, on the basis of any clear evidence, that polyandry was ever practiced by the Nayars at all (see cat. 116, pp. 271-272, 293)/.

Field dates: no date
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Indigene-4, 5
Processed in 1966-1968

9: Iyer, L. K. Anantha Krishna. The Sudras of Cochin. In, his, The Cochin Tribes and Castes, Vol. 2, pp. 1-102. Madras, London: Published in Madras for the Government of Cochin by Higginbotham and Co., in London by Luzac and Co., 1912.

Library of Congress: DS485.C64A5. DLC card no.: 12-16168.

/This source consists of a general ethnography and culture history of a people whom the author terms the high caste Sudras or Nayars, recorded during the first decade of the twentieth century. Data contained in this source pertain to: historical information on the military organization and warfare of the Nayars, house type and construction, caste subdivisions, personal names and titles, marriage customs, puberty customs (for the girl), polygamy, childbirth, naming ceremonies, the Nayar tarawád, administration of justice, feudalism, village organization, districts, games, dramatic performances, religious and agricultural festivals, religion, funeral customs, caste occupations, food, clothing, and personal ornamentation. Of particular interest is the author's information on Nayar serpent cults and demon worship.

The author was at one time Superintendent of Ethnography for the State of Cochin.

Bibliographical references appear at the bottom of various pages scattered throughout the text./

Field date: ca. 1902-1906
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologist-4, 5
Processed in 1964-1968

10: Nakane, Chie. The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System. International Journal of Comparative Sociology, Vol. 3, pp. 17-28. Leiden, the Netherlands: Published for the Department of Social Anthropology, Karnatak University, Dharwar, India by E. J. Brill, 1962.

Yale: Nm10 In91 3.

/This brief paper, one of the results of the author's field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955-1956), is a study of the disintegration of the traditional Nayar tarawad, and in particular that of the tarawad of Marayil, in Ernakium, Cochin. The disintegrative processes discussed in the text are all related to the break-down of five essential elements in the composition of the tarawad which originally maintained its functional stability. These elements are: (1) exclusive membership in a matrilineal lineage, (2) co-residence in a domestic unit, (3) membership in a property owning group, (4) recognition of the karanavan as head of the above units, and (5) participation by the entire group as a ceremonial unit. The author then proceeds to show how socio-cultural changes have brought about the breakdown of the above elements in the tarawad of Marayil.

The author, a professional anthropologist at the University of Tokyo, was aided in her field research by a grant from the Elin Wagner Foundation of Sweden./

Field date: 1955-1956 Evaluation: Ethnologist-5

Analyst: John Beierle Processed in 1966-1968

11: India. National Council of Applied Economic Research. Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala. New Delhi: National Council of Applied Economic Research, 1962.

Pp. xv, 367; 69 tables; 2 charts; 15 maps; 12 appendices; index.

Yale: Nc96 I413 962N.

/Only pp. i-xv, 1-138, 206-215, 270-279, 283-285, 310-312, 329-333 and frontispiece have been processed for the AW11 Kerala file./

/This survey of Kerala, one of several on various Indian states, was undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research at the request of the state government of Kerala. The survey attempts "...to assess the technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade." The source describes in detail the present economic situation in Kerala in relation to agriculture, animal husbandry, forestry, fisheries, mineral deposits, sources of power for industry, transportation, and manpower and employment. Speculations and hypotheses are then presented concerning the manner in which these various economic pursuits could be more fully developed, as for example through government and private investment, technological improvements, etc. Much incidental ethnographic information is also to be found on such things as lumbering, fishing methods and equipment, port facilities, mining and quarrying operations, agricultural crops and methods of cultivation, state and personal incomes, soil types, and topography./

Field date: 1960-1961
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Government Officials-4, 5
Processed in 1964-1968

12: Peter, Prince of Greece and Denmark. A Study of Polyandry. The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1963.

Pp. 601; introduction; 44 plates; 4 figures; 2 sketches; 6 maps; 48 tables; 2 appendices; bibliography.

Personal copy of C. S. Ford.

Only pp. 159-239, 575-601 and accompanying plates (fig. 5-17), map ii, tables 3-20 have been processed for this file.

[This source is Chapter 2 of a comprehensive study of polyandry and deals with the polyandry of the Thandans (Tiyas), Kammalans, and other artisan castes of Kerala. Although some background information is given, the bulk of the material describes individual polyandrous households and gives genealogical charts for each. Field work was conducted briefly in 1939 and for approximately four months in 1949.
The two appendices give information on the extent and nature of experience in the field and on the author's informants.]

Field date: 1939, 1949
Analyst: Joan Steffens

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1965

13: Thurston, Edgar and K. Rangachari. Nayar. In, Castes and Tribes of Southern India, Vol. 5, pp. 283-413. Madras: Government Press, 1909.

Yale: Nkd72 I3 909t v.5.

/This source, appearing under the heading "Nayar" in this encyclopedic inventory of the various tribes and castes of Southern India, presents a general ethnographic survey of an important Kerala caste. Much of the data contained in this source, however, were obtained from the works of other authors, particularly in regard to historical and ceremonial observations. Primary emphasis is on the Nayar as a caste of the Kerala, their relationship to other caste groups, Nayar cultural history, marriage customs, various religious ceremonials and rituals, pregnancy customs, and childhood naming ceremonies. Kinship structure and social organization are barely discussed, and although the authors do discuss the territorial organization of the Nayars, their treatment of the subject is confusing. Scattered bibliographical references will be found at the bottom of various text pages./

Field date: no date
Analyst: John Beierle

Evaluation: Ethnologists-4, 5
Processed in 1964-1968

Gough, E. Kathleen. Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change among the Nayars of Malabar. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, vol. 82, pp. 71-88. London, 1952.

1 map

Yale: Nk10 ~~+~~R81 81-82

[This source was not processed for the Kerala file because the same material is covered in other works by Gough which have been processed for the file.--Analyst]

Gough, E. Kathleen. A Comparison of Incest Prohibitions and the Rules of Exogamy in Three Matrilineal Groups of the Malabar Coast. International Archives of Ethnography, vol. 46, pp. 82-105. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1952.

Yale: Nk10 +In86 46

[This source has not been processed for the Kerala file because the Nayar material has already been covered in other sources by Gough in the Kerala file. However, there is, in addition, some kinship data on the Muslims (Mappillas) of North Malabar district in the source. --Analyst]

Gough, E. Kathleen. The Nayars and the Definition of Marriage. The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 89, pp. 23-34. London, 1959.

Yale: Nk10 ✝R 81 88-89.

[This source has not been processed for the AW11 Kerala file because the essential materials contained in this paper are to be found in other sources by the author already incorporated into this file. It should be noted, however, that this source does contain data on Nayar marriage in Central Kerala, and a discussion by the author of the definition of marriage in general and of Nayar marriage in particular.]

Mateer, S. On Social Reforms amongst the Nayars of Malabar. Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay, vol. 2, pp. 317-320. Bombay, 1891.

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[This brief source by a missionary details some of the Nayar marriage and property practices, along with some indications for reform. Since this material is included in the volume by Thurston, this source has not been processed for the Kerala file. --Analyst]

Moore, Lewis. Malabar Law and Custom. 3rd edition. Madras: Higginbotham & Co., 1905.

Pp. xiv, 444

Library of Congress: Law Gt. Britain - India - Madras - Malabar 7 "Moore"

[This volume is a collection and analysis of court cases in the district courts of Malabar by a judge of the High Court of Judicature at Madras. While it contains some material on the Nayar, it is only incidental to a discussion of Malabar law and custom in general. Therefore, this source has not been processed. --Analyst]

Rao, M.S.A. Social Change in Malabar. Bombay: The Popular Book Depot, 1957.

Pp. viii, 229; 1 map

Yale: Nn96 I3 957R

[Although this volume contains some data on the Nayar, the general treatment covers all the tribes and castes in the Malabar region as a whole and thus is of limited usefulness to the Kerala (Nayar) file. Therefore, this source has not been processed. --Analyst]

[For an index of authors and works cited, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 822-827.]

[For full bibliographical references see category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India, entire source and bibliographical notes at the end of each chapter.]

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[For a regional division of the Indian sub-continent see Chapter XIII, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

[For a description and discussion of the structure and relief of the entire Indian sub-continent, see 6: Spate, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 3-36.]

[For general information on the distribution of various types of flora and its relation to climate and soil, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 63-92.]

128, 113

[For information pertaining to literary devices and conventions, abbreviations and explanations of numerations used by the author, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. xxi-xxiii, and xxv.]

231, 113 Kerala AW11

[For a general discussion of animal husbandry in India, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 228-231.]

104, 113 Kerala AW11

[For definitions and explanations of native terms see Index, category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India, pp. 789-821.]

132, 113 Kerala AW11

[For a description of climate regions of the Indian sub-continent and its general effects on agriculture and health, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 40-62.]

134, 113 Kerala AW11

[For general information on the distribution of soil types in India see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 80-92.]

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601, 113, 59, 58, 611, 428

[For information pertaining to the above categories, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 252-270.]

[Additional information specifically on Cochin and Travancore may be found in 29: Chitra, AW1 India, cat. 116, Section II, pp. 191-198, 235-244; Section V, pp. 142-148, 166-180; Section VI, pp. 13-14, 15, 83-84, 92-93, 100-105.]

113, 311, 651, 652, 623 Kerala AW11

/For data on Forest Panchayats and their finances, see 26: Rao, AW1 India, Tables 21-24, pp. 214-218, category 116.

113, 564 Kerala AW11

[For information on the castes of Kerala see 33: Bhattacharya, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 106-108, 126 and 151-152.]

113, 185, 427 Kerala AW11

[For information on tenancy reform legislation in Travancore-Cochin see 39: Patel, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 345-350.]

113,
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/For a comparison of statistical data and general information regarding employment and unemployment in the state of Kerala vs. India as a whole, see 11: India, AW11 Kerala File, category 116, pp. 206-215./

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food.[101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

113 1921), p. 241.

(11) A. I. Richards, Some Types of Family Structure amongst the Central Bantu, in African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950).

582 (12) Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred to patrilateral, since it harmonizes the conjugal interests of a man and his sister's son, the most rivalrous relationship between men. It is also of course possible with hypergamous unions, whereas patrilateral cross cousins unions are not. In one Cochin village 7.2% of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; 1.6% had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. [103] Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 13.9% of marriages were to the father's nephew, 9.0% to the uncle's son. In Walluvanad division, South Malabar, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11.2% had married the father's nephew, 4.7% the uncle's son (own or classificatory).

613 (13) In Murdock's sense of a matrilineal, matri-
593 local unit with the husbands of the women as permanent residents. However, in a true matriclan adult male members of the matrilineage or matrisib would be living away with their wives whereas in the royal lineages princes lived at home and merely visited their wives nearby. In most naduvari and all lower subcaste lineages, women were visited only occasionally by their Nambudiri lovers who lived in their own households.

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *taravād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *taravād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

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113 G. Roheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (New York, 1950), pp. 134, 135, 432; F. L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (New York, 1948), pp. 240-243; Mead, 1949, pp. 40-41; J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 263-304.

[12] Nāyar *Kāranavans* are of course not ancestors in the strict sense. However, I use this term for convenience as they fulfill roles similar to those of ancestors in many patrilineal societies.

[13] For an account of Īrava social organization and culture, see A. Aiyappan, *Iravas* and *Culture Change*, Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., 5 (1945).

[14] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 158-165.

[15] For a brief account of Tamil Brahman kinship, see E. K. Gough, "Brahman Kinship in a Tamil Village," *American Anthropologist*, XVIII, (1956), 826-853.

[16] See, e.g., Thurston, V (1909), 152-240.

[17] Fortes, 1949, p. 235.

[18] H. E. J. Stanley, trans., Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt, 1886), p. 15.

[19] R. Rowlandson, trans., Sheikh Zein-ud-deen, *Tohfut ul Mujahideen*. An Offering to Warriors Who Shall Fight in Defence of Religion Against Infidels (Hakluyt, 1883), p. 63.

[20] A. C. Burnell, trans., *The Voyage of John Hughyen Van Linschoten to the East Indies* 100 (From the Old English Translation of 1598) (Hakluyt, 1885), p. 284.

[21] All castes on the southwest coast bury or cremate the dead in the southwest corner of the [764] ancestral garden. This custom contrasts with that of Hindus in the eastern districts, who burn or bury the dead on communal sites, each owned jointly by a caste community, outside the residential area of the village.

[566] [22] The castes of agricultural serfs are absent in Kottayam, agricultural labor being done by Īrava tenants or by the Nāyars themselves.

[23] This form of propitiation of alien ghosts in Kottayam is called a *teyyam tira*. It closely resembles the *kāranava tēre* of the neighboring Coorgs (Srinivas, 1952, pp. 158-165.) In Coorg, however, lower caste officiants impersonate the Coorg *taravād's* own ancestors. In Malabar, lower caste propitiants impersonate only alien ghosts attached to the Nāyar *taravād*.

[113] [24] Witchcraft (*odi*), a witch (*odiyan*). For a more detailed account of witchcraft, see Thurston, VI (1909), 36-41, 122-127.

[25] M. Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa* (Manchester, 1954).

[26] Gluckman, *The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies. Social Structure*, M. Fortes, ed. (Oxford, 1949), pp. 145-167.

[114] [27] All of these statements apply to conditions in 1947-9. I observed no major changes in ritual activities during a brief revisit in 1952. The Malabar Coast, as the newly formed State of Kerala, [642] elected a Communist government in April 1957, and I have little information on conditions after that date.

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of particular importance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees. 842 755 782 776 [763]

There is also a class of pious people who have through their devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure. 755 759

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods. 178 771

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past. [778]

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[1] Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 86.

[2] Ibbetson & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113

[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.

[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.

[5] Hodson : *The Meiteis*, 110.

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce." 564 613 588 [586]

If, as has been said, the "pâttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste. [533]

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction [171] [735] [184] [824] [415]

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891). [113]

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796 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate im-
114 portance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 An important local festival is that held near Palghat,
184 in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti
782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the
[346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others
[126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of
[532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver
[326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. 796 788 785 [782]

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock. 796 788

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars 796 184 788

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890). [171] [113]

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787 performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his
796 forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it
[785] against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera.
[465] The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velich-
791 chappâd about three days afterwards going to perform
796 elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

769 Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion
782 must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

[113] * The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

771 mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika reli-
795 gion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to
776 worship Bhaîri dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female. Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

776 The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

789 A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

212 It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books,
789 the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

[113] * From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

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8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

564 the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

175 As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since
564 Marco Polo travelled in Asia.
701 "In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po! po! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

175 Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material
439 which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

127 But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer
114 examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

113 [1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

In this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. [121]

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. [613] [591] [593] [429]

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the [613] [182] [564] [471]

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1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. [114] [122]

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Mairabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part 1, 1952, pp. 82–105. [113]

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
656] the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad*
occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

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133 is the undulating terrain of the midland with laterite soil. This middle region is [24] rich in agricultural produce ; paddy, tapioca, spices and cashewnut being some of the main crops of this area.

Climate and Rainfall

132 1.5 The same diversity which characterizes the physical features of the State, also occurs in case of the climatic conditions. Whereas the highland has a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, the plains are hot and humid. However, the range of variation in temperature is very narrow, the normal limits being 80°–90°F.

1.6 The average level of annual rainfall is quite high being in the neighbourhood of 96 inches. In fact only Konkan and Malabar–South Konkan region with 109 inches and 121 inches surpass Kerala in the annual volume of rainfall. Since Kerala is fortunate in getting precipitation both from the south-west and the north-east monsoons, the rainfall is fairly spread out over the year. January to April are practically the only months which are completely dry. Moreover, annual variations in rainfall are also comparatively low. The co-efficient of mean deviation of annual rainfall is only 6.5 which is lower than that of all the other States, except Assam (Table 1).[1] Draughts are, naturally, rare.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

133 1.7 The influence of geological formation and geographical features on the economic structure and the growth possibilities varies from region to region. However, some of these stand out distinctly in the case of Kerala. The high mountainous wall of the Western Ghats and its close proximity to the sea is responsile for the heavy and regular rainfall which this State receives. The high characteristic rainfall, in turn, is responsible for a number of features of this State. The large number of high value yielding plantation crops and the rich forest growth owe their existence to the rainfall and the suitable climatic conditions found in the Western Ghats. The abundant rainfall has also provided Kerala with a large number of rivers. These are the storehouse of water resources—one of the chief assets of Kerala. There are 44 rivers in addition to a much larger number of small rivulets and streams. Forty-one of these rivers are west flowing and yield a total run off of 2,500 T.M.C. ft.[2] This is as high as 5 per cent of India's total water potential, whereas the total area of Kerala is only about 1.2 per cent of the area of India.

1.8 Since the Western Ghats are in close proximity of the sea coast, most of the rivers are also very short, the average length being only 40 miles. Only four rivers, viz., Beypore, Bharatapuzha, Periyar and Pamba are more than 100 miles in length. Although the rivers are small, they carry sizable flows and these provide the State with rich irrigation potential.

[text continues on p.4]

[1] Table 1 refers to the States as they existed before the reorganization. The conclusions, strictly speaking, refer to only Travancore-Cochin. However, they are broadly true of Kerala as a whole also.

[2] T.M.C. ft.=Thousand Million Cubic Feet.

SOURCE: *Water Resources of Kerala*, PWD, Government of Kerala.

[113] *[Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5A gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3A [see p 272, category 11b -- Analysis]

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Imports and Exports

439 1.53 Reference has already been made to the fact that Kerala is very much of an exchange economy. On the one hand it has to import a substantial part of its foodgrain requirements from the other parts of India. No exact estimates of total import of foodgrains into the State are available. The total amount of rice arriving in Kerala by train was 3.8 lakh tons during 1958 and 4.8 lakh tons during 1959.[1] This does not, however, include imports by roads or by the sea. In addition to foodgrains, almost all the industrial raw materials like coal, alumina, iron and steel, salt, etc., are obtained from the other parts of India.

1.54 On the other hand, Kerala also contributes substantially to India's export trade. As may be seen from Table 6, the total value of goods exported from the ports of Kerala to the other parts of the world is roughly Rs. 55 crores per annum, but the figure has been rising over the last few years. This is quite a substantial amount, being about 10 per cent of the overall foreign exchange earnings of India. Since this State occupies only 1.2 per cent of the total area of India, in relation to its area it may be claimed to be eight to nine times more productive in terms of its foreign exchange earnings than the whole of India.

1.55 The main export commodities of Kerala are listed in Table 6. It will be seen that the three major items which contribute about 75 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings of Kerala are tea, cashewnuts and coir and coir products. Except for fish, prawns and ilmenite, all other exportable commodities originate in the agricultural sector.

439 198 1.56 Whereas exports of most of the commodities have been rising, the trend in the case of coir, pepper and ginger has not been a promising one. Of these three commodities, pepper shows the most serious decline in foreign exchange earnings. In physical quantity the export of pepper has not declined much. It was 3.3 lakh cwts. in 1951-52 and 3.2 lakh cwts. in 1958-59. The decline in foreign exchange earnings from the export of pepper has been due to a drastic fall in the world price of pepper. The crash in prices has, in turn, been primarily due to a large increase in the production of pepper in other competing countries like Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya. Similarly, in case of ginger and coir products no preceptible rise in exports has taken place due to competitive pressure in the foreign markets.

Unemployment

464 1.57 According to the Census of 1951, Kerala had a working force[2] of 4.54 million persons out of a total population of 15 million, giving a participation ratio (i.e., working force divided by total population) of 33.5 per cent. Since a participation rate of the order of 33.5 per cent is one of the lowest in the whole of India, it gives a fair indication of the very high degree of unemployment prevalent in Kerala. A low participation rate reflects the lack of adequate opportunities for gainful employment. These conclusions are borne out by the results of an unemployment

[113] [1] *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959: Government of Kerala.

[2] Working Force is equal to the sum of earning dependents and self-supporting persons. For a detailed note see Appendix 3.

3 [see p. 273, category 116 -- Analyst]

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [435] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

23/ 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

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*433 235 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] [164] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 231 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 231 234 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs. (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter [269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1958.

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*433 246 3.25 The supply of succulent green fodder throughout the year also needs to be improved. The farmers should be induced to grow leguminous and perennial fodders like elephant and napier grass in the field corners or on waste lands. Distribution of seeds and cuttings to the farmers and demonstration of fodder cultivation on the fields of cultivators would go a long way in improving the production of green fodder. Municipalities and panchayats may also organize fodder farms for utilizing sewage and city compost.

*433 234 3.26 The development measures and aids proposed here, when implemented, would increase the output of animal husbandry products. Proper feeding of cattle and buffaloes can bring about an immediate increase of about 50 per cent in the production of milk.[1] Egg production may increase by over 100 per cent of the present output. Similar increases may be expected in other items too. This would give rise to the problem of suitable utilization of the additional output. Surprisingly enough, even the existing production is not being suitably utilized. For instance, even though milk output in the State is very low and there is an acute scarcity of fluid milk in the urban areas, as much as 41 per cent of the milk is processed into ghee.[2] In a State like Kerala which has a shortage of milk, it would have been more appropriate to consume the maximum possible amount of milk in a fluid state rather than in the form of milk products, since fluid milk is more wholesome and the processing of [442] milk partly destroys its vital nutritional content. This situation is due to lack of purchasing power with the rural people together with absence of facilities to market the milk in the urban areas. Since milk is a highly perishable commodity, the next best course for producers to follow in such a situation is to process it into the comparatively non-perishable ghee. But this is a wasteful process and the profits are also low.

*433 235 442 3.27 It is also gathered that 15 to 25 per cent of the total egg production in the State is wasted by breakage and spoilage due to defective and inadequate marketing facilities. Unless adequate and prompt measures are taken to remove drawbacks in the marketing system, the measures proposed here cannot be expected to yield full benefits and the producers cannot be expected to take a sustained interest in these. The solution to this problem lies in providing at least some of these facilities, the most urgent being the organization of marketing and processing facilities and services for dairy and poultry products.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

*433 234 3.28 Dairy development on scientific lines is a pressing need. This was a neglected field prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan, however, dairy development received some attention. Two schemes for processing 150 maunds of milk per day, one each in Trivandrum and Calicut, were taken up during the Second Plan. Each

[113] [1] *Third Five Year Plan, Draft Outline*, Government of Kerala, 1960.

[2] In 1956 the total production of milk in Kerala was 4,940 thousand maunds, of this 2,332 thousand maunds (47%) were consumed in the fluid state and 2,020 thousand maunds (41%) converted into ghee.

[113] (SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*: Issued by the Economic and Statistical Adviser, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

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MINERAL RESOURCES: SIZE OF DEPOSITS AND EXTRACTION COST

6.5 In the following pages the importance of the mineral resources, the size of the deposits, costs of extraction—and allied factors, as they affect the industrialization programmes for Kerala, are discussed at some length. 128

Ilmenite

6.6 Foremost among the mineral resources of the State are the beach sand deposits in Quilon district which contain large concentrations of heavy minerals like ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite and zircon. Some of the ilmenite is of inferior quality due to leucoxenization, particularly along the Neendakara—Azhiyikkal bar. 317 [438]

6.7 The heavy mineral occurrences are of three types:

(*i*) Back beach sand dunes, which form a wasting asset.
(*ii*) Beach washings, which are renewed seasonally during the monsoons.
(*iii*) Sand bar.

In general, the beach washings have a higher content of ilmenite and other heavy minerals than the dunes and the sand bar. The extent of the variations in this respect may be seen in the table below:

	Beach washing (Per cent)	*Dunes (Per cent)*	*Sand Bar (Per cent)*
Ilmenite	75/78	60/70	40
Other heavy minerals	15/20	10/25	—
Quartz	around 50	10/15	60

6.8 Of these, the dune deposits are rapidly being used up; and as for the washings, it is not possible to predict the quantities that are likely to be available from time to time. The main reliance for ilmenite has, therefore, to be placed on the sand bar, the total reserves from which are estimated at 34.08 million metric tons.[1] Another estimate places the reserves at 50 million tons. In addition, there are a few minor occurrences in the lake deposits, and in the interior of the country beyond 500 feet of the shoreline. 433* 317

6.9 At present, however, nearly half the requirements of raw sand come from the washings and the other half from the dunes. The collection of raw sand is done through contractors who supply the sand to the mineral companies. The dune sand is worked manually with a wooden scraper and the pools are very often not back-filled. Beach washings are merely scraped off the beach wherever they accumulate. The cost of the raw sand from these sources works out to nearly Rs. 8 a ton.[2] [435] [113]

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, Geneva, 1958, p. 106.
[2] *Quartz sand at Palliparam*—pits mouth value Rs. 1.50 a ton.

investment for this will be about Rs. 5 lakhs and additional employment for 350 persons. 433* 317

Graphite

6.40 This mineral occurs in the form of disseminated grains, stringers and thin veins in surface laterites and the crystalline rocks underneath, mainly charnockitic and associated types. While the disseminated grains occur in charnockitic rocks, the worthwhile occurrences appear to be confined to the area of leptynites.[1] 135

6.41 Surface occurrences of graphite are known to occur in Kerala at a number of places, viz., Plachikuzhi, Nellimood, Narical, Ozhupara, Karipur, Perumpallimuzhi and Vellanad in Nedumangad taluk, Puliyarakonam and Chenagalloor in Neyyattinkara taluk and in various other isolated localities in Trivandrum district. The occurrences are being investigated geo-physically using electrical methods without appreciable success. This is probably due to the electrical anomalies being marked by the laterite host rock. Perhaps geo-chemical methods may prove more fruitful. 316

6.42 This mineral was mined in Kerala between 1898 and 1911 by the Morgan Crucible Company, altogether 35,000 tons of material being won. Consequent upon the discovery of graphite in Madagascar, operations ceased in Kerala. The most productive mine was at Vellanad. Recently operations were started at Aukulam on a small scale, but were suspended shortly thereafter. The production has been negligible. The prime need in the near future will be to have a more detailed prospecting on the lines suggested. 433* 316

Iron Ore

6.43 Quartz-magnetite bodies are reported from various localities. In all these cases, the top of these bodies is laterized and often very rich in iron. However, within a few feet the iron content decreases very appreciably. 135

6.44 The Nanminda occurrence (Pookunnu Hill) is probably the largest one. It would be necessary to explore this area in detail, possibly with core drills before any reasonable conclusion can be drawn. The ore body is steep dipping and will have to be won by underground mining, and further, magnetite concentrate obtained. All this would make the prospect very dear when compared to other iron ore occurrences elsewhere in the country being currently exploited. Further, the possibility of establishing a pig iron plant based either on low-shaft furnaces or electrical furnace techniques, is fraught with difficulties because of the non-availability of coke or lignite and fluxing material within the State. 433* 135

Limeshell Deposits

6.45 Even though no important horizon of limestone is found in the State, limeshell is found to occur in the various backwaters and also in the estuaries of some 135

[1] I.C. Chacko: *A Sketch of the Geology of Travancore.*

113

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

135 of the rivers. The best known among these is that of Vembanad lake ; other less important occurrences are in the estuaries of the Kadalundi and Korapuzha rivers, Kozhikode district and Cranganore lake. Only a few of these tracts have been prospected so far. A systematic exploration programme should, therefore, be initiated in all the backwater and estuarine tracts.

317 6.46 The deposits in Vembanad lake were surveyed by the Travancore Cement Company in 1946. There was no layer of limeshell as such, but it occurred amidst sands and clays, the total thickness of the mixed deposits varying from 1-7 feet. Reserves as estimated then were 3 million tons.

6.47 In addition, in the estuary of the Kadalundi river 400,000 to 500,000 tons of limeshell are estimated to be available in an area of 300 acres.[1] About 100,000 tons of material is also likely to be available from the lower reaches of the rivers Pullut and Thathapally which drain into the Cranganore lake.[2]

6.48 These limeshell deposits provide a raw material of very high purity and which is eminently suitable for use in the chemical industry and in the manufacture of white cement.

*433 6.49 The present production is mainly from Kottayam and Alleppey districts, 317 where the Vembanad lake deposits are exploited. Small quantities are also won from the Kadalundi and Korapuzha estuaries. Details of production available for 1959 are given below:

District	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
Alleppey	9,098	76,542
Kottayam	86,509	696,333
Kozhikode	500 to 1,000	N.A.

*433 6.50 Excepting small quantities sent to the adjoining States from Kozhikode dis- 317 trict, the State's output is consumed within the State. The cement company con- sumes 70,000 tons of shells a year for producing 50,000 to 60,000 tons of grey cement. 339 About 26,000 tons a year are used in lime-burning of which 25,000 tons come from the Vembanad lake.

6.51 Other limeshell utilizing industries which are under active consideration are a sand-lime brick factory at Pallathara with a capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and a calcium carbide factory at Chingavanam with a capacity of 10,000 tons a year. Both these would use shells from Vembanad lake and their annual requirements would be 8,500 tons and 10,000 tons respectively.

6.52 The total annual requirement during 1961--66 would thus be 108,500 tons of shells from the Vembanad lake. In view of the fact that the cement factory has been in existence for the last 11 years and has already consumed about a third of the original reserve of 3 million tons, proposals for new limeshell-based industries in the same area introduce problems regarding assured reserves of raw materials and their conservation.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Geological Department*, Government of Kerala, 1958-59, pp. 3-4.
[2] Ibid pp. 3-4.

377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. 435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35[2] presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as 432 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity [439] system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis 377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more [328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[113] [1] *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.

[2] [Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed — Ashalyst]

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504 transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons
505 of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

*433 8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara
504 which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

489 8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expendi-
652 ture between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport–railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

509 8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a
[508] clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[113] [1] For particulars of a detailed assessment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

Chapter 11

Manpower and Employment

PART I: MANPOWER

464 128 ONE OF THE chief problems of Kerala today is the vast unemployed section of its manpower. An appraisal of the analysis of employment prospects, therefore, becomes very important. The extent of urbanization, sex distribution, the size of the labour force, its rate of participation, and occupational distribution—all these are, therefore, studied in detail in what follows.

162 161 *Urbanization*

11.2 Progress in urbanization in Kerala is less as compared to the country as a whole. Of the total population of Kerala, 13.5 per cent live in urban areas against 17.38 per cent for the whole of India according to the Census of 1951. The degree of urbanization has been progressively increasing over the past few decades. This is shown by the table below which gives the relative rates of growth of the urban and rural population during the period 1921–51. As may be seen, urban population has been growing at a faster rate than the rural population.

MEAN DECENNIAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION

(Per Cent)

	1921–30	*1931–40*	*1941–50*
Urban	27.18	23.26	29.38
Rural	22.85	16.53	20.12
TOTAL	23.31	17.27	21.28

N.B.: It may be noted that these figures pertain only to the old Travancore-Cochin State.

[112] SOURCE: *Census of India*, Volume XIII, Travancore-Cochin (Part I, Subsidiary Table).

11.3 During the last decade, that is, 1951–61, urbanization seems to have increased at a somewhat faster rate than in the whole of India. The proportion of population living in urban areas of Kerala grew from 13.05 per cent in 1951 to 15.03 per cent in 1961, whereas in the case of all-India the proportion registered an increase from 17.38 per cent to only 17.84 per cent.[1] In view of the plans for a faster growth of industries,

[1] As pointed out in Chapter 1, too much reliance should not be placed on a comparison of urbanization between 1951 and 1961 since the definition of urban areas during the two Census operations has not been the same.

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464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 128 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 659 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemployment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

162 464 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column 1 of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference betweent labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [87] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter I.

[see p. 311, category 116 -- Analyst]

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Supply of Labour

11.36 In addition to the current back-log of unemployment, the two sources of future labour supply would be : (*i*) growth of population, (*ii*) changes in labour force population ratio. Of these, by far the most important source will be the growth of population. Long run changes in the labour force population ratio are difficult to predict. For the comparatively short period of next 10 years, this ratio may be assumed to remain constant at about 37.9 per cent or so. 464

11.37 A look at the population figures in Kerala over the last few decades shows that this State has witnessed a higher rate of growth of population than India as a whole and that during 1941–51 it was higher (22.82%) than in any other State.[1] There are indications to believe that the rate of growth of population during the coming decade may not be so fast. The following table gives the projections for growth of population[2] and the labour force arising out of it during the period 1956–71. 161 161 464

GROWTH OF POPULATION—PROJECTIONS FOR 1956—71

Year	*Population* (million)	*Increase in Population over the previous five years* (million)	*Increase in the labour force (Labour force population Ratio = 37.9 per cent)* (million)
1956	15.01	..	..
1961	16.68	1.67	.633
1966	18.34	1.66	.629
1971	20.12	1.78	.674
			1.936
	Backlog of unemployment in 1956		.660
			2.596
Less jobs created during the Second Plan			.200*
Additional labour supply during 1961–71			2.396

* *Employment Trends and Prospects*—Planning Commission. Approximate estimates of employment created during the Second Plan may also be derived from investment figures. On this basis we get a smaller figure for employment generated during the Second Plan period. Public sector investment during the Second Plan was about Rs. 75 crores. Adding 50 per cent for private investment the total comes to Rs. 112.5 crores. Assuming that an investment of roughly Rs. 8,000 is required to create an additional job, the number of jobs created during the Second Plan comes to about 1.4 lakhs. [183] [433]

11.38 The above figures may be taken to be only rough approximations, since the projections of population and labour force ratios are based on certain assumptions. However, the magnitude of the problem is well illustrated by the fact that during the coming decade an additional 23.96 lakh jobs will have to be created if something approaching the standards of full employment has to be achieved. This figure is almost 50 per cent of the existing working force. 161 464 433

[1] *1961 Census*—Provisional Population figures.

[2] Based on NCAER population projections. It may be noted that the NCAER projections would have to be slightly modified in the light of the 1961 Census data. However, the extent of difference would not be so large as to make any substantial difference to our calculations.

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TABLE 10

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433

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA
(1950-51[a] AND 1958-59[b])

	Area under crops ('000 acres)		Percentage increase or decrease	Production of crops ('000 tons)		Percentage increase or decrease
	1950-51	1958-59		1950-51	1958-59	
Rice	1,901	1,894	— 0.36	715	939	+ 31.3
Jowar	6	4	— 33.3	3	7	+ 133.3
Ragi	11	12	+ 9.1	5	7	+ 40
Other millets	30	14	— 53.3	3	2	— 33.3
Total cereals	1,948	1,924	— 1.2	726	954	+ 31.4
Tur	7	21	+ 200	1	4	+ 300
Other pulses	23	89	+ 286.9	1	13	+1200
Total pulses	30	110	+ 266.6	2	17	+ 750
Cereals & pulses	1,978	2,034	+ 2.8	728	971	+ 33.3
Sugarcane	2	21	+ 950	4	35	+ 755
Ginger	30	22	— 26.7	10	7	— 30
Chillies	8	8		2	2	
Tobacco		1			..	
Groundnuts	28	33	+ 17.8	14	15	+ 7.1
Sesamum	8	50	+ 525	1	5	+ 400
Total oilseeds	36	83	+ 130.5	15	20	+ 33.3
Cotton	18	21	+ 16.6	6	7	+ 16.6
Tapioca	506	553	+ 11	1,500	1,569	+ 4.6
Total field crops	2,578	2,718	+ 5.4	2,265	2,869	+ 26.6
Black pepper	175	224	+ 29.5	18	24	+ 33.3
Cardamom	63	69	+ 9.5	1	1	
Rubber	132	246	+ 86.3	12,998	22,158	+ 70.4
Tea	92	98	+ 6.5	24,314	39,737	+ 62.0
Coffee	28	41	+ 46.4	2,951	6,961	+ 135.8

[113]

[a] *Agricultural Statistics of Reorganized States (1956)*, Government of India.
[b] Agricultural Department, Kerala.

TABLE 14

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED COFFEE ESTATES ACCORDING TO SIZE AND AREA AS ON THE 31ST JULY 1958

(Area in acres)

District	Below 5 acres		5 to 10		10 to 25		25 to 50		50 to 100		100 to 200		150 to 200		200 to 250		250 and above		Total	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Malabar	9,121	16,187	1,123	4,936	515	4,956	62	2,272	46	2,965	10	1,218	8	1,293	6	1,336	14	5,650	10,505	40,813
Kottayam	3,130	3,596	185	56	58	57	14	343	5	323	1	159	1	150	..		1	703	3,395	5,367
Cochin	5	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	125	3	561	2		1	330	15	1,016
Quilon	147	N.A.	2	N.A.	..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149	30

Source: *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1957-58*, Vol. IV., Coffee Board.

[13]

245
4023
184

II: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

TABLE 17

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT FROM ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN KERALA

23
435

(Rs. lakhs)

Item	*1955-56*	*1956-57*	*1957-58*
Milk consumed as such	531	540	561
Other milk products	593	604	608
Beef	56	58	62
Buffalo flesh	18	19	20
Mutton	93	97	98
Hides and Skins	29	30	31
Bones and Horns	6	7	7
Eggs	84	121	136
Poultry	72	78	84
Dung	321	381	394
Increment in stock	96	113	116
Miscellaneous	4	4	3
GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT	*1903*	*2052*	*2129*

SOURCE: *Regional Income of Kerala* (At current prices) 1955-56 to 1957-58: Government of Kerala (1960). [113]

TABLE 18

LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF KERALA—MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1951 AND 1956

231

Category	*Total*		*Percentage of increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1956 over 1951*
	1951	*1956*	
Cattle	2,151,522	2,510,376	+ 16.7
Buffaloes	444,368	487,653	+ 9.7
Sheep	423,513	97,820	— 76.9
Goats	425,345	955,570	+ 125.7
Horses and Ponies	518	1,690	+ 226.2
Mules	14	2	— 85.7
Donkeys	689	1,415	+ 105.2
Pigs	117,932	113,711	— 3.6
TOTAL LIVESTOCK	*3,561,901*	*4,168,237*	+ *17.1*
Fowls	3,854,319	6,462,799	+ 67.6
Ducks	263,147	322,085	+ 26.2
Others	..	161	..
TOTAL POULTRY	*4,117,466*	*6,785,045*	+ *64.7*

235

SOURCE: *Statistical Outline of Kerala State, 1960.* [113]

[Pp. 280-282 not Processed]

TABLE 20

CATTLE AND BUFFALOES IN KERALA (CATEGORIES) 1956

231

Categories	Cattle (in '000 numbers)	Buffaloes (in '000 numbers)	Total (in '000 numbers)
1. Males over 3 years	620	279	899
(i) Breeding	11	4	15
(ii) Working	571	268	839
(iii) Others	38	7	45
2. Females over 3 years	1002	142	1144
(i) Breeding			
(a) In milk	398	63	461
(b) Dry and not calves	577	65	642
(ii) Working	8	11	19
(iii) Miscellaneous	19	3	22
3. Young stock	914	94	1008
TOTAL	2536	515	3051

SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

[113]

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF VETERINARY INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA STATE (1958-59)

232
634

District	Hospitals	Dispensaries	Stockman's stations	Inspectors' stations
Trivandrum	5	3	..	..
Quilon	5	7	..	..
Alleppey	6	3	..	..
Kottayam	5	4	..	..
Ernakulam	9	12	..	..
Trichur	7	13	4	..
Palghat	5	8	..	8
Kozhikode	2	10	..	..
Cannanore	1	7	..	3
TOTAL	45	69	4	11

SOURCE: Director of Animal Husbandry, Trivandrum.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
West Tibetans AJ4
Toda AW60
Tibet AJ1
[p. 594]

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31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

361 *Preliminary.*—Watakanchery is a Government division, rather than a true village, being marked out merely for convenience of revenue assessment. It stretches from east to west a distance of nearly four miles along the foot of a hill. A water-course which runs from east to west forms the northern boundary; the maximum distance from north to south is nearly a mile and a half. The whole area is 3,692·64 acres (nearly 5½ square miles). It is an area containing a few groups of houses intersected by paddy fields and "parambas," i.e., land on which paddy cultivation is not undertaken.

Watakanchery proper, or the town of Watakanchery, as it is called in the village accounts, is at the easternmost boundary of the Government village area and is the headquarters of the taluk containing all the public offices. Two tracts of land, one inhabited by Mappillas (Muhammadans) and another by Syrian Christians (locally known as Nasranees, i.e., Nazarenes) are included in the "town" of Watakanchery from the contiguous areas of the adjoining Government villages on the north and south respectively. Its area is 1½ square miles.

The Taluk of Talapilli contains 74 such "villages" divided solely for revenue purposes. In the "town" Brahmans live in great numbers, while the lower castes occupy the rest of the village area. This block I shall designate Watakanchery (T) and the whole area Watakanchery (V) in the following.

162 [779] 564 *Population.*—Watakanchery (T) has about 2,000 inhabitants; Watakanchery (V) about 4,000. Watakanchery (T) contains within its limits three religions—Hindus in the centre and Mappillas (Muhammadans) and Christians to the north and south, respectively. Among the Hindus the Brahmans form the majority in the "town," while there are a few "vocational" castes such as barbers, goldsmiths, etc., and a few Nayars. Though the term "castes" is in strictness to be applied to Hindus alone the Mappillas and Christians are regarded as two other castes. The Mappillas and the Christians cannot touch the Hindu caste-people without polluting them, while there are castes within the Hindu fold itself, such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, Cherumas (vide below), Eluvas, etc., who are kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher [113] castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority.

[778] *[In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri Brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

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Kerala AW 11

[For a book review of 12: Peter, see 26: Berreman, AJ1 Tibet, category 116.]

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former king-
doms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and
part of Kurumbranad. The central area compri-
ses the modern South Malabar District and Co-
chin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut,
Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall
differences of custom and social structure were
connected with major political boundaries in the
period of native rule. Though divisible into
separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the
whole of North Malabar District was temporarily
overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and
17th centuries. The central area at one period
or another was all conquered by the Zamorins
and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while
the whole southern area eventually became sub-
ject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these
three major areas, a somewhat different politi-
cal system operated, [10] and in accordance with
this the higher castes, especially the Nayars,
were differently divided into subcastes with sep-
arate administrative functions: each of these
subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced
by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship
because of failure to differentiate between the
three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had
one kinship system, whereas they in fact had
three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [174]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[594] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Nambūdiri Brahm
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahmans

father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[10] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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.113 G. Roheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (New York, 1950), pp. 134, 135, 432; F. L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (New York, 1948), pp. 240-243; Mead, 1949, pp. 40-41; J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 263-304.

[12] Nāyar *Kāranavans* are of course not ancestors in the strict sense. However, I use this term for convenience as they fulfill roles similar to those of ancestors in many patrilineal societies.

[13] For an account of Īrava social organization and culture, see A. Aiyappan, *Iravas and Culture Change*, Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., 5 (1945).

[14] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 158-165.

[15] For a brief account of Tamil Brahman kinship, see E. K. Gough, "Brahman Kinship in a Tamil Village," *American Anthropologist*, XVIII, (1956), 826-853.

[16] See, e.g., Thurston, V (1909), 152-240.

[17] Fortes, 1949, p. 235.

[18] H. E. J. Stanley, trans., Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt, 1886), p. 15.

[19] R. Rowlandson, trans., Sheikh Zein-ud-deen, *Tohfut ul Mujahideen*. An Offering to Warriors Who Shall Fight in Defence of Religion Against Infidels (Hakluyt, 1883), p. 63.

[20] A. C. Burnell, trans., *The Voyage of John Hughyen Van Linschoten to the East Indies* (From the Old English Translation of 1598) (Hakluyt, 1885), p. 284.

[764] [21] All castes on the southwest coast bury or cremate the dead in the southwest corner of the ancestral garden. This custom contrasts with that of Hindus in the eastern districts, who burn or bury the dead on communal sites, each owned jointly by a caste community, outside the residential area of the village.

[566] [22] The castes of agricultural serfs are absent in Kottayam, agricultural labor being done by Īrava tenants or by the Nāyars themselves.

[23] This form of propitiation of alien ghosts in Kottayam is called a *teyyam tira*. It closely resembles the *kāranava tēre* of the neighboring Coorgs (Srinivas, 1952, pp. 158-165.) In Coorg, however, lower caste officiants impersonate the Coorg *taravād's* own ancestors. In Malabar, lower caste propitiants impersonate only alien ghosts attached to the Nāyar *taravād*.

[24] Witchcraft (*odi*), a witch (*odiyan*). For a more detailed account of witchcraft, see Thurston, VI (1909), 36-41, 122-127.

[113] [25] M. Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa* (Manchester, 1954).

[26] Gluckman, *The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies. Social Structure*, M. Fortes, ed. (Oxford, 1949), pp. 145-167.

[114] [27] All of these statements apply to conditions in 1947-9. I observed no major changes in ritual activities during a brief revisit in 1952. The Malabar Coast, as the newly formed State of Kerala, [642] elected a Communist government in April 1957, and I have little information on conditions after that date.

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SNAKE WORSHIP AMONG THE NAYARS OF SOUTH INDIA

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NO species of animal has impressed mankind to the same extent as the snake apparently has. Startling indeed is its power of sudden appearance and disappearance; and its gliding motion, without appendages, gives it an eerie quality. The lightning suddenness of its bite and the tragic consequences, coupled with its amazing swiftness, place the snake in a category of its own. Above all its habit of casting off its skin periodically endows it with a supposed immortality which becomes the cause of its extreme veneration. Snake worship is very widespread in the world and is attended by varying rites and ceremonies. In India, where many species of snakes abound, the cult is very widespread. Perhaps due to the variety of species and the consequent danger and damage involved, snake worship in India may have had a local origin, though J. Tod traces its origin to a Central Asian tribe called Tak.[1]

[114]

It is significant that in the very rude and low cultures, among tribes like the Veddahs and Andamanese, and to some extent among the Australians, snake worship is not found. The Australians do have totemic clans named after snakes, but no special veneration is paid to snakes as such. In West Africa, on the other hand, among the Dahomey tribe the monster python Dahu Sio is worshipped as a great god, and is propitiated for favourable weather, for oracles and for wealth. Even in the Palaeolithic period snakes were held in esteem, judging from the carved snake figures on the batons de commandment, and also during Mesolithic period as evinced by snake paintings on the painted pebbles of Mas-d-Azil.

E. W. Hopkins observes that in the Vedic Age snake worship was widely prevalent in India, and references are made

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PREFATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of those who have not seen the first article of this series of notes on some of the people of Malabar, I wish to repeat that it is an "attempt to describe the people as they actually are, and not as they are supposed to be in the books on Hinduism, which, for the most part, tell us of *Hinduism as it is not* in Southern India. Books have not been consulted or used anywhere, except where the fact has been notified." It is a product of original work during three years and a half spent in Malabar. My thanks are offered to the many gentlemen, natives of Malabar, who have in the kindest manner helped me—Mr. M. Krishnan (Malayalam Translator to Government), Messrs. O. Vasava Menon, C. P. Raman Menon, U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, M. Raman Menon, T. K. Gopal Panniker, T. Kannan, Achutan Nâyar, and many others. Also I have to thank Mr. Badcock of Tellicherry for assistance. The proofs have been through the hands of several Nâyars, and every precaution has been taken to ensure accuracy of facts.

[1901.] F. FAWCETT.

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The Sûdra clan, one of the best, supplies the women servants in the Nambûtiris' houses. 564* [357]

We will now pass to a consideration of the physical measures of some of the clans—men, not women unfortunately. It was impossible to measure the women. 141 564* [114]

Here are given the averages of the various measures of 186 Nâyars—

25 Kiriattil.	25 Vattakkâd.
25 Úrâli.	25 Purattu Chârna.
8 Kurup.	25 Akattu Chârna.
22 Nambiyâr.	25 Sûdra.

Note.—Group A, a non-descript group of a few individuals of eight different clans (see "Nambûtiris"—Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, page 10) is not included here for obvious reasons.

Each index given is the mean of the indices—

	Average of 186 Nâyars.
Stature	165·6
Height, sitting	84·9
Do. kneeling	122·4
Span	175·1
Chest	80·6
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·5
Do. width	8·3
Left middle finger	11·0
Hips	26·0
Left foot, length	25·4
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·2
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	73·1
Bigoniac	10·4
Bizygomatic	13·1
Maxillo-zygomatic index	80·1
Nasal height	4·8
Do. width	3·6
Do. index	76·8
Vertex to tragus	13·1
Do. to chin	19·7
Middle finger to patella	10·1

The physical characteristics of each clan separately will be given first. This table will enable us to see at a glance how the measures of any particular clan differ

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KURUP NÂYARS.

*141 *564 [114] The number examined, 8, is not, of course, enough on which to base dependable averages. The men of this clan are—judging by the average such as it is—the tallest of all those examined. Tall, straight, well-bred looking men they are, carrying with them an air of independence and self-respect as one of the old fighting clans. It will be observed that the cephalic length is greater than the average for all the Nâyars, while the cephalic index is less, showing that they are longer headed, and more dolichocephalic than the average Nâyar. Again, the measure of vertex to chin is much greater than in any other clan; and their faces are narrower. The index $\frac{\text{Bizygomatic} \times 100}{\text{Vertex to chin}}$ gives the Nambûtiri one of 69.5, all the Nâyars excluding the Kurups 66.2, and the Kurups 64.5.

[551] The men are called by their clan name, Râma Kurup, Krishna Kurup, Gôvinda Kurup. The name Rama seems to be a favourite one, as four out of eight were so called.

Ages ranging between 20 and 72 *.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 8.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·9	163·4	167·1	...
Height, sitting	88·8	82·9	85·7	51·3
Do. kneeling	130·3	120·2	124·1	74·3
Span	184·8	173·0	178·6	106·8
Chest	89·4	78·3	82·4	49·3
Shoulders	42·2	38·8	40·4	24·2
Left cubit	51·0	45·1	47·5	28·4
Left hand length	20·8	18·2	19·3	11·5
Do. width	8·8	7·7	8·2	..
Left middle finger	12·3	10·9	11·5	6·9
Hips	28·4	24·5	26·4	15·2
Left foot length	28·0	24·9	26·4	15·2
Do. width	9·5	8·0	8·8	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·9	19·5	11·7
Do. width	14·6	13·4	14·0	...
Do. index	74·6	68·9	72·0	..
Bigoniac	10·9	9·6	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	83·5	76·7	79·6	...
Nasal length	5·3	4·4	4·8	2·87
Do. width	3·9	3·4	3·7	...
Do. index	84·1	64·2	76·2	...
Vertex to tragus	14·3	12·3	13·2	7·9
Do. to chin	21·8	19·0	23·3	12·1
Middle finger to patella	13·0	3·6	9·2	5·51

[787] * The man who said he was by his horoscope 72 was put down by me as looking 58.

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 554 083 541

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564

There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 171

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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796 114 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate importance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 184 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti 782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] [346] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others [126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of [532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver [326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

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CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635 published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [762] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his [574] nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, (78 that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end 527 of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar [114] Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mahâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the schoolmaster. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2½ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953[*]

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

588 564 121 611 591

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tāliketukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

121 588 [175]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

[127] [114]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

[*][Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chōvans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[101]

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[114]

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

[122]

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [787]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri 588 613 [776] [782] 588

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

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613 Again in all the groups studied the
276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
782 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
787 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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564 the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

175 As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since
564 Marco Polo travelled in Asia.
701 "In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po ! po ! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

175 Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of
439 Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

129 But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer
114 examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

113 [1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampudiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

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why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavan* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammavan* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 58) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, i.e., elder mother, small mother, i.e., younger mother.

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606 as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar.*—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[264] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
613 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent
621 opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions.*—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by
[971] the word *Machana*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife." [1]

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs.

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*.

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time.

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale.

588 to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets
[114] to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent
[613] people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the
[787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the
[791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar*
[301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the
[576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The
[605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (*i.e.*, her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

595 175 the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it 1609 must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. [114] Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, 174 whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes 538 minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to 174 be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking 613 of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the [1087] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few [593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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771 177 abound. The militant Romanism of the Holy Inquisition, and the no less militant Protestantism of the Dutch, had their chance, in turn, for at least a century and a half. Yet, with all the great religions of the world to choose between during the last two thousand years, it is nothing short of marvellous to see the Nāyars, who have, it must be remembered, assimilated a very great deal of the material and intellectual culture of their neighbours, and, more than that, excelled them in literature and music, still maintain with undiminished vigour their spirit-worship, black-magic, and demoniacal ceremonies, and are devoid of almost every element of true religious life.

771 We may be accused of the narrow use of a wide word in the phraseology of Tylor when we deny that the Nāyars have any religion apart from a veneer of Hindu influence. Their beliefs are mainly magical. Here, of course, I am treading on very dangerous ground, dangerous even to the initiated, but fatal to the novice. In this essay I have taken the distinction between religion and magic as being primarily a question of method rather than of intention or possible effect. The 771 orthodox French opinion that the difference between magic and religion is that 114 the latter is social while the former is anti-social, has been proved by Mr. E. S. Hartland and Dr. Marett to be wholly untenable; while the contention of Dr. Marett himself[1] is that the difference between magic and religion lies in the attitude of society towards them.[2]

771 Among the Nāyars there is an implicit distinction between practices to propitiate 782 a god and those with which to bully a spirit. Bullying a spirit for purposes of social 114 benefit I have not considered to be religion, though it is recognised by society as beneficial and therefore according to Dr. Marett should be considered as religious—because it does not possess the emotional and the psychological elements which

[1] *Anthropology*, p. 210 (Home Univ. Series).

[2] Dr. Marett has recently expressed his view thus:—

"The dominant social tradition tolerates in a community only certain practices and the beliefs associated with them. These may be said to constitute the religion of the community. It does not matter whether they embody customs such as sacrifice and prayer which are essential to the civilised man's notion of *his* religion, or whether they involve processes of sympathetic magic, etc., such as have for us become disreputable.

"On the other hand, when resort is had to the supernaturalistic means in order to gain selfish and anti-social ends we may speak of magic." (Class Lecture on Primitive Morals.)

Here Dr. Marett seems to go back to the French view and hold that the difference between magic and religion is that the former is selfish and anti-social while the latter is disinterested and social. The view here submitted is different. It is submitted that primitive society understands the difference between magical and religious customs even when both are essentially social and disinterested. To the primitive mind, the difference between religion and magic lies in the method and procedure of the ceremonies, or, as we shall now call them, the ritual. As method and procedure only reflect the mental state of the performer and the society to the benefit of which these ceremonies are performed, this difference is essentially psychological. This position is better explained by the Nāyar customs and beliefs noted below.

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All those

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Taba negative magic?

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valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyān* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

771 177 [114]

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share. 241

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture. 242 245 [177]

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves. 245 471 [36]

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the market. 241 [438] [432]

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "G" to "Y" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 699–70.

114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastadanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Penninu Putava Kotuththennullathumunnikkittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaictam.*"

This "essential feature," therefore, is most certainly a development of the
[195] later half of the eighteenth century. It is, as a matter of fact, only within the last fifty years that cloth-giving as a synonym for marriage has come to be used widely, and even now it is used mostly by the ultra-refined, who consider it improper to utter the name of marriage in company. Therefore, to say that the Todas emigrated from the Malabar coast because of similarity in custom which, among the Nāyars at least, is a very late development, does not carry conviction.

114 Again, Dr. Rivers sees a "possible link" between Malabar and the Todas in
192 the word *Pul-pali*[2] of the Todas and the ceremony of *Puli Kudi* of the Nāyars.
171 Because of the similarity in these words, Dr. Rivers has suggested[3] "the name
174 *Pulipal* may mean tamarind dairy and be a survival of community between the Toda ceremony and that of Malabar." This is a supreme example of the danger of drawing conclusions from questionable etymological premises. Now *Puli* is a well-known Dravidian word which means both the tamarind tree and the sour taste. It is also used as a verb, in which case it means to make anything sour. Now *pul-pali* does not mean tamarind dairy, but the dairy of sour milk. How this could be a link "between Malabar and the Todas" it is utterly impossible for me to see.

114 Dr. Rivers has enumerated a number of points in which he sees "a close resemblance between the customs of the peoples of Malabar and the customs of the Todas." But I would submit that all his points in which any similarity could be seen are Dravidian customs belonging not only to the peoples of Malabar but to the rest of the non-Aryan peoples of South India. Therefore the arguments Dr. Rivers has brought forward prove only that the Todas are a Dravidian people. They do not prove that there was any connection, other than that of neighbours, between the Nāyars and the Todas.

[1] Except the last, which means cloth-cutting.
[2] Pp. 701–2.
[3] P. 702.

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Note 3.—McLennan and the Nāyar Type of Polyandry.

McLennan, in his well-known book, *Studies in Ancient History*, divides polyandry into two classes, and calls one the Nair type and the other the Tibetan type. "It is in the nature of the cases," says he, "that all the possible forms of polyandry must lie between the Nair and Tibetan forms." A good deal of what McLennan says about the Nāyar customs is vitiated by the unsatisfactory character of the information at his disposal. Buchanan, on whom he chiefly depends, made a journey through Malabar, and his account is wholly untrustworthy. The loose character of the sexual tie and the licentious habits of the richer Nampudiri landlords, as far as their immediate Nāyar tenants were concerned, were naturally enough interpreted as polyandry by foreign observers. As a matter of fact distinct polyandry of any type was very rare in Malabar except among the Kāniyāns (or the astrological caste) and among them it is of the Tibetan type.

If there existed any tendency towards polyandry among the Nāyars it was not certainly towards what McLennan calls the "Nair type." The wife of a brother is looked upon as a person to whom one could openly though not legitimately pay court; and any favour short of sexual relationship which she confers upon him is allowed by public opinion. A wife, for example, is the only woman who is allowed to smear oil on a man's back; and when a woman does it to a man it is considered to be a sort of semi-marital function. A man can always ask his brother's wife to do it for him, and it is done very often, even in the presence of the brother. Such customs are, however, open to two interpretations. As we have seen elsewhere, the *Machuna* marriage (or the marriage of cross-cousin) is the orthodox form of marriage among the Nāyars. To all the brothers alike the girl stands in the same relation before the marriage. *She could have been, in fact, the wife of any of them*, provided she was not older than her cousins. Even after her marriage with one of them this potential relationship continues to exist, and therefore all the brothers treat her "half as a sister and half as a wife."[1]

Or, it may be explained, that such relationship is a survival of a Tibetan type of polyandry among the Nāyars. It may be argued that these semi-marital functions which all the brothers can claim from each others' wives, prove the prevalence in a former time of a community of marriage relationship among the brothers. This does not seem to me to be true. Nāyar tradition gives no support to this view. We have no Nāyar stories that speak of one woman who was the common wife of her cross-cousins. In fact we have no tradition of any polyandry at all. Nevertheless, we find McLennan giving the Nair name to a particular type of polyandry supposed by him to be practised universally among them.

[1] It has been argued by Spencer and Gillen that the system of supplementary spouses affords definite evidence of a system of group marriage in a previous age. Their inferences on this subject have now been subjected to very damaging criticism, especially by Mr. N. W. Thomas, *Kinship and Marriage in Australia*, pp. 111-141.

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564 463 182 174 Internal structure of the caste.

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting 626 the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine displeasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world 688 and in the world to come.

It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the 564 division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the 174 Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional 463 groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not 114 quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

564 In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

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certain families from time to time are being looked upon as sub-castes. *Jâtinirnayam*, a Malayalam work of some authority, which gives an account of Malayali castes, limits the number of subdivisions to eighteen, fourteen of which belong to the high caste Sudras, the remaining four being of low caste Sudras. In the last Census Report of the Cochin State, the same number is kept up with slight modifications, to which I am not inclined to agree. It is not possible at this stage to state the exact number of subdivisions, and the following are those that have come under my personal investigation in the State:—

1. *Kiriyattil Nayars.*—They form the highest of all the Nayar subdivisions in the Cochin State as well as south Malabar. The word *kiriyattil* or *kiriyam* is said to be derived from the Sanskrit, *graham*, which means a house. The derivation is doubtful. The members of this subdivision are believed to have been the descendants of the early Brahmans in their union with the Deva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women brought into Kerala by Parasurama, and their duty has been primarily to serve them. The members of the aristocratic class, who still bear the titles of Panikkar, Kurup, Kaimal, Kartha, Menon, and Menokki belong to this class; in this class are included the old *naduvâzhis*, and *desavâzhis*—rulers of *nâds* and *desams*—the military leaders, Pattola Menons and other *sthânis* or titled persons. Being superior to the members of other subdivisions, the *Kiriyattil* Nayars can cook for all others. The Nayars of this class are, according to current tradition, connected with the sixty-four families of Vellalas, whom Dr. Oppert has tried to identify with the Pallavas.

2. *Illattu Nayars.*—They are known in Cochin and South Malabar also as Sudra Nayars. They are par excellence the attendants and retainers of the Nambuthiris. In many parts of the State and in Malabar, they have, by close contact with the Nambuthiris, fashioned many of their personal habits after the truly Brahmanical style, and are, on that account, classed among the high class Nayars. Very seldom does a Nambuthiri woman go outside without being accompanied by a maid-servant or *dasi* belonging to this class, and every woman of this class is her constant attendant and is indispensable for her various ceremonies. They are, I understand, found very largely in Travancore also, where they form

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

CHIE NAKANE

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Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 591 593 429

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 564 471

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. 114 122

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. 113

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad;* and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the ...

[text continues on p. 21]

Preface

THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC Survey of Kerala, conducted at the request of the State Government of Kerala, is one of the last few in the series of Techno-Economic Surveys of the various States of India undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research. For some time past this small State has been attracting increasing attention of the public. Although Kerala has come into limelight on account of its political turmoils, the basic problems which the State faces are primarily economic in nature. The acute intensity of its unemployment aggravated by increased population pressure, the relatively lower per capita income of the people of the State, and highly limited scope for extension of cultivable area, pose a challenging task for the economic planners.

The main objective of the Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala, as in the case of similar surveys for other States, has been to assess technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade. The first step towards this objective was to prepare an outline of the present structure of the economy and make an assessment of the existing physical and human resources of the State. A team of economists and technical experts was constituted for this purpose. The preliminary work on the project was started early in 1960. Relevant data were collected and the members of the survey team discussed the problems and potentialities in different fields, with a number of knowledgeable persons in the State. A number of working papers dealing with problems and potentialities in respect of various aspects of the economy were also prepared. Technical Appraisal Reports analysing growth potential in different sectors were then prepared by the technical members of the team.

The Preliminary Economic Report was ready by September 1961 and it was sent to the State Government for comments. The final report as printed here brings together the material contained in the working papers and the Appraisal Reports. The Appraisal Reports contain a detailed technical analysis of each of the major fields of development, e.g., Industry, Power, Transport, etc. The Economic Report, on the other hand, aims at presenting a broad and coordinated picture of the outline of the probable growth of the State Economy. It indicates the main lines along which future development of the State should proceed and highlights the strategy required for achieving a rapid growth of the State economy.

The economy of Kerala is marked by a number of distinctive features. It is the most thickly populated State in India with an average density per square mile being over three times the all-India average. In addition, the rate of growth of population has been noticeably higher in Kerala than in the other parts of India. A high density of population combined with a fast growth of population has been responsible

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough.

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff.

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

July 1962

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she-buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The corresponding all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

[p 159]
[PP. 1-158 not Processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south. 114 184

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon from June to October. The record density of the population makes for poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows. 14 [132] [161] [484]

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

I. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western 131 [133]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of
[212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is
[871] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate
[212] (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography.
105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala
564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or
[463] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With
[565] them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

*595 I was in that town for only a very short time. I shall begin by giving a description of the little remaining Nayar polyandry that I was able to find.

● 114 *595 Research, in this case, was the very opposite of easy. When I was in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk in 1949, and had made that town the centre of my activities, all the influential local Nayars, most of them *wakils* or lawyers, got together and, threatening the severest punishments if anyone disobeyed them, decided that none of their caste would give me any information at all regarding their alleged polyandry. The town is one from which many of the most prominent Nayars in Government service in New Delhi today have originally come, and in which members of their *tarawads* and immediate families still live. It is therefore understandable that they should have taken this line, it being considered by them today that any hint of their being polyandrous is insulting and degrading. Later, I heard that I had been accused in the Indian capital of stating that Nayars were descendants of the most primitive aboriginals. There was, naturally, absolutely no truth in this, but it is easy to see how the rumour originated.

*595 On the 28th of August, 1939, I went to a Nayar household which I have marked down in my notes as bearing the name of Tsingepuram [351] Kailott. It was in the outskirts of Tellicherry, a large house in a garden compound, with a smaller building some distance away from it. There I met a man called Apunayar and his brother Kamarnayar, and the latter who seemed to be the most talkative, told me through my interpreter that he was the youngest of the two, while his brother, the other man, was the eldest of the whole family. There were four brothers, he explained, the two other ones, junior to this pair, lived in the smaller house in the compound: their names were Kunjiramanayar and Narayannayar. Their mother, Amalu of Tsingepuram kailott *tarawad* had recently died. She had been polyandrous, and the four brothers and a daughter who was also dead now had been born and brought up in the big house by their maternal uncles. The latter had died before their [428] mother, and they had inherited the property. They had given up polyandry and now lived each of them with a wife. Households had been split, and the younger brothers had built themselves the smaller house in the garden, and lived there with their respective wives, while the two elder men had remained in the ancestral mansion. Apunayar had four children, two boys and two girls, Karanayar one girl, while in the smaller household, there were only a little boy and a little girl, both the children of Narayannayar.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

I would have liked to have returned to this household and to have got more information about its inmates; I would also have found it useful to discover other Nayar homes in which the traces of polyandry were still as fresh as in this one. Alas, war broke out within a few days and I was inexorably drawn away as related in Appendix I. 595*

I had to wait more than ten years before I again visited a Nayar household reputed to be polyandrous. It was in Palappuram, in the Walluvanad taluk, on the 23rd of November 1949, where I went to a house called Valathandath. Its inhabitants belonged to the Sudra Nayar sub-caste, and the *karanavan* whom I met, an old man, bore the name of Shekaranayar. His sister, Chimdevi, also aged, lived with him, she sat in a corner of one of the rooms, her breasts bare in the old fashioned way. She had been polyandrous too, I heard, although I was unable to discover the number and names of the husbands that she had had. Offspring consisted of two daughters and a son, the three of them living in the family house.

The eldest daughter, called Parbhatiama, had a little girl, Shandakumari. When I asked who the father was, she smiled and said that she did not know. Immediately intrigued, I asked again and why. The answer, which was not too difficult to obtain, was that she had two husbands, one "with the military" in Madras, and the other a Nayar agriculturist. Which of the two was the father, my interpreters said they could not find out for nobody knew. I was struck by the fact that this Nayar woman had a soldier as one of her husbands; it was reminiscent of the ancient classical pattern in which polyandry in her caste was reputed to exist because of the military commitments of the men.

The younger daughter, Kunyimaluama, posed for a photograph with her brother, Krishnayar (Fig. 8); she was also accompanied by a young man called Balanayar of the Velathadeth *tarawad*, who was, I heard, her paramour but not her husband. [837]

In view of the really determined opposition of the Nayar community in Kerala towards allowing me to find out more about their marital customs, I abstained from making further enquiries into the subject. Consequently I was forced to content myself with the meagre results obtained, and, apart from the information gathered from the Musad and mentioned above (see p. 174), I steered clear of the Nayars. To have acted otherwise under the circumstances might well have compromised my entire research work in Kerala and have led, I am afraid, to my having to abandon it without gaining any further data, even concerning the other polyandrous castes and sub-castes. 595* 114

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there
•[114] were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The
[611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they
[900] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they
[351] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green
[342] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing
115 only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him.
[551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

*595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 614 428 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- ●114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text continues on p. 216]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

564 582 588 ●114 427 534 162 564 [115]

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

It would appear, therefore, that, far from there being an excess of men, it is the other way round: there is a shortage of them. What happens then to the unmarried women? It was even more difficult to answer that question, as only a painstaking and lengthy investigation could do this. I enquired from my guides and interpreters, from those I interviewed, from officials and from fellow anthropologists, and the consensus of opinion, which I also share, is that the spinsters stay at home – with their parents, as long as they live, and with their brothers when the parents have died. The genealogies given above somewhat confirm this view, although perhaps not as decisively as one would like.

C. POLYANDRY IN A THANDAN FAMILY OF THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR

While engaged in a general survey of polyandry in Kerala, in the course of which I came into contact with people of all sorts and conditions, in this complex State, it was not possible for me simultaneously to make a more special study of the distinctive features of the custom. At first, I really only obtained a superficial impression which, with time, I came to look upon as insufficient for me to speak with any authority on the polyandry practised by some of the distinctive castes and sub-castes of this south-west part of India.

Because I wanted to deepen my research and also out of a feeling that the opportunity to gather everything that I could while I was there should not be missed, I decided to choose one family from among those that I had already visited with my guides and interpreters, to put it under scrutiny and study its structure and activity in greater detail. Actually, I would have liked to have chosen one family in each caste or even sub-caste, but I soon realised that this meant work over a period of time far greater than I could possibly hope to have at my disposal in Kerala. So I resigned myself to enquiring where it was thought that I stood the best chance of making such a special study. I was advised to return to the Thandan family which I had first visited on the 25th and 26th of October, immediately after I had started to work in 1949. This family, it will be remembered, was called Appayl Wattakkeh, its *tarawad* had the same name, Appayl, and it was located about two miles outside the village of Ottappalam in the Walluvanad taluk of south Malabar.

The advantages of studying these people were numerous. They were close to where I lived, and to the residence of my interpreters. We had

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
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*595 already been to see them twice, and I had become quite well acquainted
119 with them. I had found the two younger men, Panju and Narayana,
124 especially pleasant to talk to and, as they lived in polyandry whereas the rest of the family had given it up, it seemed most appropriate to get to know them better still. Appayl Wattakkeh too, appeared to be one of the few larger and well-to-do Thandan households in the neighbourhood willing to talk about polyandry. I began the special study of this family on the 11th of November, 1949, and went back repeatedly to visit them until my stay in Kerala came to an end in December of the same year.

*595 I have explained earlier (p. 179) how all five brothers of the older generation had been married polyandrously to Devaki; then, when she died, how they had taken Kuniyama to be their new common wife, until Mayadi, the eldest husband, died, Raman became *karanavan* and Shankara broke loose to marry Kodamah, whom his father and mother's brother had found for him. This had seemed to give ideas to the two younger men, Panju and Narayana. Very soon, they too, requested that
[584] their maternal uncle provide them with a wife of their own, and they obtained her in the form of Nani, the present thirty five year old mother of their four boys, all born in polyandry.

The interesting thing about these two men was that, although they had not accepted the common wife whom they had previously shared with their elders, they had apparently no objection to polyandry as such, and were quite willing to remain wedded in this way, provided it was limited to them, and to a woman who pleased them both. I was natu-
[115] rally intrigued by this, and did not fail to ask Panju, who became my principal informant (No. 2 in the genealogy, Table 3, facing p. 179), what were his reasons for it. It took a long time to get from him that he was fond of his younger brother and that he had for the latter none of the feelings which he nursed against his elder brothers. Narayana, too, seemed happy with Panju, but there was perhaps more passivity in his case towards his partner than there was in the elder of the two men vis à vis his junior. Why had Nani had accepted the situation was more understandable: born and bred to expect that form of matrimony, she had raised no objection when it had been decided to marry her to the two younger members of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. She was the mistress of her home, too, since her husbands had put themselves up in a smaller house, separate from the rest of the family. She had thus no sister-in-law or mother-in-law to cope with, and seemed very pleased with the arrangement.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Panju and Narayana had taken their share of the two fifths of the common *tarawad* property undivided, as I have explained earlier, and this gave them a relatively more prosperous household in which to live and bring up their children. They were landowners in their own right, and not tenants like most of the Thandans in the area. This enabled them to work in their paddy fields for themselves, and in those of their brothers of the bigger house, and saved them from paying rent or giving part of the crop away to the *janmi* as others had to do. 595*

Accompanied by my interpreters, I spent many hours in the courtyard of the Appayl Wattakkeh farmhouse, watching the work of the men, the domestic chores of the women, and the games of the children. I was obliged occasionally to question them and to press them for answers about situations which I did not have time to watch develop, although I would naturally have much preferred to remain simply a silent onlooker. By preference, I used to go them rather than get them to come to me, for I believed that if I saw them in their own setting, I got to know them better. 124

It appeared that each time the men of Appayl Wattakkeh had been married (three times in the case of Panju and Narayana, to Devaki, Kuniyama and Nani), there had been the customary arrangement between the two families and a public wedding ceremony. Money had been given to the fathers of the bride by the boy's father and maternal uncle, and cloth to her mother. For Nani, their mother's brother had given her eldest father (she had three) twenty eight *fanans* (or sixteen rupees, fifteen annas), and a piece of cotton material to her mother. In exchange, she had brought with her a dowry which consisted of two hundred rupees worth of jewelry, household brass vessels and two gold sovereigns. This was quite exceptionally good for the Thandan caste, I was told. 583 [584]

In all three marriages, the husbands had lined up with their common bride and drunk coconut milk with her, in the presence of the respective families and their guests. The ceremony had always taken place at the woman's house, and it was only after a few days that she had gone to live with her husbands. This period varied considerably, I heard; in some cases weeks and even months went by without the partners having any sort of marital relations. People were not in a hurry to consumate marriage in Kerala, it seemed. 595* 585

I had read in Aiyappan's *Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 101, that when one husband was with the common wife, it used to be the custom that he leave his knife etc. on the door frame of the bedroom to signal 595* 119

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595 his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, ●114 if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

*595 At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the [853] household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also [462] looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or [841] three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the [783] woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus [855] gradually come to know the children better and to influence their upbringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is how- [562] ever always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

838 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
158 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known,
755 had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[125] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Toda AW60

T 114 It was from there that I made my first research work among the Todas and other hill tribes of the district.

K 114 In August, we descended to the south-west coast, passing through Mysore and Mercara in Coorg. We arrived in Tellicherry, in Malabar, at the end of the month, when the clouds of war were already gathering fast on the international political horizon. The first days of September found us in this remote part of India, on a visit to the French possession of Mahé. On learning that World War II had started, we immediately packed and left, returning to Madras where we sought a passage home. After waiting some time, we were told that we might embark on a ship of the Danish East Asiatic Company in Colombo. We proceeded there in all haste, but were kept waiting sufficiently long in the Sinhalese capital to be able to visit the place and gather some anthropological information of value. We resolved to return here as soon as the war was over, should we survive it.

I spent the next eight years in the Greek Army. I was demobilized in 1947, and immediately took steps to resume my anthropological work. I was able to do this at the beginning of 1949, when my wife and I arrived back in Ceylon by air in the February of that year. This time I had the leisure and means to study Sinhalese polyandry and, after obtaining the necessary information, as I have said, put up our camp in the interior, in the Kandyan region of Ratnapura.

K 114 We remained here until April, and then moved to Cochin in south-west India. A short spell of work in Ernakulam and the surrounding country, including Travancore, yielded interesting data. But very soon, T [119] the temperature became excessive, and conditions of work insupportable, so that we drove up to the Nilgiris for the summer, resuming my investigations of Toda polyandry which I had left off ten years before. We stayed in Ootacamund from the beginning of May until the end of September, 1949.

In the autumn, we returned to Malabar, this time to Shoranur, in the Walluvanad taluk of the southern part of the district, as this appeared to be the best area in which to study polyandry in what was soon to become the State of Kerala. We were there until December of the same year, and got to know the people living all around us quite well.

While in Malabar, I did not only visit the polyandrous communities. I was desirous of getting acquainted with the other inhabitants of the country, on the principle that the elements of a society are interrelated and evolve in connection with each other. I also attended a Nambudri Brahmin wedding, visited a Nambudri *mana* (the name by which the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tibet AJ1

K 114

large domains of the upper caste of Kerala are known), got to know all the dignitaries of the various sects into which the Christian community is split, made the acquaintance of the Jews in Mattancheri, met the Maharaja of Cochin and his court, was received by the Moslem Makhdun Tangal of Ponani, as I have related (see page 168), made excursions to the Western Ghats, at Kalladikkodi where the Malayans have their main shrine, was shown over a rehabilitation centre for Nayadis in Travancore, a blacksmith's village in the same State, and a Parayan colony belonging to the Zamorin at Chunangad in south Malabar, saw Cherumans at work in a large Nayar *Kanamdar's* farm, attended Kathakali dances at night and receptions by prominent Nayar, Ambalavasi and Samantan personalities. Generally speaking, I travelled extensively through the entire area, meeting as many elements of the population as possible, regardless of social status and condition, making it a point, rather, of getting to know them all.

T 114 122

We returned to Kalimpong in 1950. It was February when, eleven years after our first visit, we arrived once again in the little frontier town at the very gate of central Tibet. I immediately set everything in motion to try and enter the forbidden land, my hand srengthened this time by the fact that I had joined and was now a member of the Third Danish Expedition to Central Asia. It was as leader of the latter's second team, that I had come back.

In the intervening years, great changes had, however, taken place. India was now an independent country since August the 15th, 1947, and had, only a few days before, been proclaimed a Republic. Tibet, on her side, was going through a troubled and anxious period of her history. With the fall of the Kuomintang regime in China, her government had asked the Nationalist Chinese Mission in the capital to leave, in the vain hope that its removal would avoid having to receive a Communist delegation in its stead.

During the whole spring and summer of 1950, the threat of a Chinese Communist military invasion of Tibet became more and more acute. It was worrying not only government leaders in the Tibetan capital, but also those now responsible for the destinies of India in New Delhi. The result, as far as we were concerned, was that no one in either of these two centres took kindly to our request for a permit to conduct anthropological research in Tibet, and rather looked upon us as intruders with possibly suspicious ulterior motives.

Neither of the two governments to whom we addressed our demands for permission to cross the frontier apparently wished, however, to give

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reasons are concerned, the Mahabarata epic is the only case of its kind in the whole of India. The Todas, when you ask why they are polyandrous, always say "Because we are the same people as those of the Mahabarata", but I am convinced that they have got this explanation from the anthropologists and not the other way around! As far as the economic reasons are concerned, these also seem to me insufficient, because there are people living in the same area, in the same physical environment, who are not polyandrous. Even the Tibetans, when they become Moslems, though their environment does not change, suddenly cease being polyandrous and live in the Islamic fashion. The rich Tibetans in central Tibet are also polyandrous, and obviously not for economic reasons.

T, 162 792 To 847 162

As regards the demographic reasons, the following statistics will show that there is not always an excess of males over females. In the Leh *tehsil* in Ladak, where I was, there are 14,760 men to 14,650 women, which is approximately equal. The excess of single women among the Tibetans (there are some left over, naturally, considering the number of brothers who have one wife) usually go into a monastery and become nuns. That is the way they solve their problem. The Todas, on the other hand, practise female infanticide, so that there are less women than men. However, back in Tibet, in the same town of Leh, one finds that the Hindus who live there number 36 men and 13 women, and yet they are monogamous. In southern India, there is a Moslem community known as the Moplahs, in which there are five men to one woman, and they are polygynous rather than polyandrous. Even in Europe, the Bulgars have 35,000 more men than women and yet, though they may have many faults, they certainly are not polyandrous.

To 162

As far as the Todas are concerned, out of the 600-odd that exist, there are 340 men and 237 women, so that it really looks as if the reason given might be true in

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape. 613 114

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve (1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles. 613 114 184 [554]

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan. 613 [184] [614]

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children (a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. 591 [844] 171 [851] [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the 601 [602]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other"
[611] (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere
[613] also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61). 121 602

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough. 602 613 114

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin." 602 614 114 [582]

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific. 602 611 [582]

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy. 121 564 582 613

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

121 We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
114 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
613 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
184 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
[605] opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613 [114] [184]

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent.

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

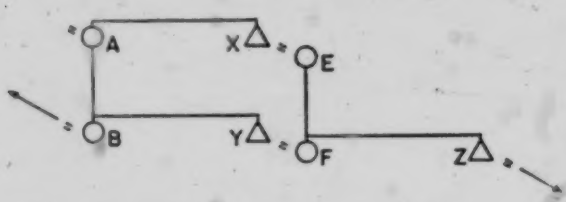

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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perior but politically inferior to the royal lineages. This would indicate that the arguments emanating from the power structure are of limited value. Nor does the psychoanalytic argument carry conviction (see Yalman, 1963). 121 114 564 613

Dumont further suggests that the Nayar position has significant cultural affinities to certain practices of the Basavi. Among the Basavi, a girl is given in marriage to a god. She may then be approached by all kinds of men, and the children she may bear belong to her own family. Thus by virtue of her marriage to a god, her children are freed from the constraints of the rule of patrilineal descent and follow matrilineal descent. In the same fashion, Dumont thinks the girls of aristocratic matrilineages are married to Nambudiri Brahman, who are referred to as "Gods of the Earth."

Dumont's point is worth making, for it shows the element of piety involved in these customs which have been severely misunderstood in India and elsewhere. The man of the matrilineage sacrifices his own children (who belong to others) in order to give his sister to a god and keep her children.

This may indeed be one of the cultural dimensions of hypergamy in this region, but the system is so clearly and effectively associated with the fundamental structural principles of matrilineal descent groups in a caste context that the specific cultural features (piety, etc.) do not need to be treated as a necessary part of the picture. A similar set of structural circumstances gives rise to an essentially similar picture in Ceylon. 121 564 613 [171]

The general principles of status differentiation in Cochin have been subsumed under the following ideal formula by Karve (1953, p. 269):

Nambudiri m.	marries	Nambudiri f.	Children	become	Nambudiri		[851]
Nambudiri m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	Kshatriya		
Ksatriya m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	non-Kshatriya [*sic.*]		
Nambudiri m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 1		
Ksatriya m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 2		
Nayar m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 3		

It is quite clear that we find the matrilineal *taravad* in its most impressive development as a corporation precisely at the highest levels of society. At the other end of the scale we have only the desire for prestige:

The Tharvad is always named after an ancestress and referred to as the Tharvad of so and so (woman). If a man does not belong to a Tharvad he is not respected and I was told by an officer in a mill that though he was well educated and a salaried man he had not the requisite social position as

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . .. in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

*291 *564 caste, is not supposed to wear his cloth below his knees. Now-a-days, when there is a general levelling up, the inferior races occupying a position they never held before, when people speak of caste as if it were a fanciful arrangement of the social fabric which it would be an excellent thing to destroy, forgetting that, fundamentally, it rests on racial differentiation, we see those of castes inferior to the Nâyar wearing their cloths to the ground—in the towns that is, where the sway of modern officialdom and education is felt. But, were a man of inferior caste to wear his cloth to the ground, away out in the district where the old order has not changed much, he would soon be made to repent having done what is believed to be an infringement of the privileges of the Nâyar. He would probably be well beaten, and might have his house burnt. The single cloth (mundu) constitutes the ordinary dress. No turban is worn. It is wrong for a [293] Nâyar to cover his head. But he may use an umbrella, and invariably does so when walking in the sun, for he is very susceptible to its rays. The cloth must be fastened at the waist in a certain way. Those of every caste tie or fasten their cloth round the loins in a certain way; people of no two castes tie the cloth alike.

Women.—A short cloth is worn somewhat tight round the loins, and over it is worn another cloth from the waist to below the knee. Nothing is worn above waist. When one sees women of the Nâyar caste on the roads (they are *never* to be seen in the towns), or at the festivals or other large gatherings, they are wearing a cloth loosely covering the upper portion of the body. In Malabar, where there is prevalent the idea that no respectable woman covers her breast, there has crept in lately, chiefly amongst those who have travelled, a feeling of shame in respect of this custom of dress. Dress is, of course, a conventional affair, and it will be matter for regret should false ideas of shame supplant those of natural dignity such as one sees expressed in the carriage and bearing of the well-bred Nâyar lady.

121 It will be most convenient to deal with the Nâyars as a body under such heads as marriage, customs, etc. Here we are concerned mainly with physical measures and general appearance, under which come dress and ornament. [291] What has been said about dress may be taken as *[564] descriptive of all the clans. Before leaving the Kiriattil [115] Nâyars it will be well to note the names of some of those actually measured.

6:Pawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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[553]

Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan ...	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi ...	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvittil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Râmuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Râmuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Râpappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak. 553 552

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd. 613 552

URÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

141
564*

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	* 120·8	74·0	*120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—in each ear. [789] An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 families of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613 *564 Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
● 115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

*142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

(4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper [515] rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face [789] with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

*163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 *564 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
● 115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

6:Pawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil ...	Krishnan ...	Cultivator ...	52
Paritbil ...	Achutan ...	Do. ...	27
613 Malabîtil ...	Sivarâman ...	Do. ...	22
Cholale ...	Râman ...	Do. ...	20
551 Muthîra ...	Narrâyanan ...	Teacher ...	26
463 Kanakath ...	Kunhi Krishnan * ...	Unemployed ...	22
Mannareth ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	30
Kûmbiyal ...	Kannan ...	Peon ...	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan ...	Do. ...	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

*553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature ...	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting ...	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling ...	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span ...	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest ...	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders ...	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit ...	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

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*115
564 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below:—
613

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
463 Pathushêri	Kanâran ...	... Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
551 Mâvila	Kumâran ...	... Cultivator	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu ...	... .	22
Puthiotil	Râman ...	... Servant	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan ...	... Cultivator	25
Ramath	Kunhi Râman	... Landlord	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni ...	... Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi	Paidal ...	... Cultivator	25

*564

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

553 Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

14
564

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width	15·5	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian—a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given— 115

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44 551 613
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31 463
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20 564*
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil ...	Kuttan	Do.	23
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjêli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

782 776 778 made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. 173 Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkòttu Illam, where 776 the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's 778 parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols 825 of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent god and that of the female. [115] Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla :—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandava-vanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone 778 images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, 776 a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that 782 is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Másí. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12¾ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

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for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

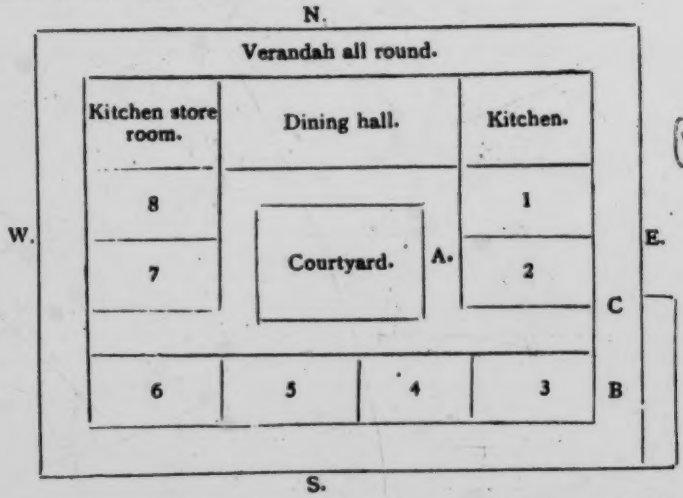

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon.

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The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it repre- 789
sents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put 842
together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by
barren women so that they may bear children. It may
be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or
on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the [834]
latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive
days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar
may not have sexual connection.

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless
men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others
are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat
enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss
of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of
others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only 789
relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the
ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too
long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through
black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in [755]
ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round
the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the
Asvârûdha yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would
also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is
able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he [825]
may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying
it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle.
In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram,
while in others each has its own mystic meaning.

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying
one of these charms to himself that they are entirely
inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the
mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp 754
in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were
assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In [791]
the evening I was able to see and converse with the
drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. [564]
The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians,
few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are
not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin,
Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri
Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar
appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man.

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had [115]
been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of
his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tâli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tâli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [989]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tâli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sâmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambûdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tâli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanâd princesses had the *tâli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sûdra Nayars of Pâlakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pâlakkara, the *tâli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tâlis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravâd* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambûdiri 588 613 [176] [182] 588

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII

105 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger
564 Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam*
581 property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger
428 sons.

105 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar
564 and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow
611 artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [192] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative
564 such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child
[58] after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle
564 of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort
588 with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 [114] With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The [611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they [920] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they [351] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green [342] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing ●115 only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him. [551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

community. It was confirmed that this name, meaning "headman", is really a title (like so many others in Kerala – Nayar, Panikkar, Kurup, Menon, etc.) by which the Tiyas of south Malabar are known. He also answered questions about *tarawad* and *kiriyam*, marriage rites and cross-cousin preference, the prevalence of polyandry in the community and the changing times, points which have all been accounted for in the first part of this chapter.

On the second day, I made out the family's genealogy, which is given in the accompanying Table 3. A few words of comment are no doubt needed here. I had three informants in all, since two others were added, later, to the first. I have marked them as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The generation to which the first informant belonged had originally consisted of nine children, from Kunji, the eldest, to Narayana, the youngest. Their *tarawad* was patrilineal and exogamous, as was also their matrilineal *kiriyam* in principle, but the rules of the latter were not observed very much any more beyond their immediate acquaintances. Kunji, now sixty two, was married at twenty; Kali, married when she was sixteen, divorced a year later and lived with her brothers; she was now sixty. All five brothers, when they were young, had been married polyandrously to Devaki, the eldest, Mayadi, now deceased, being sixteen at the time. Nani and Raman were issued from that marriage, and the young Raman and his family lived here, with his elder namesake in the same house. Devaki died when she was twenty nine, and the brothers were then all remarried, again polyandrously by their parents, to Kuniyama. Mayadi, then aged thirty, died the following year, and Raman senior became the *karanavan*.

Sankara then suddenly said that he was displeased with the common wife. He expressed a desire to break away, and asked his father and maternal uncle to find him another wife. There was considerable opposition to begin with, but, eventually, they gave in, and Kodamah was found for Sankara, who, however, did not move out and put up another household, but stayed in the family mansion with Raman. The latter retained Kuniyama as his wife and had four children by her – Krishna, Janeki, Kerthiyani, and Madivi. Sankara and Kodamah, now forty five and thirty five respectively, had one daughter, Devaki, whom they married off three years ago when she was sixteen.

The breaking away of their elder brother, Sankara, seems to have given Panju and Narayana ideas of liberty as well. Kuniyama was apparently not a very popular common spouse, or else Raman monopolized her too much – it was difficult to find out which, for all that I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

We still had time that afternoon, to drive back into the village of Perumpillav and to interview some more polyandrous Tiyas. We drove to a Tiya house to have a talk with a man, a woman and a boy who confirmed to us that they belonged to families practising polyandry. 595*

The man was called Tami; he was fifty six years old and worked as a coolie. He had the *Kudiyiruppu* lease of a house for which he paid three rupees a year to a Mopla, Melethil Kunyuni Haidaros. The latter was himself the *verumpattamdar* of a *janmi* called Cheralayam Nambidi. (I was unable to find out if he was a Brahmin, an Ambalavasi or a Samantan; with the title *Nambidi* which he bore, he could have been any one of the three, but I suspect that he was a Brahmin, as this is the caste which owns the land in north Cochin.) [115] [420] [423]

Tami's household name was Kanadiwalapil, which was also that of his *tarawad*. He and his brother, Narayan, were married to Chidu, alias Sri Devi, a woman now aged fifty. The younger brother was his junior by twenty one years and had been married as second husband to their common wife when he was only five years old. There were five children, of whom the two eldest were girls, now married off elsewhere. All the boys were unmarried, and worked with their fathers as coolies. 595* 601

I found the informant extremely difficult to question. He was continually contradicting himself, and pretended that he knew no names nor ages. Thus I was unable to discover the name of his wife's *tarawad*, how many children his second daughter had had, and the ages of his two eldest sons, Velu and Kutan. I give the genealogy as I struggled to make it, in Table 7, but I fear that it is sadly incomplete and perhaps not even reliable. It was nevertheless of interest to find out something, however little, from a Tiya polyandrous labourer. [115]

We next turned to the woman. She was accompanied by her twelve year old son, Balakrishnan, and at once showed herself, in striking contrast to her predecessor, to be bright and helpful. This was a great relief after the previous painful session. I was able to record the name of her *tarawad*, but did not manage to ascertain that of the household into which she had married.

She told me that she had had five husbands, all of them paid (free) agricultural labourers, living as *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the same Cheralayam Nambidi *janmi*. She did not know the amount of rent paid yearly, but told me that her husbands' family had been settled here for a very long time – for eighty or a hundred years, as she put it. They had little work to do, not enough in fact to keep such a large family alive. They had been toddy tappers once. Kalyany had been married publicly

[Text continues on p. 189]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
582 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
601 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
●115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Pálappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
582 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age are some of the un-
732 married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

7 [i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]
[Text Continues On P. 194]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

*595 It was called Onadi Paramben house, and our informant turned out to
601 be an old lady called Kunji, now married to only one husband, Shangh-
[115] uni, seventy two, but of whose three other brothers she had once upon a time been the wife also. The genealogy which I made out from what she told me, was an intricate one, and it took a lot of questioning and counterchecking to do. The genealogy is given in Table 17.

From a single, monogamous father were issued four boys and one girl. The latter, Kunji, was today sixty years old and lived, childless, with her husband, Viran, at Mangod village where he came from. The four men, Shanghuni, seventy two, Erechen, sixty five, Raman, sixty and Krishnan who had died at the age of forty five, had all been married, when young, by their father and maternal uncle to the informant, Kunji, when she was twenty five. Three daughters were born from the marriage, of which the second, Lakshmi, only lived three years.

[578] Then Krishnan, the youngest husband, who never took to the marriage properly and was always quarrelling with his brothers, got himself another wife, also called Kunji, today aged fifty three, and with the permission of his former co-husbands, brought her home to live with them all. He was still resident there at the time of his death. He had had four children, of whom two were sons, and who were still in the house with their families. One daughter was married out, and the other, aged twenty and unmarried, lived with her brothers. The informant said that after Krishnan had left the polyandrous marriage, the first Kunji had given birth to another girl called Paru, twenty years old now and unmarried.

Ten years after they had all been married to Kunji, and therefore five years after Krishnan's defection, Erechen and Raman decided also to secede. Their reason for leaving was the same: there was too much quarrelling in the family. Together, they took Kali of Mangode village, to wife, and brought her home to live with them. Kunyimalu, a girl, was born from this new polyandrous arrangement, and she was now thirty and happily married off to Krishnan of Kutil *tarawad*.

A further split took place just a year later. Erechen and Raman could not agree in the new set-up, and Raman ran away. He took Chiru of Kalapara *tarawad* to wife and went on to live at Karimpuzha as the local washerman. He had a boy and a girl, and was doing well. His wife was still alive, and he was a grandfather five times over. After his departure from the house, Erechen and Kali had further offspring; a son, now aged twenty five and married, and a daughter now aged twenty, still unmarried. They had not stayed in the family house, but had

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595* Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601 to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repeti- [115] tion of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [551] helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582] matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 417 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465 ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 291 went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast- 853 feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

564 582 588 114 427 534 162 564 [115

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595 114 124 already been to see them twice, and I had become quite well acquainted with them. I had found the two younger men, Panju and Narayana, especially pleasant to talk to and, as they lived in polyandry whereas the rest of the family had given it up, it seemed most appropriate to get to know them better still. Appayl Wattakkeh too, appeared to be one of the few larger and well-to-do Thandan households in the neighbourhood willing to talk about polyandry. I began the special study of this family on the 11th of November, 1949, and went back repeatedly to visit them until my stay in Kerala came to an end in December of the same year.

*595 I have explained earlier (p. 179) how all five brothers of the older generation had been married polyandrously to Devaki; then, when she died, how they had taken Kuniyama to be their new common wife, until Mayadi, the eldest husband, died, Raman became *karanavan* and Shankara broke loose to marry Kodamah, whom his father and mother's brother had found for him. This had seemed to give ideas to the two younger men, Panju and Narayana. Very soon, they too, requested that [584] their maternal uncle provide them with a wife of their own, and they obtained her in the form of Nani, the present thirty five year old mother of their four boys, all born in polyandry.

The interesting thing about these two men was that, although they had not accepted the common wife whom they had previously shared with their elders, they had apparently no objection to polyandry as such, and were quite willing to remain wedded in this way, provided it was limited to them, and to a woman who pleased them both. I was naturally intrigued by this, [115] and did not fail to ask Panju, who became my principal informant (No. 2 in the genealogy, Table 3, facing p. 179), what were his reasons for it. It took a long time to get from him that he was fond of his younger brother and that he had for the latter none of the feelings which he nursed against his elder brothers. Narayana, too, seemed happy with Panju, but there was perhaps more passivity in his case towards his partner than there was in the elder of the two men vis à vis his junior. Why had Nani had accepted the situation was more understandable: born and bred to expect that form of matrimony, she had raised no objection when it had been decided to marry her to the two younger members of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. She was the mistress of her home, too, since her husbands had put themselves up in a smaller house, separate from the rest of the family. She had thus no sister-in-law or mother-in-law to cope with, and seemed very pleased with the arrangement.

1:Gough E-4, 5(no date)1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

THE TRADITIONAL KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

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Prepared for the Social Science Research Council Summer Seminar on Kinship

Harvard University, 1954

1:Gough-1 E-4, 5(no date)1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
241 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

241 Large plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and
313 cinnamon have been developed, chiefly by British, in the highlands in the past hundred years, and in the forests teak provides a basic industry.
132 The rainfall is very heavy, especially in the north where the mountains encroach nearer to the sea. Through most of the area it varies between 75" and 170"; in the extreme south it drops to 32". Most of the rain comes with the southwest monsoon between May and September; lighter rains occur with the northeast monsoon in late November and December. Humidity is
[243] always very high. In most areas two wet paddy crops are taken in a year, in February and September. The temperature varies from 70° to 90°, and is hottest in April just before the monsoon breaks.

[4] (2) Political Divisions

631 From the establishment of British supremacy in 1792, until July 1949, the Malabar Coast was divided into three political areas. In the north is the Malabar District of Madras State, in area 5,790 square miles. It is governed in internal affairs by the legislative assembly of Madras, and is under a Collector (of land revenue) who lives in Calicut, the capital of the district. The port of Cochin is also administered as part of Malabar District. In the centre was Cochin State, in area 1,493 square miles. It was governed internally by the Maharaja of Cochin, assisted by the Cochin legislative assembly, whose headquarters was in Ernakulam, the capital. In the south was Travancore State with an area of 7,625 square miles, under the Maharaja

631 of Travancore and the Travancore legislative assembly, with headquarters in the capital, Trivandrum. On July 1st, 1949, by order of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi, the two southern states were integrated as the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Cochin retired from office, and the Maharaja of Travancore became for the duration of his life the first Rajpramukh of the new united state. The State now has its headquarters and government offices [5] at Trivandrum.

101 Despite these partly accidental political divi-
197 sions, the Malabar Coast is a discrete cultural area. Malayalam, (a Dravidian language strongly influenced in vocabulary by Sanskrit) which became distinguished as a deviant dialect of Tamil about the twelfth century, is the mother-tongue of all but a few immigrant Tamil groups in south Travancore. The area has also had some degree of political unity in the distant
174 past as the ancient kingdom of Kerala. The early history of Kerala is unknown. It was ruled by the Perumals, a succession of kings who seem to have come from outside Kerala and who may have been feudatories in the wider em-
175 pire of Chera. Their government came to an end sometime between the fourth and eleventh centuries A.D. After this Kerala was split into many petty kingdoms under indigenous Rajas of Nayar stock, having matrilineal descent. These continually fought each other and, from 1498, with the coming of the Portuguese and later the Dutch, English and French, made various alliances with these powers to gain their

175 individual ends. Their struggles were eclipsed by the Muslim invasions from Mysore which began in 1766, and ended when the East Indian Company took over the area in 1792. But the idea of a United Kerala has not died, and has been repeatedly suggested since India attained [6] Independence in 1947.

161 (3) Population

The Malabar Coast is the most densely populated part of India. The figures for 1931 show a population of 3,533,944 for Malabar; 1,205,016 for Cochin; and 5,095,073 for Travancore. In Malabar the mean density was 610 per square mile; in Cochin, 814; and in Travancore, 668. This includes forest and lagoon areas. The mean density of habitable land in Cochin was 1,400.

[511] Relative to the present exploitation of resources the whole coast is overpopulated. Most of the people lead a hand-to-mouth existence on an income barely sufficient to support life. Want and indebtedness are chronic and there is much unemployment.

Reliable figures are not available for before 1891, but at least since that date and probably for 50 to 100 years previsouly, a great increase has taken place. The figures for 1891 were, for Malabar, 2,557,736; fo Cochin, 722,906; and for Travancore, 2,557,736. This increase in population is part of the baseline from which we must start in analysing kinship systems.

174 631 II The Traditional Political Background

European and Arabic reports on the Nayars

174 take us back to before 1498, when Basco da Gama
631 first reached Calicut. From the mid-fifteenth century until the present, there is a fairly continuous series of records, by Arab, Portuguese, Dutch and later East India Company traders, and finally by British government officials and by Malayalis themselves. We may conveniently refer to the period before 1792, when the East India Company assumed government, as the period of the traditional political and economic organization, in contrast to the period between 1792 and 1947, which is the period of British
[127] rule. My picture of the traditional social structure is a composite reconstruction from literature and from the reports of my informants. It is not possible in the limits of this paper to give the derivation of each statement, but a bibliography appears at the end.

It seems clear from the literature that from the breakdown of the ancient kingdom of Kerala (c. 7th century?) until about the 14th century, the coast was divided into many small independent chiefdoms (nads.) Each nad was headed by a petty military chief of the Nayar caste. Sometime in the 9th century, the area was revisited by Arab traders after a long absence, who began to trade with the coastal chiefdoms in pepper and coconuts. Sometime between the 11th and 13th centuries, gunpowder was introduced by the Arabs, and it appears to have been from this date that some of the chiefs began to conquer neighbouring chiefdoms and to organize small kingdoms. By the early 15th century, the chief of these kingdoms were, from north to south,

174 those of Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad,
131 Kadattunad, Calicut, and Walluvanad (in what is now Malabar District), Cochin (the modern Cochin State) and to the south, the various feudatory chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore. By 1496 when the Portuguese arrived, however, the Zamorin (king) of Calicut, who had gained power by extensive Arab trade, had temporarily conquered the Walluvanad and Cochin kingdoms and reduced their rulers to the status of vassal lords. The Portuguese, allied with the Cochin Raja, drove back the Zamorin northward our of Cochin during the 16th century. From then on, wars between the major kingdoms were incessant for the next three centuries. The English reached Malabar in 1615, the Dutch in 1639, and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or other kingdom and took part in successive battles until, in 1763, the northern half of the coast was temporarily overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean invasions ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the British East India Company, and the establishment of the modern British political organization.

101 [9] Today, the coast is still divisible into three major areas, distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, by slight differences of dialect, dress and dietetic habits, and more marked differences in ritual beliefs and practices, and most markedly, by differences in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The nothern area is that of the modern North Malabar District, north

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former king-
doms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and
part of Kurumbranad. The central area compri-
ses the modern South Malabar District and Co-
chin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut,
Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall
differences of custom and social structure were
connected with major political boundaries in the
period of native rule. Though divisible into
separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the
whole of North Malabar District was temporarily
overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and
17th centuries. The central area at one period
or another was all conquered by the Zamorins
and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while
the whole southern area eventually became sub-
ject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these
three major areas, a somewhat different politi-
cal system operated, [10] and in accordance with
this the higher castes, especially the Nayars,
were differently divided into subcastes with sep-
arate administrative functions: each of these
subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced
by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship
because of failure to differentiate between the
three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had
one kinship system, whereas they in fact had
three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

565 Nayar subjects within the kingdom. Between
613 kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and
631 would not intermarry: though exogamous, therefore, each lineage considered itself to form a separate and unique [13] subcaste. The Cochin lineage, being more ancient than the rest, claimed the ritual rank of Kshattriyas (the second of the four varnas or major caste-groups of ancient North India Vedic Society, in ancient times kings and warriors.) The Walluvanad and Calicut lineages, of more recent Nayar origin, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas, but were accorded the title of Samantans, a Sanskrit word meaning "leaders." In each royal lineage, the oldest man of the whole lineage, irrespective of branch, was the crowned king and administered traditional secular rule with assistance from advisers of wealthy Nambudiri families of the kingdom, some of whom were employed as ambassadors.

Each kingdom was divided into nads or chiefdoms. In the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, some of these nads were former independent kingdoms which had been conquered by Calicut but were still ruled by their traditional monarchs who paid tribute to Calicut. These nads included Parappanad, Beypore and Chavakkad, each of whose rulers, though feudatory, claimed and were accorded higher ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage by reason of their more ancient tradition of government. Other nads of the Calicut kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (naduvaris) originally appointed by the Zamorin. [14] These ruled with

525 similar powers to those of the feudatory mon-
613 archs, but, though they were accorded the title
631 of Samantans, were considered of lower ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage. Similarly, some nads of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory kings of higher ritual rank than, but administratively subordinate to, the royal lineage, and others by lower ranking Samantan chiefs appointed by the king. Within each kingdom, the Samantan chiefs' lineages formed a single subcaste.

525 Each nad was in turn divided into villages or
621 desams, the basic units of the political system.
423 A desam appears usually to have covered from one to four square miles, comprising one or more stretches of dry garden land surrounded by, or surrounding, flats of alluvial paddy land. The land in each desam was owned by one landlord family of superior ritual rank to the other occupants of the villages. In some villages, the land was owned by a single Nambudiri partilineal extended family whose large house stood in a central position in the village. In others, it was owned by one or other branch of the royal matrilineage which had built a small palace in the village and whose eldest male member acted as a village headman. In other villages, the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineal lineage of the nad, whether this [15] were of feudatory rank of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live in a small palace in the centre of the village and fulfill the role of headman. In other villages, the land was owned by some famous Hindu temple of the kingdom, often

565 at a distance of several miles, and managed by
621 Nambudiri Brahmans. In this case a represen-
423 tative Nambudiri patrilineal family might live in the village and play the role of headman. In yet other villages, which probably comprised about half the villages in the kingdom, the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (desavari) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the nad. The Nayar desavaris of a chiefdom collectively formed a subcaste ritually lower than the subcaste of chiefs of their kingdom. In Walluvanad and Calicut the subcaste of village headmen was called Kiriattil Nayar; in Cochin they were called Vellayma Nayars.

565 The landowning families in all of these types
622 of villages were called janmis. In every case,
423 no matter whether the janmi were of a patrilineal or a matrilineal caste, the eldest man of the extended family had legal guardianship of his own family, and in another sense, of the village lands and the lower caste inhabitants. [16] In addition to his economic rights, the janmi had administrative rights. First, he must sanction marriages of all castes in the village, none of which could be performed without his consent. Second came ambalapadhi or control of ceremonies in the village temple(s); and third urayma or direction of temple lands and servants.
[346] (It should be made clear that each village had its public temple apart from the larger temples of the chiefdom and the kingdom.) While headman of the village and a landowner in a certain sense, however, the janmi could not sell away his lands

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
525 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (eldest man or karánavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord.
[994] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-
[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired
[427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
794 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

564 servants, nowadays [20] collectively called Amba-
794 lavasis. The highest of these were the Chakk-
yars or reciters of Puranic stories, and the
Pushpagans or flower-gatherers for temples.
[611] These two castes had a patrilineal descent-sys-
tem of the same type as Nambudiris, and are
said to have once been Nambudiris who were
degraded for ritual offences. They ranked be-
low Nambudiris and above Nayars and the matri-
lineal temple servant castes. These latter in-
[533] cluded Nambyars, a small caste whose work was
to accompany Chakkyar recitations on a metal
drum; Psharodis and Variyars, both of whom
traditionally sweep the temple, clean temple
vessels and make garlands for the idols; Pudu-
vals or drummers on a drum called maddalam;
and Marars or regular drummers on another
drum called chenda.

The temple-servant castes were small and
were chiefly congregated in villages owned by
Nambudiri landlords or by large temples. Four
main types of temple were owned by the higher
castes of Malabar. First came large and weal-
thy temples owned and managed entirely by
groups of Nambudiri landlords and dedicated to
one of the orthodox Brahmanical male deities of
India, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second came the
private temple of each individual Nambudiri fam-
ily in villages owned by Nambudiris; these were
small replicas of the first type, dedicated to the
same types of deities. Third came the large
temples, one of which was associated with each
[776] royal and chiefly matrilineage. These were
usually dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali,
the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the soil.

794 the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the
564 soil. Fourth came the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, one of which was found in each village or group of villages of the same subcaste where Nayar retainers were present.
[782] In the first two types of temples, animal sacrifice was forbidden; offerings were of flowers, fruits, incense and fire. The priests were
[793] either Nambudiri Brahmans or members of a lower landless caste called Embrandiri Brahmans who are immigrant from South Canara to the north. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which contained a temple of type (1), there was often no Nayar population at all: a group of lineages of one or more temple servant subcastes replaced them as retainers of the Nambudiris and as kanam tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of type (2), there would be one or two individual lineages of one or other temple servant caste, attached to the Nambudiri temple, but also a group of Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple. [22] In villages not headed by Nambudiri Brahmans, there might be only a Bhagavadi temple, managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might also be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple servant castes did not work in village Bhagavadi temples. Similarly in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple owned by the ruling lineage, the temple servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars, but individuals of the

other temple servant castes might come from other villages to assist at special annual ceremonies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi temples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brahman, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the temple and periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. Consistent with these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambudiris and all temple servants were vegetarians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise almost identical in general culture to Nayars, and historically were probably once Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine or intermarry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine) and above the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food from them but not give food to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servant castes and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few social relations outside the temple, and did not interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
[144] non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[191] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[164] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[183] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet.

within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between members of the same caste or sub-caste, but at a higher caste feast members of lower castes might receive food from higher caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs, temple servants, retainers, middle-class and servant Nayars thus collectively formed the "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

Below all these castes, living in a separate part of the village, were the "low" or "polluting" castes. These included in order of rank, Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with 20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (astrologers) with one to three households per village; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one to three houses per village; low caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas, Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal extended families with fraternal polyandrv, cross-c cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal descent with patrilocal extended families and fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked for each other and for the "good" castes of the village. Iravas, the most numerous and influential, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washerman's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

564 ritual pollution decreed that the several lower
783 castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

564 Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a
[361] separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas
437 and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket ~~and~~ umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. The Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas
[783] and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not
[611] interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes
361 there were and are in Kerala large groups of
563 Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
563 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

564 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
564 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended such festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

.437 (2) The Traditional Economic System
423 The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [436] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31]of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

702 military leader (A'san) appointed by the chief.
[857] Each desam had its gymnasium (kalari) into which all retainer-Nayar boys were inducted at the age of seven. Their training in gymnastics and swordsmanship lasted nine years, after which they received their arms at the hand of the king
701 and were accorded the title of Nayar. After this age every able-bodied Nayar man was perpetually in military training until he reached the age of retirement or until he was obliged to succeed to the headship of his matrilineal property-group
[541] and retire to manage its lands. In peacetime, mock fights were organized between Nayars of adjacent villages or of adjacent nads, and jousting was conducted at the court for the entertain-
726 ment of the royal family. In war, the Nayars
[714] fought naked: their arms were the sword, bow, lance and the bow and arrow, though gunpowder was also used, at least by the more important Rajas. Battles between enemy kingdoms appear to have been stylized. Not more than 10,000 men were commonly brought into the field at one time, and severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Nambudiri emissaries who, if fighting became intense, entered the battle field and arbitrated between its leaders. [32] If however the king or a chief were slain, his subjects must fight to the death until their honour was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side. The aim of such
721 battles appears to have been solely to gain control over the military power of nads of adjacent kingdoms, together with certain payments of tribute by conquered chieftains, and also to gain

721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 The power of the king to command his Nayar
701 retainers was checked by periodic assemblies
664 of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

692 Within the kingdom, justice was administered
681 at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

692 shrine and temporary ostracism were the chief
681 punishments, but at least among Iravas, grave offenders were sometimes excommunicated with the consent of the janmi and sold in slavery to
623 Arab traders. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages, who met
[582] chiefly at marriages and funerals. In all of these castes, the local group of the assembly, while not strictly endogamous, was the group within which the majority of marriages took place.

631 Among retainer-Nayars, the local group might
692 comprise either one large desam, or a group of
681 two to four adjacent desams when these were occupied by retainer Nayars of the same subcaste. Such an area was called a tara in South Malabar and a kara in Cochin, the assembly, a tara-koottam or kara-yogam. The assembly comprised the headmen of all Nayar property-groups who met to settle intra-caste disputes, adjudicate in trials of offences against caste law, and arrange the public ceremonies of their common Bhagavadi temple. Offences such as wrongful interdining with low caste men, small debts, thefts and adultery with women of the lower polluting castes were punished by fines paid to [34] the Bhagavadi temple, or in grave cases by excommunication, and sale into slaver. Similarly intra-caste offences were settled among desavaris within an assembly of the nad, and among nadavaris within an assembly of the kingdom. The local Nayar assembly also had power to arbitrate in disputes and offences against the village at large among the lower castes. Some

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[56] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
[595] had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

596 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
[595] might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
[597] many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

613 In the royal lineages, since each lineage,
582 though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate
837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with [37] Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, ~~who~~ though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 when they had established themselves as of high
582 ritual rank, and when some of their vassal lin-
837 eages had died out, the Zamorins too looked only to Nambudiri for genitors. Royal men similarly had liaisons with women of the lower matrilineal subcastes, as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms.

582 Among temples servants, retainer-Nayars
837 and middle class Nayars, the majority of unions took place between individuals of the same subcaste. A small proportion of retainer and middle class Nayar women had liaisons with Nambudiris of the lower subcastes, Embrandiri Brahman priests (who followed the same descent system as Nambudiris) or with royal, chiefly, village headmen or temple servant men. In the Nayar village headmen's lineages, a larger proportion of women had liaisons with men of the chiefly or royal lineages, or with Nambudiris; and in the chiefs' lineages, with royal or Nambudiri men, though in these subcastes too, individuals of the same subcaste but different lineages might have unions with each other. Similarly, a small [38] proportion of men in each Nayar subcaste, down to re tainers, had liaisons with Nayar women of a lower subcaste, down to the rank of middle class Nayars. Chart I shows the mutual ritual ranking and the direction of hypergamous unions between the higher castes of the kingdom. In the temple servant castes, whose occupational allegiance was exclusively with Nambudiris, women had liaisons either with Nambudiris or with men of their own caste. There was no intermarriage either way between temple

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village headmen, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

Hypergamous unions, even more than other
582 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
613 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the
837 lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate in his natal household and was maintained by it; he visited his mistress after supper and left before breakfast, after which he took a purifying bath before re-entering his natal house. He might not eat in his mistress's household, and following the morning bath might not touch her or his children. The only exception to these
[644] residential rules arose in the case of Nambudiris who had liaisons with royal women. These were received as temporary occupants of the palace and housed in separate buildings at the expense of the royal lineage, at some distance from the buildings occupied by the princes and the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri genitors of Nayar children, however, they [39] visited their mistresses at night and in the daytime carried out their ritual duties in private, attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serving men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
571 knit together the several castes concerned with the secular administration and with the religious law and public rituals of the state. Though not recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly members of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

613 lineages still take pride in the fact that for cen-
837 turies, their lineages have been partly fathered
571 by men of the higher castes of royalty, chiefs, and (particularly) priests. The allegiance of Nayar soldiers to their headmen, of headmen to their chiefs, and of chiefs to the king, was undoubtedly strengthened by this network of sexual ties, as was the unity of the secular and religious hierarchies, which might otherwise have been opposed.

613 IV The Traditional Lineage System of the Nayars

(1) Structure and Functions

[621] In each traditional village, four to six "military" Nayar lineages of one subcaste was present as retainers of the janmi. The retainer lineage commonly had a depth of nine to twelve generations and usually comprised between 12 to 100 members, It was called a taravad, derived from tara, the word for the raised foundation on which a house is built. Taravad can mean both the members of a lineage, living and dead, and the ancestral house from which they sprang: it corresponds to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and place. The members of a taravad are a group, usually of actual and not merely putative matrilineal kin, descended from a common ancestress (whose name may or may not be known), but they describe themselves as a group whose matrilineal forbears once lived in one house. That their lineage should be associated with the house befits the sedentary economy of the Nayars and the importance of their ancestral land. Powerful

613 Powerful emotional ties bind a Nayar to his ancestral
[342] land and to his house, which is large and beautifully constructed of whitewashed laterite, carved wooden pillars and a tiled roof. The lineage-names of retainer-Nayars are the names of original ancestral sites in the village, e.g., Kirakkutt Velappil ("Eastern Garden"). Desavari lineages take the name of their desam, chiefly lineages of their nad, and royal lineages of their kingdom. The knowledge that their matrilineal forbears once jointly owned a house and land holds lineage-members together.

[361] Except in unusual circumstances (i.e., if it is dying out) a lineage comprises several households, traditionally congregated in separate gardens some distance apart on a stretch of dry land
613 in the village. Today with the vast increase in
596 population during British rule, a lineage may comprise up to 20 or more households; traditionally, it seems usually to have contained about four to ten. Each of these households comprised a segment of the lineage, [41] usually, a group of siblings together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. The household was also the unit whose members jointly owned ancestral garden land, kanam rice lands and movable property: I call it a property-group. The lineage as a whole (unless it were dying out and comprised only one property-group) owned no property in common and its members had no economic cooperation as a group.

613 The lineage was exogamous, and matrilineal kinship terms were extended throughout its

613 range. The rule of exogamy, and the sense of close kinship which bound members of a lineage meant that the local subcaste group of the kara (whether this comprised one or more lineages) was divided into a small number of compact groups. At assemblies the members separated out into lineage groupings. Only the legal heads (karanavans) of property-groups attended such assemblies, and within each lineage these tended to defer to each other on the basis of age, spokesmanship being left to the eldest man(also sometimes called a karanavan) of the lineage as a whole.

613 681 Though it owned no property in common, the lineage was in some contexts a corporate group in the sense of having legal responsibility for its members' acts. If some member of a lineage broke a caste law, for example by dining or fornicating with a low caste person or failing to pay dues to the temple, his whole lineage was temporarily ostracized by the assembly until it called him to book. [42] His property-group must then pay a fine (prayaschittam) to the assembly and he must go through a rite of purification before his lineage could be readmitted to caste. In cases of grave offence such as fornication with a Paraya woman, his lineage was during British rule ostracized until he had been excommunicated from lineage and caste and his funeral rites performed; during native rule until he had been executed by order of the chief of the king.

613 628 In other ways, the lineage held itself responsible for disputes entered into by its members.

613 Even in the last 50 years, quarrels between men
628 of different lineages, usually over field-boundaries or women, have resulted in prolonged hostility, sometimes with fighting, between their lineages. In South Malabar and Cochin, such hostility between individual lineages could not take the form of actual blood-feuds (kudipaga) such as were known in the politically less centralized area of North Malabar. These were prevented by the strong organization of the village assembly, the power of desavari and naduvari, and the existence of the royal court. Fighting between groups of men of different lineages, as between groups of men of adjacent villages owing allegiance to different and sometimes mutually hostile desavaris, was soon stopped by the appropriate local authority - the desavari in the first case and the naduvari in the second. If however a Nayar were slain by a man of another lineage, his matrilineal kinsmen had the right sanctioned by the king to place his body in the [43] house or the outhouse of his slayer and burn house and coprse together. His lineage might then, after paying a fee to the naduvari, select one of their number to fight a duel to the death with a chosen man of the slayer's lineage in order to avenge the murder. The lineage was thus a corporate group in contexts involving murder and offences against the religious laws of the caste, though the property-group was the corporate group in contexts involving disputes over property.

613 The individual lineage was linked to its local
602 subcastes assembly by the institution of enangar.
621

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
[865] were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

581 perpetuate their lineage. Shortly before or after
613 puberty, they might, following this ceremony,
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons
621 (called sambandham - "joining together") with
581 one or more men of their own or an appropriate
613 higher subcaste, including, if they wished, the
man who had tied the tali. These men visited
them in their natal houses at night. Similarly a
Nayar man, (whether or not he had ever performed a tali-rite) might enter into relationships
with any number of women of his own or an
appropriate lower subcaste. These marital
customs are further discussed below: here it
is relevant to point only to the role of the enangar bridegroom. Since the e nangar stand to the
lineage as formal representatives of the local
subcaste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tali-rite as a ceremony at which the [46]
subcaste group as a whole "married" the immature girls of the lineage as a whole, and ritually
set free their procreative powers for the perpetuation of their lineage. It was also significant in that it appears that in general among the
Nayars, enangar relationships between lineages
(i.e., hereditary intergroup relationships) fulfilled the functions of integrating the total local
community which in many unilineal systems
(e.g., the patrilineal system of the lower castes)
are fulfilled by interpersonal cognatic and affinal ties. This was possible, and necessary, because the marital tie was so weak among Nayars
that all the interpersonal kinship ties between
individuals of different lineages were also insufficiently stable to carry these functions of
ritual and other social cooperation.

000 ritual and other social cooperation.

613 (2) Ritual Cooperation in the Lineage
783 In addition to the joint performance of the pre-puberty marriage rite, members of a lineage were united in ritual observances at a birth or death. On each of these occasions, all members fell for fourteen days into a condition of ritual pollution (pula) in which they might not touch, eat with, or enter into the houses of other members of their caste, enter the public temples or bathing pools of the village, enter their own ancestor shrines, sacred snake groves or other sacred places of their lineage, or take part in everyday social life. This period of ritual pollution resembled one of temporary excommunication from caste, the only difference being that those ostracized were regarded by others with special friendliness rather than hostility. It effectively set apart the lineage as a solidary group at times of crisis in its history, and gave recognition to their joint concern with increase or decrease in their membership.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship
794 of the lineage goddess or dharma devi ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, is a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi, and in this context was probably though of as a primeval ancestress of the lineage, though I lack data definitely to indicate this. Her idol was housed in a small shrine in the precincts of the oldest ancestral house, or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of

613 794 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a pre-puberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 608 621 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage

Since lineages were usually groups of actual and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own sub-caste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

1 [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess---Analyst]

613 by the local janmi, was formally accepted into
608 the Nayar assembly of its new area, and was
621 accorded enangar relations with some of the lineages already present. If the incoming segment was small, it was customary for it to ally itself with one or other established lineages for the performance of the first tali-rite. This set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the new segment and the old lineage, which must henceforth observe exogamy. Such fictitious matrilineal kinship, while serving to keep stable the size and number of exogamous groups in the village, was relevant only to intergroup relations in the microcosmic political life of [49] the village and not to matters which concerned only lineage members and had to do with their interpersonal family life. Thus, death and birth pollutions were not extended to include the incoming segment, which for several generations observed these in common with other segments of its parent-lineage, and with them also continued to worship the lineage goddess in their ancestral village. After some generations, however, the old matrilineal ties were forgotten or (if distance from the parent lineage was great) deliberately sundered, until in time even the rule of exogamy might unwittingly be broken and a division of the original lineage finally completed. If it had increased in numbers the new segment became a complete lineage in its own right; if not, it might gradually come to be regarded as a "real" genealogical branch of its host lineage in the new village.

Even within one village, a lineage might

613 become so large that over many generations
608 members of distant segments forgot that they
621 were matrilineal kin, ceased to observe joint pollution, and finally broke the rule of exogamy. One case of this came to my notice in the Cochin village I studied. A man and woman of two lineages which were not enangar, and for some reason unknown to my informants, had never been known to intermarry, entered into a liaison. Certain elders of the village then began to look into the history of the two lineages and to wonder whether long ago, they might have been matrilineal kin or putative matrilineal kin by joint performance of the [50] tali-rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to younger members of the village, however, the liaison continued and thus what was probably an ancient tie of lineage exogamy was tacitly broken.

[597] Cases of extinction of a lineage were rare, since if one property group were without women in any generation it was customary to adopt one or more girls from collateral property groups of the same lineage and thus continue to perpetuate all the property-groups. In rare cases of the extinction of a lineage, its jenmam lands eschested to the king for reallocation to another lineage, and its kanam lands to the janmi. Today, the property of a group with no women is divided equally between surviving male members and inherited after their deaths by their wives and children.

613 (4) Succession and Segmentation in the Lineage
587 Among retainer Nayars whose lineages owned

613 no political office, the role of oldest man of the
587 lineage was unimportant. His voice was heard respectfully in the village assembly, he might be regarded as an authority on traditional custom, and he was accorded special respect as an arbitrator in village disputes. He had, however, no sanctioned authority within the lineage and could be set politely aside by the heads of its other property-groups in crucial matters affecting joint action by the group. Overall headship in the lineage became important only for desavaris, chiefs and royalty where political office was vested in the oldest man, [51] irrespective of branch. Even here, however, authority inhered chiefly in the political office and could be exercised (in a political sense) only over members of lower subcastes and (in a kinship sense) over members of the office-bearer's own property-group. A king, chief or village headman had no rights to interfere in the management of other property-groups of his own lineage, each of which had its separate karanavan as legal guardian of its members. Indeed in the case of most royal and chiefly lineages, the senior office-bearer had no rights to management even in the property-group into which he was born: he was set apart on a separate landed estate and headship of his property-group passed to the next younger man. The dimension of authority, like that of economic cooperation, was therefore absent from the lineage and inhered instead in the hierarchy of political offices on the one hand, and in individual property-groups on the other.

613 Within each lineage, even today when it may

613 comprise ten to twenty property-groups, exact genealogical relationships, and the order of segmentation of the several branches, are usually though not invariably known by elders. Members of very distantly related segments of the same lineage may however gradually cease to use kinship terms for each other and in any case tend to feel less strong emotional ties for each other than do members of more recently partitioned segments. These are of course closest [52] between property groups which have recently partitioned, those whose recent ancestresses were all born in one house. The order of segmentation of the lineage is also recognized in that should a property-group be allowed to die out, its property customarily reverts in equal shares to segments of the same order as itself - those which formed one unit with it before the most recent partition - rather than to the lineage as a whole.

But in other ways, the order of segmentation in a lineage is unimportant for the structuring of social relations. Segments intermediate between the property-group and the lineage have no special property, activities or ceremonies, and no headmen, and their members never meet to the exclusion of other lineage members. Neither do whole intermediate segments oppose
[627] each other in quarrels between their individual members. These remain restricted to the property-groups of the disputants and are normally settled voluntarily through appeal to some popular arbitrator of the village or, if they become serious, are forcibly settled by intervention of the assembly.

613 the assembly.

Though the order of segmentation is known in the taravad and is relevant to reversion of property, to the emotional strength of matrilineal ties, and to ultimate division of the group into new exogamous taravads, the Nayars cannot therefore be said to have a lineage in the strict British sense of a system in which "minimal groups of unilineal kin combine into larger groups in contrast to [53] other groups of like nature which in turn combine until a maximal lineage or clan is formed as a capstone to the whole structure." (4) However, since it does not appear certain that matrilineal lineages of this type exist anywhere, yet since the term "matrilineage" is in current use to describe corporate groups of a matrilineal society in which the order of segmentation is known, I use this word to describe corporate groups of a matrilineal society in which the order of segmentation is known, I use this word to describe the taravad.

421 V The Traditional Kinship System

(1) The Property-Group

(a) The Corporate Character of the Group

A traditional property-group was a small segment of the lineage, usually comprising a group of brothers and sisters by the same mother, and the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint property-owning unit: its members, male and female, were from birth equal copartners in the buildings, gardens, kanam and janmam lands, movables, ritual objects and serfs owned by the group. The group

421 was headed by its oldest male member (karana-
van) who was the legal guardian of all members
and represented them in the local subcaste as-
sembly. When spoken of in its own right the
property-group, like the lineage, was called a
taravad; when spoken of as a segment of the lin-
eage it was called a tavari (lit. - "mother's
line"). Tavari could also be used of any inter-
mediate segment of the lineage or of a minimal
segment of one [54] mother and her children with-
in the property-group had a separate garden
name in addition to its lineage-name: each indiv-
idual was called by his taravad-name, property-
group name, personal name and caste-title (e.g.,
Kolangatt Thekkedil Govindan Nayar - "In the
place of the bathing pool, the southern side,
Govindan Nayar.")

421 Usually, a property-group owned only one
592 house and was simultaneously a dwelling group.
In wealthier desavari and naduvari lineages,
however, a group which increased in size might
build two or more adjacent houses. In some
cases a minimal segment descended from one
sister occupied each of these houses, and cook-
ing was separate. Much more commonly, the
two adjacent houses would be used indiscrimin-
ately by all members, cooking being carried on
in only one.

592 A traditional house of the retainer or desavari
342 subcastes comprises a central large building
with two storeys, separate staircases for men
and women, and in the centre of it a separate
courtyard open to the sky. The house faces
east and is fronted by a spacious verandah used

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group --- Analyst]

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
[778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at
[764] a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man,

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

592 nagas or cobra-deities which were believed to
782 guard each group were housed in the snake-grove in a corner of the garden and annually given offerings of milk and eggs by the karanavan in the presence of members. As well as warding
592 off ordinary sickness and misfortune they were
782 particularly [58] believed responsible for the fertility or barrenness of taravad women. Special offerings were made to them if a woman failed to conceive, and a performance was held a at which men and women of a low caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the snakes in the grove to appear. A
[787] group of women of the taravad, after purifying themselves by fasting and sex-continence for several days previously, then became possessed by the snake-gods (who are said to have "entered into them") and performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voice of the snakes and announce what propitiations were necessary to appease
[158] them. Sometimes the ceremony ended with one or more women falling into a fit. It seems
592 fairly certain that the snake-gods were (as so
786 commonly elsewhere) worshipped as phallic symbols. Since they were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forbears, but were capable of alternately withholding fertility from taravad women or causing them to conceive, it is a plausible guess that they collectively symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property-group, who had been so essential to its perpetuation yet

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual sexual promiscuity within the caste, and minimal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus Complex [59] which caused men to fear and propitiate the phallic representatives of their fathers, and women to have fantasies about "possession" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfortunately snake worship is now practically extinct; I never saw it, and found present-day informants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic, dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility of the father, which must have been experienced by Nayar children since they slept, and do today, in the mother's room till age four or five and have opportunity to witness parental intercourse, would be repressed before latency and leave its mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about the father which could be translated into the cultural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods. Such archaic representations contrast with the less distorted ones of male forbears of the taravad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

592 devoted to dead karanavans' spirits, opening off
769 the inner courtyard, contains a number of small
778 wooden stools on which the spirits are believed to come and sit. In those branches of the taravad which have remained in situ for many generations, retaining [60] an old ancestral house while collateral segments hived off into new ones (6), the ancestor shrine contains many stools, placed in order and named with the names of the karanavans going back to the first of the segment or of the lineage as a whole. In newer houses built by segments which have recently left the parent house there may be only one or two, starting with the stool of the man who built the house and was its first karanavan. (7) Offerings of cooked good, with delicacies of the kind most enjoyed by the recipient during his lifetime, are made before each stool by the living karanavan, in the presence of all members, twice annually on the new moon days of April-
592 May and October-November. The spirits of
769 dead karanavans are thought of as vindictive and
152 fearsome, ever prone to take offence against living members who fail in any of the details of ritual performances and general care of the taravad house and lands which are their duty, and to vent hostility on them out of all proportion to their offence. They are placated with fear and reverence but without affection. Their character contrasts with that of the patrilineal ancestral spirits of Tamil Brahmans, who are thought of as harmless, straving, lonely, pitiful beings who must be given food to sustain them in the life in the world of the dead. This

592 difference in the character of ancestral spirits
769 probably relates to the fact that among Nayars,
152 hostility to the mother's brother, the karanavan and all older men, though curbed by strict rules of etiquette and [61] social distance, is often either fully conscious or dealt with by projection: the mother's brother may be thought of as persecuting and his discipline strongly resented, though loyalty to the mother and the group prevents a man from openly venting his aggression. Among Brahmans, aggressive impulses against the father, elder brothers and other older men are deeply repressed; such older male figures are thought of a protective and nurturant, and inner opposition to them arouses much guilt. Perhaps because of this, their spirits are also harmless, and what is projected in beliefs about them is rather the individual's own oral dependency longings.

592 The propitiation only of heads of the property-
769 groups, by the living head on behalf of all members, underlines the corporate character of the group. Brahmans instead propitiate each man his own line of recent patrilineal forbears - father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather and their wives - thus emphasizing the strength of the asymmetrical interpersonal tie between father and son, at the expense of the
592 solidarity of the patrilineal group. Among Na-
602 yars, interpersonal relations between men of the matrilineal group are neither structurally strong nor emotionally intense: men are bound to the group and incidentally to each other by their primary ties to women (mother and sisters); rivalry between them is acute and they are kept

592 together only by loyalty to the group as a whole
602 and a sense of pride in being able to submit to discipline from male elders for the sake of their natal kinswomen. A man may be extremely proud of his taravad and of his karanavan as a good manager and spokesman, but he has a less intimate personal relationship with him than does a patrilineal man with his father. In the Brahman patrilineal extended family, by contrast, individual interpersonal ties between father and son and between brothers, who form the core of the group, may be marked by deep devotion, while loyalty to the patrilineal lineage as a corporate unit, and its overall solidarity, are much weaker.

592 (c) The Splitting of Property-Groups
571 The property-groups of retainer Nayars divide at a particular point in their development. The Nayars themselves do not know this. They regard partition of the property-group as an unfortunate occurrence which takes place because of the greed or envy of individual men, or because of unwonted increase in the membership of the group. It is true that before the increase in population of the hundred years, individual property-groups must often have remained intact over many generations, simply reproducing their numbers. However, genealogies from the histories I collected of over thirty taravads show that retainer property-groups in fact partition with unfailing regularity at a particular point in their development. This occurs when the group contains two or more segments descended

592 from sisters, whose maternal uncles and broth-
571 ers are all dead, and when each segment has an adult son or [63] grandson old enough to become karanavan in his own right. Since the armies were disbanded and men came home to live on their estates (about 1810), it is probable that groups have partitioned slightly more quickly than they formerly did, for over the past hundred years men have considered themselves old enough to become karanavans of new groups (if their uncles and older brothers are all dead) by the age of 30 to 40, whereas they appear traditionally to have been still in the army until about the age of 50. But the structure of the group at its time of partition appears to have been the same at all periods until the most recent(discussed later.) Traditionally, as long as the karanavan is own brother, mother's brother or mother's mother's brother to all members of the group, partition cannot take place, because men cannot separate from their mothers and sisters. A sibling group can never split into two, nor a junior man secede from his own mother's brother: the relationship between these men is an inter-personal one and they are within the same minimal segment of the lineage. Partition can take place only between men of different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.) who are no longer held together by common submission to a living karanavan of the parental or grandparental generation, and whose relationship is therefore structured in terms of the relationship between groups.

592 [64] Every woman is thus the potential founder
571 of a property-group, and often, after her brothers have in turn been karanavans and are dead, she lives to see her segment's property divided from that of her sisters, and her son or even daughter's son established as head of her group. However, some women do not of course become founders of groups, either because they have no children or because they have only daughters who themselves become founders in their own right when their sons are old enough. Again, a group of brothers with no sisters was traditionally unlikely to form a separate group, since they would have no women to perpetuate their group(or for that matter, to cook for them). They would be likely to remain volunatrily attached to a parallel segment, succeeding, along with their classificatory brothers, to karanavanship as they became in turn oldest member of the group. Alternatively they might split away and adopt one or more girls from collateral segments to perpetuate their separate group.

In all cases of partition, division of the property was stirpital: equal shares accrued to segments of the same order which were descended from sisters. The segment which contained the old karanavan at the time of partition usually retained the ancestral house.

592(d) Kinship Relations within the Group
602 The karanavan was traditionally unequivocal
868 head of the group. He managed the property, built new houses, repaired the old, leased land from the janmi, and controlled [65] the labour

592 of serfs. He could command all other members,
602 male or female, and children were trained to
868 obey him with reverence. He[1] had the rights of a pater over small children: till puberty he was responsible for having them educated in Malayalam reading and writing, must discipline them like a father in patriliny, and might beat them if they disobeyed. Even today in orthodox
[593] houses, the father of a child has no share at all in the karanavan's rights of pater: he may not interfere in education or discipline or question the karanavan's right to dispose of a child's career and services.

As their legal guardian, the karanavan must traditionally pass on to young men the martial traditions, swords and other weapons of the taravad. He must educate them also in the management of lands and serfs and the cultivation of gardens. Even today in villages, every Nayar has expert knowledge of paddy and garden cultivation and the planning of household architecture. Such information is learned with great care from the karanavan and younger brothers of the mother, all of whom play a part in the child's education after the age of four to five. In spite of interpersonal rivalry between men, Nayars show great loyalty to the group as a whole, pride in the military skill, dignity and financial integrity of their karanavans of past ages, and eagerness to identify with their mothers' brothers and eventually take their place as leaders of the property-group. This pride in the offices and public status of the group is of course most marked in royal lineages, [66] but

1 [the Karanavan --- Analyst]

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men; [827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

592 few juniors avail themselves of this right, which
602 is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals
671 of obedience and trust towards elders of the
taravad.

592 Even traditionally, however, both junior men
602 and women were often consulted in the manage-
695 ment of property. If a dispute arose between
421 segments within the group, it was common for
appeal to be made to an arbitrator outside the
lineage, and a settlement reached and embodied
in a document called a karar, which legally bound
all adult members. Such a settlement was likely
in the case of a very old karanavan who decided
to retire in favour of the second man. In a
wealthy taravad he might then by common con-
sent be allotted a small house and pension for
the duration of his life. In desavari and naduvari
taravads, karars were sometimes made to allot
separate houses with lands for the maintenance
of each of the old women of the group (often the
karanavan's own sisters) to live on with their
children and grandchildren. All lands continued
to be managed by the karanavan, but he paid a
sum of paddy from her allotted lands each year
to the senior woman of each segment. If one
sibling group in a taravad contained only broth-
ers, a karar was sometimes made to allot to
them a separate house with lands for the dura-
tion of their lives; this then reverted to the group
as a whole after their deaths. Karars are how-
ever common only in village headmen's, chiefly
or royal taravads: too little property is usually
592 involved in the taravads of retainer Nayars.
602 Here effective management is commonly divided

592 between the karanavan and the oldest woman.
602 The former carries out all economic transactions outside the group and controls the total income; he also keeps the key of the outer granary in the courtyard. The latter plans cookery, keeps the keys of paddy chests within the house, organized the work of women and presents to the karanavan her requirements for day-to-day expenditures. (8) Particularly when the karanavan is the son or own younger brother of the oldest woman, management runs smoothly and the oldest woman may be de facto head of the group. If she is a younger sister or classificatory sister a more formal division of roles is common.

[601] Under the karanavan, men of the group are ranked by seniority. All those older than ego are sometimes collectively called karanavar and are accorded respect and obedience (within the limits set by overall obedience to the head) all younger, whether they be mother's brothers, younger brothers, maternal nephews or great nephews, may be commanded and disciplined. The social distance between men of a property-group is great, far greater than between father and son, or between brothers, in any patrilineal South Indian group. Indeed, though learning and skills are passed on between them, the relationships between men are, when possible, formalized to the point of avoidance. By traditional etiquette, a man may not touch his karanavan or any maternal uncle; before approaching him he must remove his upper cloth. To speak to the karanavan he stands respectfully half hidden

592 from sight behind a pillar, holding his hand be-
602 fore his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. [69] With younger mother's brothers more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's etiquette is necessarily relaxed, but he observes the greatest possible formal respect before them. A similar etiquette is preserved before older brothers and classificatory brothers: after puberty these never joke, sit or chew betal and areca nuts together. A junior man never sits before his senior except at mealtimes when all men may sit in the dining hall in order of age, served by women of the group who eat later in company in the kitchen. In general, age overrides generation and also segment in the formal structuring of relationships between men of a property-group: mother's mother's brother is accorded the same etiquette as mother's brother, and classificatory older brother as older brother. Emotionally, however, there tends to be less acrimony and more tenderness, as might be expected, between alternate than between proximal generations; there is also a strong tendency for own siblings to support each other against classificatory sib-
613 lings. This is part of the process of clear-cut
593 segmentation in the lineage along lines descending through sisters: it culminates regularly in quarrels between classificatory brothers and division of property between the segments. This process of segmentation throughout the whole lineage derives from the paramount strength of the mother-child bond, the key-pin of the kinship system. For both men and women,

613 no other personal relationship can override this:
593 both sexes have their permanent home with the mother throughout her life and accord her unfailing [70] reverence and affection. From this bond issues the unity of the sibling group, (9) particularly the strong tie between brother and sister which emotionally reflects the dependence of men on their mothers. With the elder sister as with the mother a man has an intimate relationship of reverence mingled with easy familiarity: the two may sit together and discuss affairs of their kin-group, and the sister early accords her brother the right to discipline her children. With her elder brother, as with her maternal uncle, after her puberty, a woman must maintain a formal etiquette of partial avoidance: she may not sit before him speak to him unasked, or be alone in a room or a house with him. Only if she gravely offends against traditional morality, he may traditionally beat her even after puberty, for a Nayar woman owes the same obedience to all older matrilineal kinsmen as a collectivity as does a woman of the patrilineal castes to her father and later her
[684] husband. Incest with the younger sister or classificatory sister or sister's daughter is a most heinous crime, formerly punishable by death, and in modern times by total ostracism by the caste and lineage. It does however occasionally take place and is evidently recognized as a temptation under matrilocal residence, hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.
592 In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the

592 periphrey, though the legal power is in their hands. They are bound to it by their interpersonal ties with their mothers and sisters, [71] hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.

In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the periphery, though the legal power is in their hands. They are bound to it by their interpersonal ties with their mothers and sisters, but to some extent drawn away from it by their mutual rivalries and by their sexual liaisons with women in other lineages. The bonds between a woman and her daughters, as between sisters, are much more intense and less rivalrous than are those between men of the group. Residential separation, between a woman and her daughters, even for visits of more than a day or two, is traditionally unthinkable, and sisters even today often stay together until torn apart by the rivalries of their respective children. Cooking is communal in a taravad: the mother or oldest woman arranges the division of female labour. Apart from clothing (freely borrowed between women), property, even jewelry, is communally owned. Though a general respect is owed to all older women, the etiquette of behavior between them is easy and informal. In the house, the small group of one woman and her children receives little spatial recognition. In the daytime, all work and play together in the kitchen, upstairs rooms and back verandah; at night, older children sleep with their grandmothers in the main hall, while young ones go

592 with their parents into any convenient vacant
[582] room. At the same time, the separate, unique role of each woman as potential founder of a new taravad is recognized in certain rules: both sororate and sororal polygymy are traditionally forbidden, for example, since the inter-personal unity between sisters, as well as their separate positions each at the head of a line of matrilineal descendants, must not be endangered or distorted by their extra-lineage ties.

592 [72] (2) The Traditional Institution of Marriage.
581 Consistent with the unity and multiplex economic, legal and ceremonial functions of the taravad as a corporate group, marriage was traditionally the slenderest of ties, while as a
592 social concept fatherhood scarcely existed. We
582 have mentioned already that at the tali-rite of
608 retainer, middle class and servant Nayars and of temple servants, the immature girls of a lineage were collectively "married" and divorced before puberty by their local caste group as a whole, represented by their individual enangar. In desavari, chiefly and royal lineages the tali was usually tied by a man of a higher subcaste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers for its women in hypergamous liaisons. The women of desavari lineages were thus usually "married" by naduvari men, naduvari and royal women either by Nambudiri men or by men of some higher-ranking royal lineage more ancient than their own. In all castes, the talitier had no subsequent responsibilities and if he wished need never visit the woman again.

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognized the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

595 Traditionally, the visiting lover placed his wea-
833 pons outside the door as a warning to other men that he was within. My informants reported that more recently, until the end of the nineteenth century in some villages, if two lovers of a woman called on the same night the one who came last slept outside on the verandah. Usually the regular lovers of a woman (who might not be from the same lineage) knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

595 It is difficult to decide from the evidence whether this instution of combined polyandrous and polygynous mating can strictly be regarded as "marriage" in any usual sense of the term. Personally, I prefer the word "marriage" for the ritual marriage of talikettukalyanam (which old English speaking Nayars even today state to have been "the real marriage"), because it gave ceremonial recognition, to a stable relationship of perpetual hereditary affinal kinship between lineages in the local group. Moreover, although exclusive sexual rights in the woman were given up at once at the "divorce", the observance of death [74] pollution by the woman and her children indicates that in some sense the relationship was thought to continue for life.

595 However, the evidence suggests that post-
684 puberty liaisons too were perhaps not entirely
851 promiscuous; moreover, the more permanent of them at all events were attended by ceremonial obligations. First, liaisons were strictly limited to men of the appropriate "good" castes: sex unions with men of lower caste were categorically forbidden and for women, punishable

595 by immediate death. For this reason it was
684 necessary, when a woman became pregnant, for
685 her to be able to name one or more lovers of appropriate subcaste who might have fathered the child. These men must then acknowledge their responsibility by paying the expenses of delivery (petta chilavu - clothing, rice and vegetables) to the barber-midwife who attended at births. If no appropriate lover came forward to do so, the woman was deemed to have cohabited with a low caste man and was excommunicated. Even today, a girl who becomes pregnant before the (modern) marriage ceremony is easily exculpated if she can name a Nayar or higher caste lover who will pay her deliver expenses. She is then by old custom tacitly regarded as having been married to him, and if he chooses not to visit her again, has little difficulty in finding a second husband. If however no expenses are paid, she is assumed to have had relations with a low caste man, a Christian or a Muslim, and though excommunication is not now effectual, she falls into social disgrace. She is unlikely henceforth to find a Nayar husband, and her household may find difficulty in marrying away other girls of her generation

595 In addition to the delivery expenses, a Nayar
586 of the local subcaste group who entered into a relationship with a girl was expected to present her with a loincloth on the first night of visiting her. Thereafter, if he continued to visit her, he must make customary gifts of clothing, [75] bathing- and hair-oil, and vegetables, at Onam, Vishu and Tiruvadhira, (10) the three main

595 [586] festivals of the year. If he failed to do so on one of these occasions, it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. However, it seems clear from the literature that though a woman might have a small number of regular visitors of her local group - or even only one - these had no exclusive sexual rights, and that she might receive others at will if they were passing through her village. The evidence in uncertain, however, about the total number of men a woman might entertain concurrently. Nicolo di Conti (1444) writes that "The Nayar women are allowed to take several husbands, so that some have ten or more". Varthema (1510), writes that "One woman has five, six or seven husbands, or even eight. And one sleeps with her one night and one another night" (p. 146). These reports suggest that the number of lovers a woman might have was limited. Hamilton states that in the eighteenth century this was definitely so, and that a woman might have "twelve but no more at one time." (p. 310) Barbosa, however, writing in 1520, says that "in addition to the three or four lovers whom every woman has, they never refuse themselves to any Brahmene or Nayre who gives them money." His view is supported by Pietro della Valle (1624), who says "The Gentile Nairi have no peculiar wives, but all women are common amongst them" (II, p. 379). It seems probable, therefore, that each woman had a small number of fairly regular lovers who made ceremonial gifts to her at the festivals, but that a man might without difficulty gain access to a strange woman when he was

595 away from his village on military service. Buchanan, as late as 1807, reports that Nayar women vied with each other as to the number of lovers they could obtain. (p. 411).

595 [76] Until late in the nineteenth century, women
584 evidently had freedom to choose their own lovers.
644 This was until recently still the case in the royal lineages, where women selected their lovers from a small group of aristocratic Nambudiri families. Young men of these families were introduced into the palaces by older kinsmen already established there, and might become ensconced as regular occupants of the Nambudiri quarters until such time as they were dismissed by their royal mistresses. The princes of the lineage appear to have had little say in arranging these unions. I was told by one informant that the senior Raja periodically held an audience at which Nambudiris currently living in the palace were presented to him by his secretaries, but that otherwise he had little knowledge of
595 marital life within the palace. Today, as also
584 in commoner lineages, this is no longer the case: monogamy has been customary in all subcastes for the past forty to fifty years, and the prospective husband of a woman is selected by her karanavan or elder brother. In orthodox families of the retainer subcastes, at least for the past fifty years, the karanavan or the elder brother of a woman has had the right to dismiss a husband of whom he disapproved. Alternatively
[586] a woman may still, as of old, divorce her husband at will by refusing him admittance or causing her kinsmen to place his sleeping mat

584 outside on the verandah before he comes to visit
595 her.

These statements however again require some modification in the case of hypergamous unions. In recent years at all events, a powerful Nambudiri or royal landowner might occasionally force his attentions on a Nayar woman, whose family would be unlikely to oppose him. In two cases I even heard of Nambudiris who had succeeded in carrying on a liaison with a dead Nayar wife's younger sister, though this is contrary to Nayar rules of mating and led to unhappiness and strong covert [77] disapproval among the woman's kinsmen. In general, however, the traditional picture of Nayar marriage is one in which women voluntarily seek the favours of men: rape, for example, is a crime
[684] apparently unheard of among them. Certainly, cases are recorded of the dismissal of a higher caste man by a Nayar woman.

613 Combined polyandrous and polygynous mating
595 had a function in maintaining the unity of the
592 lineage. It seems that in every matrilineal system one basic conflict is inherent, namely the conflict between a man's ties to his natal kin on the one hand and to his kin by marriage and procreation on the other. In the Nayar system in this area, the conflict was resolved by almost completely eliminating the claims of the father and his kin. Polyandry and polygyny, combined, minimized the rights of the husband and father, and dispersed their roles between a number of men. This preserved the unity of the lineage, by preventing the close attachment of men to

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated without religious rites) underlined the necessity to the lineage of marriage and procreation, and the exclusion of the individual husband and father from a legally and socially significant role in relation to it.

594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them. This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in the world, was evidently made possible by their specialized role as one caste group in a larger society in which, in general, marriage and the elementary family were institutionalized. First, the Nayar system could probably not have come about in any but a leisure class supported by the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of this, young Nayar men need give economic [78] support neither to their wives nor to their sisters. Women were the people who sat at home on the land; their maintenance was assured by the payment of rents from low caste tenants and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
585 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied men for their occupation as a mobile militia. In explaining their peculiar marriage relationships, I am inclined to emphasize the military organization even more than the status of Nayars

595
701

as a leisure class, since leisure classes without polyandry are common all over India.

The Nayars themselves appear to have recognized a connection between their occupation as a militia and the custom of plural marriages by which men were prevented from forming permanent attachments to wife and children. Barbosa, writing of plural marriages, reports that "it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (p. 124). Similarly Joao de Barros, writing in the early sixteenth century, says: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain prince to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike service to which they are bound whensoever the king calls upon them." (12)

Nayar marriage may thus perhaps be seen as comparable to other military institutions, for example the age sets of bachelors among the Masai (Merker, 1904, pp. 82-3) or the age regiments of the Zulus (Bryant, 1929, pp. 124, 642-7) in the reign of Shaka. In both these societies those groups of the population organized for warfare were prevented from forming attachments to wives and children. Shaka achieved this among the Zulus by compelling men of the age regiments [79] under 35 to 40 to remain (at least in theory) celibate. Among the Masai, a soldier might form as many connections as he wished, and promiscuous intercourse was encouraged between men of the bachelor age sets

595 and girls of suitable age. But only older men
701 were permitted to marry and form a household with their wives and children.

The similarity between systems like the Masai and the Nayar system is that in those groups of the population organized for warfare, male sexuality was divorced from the upbringing of children, which among Nayars took place within the lineage and concerned only lineage members. Among the Masai this freeing of a man's sexual life from the responsibilities of child-rearing concerned only certain age-groups of men, while in Calicut and Cochin it applied to the total male population of one caste.

595 The extent to which Nayar kinship was in-
701 fluenced by their relation to the land and by the
566 military organization becomes clearer when we
184 compare the kinship system in Calicut and Cochin with that of Nayars in the northern kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam and Kadattunad, north of the Kora River which formed the northern boundary of the Calicut kingdom at the height of the Zamorin's power.

Apart from the narrow coastal belt, the country in north Malabar was rocky and mountainous, and comprised much waste land and virgin forest. Perhaps because of this, the sparsely populated northern kingdom never achieved the degree of political centralization found in the central kingdom. Government was ostensibly by nadavaris owing a tenuous allegiance to their Rajas. In fact, however, in all these kingdoms chiefs perpetually rebelled against their Raja and shook off his power for long periods, while

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage: infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

582 Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well
595 as marriage to the dead spouse's sibling, were
835 thus automatically forbidden. This rule appears to relate to the paramount need to keep minimal the potential rivalries between individuals of the same sex within the group. It was also consistent with the relationship of respect between
585 them. Even today, when ceremonies mark the
602 start of the post-puberty marriage, a man's
595 lineage elders may not attend his marriage ceremonies and feast. He goes to the bride's house with unrelated friends of his own age or with affines, ideally, his sister's husbands. For marriage is a jolly undertaking and only such men may joke together about sexual scandals in the village. But [81] reticence is required in discussing their own marriage, and the respect a woman owes her older kinswomen demands that she interfere in no way in their marital life. Today, a woman treats her father or step-father with affectionate respect of a less formal kind than that accorded to the mother's brother, but she should not touch him after puberty. With her elder sister's husband she observes still greater formality, based on the incest prohibition. The ban on sororal polygyny is particularly comprehensible in view of the fact that Nayar women were traditionally open rivals for the attentions of men: many writers mention this and it is still discernible in villages today. The mutual respect and amity required of women of the same property-group was incompatible with such rivalry.

835 However, the ban on relations with two persons
582 of the same group was less stringent than the

835 rule of lineage exogamy. Even today, cases
582 occur very occasionally in which a man cohabits both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage, or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies. This appears to be because
[611] traditionally, only matrilineal kinsfolk are regarded as kin in the true sense of the word: incest prohibitions outside this range are a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

582 No other unions outside the lineage and within the appropriate caste appear traditionally to have been prohibited. Relations with the father's sister (or rather with the sister of the mother's lover, since paternity was often uncertain) were disfavoured because of generation difference but even today they are not prohibited. Unions were definitely permissible between the Nambudiri son and the Nayar daughter of a Nambudiri eldest son (i.e., between paternal step-siblings); it is [82] not certain whether they were ever permitted between two Nayars known to be paternal step-siblings, but they are not permitted today. Marriage to the brother's daughter and the paternal parallel cousin are still permitted, though they are not preferential marriages between Nayars. Marriage is however preferential between a Nambudiri and his paternal parallel cousin of a matrilineal caste. This is particularly true of unions between aristocratic Nambudiris and royal women, since it perpetuates a bond between two groups both of which are small and highly

582 specialized in wealth and power. This is the only case I know of in South India of preferential marriage to the paternal parallel cousin: it is a function of the unique hypergamous relationship between patrilineal and matrilineal castes.

Incest prohibitions were therefore in full harmony with the Nayar emphasis on the unity and exclusiveness of the matrilineage and their minimal recognition of marital and patrilineal ties.

582 Today, cross cousin marriage is much fav-
602 ored and serves to harmonize the modern conflicting claims of a man's natal and his conjugal kin. It has been common for at least a hundred years since polyandry began to die out. It was certainly of course permissible in the traditional system and must often have occurred, since enangar are often cross cousins and unions between enangar of the local group were presumably the most numerous and most stable. A likely guess is that a preference for unions between cross cousins, when these were known, traditionally existed alongside plural marriages, though the two seem at first sight mutually opposed. For these institutions (cross cousin marriage and very weak plural marriages) are both functions of the unity of the lineage. They are opposite, but alternative, methods of dealing with the "matrilineal puzzle". (13) When matrilineal bonds are of para-[83]mount strength as they were among the Nayars, a weak and transient conjugal tie is likely, because natal and conjugal ties inevitably oppose each other. Plural liaisons with frequent separation cater for matrilineal bonds by minimizing conjugal

582 ties, and these were traditionally the common
602 solution in this area. But even in a promiscuous community, it seems likely that the effective relationship between a man and children he believes to be his cannot always be altogether overridden and may assert itself in face of matrilineal ties. When this happens some other solution to the conflict is required. Cross cousin marriage, particularly matrilateral, (14) is one such partial solution, since it harmonizes for two members and for two generations of a lineage conjugal interests which would otherwise be opposed.

601 (4) Kinship Terms

As might be expected, the traditional Nayar terminology of this area includes terms only for matrilineal kin, their spouse, and the children of ego's wife. Today, terms are sometimes used to address cognates, but they are very seldom used in reference; descriptive terms like "my father's nephew" and my mother's father" are used instead. Contrary to the view of Murdock and Emeneau, (15) the Nayars of this area do not have a bifurcate merging system with Iroquois cousin terms: indeed none of the matrilineal groups of Kerala (North Malabar Nayars, Tiyyars and Muslims, South Malabar and Cochin Nayars, or Travancore Iravas and Nayars) have such a system, which in this region is confined to the patrilineal and double unilineal castes below Nayars.

Within the lineage, men of the first and second ascending generations are equated as "male

601 mothers" (ammaman), occasionally with prefixes "big" or "small" in the first ascending, according to age in relation to mother, and occasionally with prefixes "big oldest" and "small oldest" in the second [84] ascending, according to age in relation to grandmother. This equating of first and second generation males accords with the disciplinary powers of all older males, headed by the karanavan. Correspondingly, sister's children and sister's daughter's children are all marumakan (m.) or marumakal (f.). In ego's generation (m. and f. sp.) older brothers are addressed and referred to as jyeshtan (coll. etan); younger brothers are referred to as anujan. All men older than ego in the lineage may be referred to as karanavar (seniors); all younger as anandravar (juniors). These usages accord with the great importance of age-rank between men. For both sexes, all senior kin are addressed by terms, all juniors by name.

Women of the second ascending generation are called muthasshi ("oldest woman") with prefixes "big" or "small" according to age in relation to grandmother. In the first ascending, similarly, mother - amma, and other women are "big" or "small" mothers. In ego's generation older sisters are jyeshtathi (m. and f. sp.), younger
601 sisters anujathi (m. and f. sp.). In addition,
593 there are special cross-sex reference terms for "male sibling" (f. sp., age unspecified) - angala, and "female sibling" (m. sp., age unspecified) -pengal. These bring out the importance for Nayars of the complementary brother-sister tie,

601 on which the unity of the sibling group and the
[593] collateral cohesion of the lineage is based.

Among female affines, the wives of men of the second and first ascending generations are ammayi (fem. of ammaman). Today, great respect is shown to these women, but they are also proverbially disliked since it is expected that they will try to obtain favours from the maternal uncles and draw away their allegiance from the Similar attitudes are shown to the EBW who has the respectful term jyeshtathi amma - "elder-sister-mother" or respected elder sister". [85] Only descriptive terms are used for the spouses of younger brothers and maternal nephews.

Among male affines, the father and step-father are called by the respectful term acchan (lit. -"lord"). Higher caste fathers are also called by their caste titles (e.g. "acchan Nambudiri"). The mother's father is muthacchan (oldest "lord"). The term acchan, like jyeshtan, anujan, jyeshtathi, anujathi, bharya=wife and barthavu=husband, are all Sanskrit terms, evidently at some time taken over from Nambudiris. The old Tamil word appan=father was reserved for the mother's tali-tier and is seldom heard today among Nayars, though it is the usual word for "father" among Nambudiris themselves and in the lower castes. Acchan was also a lineage-title accorded to some desavaris and military leaders in the traditional period; it has the connotation of high rank and political office rather than of begetting, and seems particularly appropriate for the Nayar practice of hypergamy and the fact that their lineages tended, at least in

601 part, to be (literally) "fathered" by their feudal lords. All current lovers of the mother were traditionally called acchan, and the word is sometimes extended as an address-term to husbands of the mother's sisters (with age-prefixes) though these are usually referred to descriptively. In ego's generation, women have no reference-terms for the sisters' husbands: the older sister's husband is called jyeshtan or etan - "elder brother"; the younger sister's husband by his name and caste-title if older than ego, by name alone if younger. A man addresses his sister's husbands in the same way, but brothers-in-law also have a reciprocal reference-term, aliyan, which, like the cross-sex sibling terms, is usually restricted to men married into the property-group and not to the lineage as a whole. Its existence as a special term again points up the unique tie between brother and sister and the fact that brother and (traditionally visiting) [86] husband are brought into a special relationship through their claims on the same woman. Their etiquette, in contrast to that between lineage men, is one of easy familiarity, though covert jealousy between them is often intense.

Women address lineage kinsfolk older than themselves as do men. Their children they call makan (m.) and makal (f.), their daughters' children, irrespective of sex perakutti="name-child". This is appropriate for the daughter's daughter who is often called after a woman, but less so for the grandson who is usually named after some male forbear of his property-group, living or dead. These terms for descending

601 generations are extended throughout the lineage. Today men also use the same term for their own and step-children and own and step-grandchildren but do not extend them to other descendants of the wife's lineage or to the brothers' descendants. The words makan and makal are so regularly used by men today both for their own and step-children and in descriptive compound terms (e.g. "my uncle's son" - ende ammamande makan) that I think they were even traditionally used by men for children of their mistresses. Nambudiris, however, should properly use the terms only for their own or their elder brother's Nambudiri children.

Today in the modern bilateral kinship system which is gradually coming about, terms formerly restricted to matrilineal kin are sometimes used to address the father's matrilineal kin, though this usage is not yet standardized. Such terms now reflect the equivalence (rather than the opposition) of the sexes in marriage and of their groups, as would be expected in a bilateral system. Those in fairly current use are FF (=MF), FM (=MM), FMB (=MMB), FMBW (=MMBW, FB (=MB), FBW (=MBW), and FSi (=MSi). Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins [87] have no reference-terms, but if older are addressed as siblings. A woman addresses her husband's kin by the same terms as the husband, unless she has married her maternal uncle's son, when she still calls her parents-in-law "MB" and "MBW". Both sexes however refer to their spouses' kin by descriptive compound terms, except for "brother-in-law"

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that they were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages

644 We saw that the traditional property-group of
423 retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every
[427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

613 longer periods.
644 In all the royal and chiefly lineages, political
423 office was normally held by the eldest member irrespective of branch. In several of these lineages, however, including Calicult, Walluvanad and Kolattiri, there existed also separate offices subordinate to that of the kind. In Calicut, the five oldest men of the Zamorin's lineage, irrespective of branch, held five offices or sthanams (occupant = sthani), each with a landed estate, separately from the lands jointly owned by each property-group of the lineage. The eldest sthani was the Zamorin who ruled at Calicut. The second was called Eralpad: he was the naduvari of Ernad, the oldest of the Zamorin's nads, from which his forbears originally sprang. To prevent rivalry with the [89] king, the second sthani was forbidden during his tenure of office to cross over into the Calicut nad until the Zamorin died and he was summoned to perform the funeral rites and receive the crown. The third sthani, the Munalpac, was commander-in-chief of the Zamorin's army: his estate was in Calicut but he travelled throughout the kingdom. The two youngest sthanis held no political office but lived as desavaris or independent landlords in separate villages of the kingdom. When the Zamorin or any of the other sthanis died, those below him in rank moved up one place, and the next eldest man was appointed as the fifth sthani.

From the 14th century until 1792, the Zamorin's lineage was able to cohere as a single property-group without partition between its

613 segments lifted out of their group on to separate
644 estates. The jointly owned land of the royal lin-
423 eage, in Ernaq, was managed by the sixth man karanavan after the fashion of an ordinary Na-
[901] yar property-group. As among Nayars, younger men of the lineage were trained as soldiers and fought in the Raja's wars.

However, it also happened that during these centuries, the Zamorin's lineage did not greatly increase in numbers. Indeed, in the 18th century it was obliged to save itself from extinction by adopting three girls from the royal lineage of Nileswaram in South Canara, north of Kerala. In 1792, the Zamorin was conquered by the British and, along with other rulers of what became Malabar District, retired from political office as the head of a large landowning lineage. The British to compensate the royal lineages gave them political pensions, payable in cash sums annually to each male and female. Shortly afterwards, the Zamorin's [90] lineage began to increase in size, and by the mid-nineteenth century had partitioned into three property-groups, Pudiya (New) Tavari which lives in a village in the modern Calicut division of Malabar District, Padinyare (West) Tavari, also in Calicut, and Kirakke (East) Tavari in Ernad Division. Pudiya Tavari has this century partitioned into three new property-groups. The extensive lands of each group are managed by their separate karanavans. The five sthanams with their landed estates are still occupied by the five eldest members of the lineage, who in addition receive their political pensions independently of the rest.

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

613 is a recent practice which grew out of the de-
644 mands for separate payments of those princes
423 who had left the palace to find modern work outside. Until about ten years ago, the karanavan completely controlled the group's finances and paid maintenance in kind to its members, even to toilet requisites such as oil for bathing and ash for cleaning the teeth. Since they began to receive allowances in cash, several princes have acquired private land and built small houses for their wives and children, where a very few of them now live and eat, despite caste rules against interdining with lower caste kinsfolk. In addition some princes now work in government service or in one of the coast towns or in one of the large cities of India. They return to the palace only for vacations and ceremonies. The lands of the major royal property-groups of Malabar are at present declared impartible by law, but there is dissatisfaction with this law among their younger members. Individual partition of property, in accordance with the new Nayar inheritance laws to be explained below, is expected to take place in most palaces within the next few years, and has already been applied for in some. The royal lineages are in fact now breaking down in precisely the same manner as are retainer Nayar taravads.

It is clear, however, that royal property-groups were traditionally able to comprise more segments and cohere for longer periods than could retainer groups. The differences in structure which made this possible were: 1) the landed estates which were large enough to [93]

613 support many members and, together with the
644 political office, had a sentimental value for
423 them; 2) sthanams, which lifted the five oldest men out of the factionalism of their property-groups; 3) the spacious construction of palaces with privacy for each woman and her descendants, each adult man, and each visiting Nambudiri husband; 4) the very rigid rules of etiquette and avoidance which discouraged quarrels between men and incest between men and women; 5) the ability of the palace to employ separate servants for each adult; and 6) the peculiar residence-arrangements in royal and a few chiefly lineages, which, together with the universal practice of hypergamy, gave the property-group some of the features of a matriclan (14) and enabled it to live for generations on the same site. The existence of Nambudiri Brahmans as a leisure class of ritual specialists, many of whom were free to leave their own estates and live as drones (or "as breeding bulls", as one Calicut prince remarked) in the palaces, was crucial to this, as was the ability of the royal lineage, because of the concentration of wealth and political power in its hands, to maintain a horde of retainer lineages at its doorstep to provide mistresses for the princes and a bodyguard for the king.

613 In spite of these special devices, royal and
644 chiefly lineages did, even traditionally, divide into separate property-groups when their numbers became unwieldy. Unfortunately I lack genealogies to show whether, as in retainer lineages, this regularly occurred at a particular

613 point in their development. There is plenty of
644 historical evidence, however, to show that they did so. In many cases, especially of the smaller Rajas and the chiefs, the kingdom or chiefdom was also divided between the segments at some point after their own private estates had been partioned.

613 [94] Reference to Map 7 helps to clarify this
644 statement. Nads I and II (Kolattunad and Arik-
631 kal) were once united under the Kolattiri Rajas, but nad II early broke away as a small independent chiefdom ruled by a segment of the lineage which had been converted to Islam by the Arabs. Nad I, which remained the kingdom of Kolattiri, was subdivided into smaller nads ruled by Samantan naduvaris. There are today several lineages of these, but Innes reports that they have all split off from one of two original lineages. Nad II was similarly ruled by a high class Nayar chieftain lineage (14) which at various times was feudatory to Kolattiri. This lineage divided into several branches each of which took as portion of the nad and ruled it independently. Nad IV was also once ruled by a single naduvari lineage as one property-group (Mithangath Kovilagath Thottoli), as feudatory of Kolattiri. In 1766, the group partitioned its properties between its five segments, but retained the office of naduvari, and also a second athanam, for the first and second man of the whole lineage.

The Kurumbranad Rajas, (nad X), like the Kolattiri Rajas, are said to be one of the oldest ruling families of Kerala and to have received their nad from the last of the Perumals. The

1/1 [See p. 105, category 116 --- Analyst]

613 The area ruled by the Kurumbranad Rajas is
644 thought to have once extended as far south as
631 nad XI, where it bordered on the Zamorin's territory, and as far north as nads IV and VI. Nad IX was formerly ruled by the Rajas of Kollam, who are thought to have been an independent segment of the Kurumbranad family. The Kollam Rajas were conquered and expelled by the Zamorins.

The Kottayam Rajas, who ruled nads VII and XXX, and were in possession of nad XI for a short time before the British took over, are said by some informants to have once formed one lineage with the Kurumbranad Rajas, (with whom Innes too reports that they were "closely related".) This is likely, since the two lineages acknowledge each other to be Kshattriyas, but will not intermarry. Innes also reports that nad XXX (a mountainous, sparsely populated area) was conquered by Kottayam and Kurumbranad together and later divided between them. Before the British came, the Kottayam lineage redivided and one property-group, Parassi, became independent chieftains over part of nad VI. When the Muslims invaded from Mysore the main branch of the Kottayam family fled temporarily to Travancore and in their absence Parassi became rulers of nads VI and XXX. They later opposed the British settlement of Malabar and were therefore deposed and not given a pension. Parassi and Kottayam (who returned) are still independent lineages but do not yet intermarry. The Payyormala Nayar chieftains of nad VIII who ruled as feudatories

613 of Kurumbranad, were also once one lineage,
644 which divided its rule and its lands between
631 three segments. This nad, like nads X and XI was for a short time conquered by the Zamorin, and its rulers, along with the Kurumbranad Rajas, became his feudatories.

The Kadattunad Rajas of nad VII are not one of the oldest lineages of Kerala and are not a segment of one of the neighbouring lineages. Krishna Iyer reports (15) that [96] Kadattunad was once a branch of the Porlattiri royal lineage which once ruled nad XII. The Porlattiri lineage was the first to be dispossessed by the Zamorin and its members are said to have fled north and sought refuge with the Kolattiri lineage. Innes says that the Kadattunad lineage sprang from the union of a Kolattiri woman with a Porlattiri man, but our informants in North Malabar thought that Kadattunad are descended from a Kolattiri man who gave this nad to his Porlattiri wife and children, in accordance with a common North Malabar custom.

The Pulavayi Nayar chieftains of nad XIV were once independent rulers in their jungly nad, but became nominal feudatories of the Zamorin. Their lineage and rule were also divided into several branches. Nads XIII and XV were once united under the Parappu royal lineage, which divided its nad between two branches, both of which were early overrun by the Zamorin. The Beyport Rajas' lineage, which remained as a feudatory of the Zamorin and is still extant, is a branch of the Parappu lineage. Nads XXIII and XXIV were similarly once one with nad XXV

613 under the Palghat Rajas, but the Zamorin drove
644 a wedge into their territory in the 18th century
631 and took nad XXV. The other two nads were divided between two branches of the Palghat lineage.

Nad XXVIII was formerly ruled by the Chavakkad Rajas, whose lineage became a feudatory of Cochin. The lineage divided into four tavaris, which quarreled with each other for political power. One of these branches, known as the Rajas of Punnattur, finally appealed to the Zamorin for [97] support against the other three, which were supported by Cochin. The Zamorin came to their help, overran the whole nad, and made its rulers feudatory to himself.

The Vellatiri Rajas, who ruled nad XIX and formerly nads XX and XXI as the kingdom of Walluvanad, remained a small lineage and, like the Zamorins, did not partition until the British began to rule. Their numbers then increased and they are now divided into four palaces.

Since the Zamorin's lineage, which maintained its kingdom intact, was one which happened not to increase in numbers or divided its property-group over four centuries, it might be thought tempting to argue that the cohesion of each kingdom traditionally depended on the cohesion of its royal lineage.

However, we must be clear in recognizing that the cohesion and expansion of the Zamorin's kingdom, and to a lesser extent of that of Cochin, and later of Travancore, depended on factors other than the structure of their royal lineages. Chief of these factors were, it seems likely,

613 the expansion of overseas' trade with the Arabs
644 and later, the Europeans, from the twelfth to
631 the eighteenth centuries; the developments of better means of communication in the larger kingdoms of the plains, where this was not too difficult; some ammassing of wealth in the hands of rulers; and leading from this, their ability to organize larger armies which (especially after the adoption of gun-warfare) permitted them to conquer neighbouring weaker nads. The persistence of these larger units seems to have depended on the strength of their new political institutions, chiefly [98] the militia and the central courts of justice, as well as on a widening of the field of social relations of the "good" castes who controlled the administra-
613 tion. Along with this went a very slow process
644 of social mobility in the upper reaches of the
631 society. The caste system of rulers, chiefs,
565 village headmen and retainers was not entirely stationary: retainer-lineages which had distinguished themselves in war were sometimes appointed as desavaris and gradually changed their ritual rank, and it was possible for a desavari lineage to increase in wealth and be made a naduvari lineage, or for a small naduvari lineage to increase in wealth (as did the Zamorins), expand its territory, and call itself a royal lineage, claiming the rank of Kshattriyas. This process took some time, indeed: it was not until the eighteenth century that the Zamorin's lineage, after going through a ceremony in which its members passed through the body of a golden cow, were able to claim that

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable
613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

613 property-groups. These in turn scrambled for
644 the crown and in turn allied themselves with the
631 Zamorins, the Portuguese and the Travancore Rajas to help them to establish their claims. Despite periodic total conquest by one or other neighbouring ruler, however, the kingdom was never divided between its segments as were many of the smaller chiefdoms, I think because, like Calicut and Walluvanad, it had developed trade and centralized political institutions which would not permit of its reversion to smaller units. Whether, had their kingdoms grown much larger the rulers would have been obliged to abandon the matrilineal system, is a question which cannot be answered out of the data available. [100]

At all events it is clear that despite its militia and relatively centralized administration, the whole political structure of the central area, as well as the kinship system of its rulers, depended for its persistence on a relatively stationary or only very gradually changing economy which would permit the perpetuation of hereditary political offices. For the administration, managed by the "good" upper castes, was built up round a network of kinship ties. Nambudiris fathered the Rajas and sporadically, the high caste population at large; the Rajas fathered the chieftains, and the chieftains the desavaris; while the whole retainer Nayar population, despite its division into karas, villages, and lineages linked in perpetual affinal kinship, was also united throughout the kingdom by the practice of sexual unions between the mobile

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food.[101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

113 1921), p. 241.

(11) A. I. Richards, Some Types of Family Structure amongst the Central Bantu, in African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950).

582 (12) Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred to patrilateral, since it harmonizes the conjugal interests of a man and his sister's son, the most rivalrous relationship between men. It is also of course possible with hypergamous unions, whereas patrilateral cross cousins unions are not. In one Cochin village 7.2% of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; 1.6% had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. [103] Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 13.9% of marriages were to the father's nephew, 9.0% to the uncle's son. In Walluvanad division, South Malabar, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11.2% had married the father's nephew, 4.7% the uncle's son (own or classificatory).

613 (13) In Murdock's sense of a matrilineal, matri-
543 local unit with the husbands of the women as permanent residents. However, in a true matriclan adult male members of the matrilineage or matrisib would be living away with their wives whereas in the royal lineages princes lived at home and merely visited their wives nearby. In most naduvari and all lower subcaste lineages, women were visited only occasionally by their Nambudiri lovers who lived in their own households.

1:Gough-103 E-4, 5(no date)1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

613 (14) Called Randatara Acchanmar, (lit. "Fathers over the two taras".) The nad was composed of two taras, and the chieftain taravad had the title of acchan, common in North Malabar.
(15) The Zamorins of Calicut, p.1.

1: Gough-104 E4&5 (no date) 1954 AWII Kerala AWII

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CHART I RITUAL RANKING AND HYPERGAMOUS UNIONS BETWEEN THE HIGHER CASTES OF COCHIN

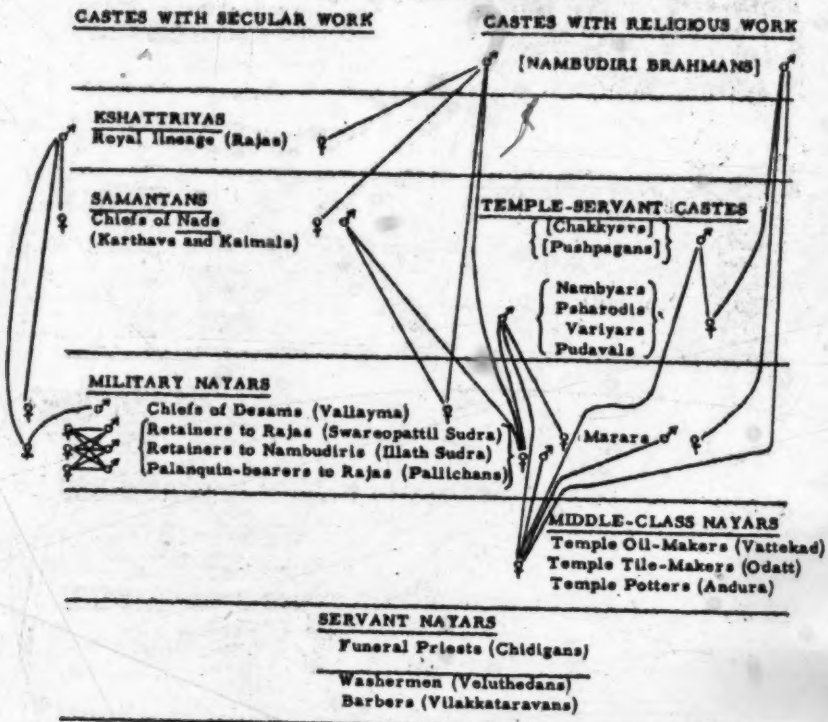

Key

} indicates equivalence of, or dispute for, rank.

A line drawn across the page indicates that all castes above it rank unequivocally above all castes below it.

Oblique lines and curves indicate some amount of hypergamous mating between the castes.

♂-male ♀-female

Castes shown in brackets have patrilineal descent: all others have matrilineal descent.

1: Gough-105 E-4, 5 (no date) 1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

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MAP II MALABAR DISTRICT

Showing the boundaries of the nads and kingdoms in the mid-eighteenth century.

Nads	Rulers
1 Kolattunad	Kolattiri Rajas
2 Randatara	Nayar Chiefs
3 Tellicherry	E. India Co.
4 Iruvalinad	Nayar Chiefs
5 Kurangoth	Nayar Chiefs
6 Kottayam	Kottayam Rajas
7 Kadattunad	Kadattunad Rajas
8 Payyormala	Nayar Chiefs
9 Payyanad	Zamorin
10 Kurumbranad	Rajas
11 Tamarasseri	Kottayam Rajas
12 Poland	Zamorin
13 N. Parappanad	Parappanad Rajas (Zam.)
14 Pulavayi	Nayar Chiefs (Zamorin)
15 S. Parappanad	Parappanad Rajas (Zamorin)
16 Ramnad	Zamorin
17 Cheranad	Zamorin
18 Ernad	Zamorin
19 Walluvanad	Walluvanad Rajas
20 Walluvanad	Zamorin
21 Nedunganad	Zamorin
22 Kavalappara	Nayar Chiefs
23 Vadamalappuram	Palghat Rajas
24 Temmalapuram	Palghat Rajas
25 Naduvattam	Zamorin
26 Bettatnad	Bettem Rajas (Zamorin)

Nads	Rulers
27 Kutnad	Zamorin
28 Chavakkad	Chavakkad Rajas (Zamorin)
29 Arikkal	Arikkal Rajas
30 Wynaad	Kottayam Rajas
31 Cochin	Cochin Rajas

1: Gough AW11 Kerala AW11
175

[For information on the political history of the Malabar coast, as well as on the traditional political and economic system, see category 116.]

1: Gough AW11 Kerala AW11
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[This entire source presents a historical and functional interpretation of Nayar kinship structure, and the reader is referred to category 116. Only sections dealing specifically with kinship nomenclature have been marked for category 601.]

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MATRILINEAL KINSHIP

EDITED BY

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961

[title page]

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Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

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conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1958.

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177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by de- [133] ciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

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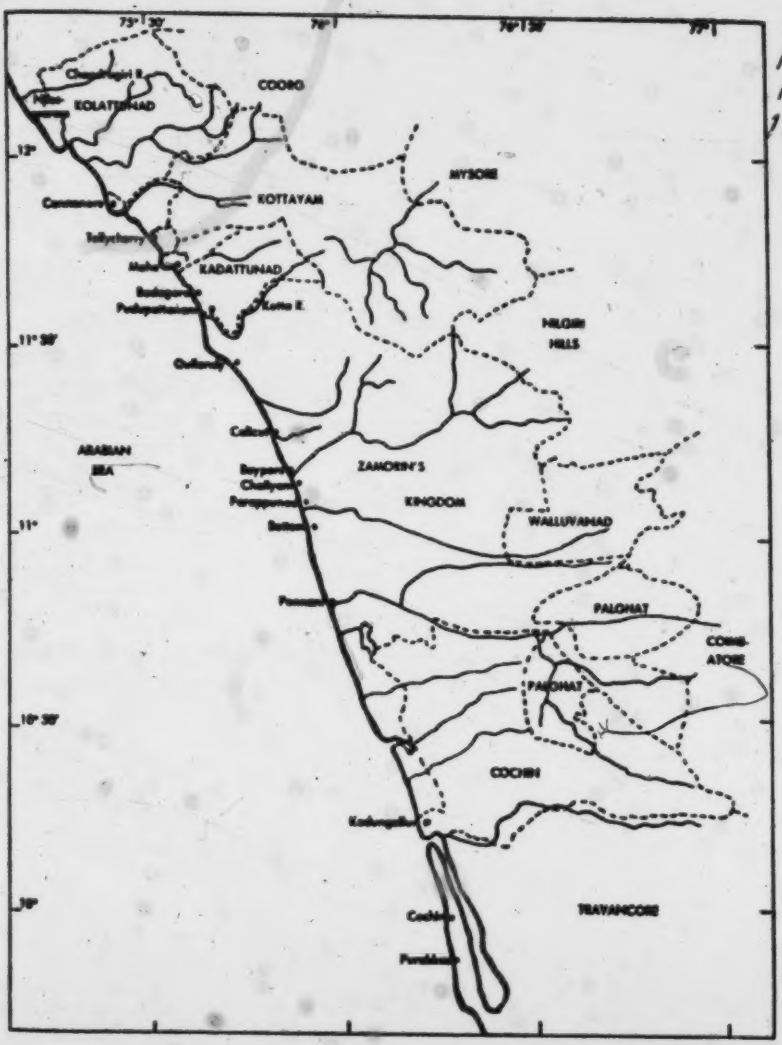

Fig. 6-1. Rough boundaries of the Kingdoms of Central and North Kerala in the mid-eighteenth century. (Adapted from C. A. Innes, 1908: 44–45.)

[p. 301]

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

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Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

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175 about Quilon (Ricci, 1931: 326–330; Logan, 1951, I: 282–283). Chi-
439 nese trade declined in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,
635 but that of Muslim Arabs (who had visited the coast from the eighth century) greatly increased. In the fourteenth century a third Nayar kingdom around Calicut, in the center of the coast, had expanded with the help of Arab merchants (Major, 1857: 13–18). By the time the Portuguese arrived, in 1498, Calicut practically monopolized the Arab trade, and the Zamorin (king) of Calicut held overlordship from Pudupattanam south to Porakkad (Logan, 1951, I: 293–294; Ayyar, 1938: 273, 291). Trickles of trade continued in Kolattunad and Travancore, but the kings there had grown weak by comparison with the Zamorin. Kolattunad had become divided into three virtually independent little kingdoms, and the Travancore ruler had surrendered large powers to the subordinate local chiefs of his realm. Two other small kingdoms remained independent in the interior to the east of Calicut: Walluvanad and Palghat.

The period 1498 to 1792 was one of bitter struggle between Euro-
175 pean and Middle Eastern powers, who formed shifting alliances with
439 native rulers for control of the pepper trade. By 1600 the Portuguese
648 had practically abolished the Arab trade, but they were themselves driven from the coast by the Dutch in 1663. The English reached Kerala in 1615 and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or another Nayar ruler and took part in successive battles until, in 1766, the northern half of the coast was overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean occupation ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the English East India Company and the establishment of the British bureaucratic political system (Logan, 1951, I: 404–473).

175 Shortly before the Mysorean invasions Kerala was divided into nine
648 small kingdoms and a number of border chiefdoms owing only ten-
635 uous allegiance to some king. The British after 1792 amalgamated the seven northern kingdoms (Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Kadattunad, Calicut, Walluvanad, and Palghat) to form the Malabar District of Madras Province, pensioned their rulers, and brought them under a British district officer responsible to the government of Madras. Cochin, a small kingdom in the center of the coast, remained a native state under its own ruler subject to the advice of a British Resident. So also did the southernmost kingdom of Travancore, whose ruler had already in the 1730's established a standing army, dispossessed his Nayar nobles, and formed a bureaucratic government. Kerala remained divided in this way until after the in-

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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

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Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic lead-
[162] ers. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit lan-
[174] guage and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera
564 kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nambudiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of
463 ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a
[611] role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual
613 rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in
635 Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaḷs*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

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621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative
[178] power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
[622] in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
[613] from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages isolated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes 564
two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants."

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied 564
in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, 554
and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or dif- [628]
ferent sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, [726]
soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain.

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages 621
of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property 613
groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the 564
king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet 566
paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure 471
was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran*. In most villages the men of 427
retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs.

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristo- 564
cratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, 794
nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They

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564 794 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matrilineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 794 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden. 782 793 Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as permanent tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the 613 second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 794 613 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhagavadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 564 793 791 782 In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman, attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

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vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

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564 tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in
[361] a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title
121 today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes.
564 Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name
[703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their
162 personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a sepa-
621 rate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

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lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

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563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the popu-
[162] lation in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians
[651] were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth
[564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupa-
[463] tions and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and
[592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the
471 village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western
592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell
566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

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originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

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651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and
436 cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of 621 intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later [692] in connection with the lineage. [623]

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar 622 retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or 692 trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil 564 disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their [566] Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave 692 crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' 564 (*nāduvaris'*) judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital [567] offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among 564 the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group 571 of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as 564 is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent 564 613

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system of Nambudiris. In the Nambudiri patrilineal extended family only the eldest son was permitted to marry (with Vedic rites) within his caste, and beget children for his family. Younger sons had recognized liaisons with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to their mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. These hypergamous unions were regarded by Brahmans as socially acceptable concubinage, for the union was not initiated with Vedic rites, the children were not legitimized as Brahmans, and neither the woman nor her child was accorded the rights of kin. By the matrilineal castes, however, the same unions were regarded as marriage, for they fulfilled the conditions of ordinary Nayar marriage and served to legitimize the child as an acceptable member of his matrilineal lineage and caste.

If a Nambudiri eldest son remained childless the second son might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget children for his family. Unmarried Nambudiri women, of whom there were many, remained in their natal homes and were maintained by their fathers and brothers. The eldest son of a Nambudiri house might however have several Brahman wives (who lived patrilocally with him) and also several Nayar partners whom he visited in their homes. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then dropped to the next generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments and was enabled to maintain its ancestral estate intact over many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man related through some cognatic tie.

The possible directions of hypergamous marriages in the Cochin kingdom are briefly as follows. In the royal lineages marriages were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad royal women married only Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest sub-castes within the kingdom. Royal men married women of chiefly lineages within the kingdom, of village headmen's lineages within their own domain, or of retainer Nayar lineages in the royal villages. In the Calicut kingdom royal women married either Nambudiris or the feudatory princes of higher rank and more ancient lineage than themselves. Royal men married women of the same lower matrilineal groups as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms. Women of the feudatory royal lineages married only Nambudiris; men married royal women or women of chiefly, village headmen's, or retainer Nayar lineages within their own area of rule.

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Each Nayar chiefly lineage, like royalty, normally counted itself a separate caste and married only hypergamously. Women of chiefly lineages married the royals or feudatory royals to whom their lineages were immediately subordinate, or wealthy Nambudiris, usually of their own district. Men of chiefly lineages married women of village headmen's lineages within their district, or women of retainer Nayar lineages, usually in their own villages. 564 613

Village headmen's lineages occasionally contracted marriages reciprocally with other village headmen's lineages of the chiefdom which had originally sprung from the same retainer caste. They also provided wives for chiefs and Brahmans and husbands for retainer women, usually of their own villages. [622]

Among temple servants, Nayar retainers, and Nayar temple menials the majority of marriages were between persons of the same caste. A few women in the Psharodi, Variyar, Poduval, and Nambyar castes married Nambudiris, especially those whose families managed the temples where they worked. A few such women also married men of the Chakkyar and Pushpagan castes which had descent systems like that of the Nambudiris. A few men of these matrilineal temple-servant castes married women of Nayar retainer and Nayar temple-menial castes in the villages of their work. Nayar women were particularly convenient partners for temple servants and Nambudiri temple priests because of the latters' spatial distribution. Often a temple-servant lineage or a Brahman priestly family held the hereditary right of service in six or eight small temples in villages up to ten miles away. One man of the lineage might spend much of his life working away from home in one of the more distant temples. He would live on food previously offered to the deity, occupy a room attached to the temple kitchen, bathe in the temple bathing pool, and visit a local Nayar wife at nights, returning home for life crises and festivals. 564 794 613

Women of the retainer Nayar castes might receive husbands from all the castes above them. Sudra Nayar women living in Brahman-owned villages or on the estates of large temples were the most likely to form links with Brahmans and temple servants; Charna Nayars and Pallichans, with royalty or chiefs; and Kiriattil women, with village headmen. Thus hypergamous unions entered into by retainer Nayars in general followed the main lines of lord-vassal relationships. However, "odd" marriages with individuals of any higher rank in nearby villages were permitted. 564

Because the higher castes were much smaller than they were, the Nayar retainers probably gave less than 10 per cent of their women

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564 to men of higher caste. Men of the retainer castes made still fewer marriages in the castes of temple menials. The latter also received as husbands a few temple servants and a few Nambudiris of the lowest sub-castes of cooks and household priests. The temple-menial castes did not intermarry, and their men seem thus to have been confined to women of their own caste. Hypergamy stopped at this level and the Nayar servant castes were each endogamous.

564 613 The hypergamy of the Nayar office-bearing lineages fitted their gradual social mobility and lack of rank parity with each other. With time, because of the vicissitudes of war and conquest, a retainer lineage might be appointed as village headmen, and might later even aspire to chiefly rank. Several of the chiefly lineages of Kerala can be traced back to much humbler origins three to six centuries ago. Apart from the regular offices of rule over territorial units, commoner Nayar lineages might also attain special rank as ministers or military leaders. When a lineage received promotion in this way, its members in course of time declared themselves ritually higher than those of the caste from which they sprang and would no longer interdine or intermarry with that caste on equal terms. Hypergamy permitted these isolated office-bearing lineages to marry in unequivocally higher and unequivocally lower groups, but to side-step the awkward question of their precise rank in the hierarchy as a whole.

Hypergamous marriages, like all Nayar marriages, were tenuous and carried few obligations. Nevertheless, the dependence of aristocratic castes on each other for spouses and genitors must have strengthened relations between them. Hypergamy inextricably linked the secular and the religious hierarchies, whose interests in many contexts were opposed. Nambudiris waged a perpetual struggle to preserve their lands and judicial powers from encroachment by kings and chiefs. Their religious laws forbade bloodshed on the estates of their great temples. If a local ruler invaded such an estate or flouted its laws, the Brahmanical assembly exercised its religious authority to fine him in land, cash, or elephants and closed their gates till he repented. This does not mean that the kings were puppets of the Brahmans. When a king conquered a new district its Brahmans came over to his side. They gave him the right to protect their temples and to use their Nayar retainers in war, on receipt of a fine for any personal inconvenience they had suffered. They obviously needed the ruler's military protection of their religious and landed rights. The rulers in turn needed the Brahmans, for the whole social system was sanctioned by religious beliefs of which they were the chief

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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614 tion they entered for fifteen days into a condition of ritual pollution.
764 They might not eat with nor touch other Nayars, enter the temple or
844 other houses, bathe in the public bathing pools of their caste, or eat
783 meat or salt. Death pollution, and to a milder degree birth pollution, cut off the clan from participation in the social life of the caste. It isolated the members as a group set apart in a special and dangerous ritual condition, who had to observe taboos for their own and each others' safety. Its observance stressed the kinship connection of clansmen and marked their common concern on the occasion of an increase or decrease in their membership. Only those clansmen living within the neighborhood, however, were obliged to attend a funeral or visit a house of birth. Beyond these observances clansmen had only loosely defined rights of hospitality in each other's homes. As far as I am aware they never assembled as an organized group.

614 In time a clan might divide into two or more clans by the common consent of its members. The decision to separate depended both on geographical distance and on distance of relationship. If a segment of the core unit moved into an adjacent neighborhood its members might maintain clanship with the parent lineage for several hundred years thereafter. If they moved to a distant part of the district (say, fifteen miles away) their grandchildren might sever the connection. Severing clanship was called "cutting the pollution bond." Representatives of the branches met and decided not to inform each other of future deaths in their respective groups. Usually the outlying branch would soon afterward adopt the name of the oldest ancestral house site in its own vicinity as its clan name. Exogamy was theoretically preserved as long as matrilineal ties were remembered—usually, about three generations after the division.

Beyond the neighborhood, clan ties had no legal or economic concomitants and were relatively unimportant, their claims being subordinated to those of lineage, village, neighborhood, district, and kingdom.

THE LINEAGE

613 A lineage comprised those members of a clan living in one Nayar neighborhood, and it operated within the legal and social framework of this unit. As we have noted, the retainer Nayars of a neighborhood were of the same caste. They interdined and intermarried freely and the neighborhood was their unit of caste administration. A neighborhood might comprise the retainer Nayars of one village or of two or three adjacent villages, or occasionally Nayars of only part of a large village (e.g., a royal village) in which more than one caste of

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Nayar retainers resided. A neighborhood normally contained some six to ten lineages and probably had a population of about three hundred Nayars. 613

The lineage was called a *taravād*. If it occupied the ancestral village of the clan its members used the ancestral house name as both clan and lineage names. If it lived elsewhere its members added a distinctive name, derived from their new locale, to the clan name. Each segment of a lineage occupying one house in turn had its own house name, and each Nayar had a personal name followed by the caste title. A typical Nayar name might therefore be "Thengiparambil Padikkil Kirakkutt-Velappil Govindan Nayar"—"Clan of the coconut garden, lineage of the gatehouse, household of the eastern garden, Govindan (personal name) Nayar." Usually one branch of a lineage continued to occupy and to rebuild the oldest ancestral home of the clan. The clan, lineage, and house names of these members would then be collapsed into one.

A lineage normally comprised some four to eight households, each a matrilineal segment of three to six generations' depth, including the youngest children and the common ancestress. Sometimes the households of a lineage might occupy adjacent gardens on a continuous stretch of dry land in the high-caste residential area of one village. Alternatively the houses of a lineage might become scattered throughout the high-caste residential areas of the several villages of the neighborhood. For it was possible for Nayar tenants, with the consent of the various overlords concerned, to buy or exchange the tenures of gardens. Further, a branch of a lineage which was expanding might be allotted the tenure of a newly developed garden at some distance from its former abode. Normally, however, the gardens in which their houses were built remained in the possession of one or other branch of a lineage over many generations. 613 592

Some writers would not apply the word lineage to the group which I am discussing. It was not always a lineage in the sense of a matrilineal group tracing descent from a common ancestress through a determinate number of generations (cf. *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*, 1952: 88–89). This definition applied to lineages which had occupied a neighborhood only for six or seven generations. It might also apply to an older lineage some of whose branches had died out, or to an older lineage whose membership had not happened to expand greatly over several generations. Often, however, there would be very old lineages whose most distantly related segments no longer remembered their exact genealogical relationship and whose members 613

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were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmentation within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the households of the disputants and were normally settled through appeal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave [553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the [588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, [881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony [843] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to [969] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the [965] subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem- [783] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides [885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis 681 ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the 564 whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess [784] and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a 613 whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage 681 normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections 684 with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a 564 case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled 613 by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. 681 The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by 564 certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which [783] they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses [574] (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to 613 a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court 682 of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same [696] or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

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613 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason
687 against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge
627 him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth
[178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction
613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis-
627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor
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of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

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613 birth pollutions were not extended to them by their host lineage. In-
182 stead, as we have seen, they continued to observe these rites for several generations along with their clansfolk elsewhere.

The information on this procedure is incomplete because it does not take place in modern times. It is not known whether a lineage segment ever became incorporated into a new retainer caste as well as a new neighborhood, although this seems unlikely. It is not known whether an indigenous lineage which shrank to the size of one small property group ever allied itself in putative matrilineal kinship with another established lineage. It is also uncertain whether major segments of a very large lineage might over time break the pollution bond and gradually cease to observe exogamy. Some evidence from a Cochin village suggests that this may have happened. Shortly before my stay a man and woman of two lineages which had the same enangar and had never been known to marry, entered into a traditional type of informal marriage relationship. Elders of the village then began to wonder whether the lineages had not once formed one lineage, either by true matrilineal kinship or by joint performance of the tāli rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to the junior generation the marriage persisted. Thus, what may once have been an ancient tie of lineage and clan exogamy was quietly broken. I do not know whether fission within a lineage was traditionally possible or whether it occurs only in modern times, when the neighborhood assembly and the lineage itself are both disintegrating.

THE PROPERTY GROUP

613 *Structure* The property group among Nayar retainers was a seg-
592 ment of the lineage having a time depth of some three to six generations, including the youngest members and the common ancestress. It therefore typically comprised a group of brothers and sisters (real or classificatory), together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint-property-owning unit. Its members were from birth equal co-parceners in the buildings, land, movables, serfs, and all other property which had come to them from their matrilineal forebears, or had been conferred on them by their feudal lord, or had been acquired by the efforts of individual members. The group's oldest male member (kāranavan) was its legal guardian and represented it in the caste assembly.

When spoken of in its own right the property group, like the lineage, was called a taravād. When spoken of as a segment of the lineage it was called a *tāvari* (literally, "mother's line"). Tāvari could also be used of any intermediate segment of the lineage or of a mini-

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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name. 592

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on. 613 591 592

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase. 342 [351] [778] [352] [844] [841]

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en- [343] [351]

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their
[515] own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[126] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts,
241 and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

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613 his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the prop-
592 erty group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor
681 on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new
[687] district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with
[703] property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

613 The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was con-
592 ferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior
681 members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal
692 punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

613 It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de*
592 *facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior
681 men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of
692 officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their prop-
703 erty groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[153] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [195] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both [858] sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, [863] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the man- [867] ners and morals of their caste.

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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking
for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and
other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should
offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting
to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious
laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely per-
sons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should ac-
cept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If
he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in
law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedi-
ence to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Through-
out her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her
his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his
caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matri-
lineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sis-
ters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander
or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he
must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his
natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He
should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in
the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of
friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the
interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death
must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of
her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of
impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [776]
impious son. [755]

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and
converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the
affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip
and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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WOMAN-DAUGHTER

A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household responsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was expected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, however, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilinealy related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters. 604

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister. [601] [551]

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling. [601] [602] [613] [614] [578]

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravăd as a group and 603

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took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' children, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was responsible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste, in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural matters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

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was formalized to the point of avoidance. A boy or man might not touch his mother's brother. Before entering the uncle's presence he removed his upper clothing as a mark of respect. He might not speak first to the uncle but stood with arms folded and head bowed, attentively awaiting commands. He might not sit before his uncle except at mealtimes; he then sat down last and rose as soon as the uncle's meal was finished. When summoned for a lengthy interview he stood half hidden behind a pillar, holding his hand before his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. He might not chew betel leaves, smoke, spit, or use any but the most serious and respectful language in the presence of his senior. These rules of intercourse were most strict in the relationship with the kāranavan. For this reason a kāranavan absented himself as much as possible from family gatherings, living on the upper floor of the granary among his age mates of other lineages who came to visit him. With junior mother's brothers, who were more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's behavior was necessarily more relaxed. Even so, he observed the greatest possible formality, walked several feet behind them, and avoided them when he could. 604 576

A man should show loyalty to his mother's brothers in relations with outsiders, if necessary defending them with his life. He was expected to identify with them, receiving and perpetuating the noble traditions of his taravād. In fact Nayars did show great pride in the elders of their taravād as a group, exhibiting their virtues and hiding their weaknesses in the presence of strangers. There was regularly, however, deep hostility in their interpersonal relationships. The Nayars of today are well aware of this and expect acrimonious rivalry between the men of a taravād; hence, they say, the need for formal etiquette and strict ranking on the basis of age. A Nayar will speak of himself as bound to his taravād through natural love for his mother and sisters, and obliged for their sakes to maintain outward decorum in his relations with matrilineal kinsmen. In a modified form this suppressed hostility traditionally extended to all the men of the own, first ascending and second ascending generations. All male elders in the taravād might be collectively called *kāranavar* (singular, kāranavan). Within the property group they were numbered in order of age (irrespective of generation) as first, second, and third men. All owed loyalty and obedience to those above them and protection to those below them, but all envied their seniors and feared the rivalry of juniors. The mother's own brothers were, however, the prototypes for this generalized rivalry. Whether or not Nayars experienced Oedipal hostility 604 613 604 613 561 578

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604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy retained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and [588] was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan [586] had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 835 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law. 593 835

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships. 593 835 154 [855] [604]

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized 593

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Organized
duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, col- [592]
lectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [564]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [623]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [578]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual 561 occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran 461 errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighbor- [422] ing groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped [613] them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers[8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns. 595 [201]

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union. 585 595

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. 595 431 [796] [776] [613] [586] [302] [262] [276] [584] [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 843 595 431

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843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obliga-
[431] tion. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[837] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

595 613 577 [593] 595 764 613

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

595 754 613 593 [154] [586]

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the täli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The täli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the täli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her täli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the täli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the täli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [564] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age.

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose.

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today, the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly

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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 592 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 [576] Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relationships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 576 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility—characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

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A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [885] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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613 riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did
592 not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

595 It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and
175 linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike
[671] service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her en-
[613] angar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

595 Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group mar-
175 riage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern
184 Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

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a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [174]

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595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
[566] adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made possible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons)
[178] organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE
592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
423 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

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ual process of fission. This state of affairs was in harmony with the small amounts of land controlled by retainer property groups and with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to their land. The conditions of kānam tenure not only allowed for changes in the tenures of plots of land within one village, but even permitted segments of an expanding taravād to change their feudal allegiances and if necessary to hive off from their natal village.

The situation was different in the aristocratic lineages of royalty and district chiefs. By jenmam right they owned large domains which could support greater numbers of members. Their members also had a stake in the political office which they were reluctant to surrender. On the whole these lineages tended to cohere for longer periods than did those of retainers. Some of them today number over three hundred members and trace their descent back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When segments of these lineages did move away from their ancestral lands it was usually because they had been conquered and forced to vacate their territories and offices.

In the beginning, when one of these aristocratic lineages rose to power, it did so as a small property group. It did so either (in the case of royals) through conquest or (in the case of chiefs) through being appointed to office by some royal power. When they acquired office these upstart property groups seem to have severed ties with their former lineages and clans and to have conferred on themselves a higher ritual rank as independent castes.

After a few generations such a property group might expand in numbers and separate out into segments. I lack data on the precise point at which aristocratic property groups segmented; it seems to have been always at a later point with them than with retainer Nayars. (Today, some royal and chiefly property groups have a time depth of eight or more generations and over a hundred members.) When fission did occur the segments moved into separate palaces, each taking a portion of the ancestral domain for its maintenance. The oldest man resident in each segment acted as kāranavan and managed its internal affairs. For a time at least, the political office remained vested in the oldest man of the lineage irrespective of branch. When he was able, he kept a tight hold over all the segments, deflecting part of their income to himself for the upkeep of his palace staff, private army, and the larger forces he mustered through his subordinate vassals in war. The office bearer also retained sole right to the customs dues on trade within his chiefdom or kingdom, and to the tribute from village headmen within his area of rule.

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613 Theoretically, office-bearing lineages were supposed to cohere for-
178 ever, the officer being the eldest man of the lineage regardless of branch. In fact, if the lineage continued to expand, some other development would occur within a few generations. What its pattern might be depended on the economic and political circumstances of the times. One pattern was for the political office itself to become divided between the segments some time after they had divided their private domain. The head of each segment would then become ruler in his own right over a portion of the original territory, either (in the case of royals) as an independent small king, or (in the case of district chiefs) as a small chief independent of the rest of his lineage but still owing nominal allegiance to the original king of the kingdom as a whole. This type of fission of offices took place in areas and periods in which for some reason trade was declining, customs dues were running low, and neither king nor chiefs could muster enough extra wealth to fight wars which would maintain them in full political control. This
613 process went on apace from the fifteenth century to the end of the
178 seventeenth both in Kolattunad and in Travancore, the northernmost
175 and southernmost kingdoms of Kerala. They had been powerful
648 kingdoms for a period, with the help of Chinese traders, but declined in the fifteenth century after the Chinese trade collapsed and the Arabs built up Calicut. After 1500, different trading powers supported the smaller chiefs of these areas in trade wars against each other, so that these kingdoms remained weak and disunited until the second quarter of the eighteenth century. During this period segments of the royal lineages in both kingdoms carved up much of each kingdom into virtually independent chiefdoms. Within each of these in turn, the lineages of formerly subordinate Nayar chiefs tended also to break into segments, each retaining control over four or five villages. Early in the eighteenth century the British and French each tried to consolidate North Malabar by allying themselves with different local powers, but their struggles were temporarily eclipsed by invasions from Bednur to the north and later, in the 1760's, from Mysore in the east. In Travancore the process of disintegration persisted until the British obtained a trade monopoly and, in the 1730's, helped the king to reconquer his kingdom once and for all and to establish a bureaucratic form of rule (Innes, 1908: 55–75; Pillai, 1940: 266–466; K. M. Panikkar, 1931: chap. V).

613 The other course of development was for one branch of a ruling
669 lineage to seize the office and most of the private domains and, temporarily or permanently, exclude or banish the others. This process

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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade. Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups. The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, supported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656 the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches, and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thirteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and, except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid-eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to vil-
lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if neces-
635 sary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office.
622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and
726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed
635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When
634 a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral
613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there
554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as
[648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except
554 that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with
554 her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
592 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of princesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

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between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

Kinship Terms

601 613 As might be expected, kinship terms were used only between matrilineal kin and between ego and the spouses of members of his lineage. The terms were as follows.

A. MATRILINEAL KIN (extended throughout the lineage)

(1) *Mūttassi* ("Oldest woman"). M. and F. speaking. Woman of the second ascending generation, primarily MoMo. May be prefaced by *valiya* ("big") or *cheriya* ("small") for women respectively older or younger than MoMo.

(2) *Ammāman* ("Male mother"). M. and F. speaking. Men of first and second ascending generations, primarily mother's own brother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya for men of first ascending generation respectively older or younger than Mo. May be prefaced by *mūtta* ("oldest") for men of second ascending generation.

(3) *Amma*. M. and F. speaking. Women of first ascending generation, primarily own mother. Prefaced by valiya or cheriya for women respectively older or younger than Mo.

(4) *Jyēshtan*. M. and F. speaking. Men of own generation older than ego, primarily own elder brother. Sometimes corrupted to *ētan*.

(5) *Anujan*. M. and F. speaking. Men of own generation younger than ego, primarily own younger brother. Reference only.

(6) *Jyēshtatti*. M. and F. speaking. Women of own generation older than ego, primarily own elder sister. May be corrupted to *eraṭṭi* (South Malabar) or *chēchi* (Cochin).

(7) *Anujatti*. M. and F. speaking. Women of own generation younger than ego, primarily own younger sister. Reference only.

(8) *Angala*. F. speaking. Own brother by same mother. Reference only.

(9) *Pengal*. M. speaking. Own sister by same mother. Reference only.

(10) *Marumakan*. M. speaking. Male of first or second descending generations, primarily own sister's son. Reference only.

(11) *Marumakal*. M. speaking. Female of first or second descending generation, primarily own sister's daughter. Reference only.

(12) *Makan*. F. speaking. Male of first descending generation, primarily own son. Reference only.

(13) *Makal*. F. speaking. Female of first descending generation, primarily own daughter. Reference only.

(14) *Pērakutti* ("Name child"). F. speaking. Male or female child

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of second descending generation, primarily own daughter's child. Reference only. 601 613

(15) *Kāranavar* (singular, *kāranavan*). M. and F. speaking. All males of the lineage older than ego, living or dead. Primarily, the eldest living man of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

(16) *Anandravar* (singular, *anandravan*). M. speaking. All males of the lineage younger than ego. Primarily, junior males of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

Comment: Older relatives are addressed by terms; younger, by name.

The overriding of generations which appears in terms 2, 10, and 11 is suitable because the men under 2 are not in the direct line of ascent and their authoritative roles are similar. Terms 15 and 16 further emphasize the age rank of lineage males regardless of segment or generation. [561]

The separation of terms 1 and 3 may be related to the fact that women are in a direct line of descent. Moreover, 1's role is more authoritative than that of 3.

The existence of special terms 8 and 9 points up the interdependence of own brother and sister on which the unity of the sibling group and the cohesion of the property group are based.

The merging of lineals and collaterals within each generation points up the lack of institutional segregation of one woman and her children.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES 601

(1) *Bhārya.* M. speaking. Wi in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu.* F. speaking. Hu in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar.* M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Mūttacchan* ("Oldest father"). M. and F. speaking. Hu of A1.

(5) *Acchan.* M. and F. speaking. Hu of A3, especially of own mother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya according to age of the man's wife in relation to ego's mother. Followed by the caste title (e.g., Nambudiri) if he is of higher caste.

(6) *Ammāyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wife of A2.

(7) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and his wife's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(8) *Jyēshtatti Amma.* Wife of A4. M. and F. speaking. Sometimes

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601 corrupted to *chēdatti amma* (Cochin) or *eratti amma* (S. Malabar).

(9) *Chētan.* M. and F. speaking, reference; M. speaking only, address. A particular shortened form of *jyēshtan* (ElBr), reserved for the husband of A6.

(10) *Makan.* M. speaking. Son of ego's wife. Reference only.

(11) *Makal.* M. speaking. Daughter of ego's wife. Reference only.

(12) *Pērakutti.* M. speaking. Child of ego's wife's daughter. Reference only. Not always used.

(13) *Appan.* M. and F. speaking. Ritual husband (*tāli* tier) of ego's mother.

(14) *Manavalan.* F. speaking. Ritual husband. Reference only.

All other affines and cognates were referred to by descriptive compound terms (e.g., *ende acchande marumakan*, "my father's nephew"; *ende anujande bhārya*, "my younger brother's wife"). Persons of 8 and 9 were also often referred to by descriptive compound terms.

601 A man might *address* his wife's matrilineal kin older than himself
602 by the same terms as she did but he was not obliged to do so. He
[551] might also address them by their names and caste titles. They ad-
[564] dressed him by his personal name, adding the caste title if he were of higher caste.

A man addressed his wife's younger matrilineal kinsmen by name. Because of the avoidance relationship he and his wife's younger sisters used no terms or names to address each other.

If she knew them and was of the same caste as they were, a woman addressed her husband's older matrilineal relatives by the same terms as he did. She addressed by name those younger than herself. She called her husband's younger sister who was older than herself *jyēshtatti*, (elder sister). Because of the avoidance relationship no terms or names were used between a woman and her husband's brothers who were older than she.

In hypergamous marriages a woman and her husband's natal kin used no terms to address each other.

An individual used no terms, but only names, to address his father's matrilineal kin.

601 *Comment:* In general, the restricted use of reference terms for
[581] affines and the lack of terms for patrilateral kin other than the father reflect the slenderness of the marriage tie and the lack of obligations to these kin.

Affinal terms were mainly restricted to the spouses of ego's older matrilineal kin, persons with whom he had fairly regular contact. Even these, however, might be *referred* to by descriptive compound

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terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses. 601

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them. [561]

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties. 595 178 [613] [594]

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations. 601 178

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

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arate terms, we have a "lineal" classification for the women of this generation. Men of the first ascending generation are classified in a "lineal" manner, with FaBr = MoBr, both separated from Fa. Female affines of the first ascending generation are "lineal," with FaBrWi = MoBrWi, both separated from Mo. Male affines of the first ascending generation are "generational," with Fa = MoSiHu = FaSiHu. The terms faithfully reflect an extreme matrilineal system which is in process of breaking down in favor of bilateral kindreds.

[pp. 385-741 not processed]

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116 TEXTS--a full set of pages from each processed source, arranged in page order, as a means of establishing the context for any particular slip. Sets are arranged in the numerical order of the sources. See also:

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MATRILINEAL KINSHIP

EDITED BY

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS
Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961

[title page]

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Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

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439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
[496] the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564 Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
[566] in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
648 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
634 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
635 centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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Murder among the Nayars

627 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
613 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but
628 even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan
564 (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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613 564 422 423 [427]

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591 [701]

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also man-
613 431 aged to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal de-
423 scendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and
[671] when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was
[428] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-
[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both
[635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants.
[578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged
[627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants
431 led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's
423 kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More com-
592 monly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
595 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
656 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
178 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
613 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way
178 it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[70] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-
culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward ne-
olocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as
178 the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matrilocally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

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613 tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal 576 etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates 591 a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. 593 The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various 591 particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some 582 of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's [428] descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman [593] might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or 591 widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. 593 Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at [844] the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more [593] usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North [584] Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's [184] niece.

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000 574 [593] [604] taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, observed rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions—during their periods of co-residence.

591 582 613 591 [593] [763] [586] [764] Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

[431] Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] [848] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

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585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which [431] she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village head- [595] men, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case tradi- tionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no cus- tomary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

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593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In
such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and
[607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

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The wives of her elder matrilineal kinsmen figured prominently in the life-crisis rites of a girl, performing the ritual acts done by enangar women in Central Kerala. 602 613 796

Because of residence patterns men had less contact than did women with the property groups of their spouses. They must be invited to all ceremonies and had ritual duties in those connected with their own children. As sambandhakkar of a property group, the husbands of its female members were usually consulted formally by its kāranavan before he undertook important matters such as building houses or dividing property. He was not, however, obliged to follow their advice. 613 602

Kinship Terms

601 184

A. MATRILINEAL KIN

The pattern of terms was the same as in Central Kerala. Lexically, the only difference was that MoMo and her sisters (A1) were called *acchamma* (literally, "father's mother"), a term extended to them from FaMo. This usage probably resulted from the fact that a child normally recognized FaMo earlier than MoMo and had more contact with her.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES

In North Kerala, as might be expected, there were customary kinship terms for the patrilateral kin. The terms for affines and non-matrilineal cognates were as follows.

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Acchappan* ("Father's father"). M. and F. speaking. FaFa and FaFaBr. FaFaSiHu, FaMoBr, FaMoSiHu. MoFa and MoFaBr. MoFaSiHu, MoMoSiHu.

(5) *Acchamma* ("Father's mother"). FaMo and FaMoSi. FaFaBr-Wi, FaFaSi and FaMoBrWi. MoFaSi, MoMo, MoMoSi, MoFaBrWi.

(6) *Amma* ("Mother"). M. and F. speaking. Extended from Mo and MoSi to FaSi and FaBrWi. FaSi is called *valiya* ("big") mother or *elaya* ("younger") mother according to her age in relation to the father. FaBrWi is so designated according to FaBr's age in relation to Fa.

(7) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Fa, mother's current husband,

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601 184 FaBr, FaSiHu, MoSiHu. The last three are designated "older" or "younger" in the same manner as above.

(8) *Ammâyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of any male of first or second ascending generations within ego's lineage, especially within his property group.

(9) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and Wi's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(10) *Jyĕshtatti amma.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of older male of ego's generation within his lineage, primarily within his property group.

(11) *Machunian.* M. and F. speaking. Male cross cousin, i.e., male of ego's father's lineage in ego's generation, or So of ego's own, or classificatory MoBr within his lineage. Extended to male cross cousins of either parent.

(12) *Machunichi.* M. and F. speaking. The female equivalent of B11.

(13) *Makan.* M. speaking. WiSo. Reference only.

(14) *Makal.* M. speaking. WiDa. Reference only.

(15) *Pĕrakutti.* M. and F. speaking. Reciprocal of B4 and B5. Used primarily of own grandchild through either So or Da. Reference only.

[602] A man or woman used the same terms to address the spouse's natal kin as the own natal kin except in case of an avoidance relationship.

[605] An individual *addressed* all cross-cousins in the same manner as siblings, reserving terms B11 and B12 for reference. He addressed and referred to paternal parallel cousins as siblings.

[564] Kinship terms were used in relationships with affines or cognates of higher or lower matrilineal caste but not in relationships with Nambudiri Brahman relatives.

601 602 *Comment:* Males and females of the second ascending generation were equated with grandparents, except for the maternal great-uncle and his wife. This fits the fact that relationships with the maternal great-uncle and his wife were distant and authoritative while those with other kin of this generation were non-authoritative and informal. Similarly, in the first ascending generation the mother's brother and his wife are singled out as distant and authoritative figures. All others of this generation are classed with the parents as non-authoritative figures.

The existence of Iroquois cousin terms for reference fits the special joking relationship and preferential marriage between cross cousins as contrasted with the prohibition of marriage between parallel cousins of both sides.

[pp. 405-745 not Processed]

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JOURNAL OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE

VOLUME 71

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PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA
1958

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans*' spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. [628]

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kārana-* [694]
van. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kārana-*
van's misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to 184
whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

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159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely re-
776 sembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a
593 paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults
613 are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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769 613 564 596 brothers and then to the junior generation. At the death of a man, his eldest son becomes head of the household until all the sons are adult and can divide their property and move into separate homes. Within the extended family each man must have a son of his own, or an adopted son, who will be his heir, perform his funeral rites, and make offerings for his spirit after death. There is no collective cult of lineage ghosts as among the Nāyars, Iravas and Coorgs. Each son propitiates in his own home the [782] ghosts of his father and mother, paternal grandfather and grandmother, and paternal great-grandfather and great-grandmother. Offerings of water are made thrice daily to these ancestors, of water and gingelly seeds on the new moon days of each month, and of cooked rice balls and other objects on the anniversaries of the parents' deaths. The ancestors are not thought to be interested in the material affairs of the living and cannot help or harm them. Offerings are not made ostensibly to propitiate them but to ensure their own safety in the life after death. If the deceased's sins were not 769 expiated before death it is believed that his spirit must endure terrible physical torture 596 in the abode of Yama, the god of death, before proceeding to *pithiru lokam*, the world 564 of the ancestors. The offerings strengthen the spirit if it is in hell and help it to escape [772] therefrom. In any case, even a spirit already in the ancestral world can fall down into [783] hell if offerings are not made by dutiful descendants. After a period in the abode of the ancestors the spirit is reborn, in high or low estate according to its merit or demerit during life and according to the degree of merit acquired for it by the piety and offerings of its descendants. After many rebirths and the acquisition of great merit, the spirit merges in the universal soul. Village Brahmans believe that the correct performance of ancestral ceremonies is instrumental to this end.

769 These beliefs appear to be associated both with the general philosophy of the 719 Brahmans and with the emotional content of their kinship relationships. The Brah- 564 mans, unlike the Nāyars, are ritual specialists. Their religion teaches that the pleasures 181 of this world are illusory. The aim of the soul is to escape the cycle of rebirths and find union with the divine. Only the spirits of those who died prematurely and violently are believed still interested in this life. Weighed down by sin and desire, they hover about the site of their deaths awaiting the summons of Yama when their appropriate [753] life span has passed. Such spirits may inflict sickness upon those who cross their paths, but the spirits of normal ancestors are not at all punitive.

769 The relationship between a man and his paternal ancestors reflects the deep personal 593 devotion and mutual dependence between father and son during life. From early 564 childhood a son is taught that aggressive thoughts, let alone acts, toward the parents 783 are gravely sinful and to be shunned. The parents are highly idealized and enveloped in an aura of sanctity. Children are taught that the father and the mother are the first gods to be worshipped. Among individual Brahmans, the expression of any form of aggression toward the father appears to be attended by deep guilt. Neither should a son permit himself the thought that his father is punitive toward him. In everyday etiquette the relationship is one of comparative intimacy and informality. Corporal [861] punishment is very seldom inflicted, and the chief sanction against bad behavior seems to be not fear of punishment but extreme emotional dependence and fear of rejection. Individual Brahmans, on the occasion of the sickness or death of their parents, have exhibited to me great guilt, blaming themselves for youthful impiety, and fearing that the ill which has now come on their parents is the result of their own misdemeanor. From case histories there seems no doubt that the relationship with the

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father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

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769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
182 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact
626 fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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his forebears. Thereafter he offers rice balls and other oblations in a *śrāddham* ceremony 184
on each anniversary of the death. 564

Many of these customs are of long standing among the Nāyars. Barbosa[18] reported in 1518 that Nāyar royalty observed *dīkṣā* for the dead in the same manner as Nambūdiris. Sheikh Zein-ud-Deen[19] recorded the custom for commoner Nāyars in 1579. Linschoten[20] reported in 1598 that Nāyars normally cremated their dead. Today, Nāyar death and anniversary rites are almost identical in form with those of Nambūdiris. During the period of death pollution they employ a lower matrilineal caste to instruct them in the rites. (In Cochin, Chīdigans fulfill this function; in South Malabar, Attikūrssis; and in North Malabar, Mārārs.) The same caste assists Nambūdiri Brahmans to prepare the ritual materials for their funerals, and has clearly transmitted the Brahmanical rites to the Nāyars. Similarly, at the end of the death pollution on the sixteenth day, during the *dīkṣā* period, and on anniversary days, Nāyars are instructed in their oblations by a priest of a degraded subcaste of Brahmans. (This subcaste is the Elayads in Cochin and South Malabar and the Nambidis in North Malabar.) A few peculiarly non-Brahmanical rites do, however, survive. In Kottayam, poorer Nāyars among commoners customarily bury their dead.[21] In both areas those who burn the dead bury the bones and ashes in a pot under a jack-fruit tree outside the ancestral house near the ancestor shrine. Some leave the bones there permanently and consider that the ghost remains near the bones and the ancestral house. Others dig up the bones after the period of mourning, dispose of half of them in a sacred river, and return the other half to the grave. The bones of *kāranavans* are sometimes [613]
placed on an open platform under a jack-fruit tree, to which food offerings are made on days of propitiation. Other rites spring from the Nāyar view that the ghost requires appeasement rather than mere assistance to another world. Brahmans, for example, pour holy water into the mouth of a dying man to purify him for entry into the world of ancestors. Old-fashioned Nāyars offer rice gruel as a last act of appeasement.

Even the Sanskritic rites are in fact so adapted to Nāyar requirements that they 76
carry a quite different emphasis of meaning from that associated with them by Brah- 184
mans. First, the role-structure of the rites is, of course, completely adapted to the 564
descent system. A Nambūdiri deceased's chief mourner is his or her eldest son, or, 613
if there is no Nambūdiri son, the eldest brother's son. A Nāyar woman's chief mourner is her eldest son; that of a man, the man next junior to him in the property group. But all males of the *taravād* junior to the deceased make subsidiary *bali* offerings to him in the period of pollution. Brahman spouses observe mourning and death pollution for each other. Nāyar spouses traditionally observe no mourning or pollution for each other, for they belong to different *taravāds* and have no mutual legal obligations. If a Nāyar dies in a wife's house, his body must traditionally be returned to his *taravād* for cremation. Shortly before or after the death of her husband, a woman goes to view his body for the last time. She is then ceremonially conducted out of the house on the north side—the side opposite to that from which the god of death arrives. She is returned to her natal home, and after this she may never reenter her dead husband's house. In Cochin, where men traditionally had no obligations to their children, a child did not observe death pollution for his genitor. But in North Malabar, [591]
where children have an intimate relationship with the father in avunculocal residence during childhood, a man's sons make offerings for him during death pollution, and the eldest son is second-in-command to the chief mourner at the cremation. The

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Tiyyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kuttichāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kuttichāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
782 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.
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184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[794] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of
[613] commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
564 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal.* Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam.*

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

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in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft, however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

769 The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad,
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and
152 submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[35] and the initiation rites[36] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are
[782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *taravād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *taravād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

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113 G. Roheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (New York, 1950), pp. 134, 135, 432; F. L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (New York, 1948), pp. 240-243; Mead, 1949, pp. 40-41; J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 263-304.

[12] Nāyar *Kāranavans* are of course not ancestors in the strict sense. However, I use this term for convenience as they fulfill roles similar to those of ancestors in many patrilineal societies.

[13] For an account of Īrava social organization and culture, see A. Aiyappan, *Iravas* and *Culture Change*, Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., 5 (1945).

[14] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 158-165.

[15] For a brief account of Tamil Brahman kinship, see E. K. Gough, "Brahman Kinship in a Tamil Village," *American Anthropologist*, XVIII, (1956), 826-853.

[16] See, e.g., Thurston, V (1909), 152-240.

[17] Fortes, 1949, p. 235.

[18] H. E. J. Stanley, trans., Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt, 1886), p. 15.

[19] R. Rowlandson, trans., Sheikh Zein-ud-deen, *Tohfut ul Mujahideen*. An Offering to Warriors Who Shall Fight in Defence of Religion Against Infidels (Hakluyt, 1883), p. 63.

[20] A. C. Burnell, trans., *The Voyage of John Hughyen Van Linschoten to the East Indies* (From the Old English Translation of 1598) (Hakluyt, 1885), p. 284.

[21] All castes on the southwest coast bury or cremate the dead in the southwest corner of the ancestral garden. This custom contrasts with that of Hindus in the eastern districts, who burn or bury the dead on communal sites, each owned jointly by a caste community, outside the residential area of the village. [766] [566]

[22] The castes of agricultural serfs are absent in Kottayam, agricultural labor being done by Īrava tenants or by the Nāyars themselves.

[23] This form of propitiation of alien ghosts in Kottayam is called a *teyyam tira*. It closely resembles the *kāranava tērē* of the neighboring Coorgs (Srinivas, 1952, pp. 158-165.) In Coorg, however, lower caste officiants impersonate the Coorg *taravād's* own ancestors. In Malabar, lower caste propitiants impersonate only alien ghosts attached to the Nāyar *taravād*.

[24] Witchcraft (*odi*), a witch (*odiyan*). For a more detailed account of witchcraft, see Thurston, VI (1909), 36-41, 122-127. [113]

[25] M. Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa* (Manchester, 1954).

[26] Gluckman, *The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies. Social Structure*, M. Fortes, ed. (Oxford, 1949), pp. 145-167.

[27] All of these statements apply to conditions in 1947-9. I observed no major changes in ritual activities during a brief revisit in 1952. The Malabar Coast, as the newly formed State of Kerala, elected a Communist government in April 1957, and I have little information on conditions after that date. [114] [642]

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116 TEXTS--a full set of pages from each processed source, arranged in page order, as a means of establishing the context for any particular slip. Sets are arranged in the numerical order of the sources. See also:

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VOL. 36
NO. 2 APRIL-JUNE, 1956

A Quarterly Anthropological Journal
Founded in 1921 by Sarat Chandra Roy

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SNAKE WORSHIP AMONG THE NAYARS OF SOUTH INDIA

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NO species of animal has impressed mankind to the same extent as the snake apparently has. Startling indeed is its power of sudden appearance and disappearance; and its gliding motion, without appendages, gives it an eerie quality. The lightning suddenness of its bite and the tragic consequences, coupled with its amazing swiftness, place the snake in a category of its own. Above all its habit of casting off its skin periodically endows it with a supposed immortality which becomes the cause of its extreme veneration. Snake worship is very widespread in the world and is attended by varying rites and ceremonies. In India, where many species of snakes abound, the cult is very widespread. Perhaps due to the variety of species and the consequent danger and damage involved, snake worship in India may have had a local origin, though J. Tod traces its origin to a Central Asian tribe called Tak.[1]

[114]

It is significant that in the very rude and low cultures, among tribes like the Veddahs and Andamanese, and to some extent among the Australians, snake worship is not found. The Australians do have totemic clans named after snakes, but no special veneration is paid to snakes as such. In West Africa, on the other hand, among the Dahomey tribe the monster python Dahu Sio is worshipped as a great god, and is propitiated for favourable weather, for oracles and for wealth. Even in the Palaeolithic period snakes were held in esteem, judging from the carved snake figures on the batons de commandment, and also during Mesolithic period as evinced by snake paintings on the painted pebbles of Mas-d-Azil.

E. W. Hopkins observes that in the Vedic Age snake worship was widely prevalent in India, and references are made

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to Abibuduya, the serpent of the deep. Further, an inscrip- 825
tion at Banavasi in Kanara in South India, records the erection 171
of a cobra stone in the middle of the 1st century A.D.

In Chamba district the 'golden snake' is offered milk.[2] In Bengal the snake goddess Manasa is worshipped widely, and this is supposed to give protection from snake-bite. Manasa is represented by an earthen pot with vermilion marks. Among the Meithies of Manipur the snake is believed to be the manifestation of a dead ancestor and is accordingly venerated and worshipped. A cult of the snake god is found among the Khasis of Assam, which however is diminishing now-a-days. Among the Khasis a mythical snake called U Thlen is worshipped and is propitiated by the offering of human blood.[3] It is believed that the Thlen attaches itself to homes and families and is the bestower of wealth, prosperity, fame and well-being to its hosts. However, it needs regular and periodic propitiation by the offering of human blood, and in the event of its being neglected it brings disease, ill luck and ruin to the unlucky family which has angered it.

In South India and particularly among the Nayars the 825
worship of snakes is an established cult. Snake groves or 778
kavus, which are clumps of wild trees festooned with 171
creepers, abound in plenty, usually near the homes of Malayali Hindus. These groves are called *vishathum kavu* (poison shrine) or *nagakotta* (snake shrine). Usually a block of granite is carved into the shape of a cobra's head, called *chitra kutta kalu* and is consecrated at the spot.

In Quilon district, Travancore, near Haripad is a big snake 825
worship centre in the form of the Manarsalil temple. One of 171
the important snake shrines is called *bernie kavu* situated in Chenganur taluk of the Quilon district. In Trivandrum is the great temple of Padmanabha Swami and here one of the important deities worshipped is Ananta, the mighty serpent, upon whose great coils Lord Vishnu reclines on the ocean of milk.[4] Further, in Tirunelveli a temple dedicted to Shankar and the goodess Gomiti called Sankaranianar Koil has a snake mound where worship is offered to serpents in the hope that chronic stomach ailments will be cured by propitiating the

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825
171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes.
825 Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison,
171 are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for
782 snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship
778 at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person
[766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes
825 unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a
778 Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him
796 and left them in their present abode. He however promised to
[173] return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure. These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

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of particular importance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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116 TEXTS--a full set of pages from each processed source, arranged in page order, as a means of establishing the context for any particular slip. Sets are arranged in the numerical order of the sources. See also:

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Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 3

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ANTHROPOLOGY.

NÂYARS OF MALABAR

(WITH ELEVEN PLATES)

BY

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[*Reprinted from the Edition of 1901, with a Bibliography.*]

MADRAS:
PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRESS.

1915.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of those who have not seen the first article of this series of notes on some of the people of Malabar, I wish to repeat that it is an "attempt to describe the people as they actually are, and not as they are supposed to be in the books on Hinduism, which, for the most part, tell us of *Hinduism as it is not* in Southern India. Books have not been consulted or used anywhere, except where the fact has been notified." It is a product of original work during three years and a half spent in Malabar. My thanks are offered to the many gentlemen, natives of Malabar, who have in the kindest manner helped me—Mr. M. Krishnan (Malayalam Translator to Government), Messrs. O. Vasava Menon, C. P. Raman Menon, U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, M. Raman Menon, T. K. Gopal Panniker, T. Kannan, Achutan Nâyar, and many others. Also I have to thank Mr. Badcock of Tellicherry for assistance. The proofs have been through the hands of several Nâyars, and every precaution has been taken to ensure accuracy of facts.

[1901.] F. FAWCETT.

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THE NÂYARS OF MALABAR.*

IT is likely that some of the gentle readers of this monograph are not familiar with "The Lusiad," the epic poem of Luis de Camoens, the restless soldier-poet who sailed with a detachment of the Portuguese for the West Coast of India in 1553. Voltaire, who is not given to redundant praise of anybody, styles him the Portuguese Virgil. At any rate he has written a fine epic, and from it I will quote a few lines concerning the Nâyars, with whom he came in personal contact three and-a-half centuries ago.

"Polias the labouring lower clans are named;
"By the proud *Nayres* the noble rank is claimed;
"The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
"The warrior's plumes their haughty brows adorn;
"The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right,
"Their left arm wields the target in the fight;
"Of danger scornful, ever armed they stand
"Around the king, a stern barbarian band." †

A former Governor of Bombay, Johnathan Duncan by name, who visited Malabar in 1792-3, has anticipated me in quoting some of these lines, and with regard to them he observes: "These lines . . . . . contain a good description of a Nâyar, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders." ‡

The Nâyars, the Nareæ of Pilny, (Nat. Hist. VI, 21), were the swordsmen, the military caste of the west coast of India. There are some small sects or castes intervening, but broadly speaking the Nâyars rank after the Nambûtiris in Malabar, and they occupy the same position in the Native States of Cochin and Travancore.

* The first article of this series was in Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where the Nambûtiri Brahmans of Malabar were described.

† Mickle's Translation, London, 1798.

‡ Logan's "Manual of Malabar," page 137.

162 564 According to the Census Report, 1891, they numbered 377,828 in Malabar. The figures found in this useful document offer an instance of the unreliability of casual observation. The author of "A Manual of Malabar Law" describes the peoples of Malabar to some extent, and in his Introduction says: "The Nâyars constitute the major portion of the Malabar population." One hears of Malabar as the land of the Nâyars, as if its inhabitants were all Nâyars. Certainly they may be said to form the most distinguishing feature of the district; but, when we seek in the spirit of accuracy, we find the surprising fact that they number but 14·2 per cent. of its population.

611 564 The chief immediate interest attached to them lies in the fact of their being the best, that is the fullest, the most complete existing example of matriarchy, or, to be more strictly accurate, of inheritance through females. [171] This system, obtaining at one time amongst the Celts and other races of Europe, was probably universal in the sense that it existed at some period in the life history of every race of mankind, and is now to be found here and there in the world.

611 171 That inheritance through females was once the rule in Southern India is fairly obvious. Amongst others the Maravars, who are, so far as we can surmise at present, aborigines in the sense that we know of no earlier inhabitants in the part of the peninsula occupied by them, to this day offer strong proof of this. I refer to the genuine Maravars—the Kondayan Kottai Maravars of Tinnevelly—and not to the offshoots settled in Trichinopoly and elsewhere, who have almost entirely forsaken all the customs of their fathers.* Amongst the Maravars the girl on marriage joins the sept of her husband, but she retains her own sept name, and her children are of *her* sept; not of their father's. Marriage between persons of the same sept name is prohibited; and this is regulated solely through the mothers. The tribe is endogamous; but the septs within it are exogamous. Thus, a man or a girl cannot marry any one of the same sept, having the same sept name (which is inherited through their mother), and *must* marry some one within the tribe but of a different sept to his or her own—of his father's sept or any other. Though property

* Most of the cigar makers of Trichinopoly are Maravars in origin. Their names — ———Naidu,———Pillay, and so on are borrowed from people of higher castes.

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devolves through the men, the degrees between which marriage is prohibitive are inherited through the women.*

But the circumstance that inheritance through women was once, perhaps, the rule in Southern India cannot be accepted as of itself proof that the Nâyars are identical with the Dravidians, as the people of Southern India are commonly called. It is not yet time to say whether they are or are not. To the ordinary visitor their outward appearance, customs, habitations, mode of life generally, are very different from what he sees in the Telugu or Tamil countries; for Malabar, "the west coast," is as unlike the rest of the Presidency as Burma. The only other district of the Madras Presidency which resembles Malabar, is Ganjám, more particularly the northern part of it, where the people are almost entirely Aryan. The resemblance between these, the Uriyas of Gumsoor and thereabouts, a fine fighting stock, and the Nâyars of Malabar is very striking. It is not, perhaps, a mere coincidence that in these two furthest remote corners of the Presidency alone, the people at large are to be seen wearing umbrella hats to protect them from the sun.

The Nâyars are divided into clans, (we will call them clans for want of a better term), many of which intermingle through marriage, but some of them are endogamous. The precise number of these clans cannot be given, as it is disputed whether certain of them have a right to belong to the cognate Nâyar body. The names of the clans which have come directly under my measuring instruments are these:—

Kiriyattil.	Kitâvu.
Sûdra.	Pallichan.
Kurup.	Muppathinâyiran.
Nambiyâr.	Vlyâpâri or Râvâri.
Úrâli.	Attikkurissi.
Nalliôden.	Mânavallan.
Viyyûr.	Vengôlan.
Akattu Chârna.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Chârna.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Âmayengolam.
Vangilôth.	

This list is not in order of priority.

* An example of this custom existing in another land may be quoted here from a modern book—'The Caroline Islands,' by F. W. Christian, 1899: "Descent is traced through the mother—a custom tolerably common amongst the Oceanic races in general. Members of the same tipu or clan cannot marry." (Page 74.)

564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with [851] others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [613] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493] * A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live 613
there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

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486 564 784 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstru- 562 ation. While in her period she may not eat or drink 178 with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. 783 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South 841 Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* 564 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, 613 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving 486 her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna 178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it 562 may be that the women of it have latterly taken more liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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The Sûdra clan, one of the best, supplies the women servants in the Nambûtiris' houses. 564* [357]

We will now pass to a consideration of the physical measures of some of the clans—men, not women unfortunately. It was impossible to measure the women. 141 564* [114]

Here are given the averages of the various measures of 186 Nâyars—

25 Kiriattil.	25 Vattakkâd.
25 Úrâli.	25 Purattu Chârna.
8 Kurup.	25 Akattu Chârna.
22 Nambiyâr.	25 Sûdra.

Note.—Group A, a non-descript group of a few individuals of eight different clans (see "Nambûtiris"—Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, page 10) is not included here for obvious reasons.

Each index given is the mean of the indices—

	Average of 186 Nâyars.
Stature	165·6
Height, sitting	84·9
Do. kneeling	122·4
Span	175·1
Chest	80·6
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·5
Do. width	8·3
Left middle finger	11·0
Hips	26·0
Left foot, length	25·4
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·2
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	73·1
Bigoniac	10·4
Bizygomatic	13·1
Maxillo-zygomatic index	80·1
Nasal height	4·8
Do. width	3·6
Do. index	76·8
Vertex to tragus	13·1
Do. to chin	19·7
Middle finger to patella	10·1

The physical characteristics of each clan separately will be given first. This table will enable us to see at a glance how the measures of any particular clan differ

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* 141 564 from those of the average Nâyar; also how the averages compare with the Nambûtiri.

But, before doing this, we will exclude the endogamous clans—the Ùrâli (wholly endogamous) and the Vattakkâd (partly endogamous), and take the averages of all the others. It will be observed that exclusion of these two, who are each units apart from each other, and the first from all the others here dealt with, leaves the averages of all those who intermingle much the same as before, when the Ùrâli and Vattakkâd were included. It cannot be said that exclusion of these two bring the measures of the others any nearer to those of the Nambûtiri, whose blood is in constant process of mixture with the others, but not at all with the Úrâli and not much with the Vattakkâd. It must, however, be remembered that there are about 39 Nâyars to every Nambûtiri in Malabar, and that the latter does not waive his opportunities to disperse his favours amongst the Nâyar ladies.

* 141 564 The Úrâli and the Vattakkâd are not the only clans wholly or partly endogamous, but they are the only clans wholly or partly endogamous which have been examined thoroughly by me. The Attikkurissi clan is also endogamous, and there may be others.

[625] *Note.*—Individuals in the constabulary are excluded from all the tables, their measures being as a matter of course above the averages for their caste or clan.

	Averages of 136 Nâyars, Vattakkâd and Úrâli excluded.
Stature	165·7
Height, sitting	85·1
Do. kneeling	122·7
Span	175·3
Chest	80·4
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·6
Do. width	8·0
Left middle finger...	10·9
Hips	25·9
Left foot, length	25·5
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·3
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	72·9

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	Average of 141 136 Nâyars, Vattakkâd 564* and Urâli excluded.
Bigoniac	10·4
Bizygomatic	13·0
Maxillo-zygomatic index	80·0
Nasal height	4·8
Do. width	3·7
Do. index	77·6
Vertex to tragus	13·1
Do. to chin	19·7
Middle finger to patella	10·0

KIRIATTIL NÂYARS.

Ages ranging between 22 and 52.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Average of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks.
Stature, height ...	175·2	155 1	165·3	...	
Height, sitting ...	89·7	80·4	84·3	51·0	
Do. kneeling ...	129·5	113·8	122·0	73·8	
Span	186·0	160·4	174·3	105·4	
Chest	87·6	75·0	78·2	47·3	
Shoulders	42·8	37·7	39·4	23·8	
Left cubit	47·8	42·7	45·9	27·8	
Left hand, length ...	19·5	16·6	18·3	11·1	
Do. width ...	8·6	7·6	8·2	44·3	To left hand, length = 100.
Left middle finger ...	11·5	9·1	10·7	57·8	To left hand, length = 100.
Hips	27·9	24·4	26·0	15·7	
Left foot, length ...	26·8	23·2	25·3	15·3	
Do. width ...	9·8	8·0	8·8	13·9	
Cephalic length ...	20·1	17·5	19·0	11·5	
Do. width ...	14·6	13·3	13·9	...	
Do. index ...	80·0	69·0	73·1	...	
Bigoniac	11·3	9·1	10·4	...	
Bizygomatic ...	14·1	12·2	13·0	...	
Maxillo-zygomatic index.	84·8	73·4	80·1	...	
Nasal height ...	5·1	4·2	4·7	...	There are 8 whose nasal height is 5 and over.
Do. width	4·4	3·2	3·7	...	
Do. index	102·3	66·7	78·8	...	
Vertex to tragus ...	14·4	12·0	12·9	7·8	
Do. to chin ...	20·8	17·5	19·2	11·6	
Middle finger to patella.	14·7	5·5	9·7	5·86	

*141 *564 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so.

In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

142 302 *564 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains; the rest of the head, the face and body are always shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

*142 *564 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.

A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head [827] profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

*[564] [302] [305] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest, abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

* During the rains.

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 502 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.* It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

[see plate I, facing p. 220 -- An.]

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PL. VII.

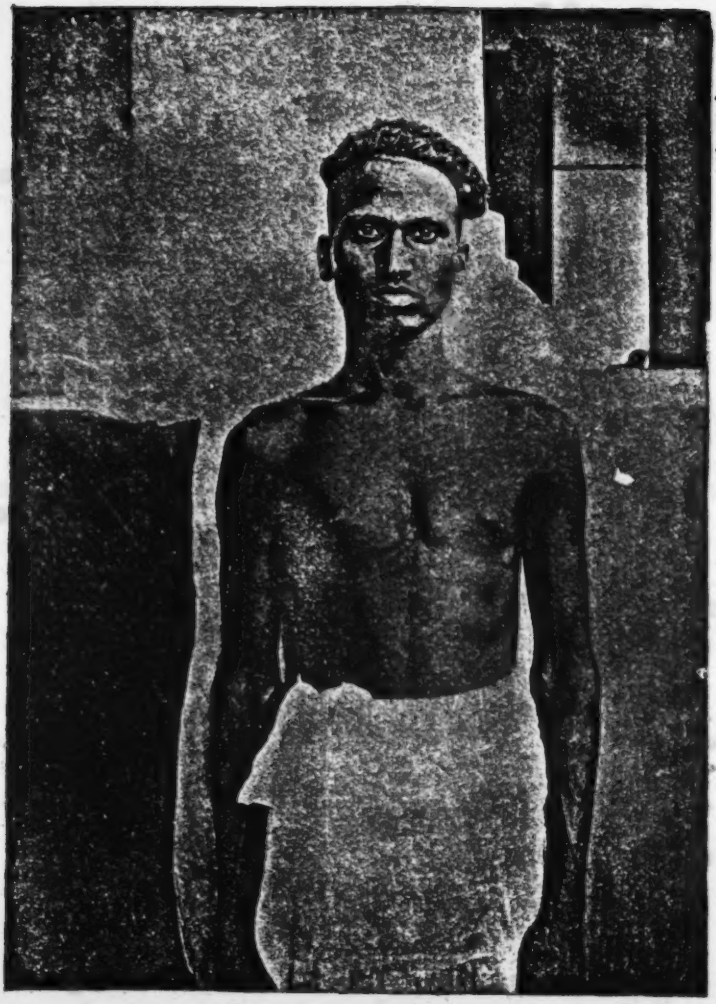

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 196]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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legend "made in Austria." The Nâyars wear none but the gold, "mounted" as they call it (the mounting being much as the upper portion of one section of the necklace, in the plate), strung together through the mounting just as the necklace: a very effective ornament for the neck. The brass imitations of the sequin are worn by the women of the inferior races of whom we shall have some description hereafter. If one asks the ordinary Malayali, say a Nâyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rama and Sita; between them a cocoanut tree!

Turkish coins, French half louis, and German 10 mark pieces are also used in the same way, each one being known by a distinctive vernacular name, and no corruption of its nomenclature in European coinage, so that it is always easy to identify one of these coins by its vernacular name. For instance, every Malayali knows what an "Amâda" is: it is what we know to be a real or imitation Venetian sequin.* The half louis of the empire is known as the "pakshikkas," probably from the eagle on the reverse. And so on.†

Ornaments are never worn on the ankles or on the waist, as is the rule in other parts of Southern India.

Dress, men.—This is very simple; ordinarily one cloth round the loins, the ends overlapping a foot or two in front. It is not tucked between the legs, which is the fashion practically all over India, but hangs straight to the ground. It should touch the ground, or very nearly do so. Wearing a cloth in such fashion carries with it dignity to the wearer. A Tîyan, or a man of any inferior

* I have never heard any explanation of the word Amâda in Malabar. The following comes from Tinnevelly: "Amâda was the consort of Bhagavati and he suddenly appeared one day before a Shânár (the caste devoted to climbing the palms and drawing off the juice) and demanded food. The Shânár said he was a poor man with nothing to offer but toddy, which however he gave in a palmyra leaf. Amâda drank the toddy and performing a mantram over the leaf it turned into gold coins which bore on one side the pictures of Amâda, the Shânár and the tree; and these he gave the Shânár on a reward for his willingness to assist him. This explains the two names—Shânár caste (as they are called in Tinnevelly, but where they are not very common), and Amâda."

† It is scarcely right to say any of these coins, even the sequin, is not current. The value of each is known everywhere to a nicety. It must be remembered that throughout Malabar copper coins of the English and Dutch East India Companies, of Mysore, and of almost every former dynasty of South India are to be found amongst the coins actually current with the people, while in the rural parts reckoning is always in fanams: not in annas.

291 caste, is not supposed to wear his cloth below his knees. *564 Now-a-days, when there is a general levelling up, the inferior races occupying a position they never held before, when people speak of caste as if it were a fanciful arrangement of the social fabric which it would be an excellent thing to destroy, forgetting that, fundamentally, it rests on racial differentiation, we see those of castes inferior to the Nâyar wearing their cloths to the ground—in the towns that is, where the sway of modern officialdom and education is felt. But, were a man of inferior caste to wear his cloth to the ground, away out in the district where the old order has not changed much, he would soon be made to repent having done what is believed to be an infringement of the privileges of the Nâyar. He would probably be well beaten, and might have his house burnt. The single cloth (mundu) constitutes the ordinary dress. No turban is worn. It is wrong for a [293] Nâyar to cover his head. But he may use an umbrella, and invariably does so when walking in the sun, for he is very susceptible to its rays. The cloth must be fastened at the waist in a certain way. Those of every caste tie or fasten their cloth round the loins in a certain way; people of no two castes tie the cloth alike.

Women.—A short cloth is worn somewhat tight round the loins, and over it is worn another cloth from the waist to below the knee. Nothing is worn above waist. When one sees women of the Nâyar caste on the roads (they are *never* to be seen in the towns), or at the festivals or other large gatherings, they are wearing a cloth loosely covering the upper portion of the body. In Malabar, where there is prevalent the idea that no respectable woman covers her breast, there has crept in lately, chiefly amongst those who have travelled, a feeling of shame in respect of this custom of dress. Dress is, of course, a conventional affair, and it will be matter for regret should false ideas of shame supplant those of natural dignity such as one sees expressed in the carriage and bearing of the well-bred Nâyar lady.

121 It will be most convenient to deal with the Nâyars as a body under such heads as marriage, customs, etc. Here we are concerned mainly with physical measures and general appearance, under which come dress and orna- [291] ment. What has been said about dress may be taken as *[564] descriptive of all the clans. Before leaving the Kiriattil [115] Nâyars it will be well to note the names of some of those actually measured.

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PL. VIII.

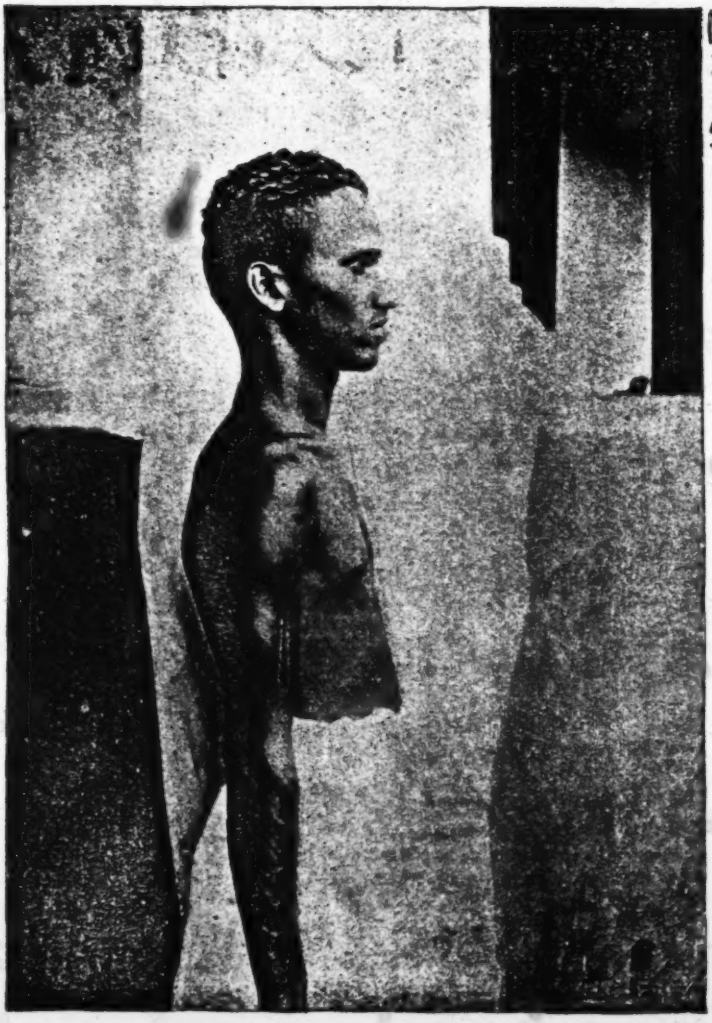

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 198]

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[553]

Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan ...	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi ...	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivîttil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvîttil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Râmuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Râmuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Rârappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak. 553 552

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd. 613 552

ÚRÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

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564*

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	* 120·8	74·0	*120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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ÚRÂLI NÂYARS—*cont.*

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*564

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks.
Chest	88·0	77·4	81·2	49·8	
Shoulders	43·7	36·8	39·7	24·3	
Left cubit	51·4	41·6	45·2	27·7	
Left hand length ...	20·5	17·0	17·8	10·9	
Do. width	8·8	7·5	7.9	...	
Left middle finger ...	12·2	9·6	10·7	...	
Hips	29·6	23·7	26·0	15·9	
Left foot length	28·3	23·7	24·7	15·1	
Do. width	9·8	8·2	8·7	...	
Cephalic length	20·4	17·5	19·2	11·8	
Do. width	15·0	13·4	14·0	..	
Do. index	79·0	68·2	72·9	...	
Bigoniac	11·1	10·0	10·5	...	
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·2	13·2	...	
Maxillo-zygomatic index.	84·8	74·1	80·6	...	
Nasal height ...	* 5·3	4·1	4·8	2·94	*There were 6 of 5·0 and over.
Do. width	4·0	3·2	3·6	...	
Do. index	84·4	65·4	75·5	...	
Vertex to tragus	14·2	11·9	12·9	7·9	
Do. to chin	21·2	18·4	19·9	12·2	
Middle finger to patella...	18·7	7·1	11·5	7·05	

Face.—Among the descriptive notes of individuals made when measuring them are these :—

(1) Supraciliary arches, slight. Nasal notch. Chin recedes slightly. Chin square with slight hollow in front.

(2) Nasal bone slightly raised. Nasal notch moderate. Supraciliary arches ditto. Chin pointed.

(3) Head pyramidal. Thick flabby nose. Nasal bone slightly raised.

(4) Forehead moderately high and straight. Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight ; very slight prognathism. Chin recedes.

(5) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches marked. Lips thick. Nasal notch. Nasal bone slightly raised. Ears small.

(6) Protuberance over the right ear. Forehead markedly prominent. No nasal notch.

As a rule the nose is straight, or the nasal bone is slightly raised. In some cases the nasal notch is deep.

In one individual the broadest part of the head was just *above* the ear.

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In another, the alæ of the nose appear to have become 141 564* enlarged through taking snuff.

In another, the point of the ear (noticed by Darwin) in the helix $\frac{1}{3}$ from the top, was very marked.

One individual of 29 looked at least 40. He had [145] suffered severely from small-pox.

Figure.—The average is slight to medium. One is noted as stout, and another as very strongly built.

Hair.—It has been noticed already (see Nambûtiris. 142 Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I) that the growth of hair on the 564* cheeks is a racial characteristic. In some of the lower races it is entirely absent, while in the Nambûtiris it is constant. About half the Urâli Nâyars examined had a regular growth of hair on the cheeks.

On the head.—In all but one the hair on the head, invariably black and glossy, was thick and wavy; in a few, it was very thick or fairly so; and, in the case of three individuals, it was noted as curly. A few grey hairs were noticed in four individuals aged respectively 25, 29, 30, 45; and one young fellow of 20 had a small patch of white hair over the right eyebrow.

Hair on the chest was slight to moderate as a rule, but in 4 individuals it was thick.

Hair on the arms was observed to be slight in 13, and moderate or thick in 12.

In all, the hair on the legs varied between moderate and thick, excepting that in 2 the growth was very thick. One man had shaved his feet, and another had shaved the backs of his hand and his wrists. In a few there was a tolerably thick growth of hair in the small of the back. This is common to all the Nâyars.

Colour of the skin.—In 22 cases in which this was recorded the darkest was No. 43 (Broca's colour types) and the fairest No. 40. Twelve individuals were of No. 29 or fairer, and this (a little fairer than 29) seems to be about the average. A little darker than the Kiriattil.

Colour of the eyes.—8 individuals were of No. 2 (Broca); 6 individuals were of No. 1; 6 individuals between 1 and 2.

Ornaments.—A few of those examined said that men 301 of the clan never wore earrings, though their ears were 564* pierced. There may be some section of the clan who do not; but, as a rule, earrings are worn by those who can afford them. One man indeed said he never wore them, fearing thieves might steal them. Another wore

301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami- *564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613 Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
*564 Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

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VATTAKKÂD NÂYARS.

There is some obscurity in the sub-divisions of this clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranâd, they are divided into the Undiâtuna, or "those who pull" (to work the oil machine by hand) and the "Muri-Vechchu-âtune," or "those who tie or fasten bullocks" (to work the oil machine by means of bullocks and not by hand); yet farther north, Tellicherry and thereabouts there are no known sub-divisions; while in Ernâd, to the eastward, these names are quite unknown, and the clan is divided into the "Veluttâtu," the White, and the "Karuttâtu," the Black. It has been remarked already (page 82) that the Vattakkâd (those who turn round) are not always admitted to be true Nâyars. In the extreme north of Malabar they are called Vaniyan—oil monger. The "White" have nothing to do with expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary occupation of the Black. The "White" may eat with Nâyars of any clan; the Black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The Black sub-clan is strictly endogamous. The other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their woman may marry with men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. But not *vice versâ*. The men must marry within their own sub-clan. I think, but am not sure a man of this clan may marry a woman of the Pallichchan clan; but even if such an alliance is permissible anywhere, I do not think it ever takes place. It may be taken as accurate that men of the clan always marry within their own sub-clan, and that women of the superior sub-clan very often mate with Nâyars of superior clans. 564* [264]

In taking the measures I made no distinction between the sub-clans; it was only just before completion that the existence of the sub-clans was discovered. Had the important fact been discovered earlier, the sub-clans would have been separated. Though scarcely enough for scientific accuracy, it is tolerably certain that most, if not all, of those examined were of the superior sub-clan, which is exogamous as regards the women. The inferior section of the clan—the Black—is not to be found north of the Korapuzha river in North Malabar. One quarter of my subjects were measured in North Malabar—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Badagara; and for the rest, in some cases it is noted that the individuals are of the superior section. This accounts pretty correctly for rather more than half. I am tolerably certain that the other half also belonged to it. 128 141 564*

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124 *564 However alert one's discrimination may be, one may fall into possible error as I did here. "What caste do you belong to?" "I am a Nâyar." "What kind of Nâyar?" "I am a Nâyar." It may take some time to let in comprehension that the name of his clan is wanted, then the answer is "I am a good Nâyar" (one of a good or superior clan). At last he will say he is a Sûdra Nâyar, a Kiriyattil or whatever he may be. Again, many claim the Kiriyattil as their clan when they really have no right to do so, being inferior to it.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 62.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	178·6	154·3	167·0	...
Height, sitting	92·0	78·7	84·6	50·6
Do. kneeling	131·3	112·4	122·9	73·6
Span	190·0	164·7	177·8	106·5
Chest	95·8	70·6	81·3	48·7
Shoulders	42·8	36·9	40·3	24·1
Left cubit	51·4	44·3	46·9	28·1
Left hand, length	20·5	17·0	18·7	11·2
Do. width	8·9	7·6	8·2	...
Do. middle finger	12·6	10·4	11·9	...
Hips	27·8	23·6	26·3	15·7
Left foot length	28·1	23·6	25·7	15·4
Do. width	9·8	7·9	8·9	...
Cephalic length	20·1	18·2	19·2	11·5
Do. width	15·0	13·2	14·2	...
Do. index	79·0	68·0	74·0	...
Bigoniac	11·2	9·7	10·5	...
Bizygomatic	14·0	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	84·4	77·0	80·1	...
Nasal height	5·3	4·0	4·9	2·93
Do. width	3·9	3·0	3·5	...
Do. index	87·5	61·2	73·1	...
Vertex to tragus	13·9	12·3	13·1	7·8
Do. to chin	21·5	17·3	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	14·5	1·8	9·4	5·62

The individual, whose mid finger when standing at "attention" to the top of his patella gives the maximum measure, had a span which was 23·4 more than his height. In seven, the length of the left foot was greater than the breadth of the hips across the crests of the ilium. In ten, the nasal length was 5 cm. and over.

The statures of the first ten measured averaged 168·2 and the nasal index 76·6; otherwise the correspondence between the averages of 10 and of 25 is complete. Perhaps mixture of subjects belonging to the two sections

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of the clan is responsible for the rather important differences noted. 144 564 *

Face.—Nasal notch is noted as deep in 3 and moderate in 1; in the others it was slight or not apparent. The nasal bone was raised above the line of the nose in 5, and depressed in 2. The following are brief notes of individuals:—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Forehead high. Supraciliary arches very slight. Chin long.

(2) Forehead high. Nasal point slightly raised. Nasal notch moderate.

(3) Nasal point depressed so that the nose has as it were a knob at the tip.

(4) Supraciliary arches not apparent to the touch. Slightly rounded nostrils. Teeth project forwards.

(5) Deep nasal notch. Supraciliary arches marked.

The posterior portion of the head of the individual whose nasal index was the minimum seemed to project uncommonly; but his cephalic length was no more than 19·4 or a little above the average.

Figure.—Two-thirds are noted as "slight," nearly one-third as "medium," and two (individuals) as stout. One was very lean.

Hair.—In rather more than half the number of subjects the hair on the head was noted as *thick* and *wavy*. In most of the others it was *moderately thick*. In two only it was thin. In two it was *curly*. A man aged 27 had very slight growth of hair on the face (none on the cheeks), but had a fairly strong growth in the small of the back. Individuals of 40, 42 and 62 were a little grey, while one of 45 was almost bald, and what hair he had was white. Very few had hair on the cheeks, or anything like a full growth thereof. It was observed in but two instances, and in a third as slight. But it is proper to remark that, in the earlier period of my investigations, I did not make special notes about whiskers. 142 564 *

Hair on the chest is, as usual, not easy to gauge when there obtains the custom of shaving it periodically, every fortnight or every month. In about a quarter of the subjects the growth is noted as moderate, and in a sixth as thick; in the rest as slight or very slight. In the case of a man aged 45 the hair was white as well as thick.

Hair on the arms was moderate to thick in 13, slight to very slight in 11, and absent in 1.

Hair on the legs was, in every case but one, moderate or thick; in the case of one, very thick. The exception was in the case of a man sick and ill developed.

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142 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest
*564 was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings
*564 (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one
[304] case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper
[789] rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29
*564 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
613 551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

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SÛDRA NÂYARS.

We now come to the Sûdra Nâyars, men and women of which clan supply the house servants in the Nambûtiri Brâhmans' houses. It is only a few who are occupied in this way, however, and of all those examined only one is noted as a servant. The subjects were found in various parts of South Malabar, a few from the neighbouring Cochin Native State. 564* [357]

141
564*

Ages ranging between 22 and 52.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	173·3	151·1	165·9	...
Height, sitting	90·8	78·8	85·8	51·7
Do. kneeling	128·3	110·1	122·9	74·1
Span	186·0	158·3	174·3	105·1
Chest	89·0	76·0	81·1	48·7
Shoulders	43·4	37·4	40·2	24·2
Left cubit	48·6	41·4	46·1	27·3
Left hand, length	20·8	16·8	18·7	11·3
Do. width	8·6	7·3	8·1	...
Left middle finger	12·1	9·9	11·1	...
Hips	27·9	24·0	26·0	15·7
Left foot, length	27·0	23·1	25·3	15·3
Do. width	10·3	7·8	8·9	...
Cephalic length	20·2	17·7	19·2	11·6
Do. width	15·3	13·0	14·1	...
Do. index	86·4	65·0	73·8	...
Bigoniac	11·4	9·4	10·5	...
Bizygomatic	14·1	11·9	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	85·7	76·6	80·3	..
Nasal height	5·4	4·0	4·7	2·83
Do. width	4·2	3·3	3·7	...
Do. index	89·1	67·9	79·4	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·5	13·3	8·0
Do. to chin	21·3	17·7	19·6	11·8
Middle finger to patella	15·7	7·0	9·9	5·97

Note.—The individual whose cephalic index is the maximum was measured in Palghat, where there are many Pattar (East Coast) Brâhmans; his father was, in all probability, one of them. The index of no other equalled 79·0. One broad headed man, whose father was known to have been a Pattar Brâhman, was excluded from the averages.

There were but three subjects whose nasal height was 5 cm. and over.

Face.—Slight prognathism was noticed in one. In another the posterior portion of the parietal was curiously flat.

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141 Some individuals were described in my notes—
*564 (1) Nasal bones wide and thick. Teeth project.

(2) Lips thick and somewhat projecting. Chin receding. The flesh on the chin is thick, giving it a rounded lump like appearance. Inion appears to be in a projecting ridge round the back of the head. (Cephalic length 19·7.)

(3) Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight. Lips slightly everted. Teeth in upper jaw project forwards. Eyes deep set. Inner corner of eyes a trifle oblique.

The last two specimens are uncommon; not typical. The thick lips and projecting teeth are not usually noticeable as in their case. The long oval face is the common
[302] type. The fashion of wearing no hair on the face, shaving the head at the back and at the sides and a little
[291] over the forehead, leaving but the oval patch on the vertex, no head covering being worn, gives the face an appearance of length. But while the average of the measure vertex to chin, for all the Nâyars,* reduced to stature equals 100, is 11·9, the same for 21 of the 30 different castes † examined in Malabar is greater. The Mukkuvan is as high as 13·4, while on the other hand the Nambûtiri is less, being but 11·7.

Figure.—One out of 25 is recorded as "stout." One-third were "slight." Nearly two-thirds were medium or thereabouts; and this seems to represent the average.

142 *Hair.*—More than half are noted as having whiskers,
*564 that is, growth of hair on the cheeks. In two-thirds of the subjects the hair on the head was thick and wavy; in a few cases it was very thick. Individuals aged respectively 25, 32, and 52 were noted as being a little grey. In one-quarter of the total number the hair was thin to moderately thick. One individual of this clan is marked as having hair a little grey.

Hair on the chest.—Rather more than a quarter of the whole had thick to moderately thick hair. In the case of one man hair was thick all over the body, even on the back: everywhere except over the ribs, the front of the upper arm and shoulder. In another the hair on the small of the back was *thick*. In the greater number of individuals it was marked slight, and moderate, and in a few it was absent.

* Group A included.
† Counting each clan of the Nâyars separately.

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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his ~~nose~~ slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [771] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [779]

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*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil ...	Krishnan ...	Cultivator ...	52
Paritbil ...	Achutan ...	Do. ...	27
613 Malabîtil ...	Sivarâman ...	Do. ...	22
Cholale ...	Râman ...	Do. ...	20
551 Muthîra ...	Narrâyanan ...	Teacher ...	26
463 Kanakath ...	Kunhi Krishnan * ...	Unemployed ...	22
Mannareth ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	30
Kûmbiyal ...	Kannan ...	Peon ...	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan ...	Do. ...	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

*553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature ...	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting ...	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling ...	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span ...	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest ...	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders ...	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit ...	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

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NAYAR WOMEN (SOUTH MALABAR), AGED 20 AND 17.

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NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS—*cont.*

141
564*

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Left hand length	20·0	17·7	18·4	...
Do. width	8·5	7·3	7·8	...
Do. middle finger	12·5	10·3	10·9	...
Hips	26·7	24·4	25·4	15·4
Left foot length	27·2	23·6	25·2	15·3
Do. width	9·2	8·0	8·6	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·3	19·2	11·6
Do. width	15·4	13·2	14·1	...
Do. index	79·3	69·4	73·7	...
Bigoniac	11·5	9·1	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·5	11·9	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	87·1	73·8	79·2	...
Nasal height	5·5	4·2	4·8	...
Do. width	4·3	3·2	3·7	...
Do. index	92·9	62·7	77·3	...
Vertex to tragus	13·9	12·2	13·0	7·9
Do. to chin	21·4	18·2	19·7	11·9
Mid finger to patella	15·7	6·5	10·4	4·73

Note.—Although the number of subjects is limited to 22, the averages may be accepted as correct. The averages for 10 and for 25 are, as a rule, identical; in a few there is a trifling difference, but nowhere is the difference more than trifling.

In eight individuals the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. This is about 36 per cent.

In four the nasal index was 90 or over, and in four it was less than 70.

Face.—Observation was recorded in but nine instances.

The reason for this which seems to give examination of subjects a somewhat casual character, is that during the early part of my investigations my notes as to physical characteristics, shape of the nose, etc., were less complete than they were later on. Very seldom, in fact only in the case of the Irulans, was one caste examined completely at a time. It was impossible to work on the people caste by caste. Official duties rendered it impossible to regulate one's peregrinations so as to do so. Subjects were taken where and when they could be got hold of anywhere in the district.

In two cases only the supraciliary arches were rather prominent; in the others, slight or absent.

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*141 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated.
*564 Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspi-
*564 cuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one
[293] starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without
[179] his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman
292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater,
751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 30 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [789]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

*115 564 613 463 551 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below :—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pathushêri	Kanâran ...	... Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
Mâvila	Kumâran ...	... Cultivator	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu ...	... .	22
Puthiotil	Râman ...	... Servant	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan ...	... Cultivator	25
Ramath	Kunhi Râman	... Landlord	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni ...	... Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi	Paidal ...	... Cultivator	25

*564 553

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

14 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width	15·5	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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length was 5 cm. or over. In one individual the iliac 141
bone was much higher at the right side than on the left. 564*

Face.—A few individuals were noted thus—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Nasal point slightly elevated. Helix of ear very thin; the Darwin's point in the centre of the curve on the left and high up on the right.

(2) Deep nasal notch. Chin receding. Lips thick.

(3) Slight nasal notch. Supraciliary arches developed at outer edges. Chin recedes.

(4) Supraciliary arches and glabella in one marked ridge. Nasal point somewhat raised. Nasal notch.

(5) Very deep nasal notch. Very wide and thick eyebrows.

Figure.—More than half are marked as slight—a few of them "very slight"; the rest "medium." None "stout."

Hair.—As a rule, to which exceptions are very few, 142
hair on the head is thick and wavy: curly in the case of 564*
one individual. The hair of a man of 70 was noted as "very thin and grey." A man of 31 also had hair which was "thin and grey," but he was exceptional. The growth of hair on the cheeks—whiskers—was observed in almost every subject.

Hair on the chest.—The average is "moderate."

On the arms.—The growth of hair in half of the subjects was "slight to very slight"; in the other half, "moderate to thick."

On the legs.—It was noted as "moderate" to "thick" in more than three-fourths of those examined; in a few, "slight."

The growth of hair of a few individuals is here specified—

(1) Aged 54. Hair on the head moderately thick and grey. Hair on the face white. Growth of hair on the cheeks. Hair all over chest grey. Very long thick hair on the back. Hair on the legs and arms thick.

(2) Aged 36. Hair on the head moderately thick and wavy. Glossy black. On chest and middle line of abdomen, moderate. On the arms and legs moderately [302]
thick. Shaves the head (except the crown), face, chest, abdomen, wrists and hands, about every 15 days.

(3) Aged 28. Hair on the head thick and wavy. Growth of hair on cheeks; on the chin it is very thick. On the chest, moderate; on the arms, very slight; on the legs, thick. Does not shave his chest, as doing so [302]
would make him weak; on the other hand, if he does [753]
not shave his head and face, he will become sick. [826]

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

*142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

[789] (1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the other of silver and iron. The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

[237] [789] [776] (2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of the right hand. An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my collection) on a string round the waist. The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—" to entice the public " as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

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AKATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

This is one of the relatively inferior clans. It is not one of the fighting clans, as the Purattu Chârna. The clan is divided into two sub-clans, one of which looks to the Zamorin as their lord, and the other owns lordship to minor lordlings, as the Tirumulpâd of Nilambûr. The former are superior; and a woman of the latter may mate with a man of the former, but not *vice versâ*. The men, but not the women of the two sub-clans, may eat together. There is no distinctive name for the sub-clans. As mentioned already, women of this clan are under no restriction as to residence or travel as are those of the superior clans; hence, of late, officials in North Malabar, officials or vakils residing in Madras, have been wiving with these women. The women may mate with men of their own or of any other clan or with a Nambûtiri. Not so the men, who can marry women of their own clan only.

Ages ranging from 20 to 44.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks.
Stature ...	179·4	154·7	165·0	...	
Height, sitting ..	92·0	79·7	85·5	51·8	
Do. kneeling ...	132·6	113·8	122·3	72·1	
Span ...	190·4	161·9	175·2	106·2	
Chest ...	89 0	76·6	81·0	49·0	
Shoulders ...	42·5	37·4	40·1	24·3	
Left cubit ...	51·1	42·4	45·9	27·8	
Left hand length ..	21·2	16·9	18·4	*11·1	* 11·15
Do. width ...	8·8	7·3	8·0	..	
Left middle finger ...	12·7	10·1	10·9	6·6	
Do. hips Do. ...	28·4	24·1	25·9	15.7	
Left foot length ...	28·7	22·3	†25·1	15·2	† 25·15. In one subject greatest length was measured to the second toe.
Do. width ...	9·8	7·9	8·8	...	
Cephalic length ...	20·4	17·0	19·1	11·6	
Do. width ...	15·5	13·0	13·9	...	
Do. index ...	80·6	67·2	72·8	...	
Bigoniac ...	11·2	9·8	10·5	...	
Bizygomatic ...	14·2	11·8	13·0	...	
Maxillo-zygomatic index.	85·4	78·5	81·2	...	
Nasal height ...	5·4	4 0	4·7	2·84	
Do. width ...	4·1	3·1	3·6	...	
Do. index ...	90·9	63·0	77·0		
Vertex to tragus ...	13·9	11·8	12·9	7·9	
Do. to chin ...	20·9	17·9	19·6	11·9	
Middle finger to patella	13·5	3·3	9·9	5·97	

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In three the cephalic length was 20 cm. or over. In nine the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on a few individuals will be set down here. In most cases the supraciliary arches were well marked, and the nasal notch was deep. Nose generally straight, or nasal point slightly raised. Prognathism rare. Lips, especially the lower lip, often very thick.

(1) Very well bred looking. Eyebrows fleshy and thickly marked. Supraciliary arches very slight. Deep nasal notch. Nose straight; nasal point raised very slightly—and very well shaped. In the left ear a very small hole above the usual one in the lobe; I have not noted why it was made.

(2) Supraciliary arches rather prominent. Upper portion of forehead somewhat protuberant. Deep nasal notch. Nasal point raised. Lower lip thick. This man's father was a Nambûtiri. He appears in the plate.

(3) Forehead high. Deep nasal notch. Slight prognathism. Lower lip very thick.

(4) Supraciliary arches not marked. Nasal notch moderate. Lips thin.

Two out of the twenty-five were deeply pitted with small-pox, the Malabar goddess of small-pox, Bhânnâramûrti, having hurt them. In one man the broadest part of the head was above the ears, a little in front. [164] [776]

Figure.—The number of those put down as slight and those put down as medium are about equal.

Hair.—Worn in the usual Malayali fashion which has been described already and, as a rule, plentiful and wavy; treated with gingelly oil, which is sometimes perfumed. The number of individuals whose hair (on the head) was noted as "very thick and wavy" is abnormally large. A young man aged 24 had some white hairs here and there on his head; a man of 35 was a little grey; a man of 39 also; and one of 44 was quite grey. Whiskers or growth of hair on the cheeks were observed in more than half the number of subjects. In several there was hair, fairly thick in some, in the small of the back, and one man had thick hair all over the back. 142 564* [302]

Hair on the chest was "moderate" or "thick" in more than half.

Hair on the arms was "moderate to thick" in about half; in the other half "slight."

Hair on the legs was, as a rule, thick: rarely less than moderately thick. The legs of one man were like those of a bear.

*142 The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1
*564 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

[302] The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the
[613] week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.	1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
" " "	1 to 2	"	6	"
" " "	2	"	7	"
" " "	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

*141 *Weight* of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½
*564 lb.

Prolificness.—In the 8 recorded instances the average
163 number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be
*564 remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

301 *Ornaments.*—Ears are always pierced, and the usual
*564 Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

[304] (1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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PL. X.

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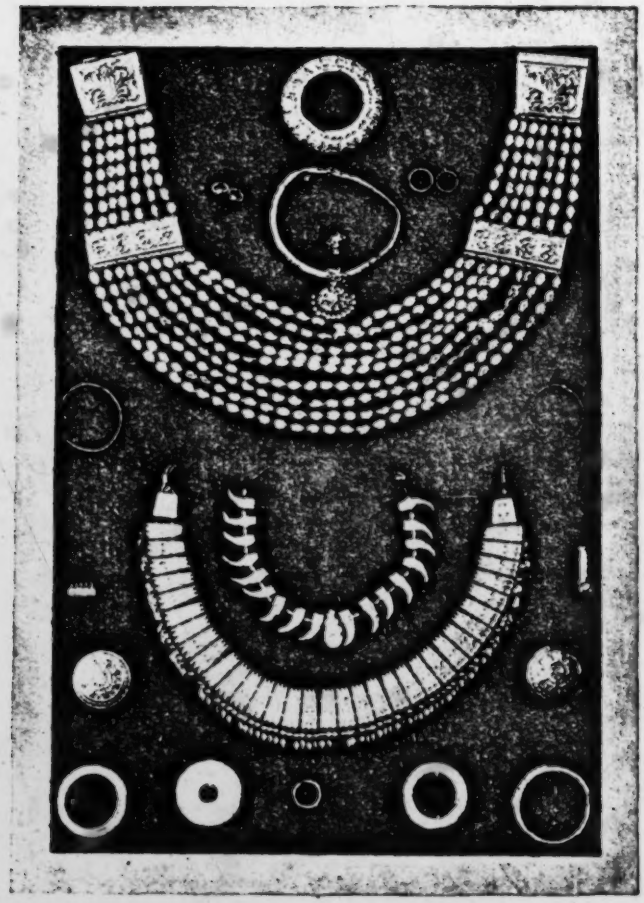

JEWELLERY WORN BY NAYAR WOMEN.

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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

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KURUP NÂYARS.

*141 *564 [114] The number examined, 8, is not, of course, enough on which to base dependable averages. The men of this clan are—judging by the average such as it is—the tallest of all those examined. Tall, straight, well-bred looking men they are, carrying with them an air of independence and self-respect as one of the old fighting clans. It will be observed that the cephalic length is greater than the average for all the Nâyars, while the cephalic index is less, showing that they are longer headed, and more dolichocephalic than the average Nâyar. Again, the measure of vertex to chin is much greater than in any other clan; and their faces are narrower. The index $\frac{\text{Bizygomatic} \times 100}{\text{Vertex to chin}}$ gives the Nambûtiri one of 69.5, all the Nâyars excluding the Kurups 66.2, and the Kurups 64.5.

[551] The men are called by their clan name, Râma Kurup, Krishna Kurup, Gôvinda Kurup. The name Rama seems to be a favourite one, as four out of eight were so called.

Ages ranging between 20 and 72 *.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 8.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·9	163·4	167·1	...
Height, sitting	88·8	82·9	85·7	51 3
Do. kneeling	130·3	120·2	124·1	74·3
Span	184·8	173·0	178·6	106·8
Chest	89·4	78·3	82·4	49·3
Shoulders	42·2	38·8	40·4	24·2
Left cubit	51·0	45·1	47·5	28·4
Left hand length	20·8	18·2	19·3	11·5
Do. width	8·8	7·7	8·2	..
Left middle finger	12·3	10·9	11·5	6·9
Hips	28·4	24·5	26·4	15·2
Left foot length	28·0	24·9	26·4	15·2
Do. width	9·5	8·0	8·8	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·9	19·5	11·7
Do. width	14·6	13·4	14·0	...
Do. index	74·6	68·9	72·0	..
Bigoniac	10·9	9·6	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	83·5	76·7	79·6	...
Nasal length	5·3	4·4	4·8	2·87
Do. width	3·9	3·4	3·7	...
Do. index	84·1	64·2	76·2	...
Vertex to tragus	14·3	12·3	13·2	7·9
Do. to chin	21·8	19·0	23·3	12·1
Middle finger to patella	13·0	3·6	9·2	5·51

[787] * The man who said he was by his horoscope 72 was put down by me as looking 58.

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In two individuals (out of 8) the cephalic length was over 20 cm. In three the nasal height was 5 cm. and over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on two subjects are—

(1) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches distinctly developed. Very deep nasal notch. Nasal point elevated above the line of the nose.

(2) Supraciliary arches not apparent. Nasal point slightly elevated.

Figure.—The greater number are noted as slight; about one-third as medium to stoutly built.

Hair.—Much as those of the other clans. The man who said he was 72, but who looked 58, showed no sign of baldness; his hair was but moderately grey. Another, aged 36, a very strongly-built man, was becoming bald. Baldness at his age is, I should say, rare. 142 564*

Colour of the skin.—The average is a trifle darker than 29 (Broca). The fairest was fairer than 29, and the darkest was No. 43.

Colour of the eyes.—The average colour of those examined is between 1 and 2 (Broca).

Ornaments call for no remark; they are much as those worn by other Nâyars. Ears are always pierced and earrings worn. 301 564* 304

It would be profitless to deal separately with the measures of the individuals comprising the group A in the same way as the others which are more or less complete, with the exception of the Kurup clan. As said already in the group A consists of— 141 564*

2 of the Nelliôden clan.		3 of the Pallichan clan.	
2 „ Viyyûr clan.		1 „ Muppattinâyiran clan.	
1 „ Vangilôth clan.		2 „ Vyâpâri clan.	
1 „ Kitâvu clan.		1 „ Attik' urissi clan.	

and their measures taken collectively have been quoted. The Attikkurissi are endogamous, and the Kitâvu do not wear earrings. [301]

At page 60, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where, speaking of the Nambûtiri Brâhmans, it was said that possibly it may be found that marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son may be found to produce the finest issue; to be the best for preservation of the race. This kind of marriage of first cousins, but never of progeny of sisters or of brothers, is in a general way the rule throughout Southern India, and it obtains amongst the 582 [564]*

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582
*[564] endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 585 [582] [837] 837 175 564 [626] Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman, he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death. If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

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582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[628] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the
582 Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhú-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

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custom is one which makes for improvement of the race, bound up as it is with the Marumakkattâyam system, which, guided by the anulômam principle, has fewer hindrances in the way of natural selection than perhaps any other marital custom throughout the world.

The divine commands of Srí Parasu Râma, the imputed originator of the Marumakkattâyam system which is followed by 70 per cent. of the people of Malabar, are supposed to be contained in the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam, a work in Sanskrit verse, written on the ordinary Malabar grantham (palm-leaf book). It purports to be a monologue "addressed by the Rishi Garga to Yudhishthira the eldest of the Pândus." Chapter XLIX relates "how certain celestial damsels were brought from Indra's world by Parasu Râma to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kêralam Brâhmans, and it relates how Parasu Râma at Vishabhadri (Trichûr), pronounced his commandment to the women (not being of the Brâhman caste) to satisfy the desires of Brâhmans, enjoining on them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was void of the least taint of sin." Unfortunately no scholar has given his opinion as to the time when this was written. Most likely it is not very ancient, and may be attributed to device of the Nambûtiris. But it is respected as authoritative. "One of the foremost Nambûtiris in Malabar in respect of wealth, rank, sanctity and learning," in common with the rest of his clan, relied absolutely on it, and informed the Commission: "The Smiriti says the Sûdras' appointed path to heaven is serving the Brâhmans." "The practice of Brâhmans . . . . . having sexual intercourse with servile (Sûdra) women is in accordance with the Sástras." "If a Brâhman wished to have sexual intercourse with a Sûdra's wife, the Sûdra would be bound to gratify the wish." "A Sûdra cannot be sure of the true parentage of the children born of his wife. Hence the Sûdras cannot follow Makkattâyam"—inheritance in the male line. The Zamorin Maharajah Bahadur informed the Commission that "according to Parasu Râma . . . . chastity should not be observed by non-Brâhman females." Again, the "Ettan Tamburan," one of the senior members of the Zamorin's family, a learned Sanscrit scholar said: "It has been ordained by Parasu Râma that in Kêrala, Marumakkatâyam women need not be chaste;" and he quoted a sloka in proof that there

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564 should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst
837 the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

581 The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

585 The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem
764 to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see
182 relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than else- [421]
where. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be attempted. The first of these, described as "most [227]
peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

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along with those of the boys of her Enangan (a recognised member of one's own clan) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers, is marked out as a fit person to tie the tâli, and a day is fixed for the tâli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Kâranavan of the boy's family. On the appointed day the boy is invited to a house near that of the girl, where he is fed with his friends by the head of the girl's family. The feast is called 'Ayani Unu,' and the boy is thenceforth called 'Manaválan' or 'Pillai' bridegroom. From the house in which the Manaválan is entertained, a procession is formed, preceded by men with sword and shield shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her taravâd, to meet the other procession, and after meeting the Manaválan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the pandal erected for that purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour and there his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths on the occasion. The Manaválan is then taken to the centre of the pandal where bamboo-mats, carpets, and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside of the house, and after going round the pandal three times, places her at the left side of the Manaválan, and the father of the girl then presents a new cloth tied in a kambli to the pair, and with this new cloth (technically called 'mantravadi') they change their dress. The wife of the Kâranavan of the girl's taravâd, if she be of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting anklets, etc. The Purohita called 'Elayatu' (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tali to the Manaválan, and the family astrologer shouts 'Muhurtham' (auspicious hour), and the Manaválan, putting his sword on the lap, ties tali round the girl's neck, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families a Brâhmini sings certain songs intended to bless the couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a certain Nayâr who is versed in songs performs the office. The boy and the girl are then carried by Enangans to a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank or river, holding each other's hands. After changing cloths, they come home preceded by a procession, which varies in importance according to the wealth of the girl's family. Tom-toms and elephants usually form part of the procession, and saffron water is sprinkled. When they come home the doors of the house are all shut, which the Manaválan is required to force open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt
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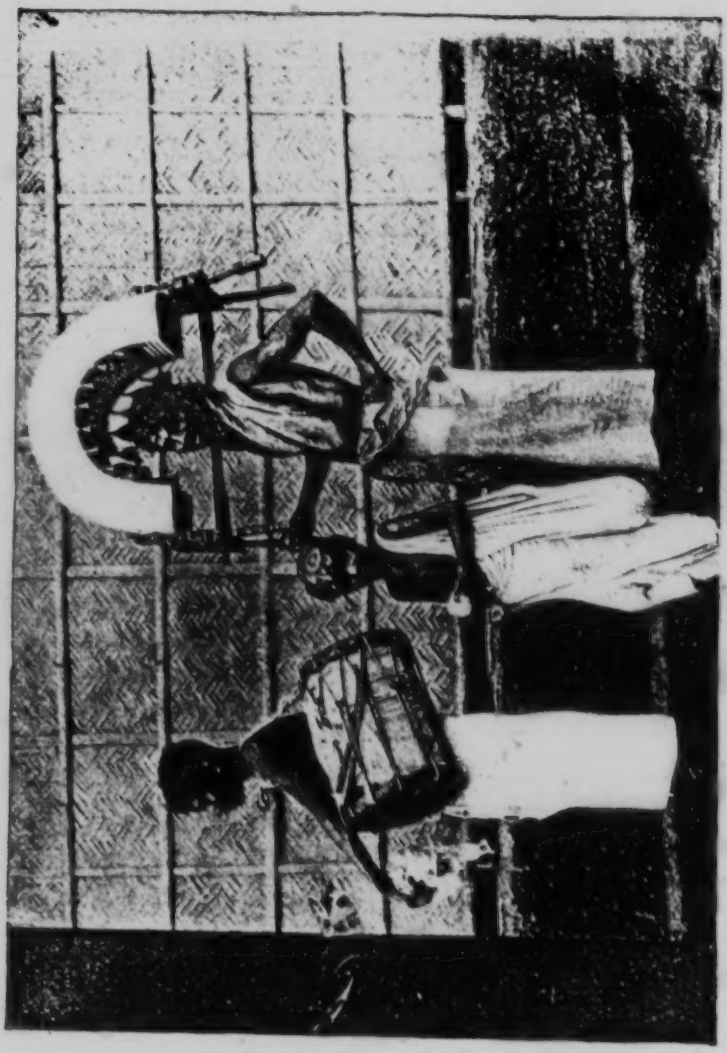

A PALNI PILGRIM, WITH HIS KAVADI.

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "pâttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891).

564 613 588 [184] [586] 765 783 of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [832] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 585 [588] The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is neeessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 184 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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"The variations of the Sambandham are the Pudamuri, Vastradánam, Uzhamporukkuka, Vitáram Kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malayali who would not readily understand what is meant by *Sambandham tudan guga* (to begin Sambandham). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout Kéralam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. 585 184

"It is thus found that Sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among Marumakkattayam Nâyars. It will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this Sambandham ceremony, all over the Kéralam, are in the main the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically : the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony : the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place : the presentation of the *danam* (gifts) to the Brahmans : the sumptuous banquet : the meeting of the bride and the bridegroom,—are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted Sambandhams in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to, are gone through at all Sambandhams among respectable Nâyars, and I would further say that they ought to be gone through at every Sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the Sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of Sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the Putamuri, or Vastradanam, as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of Sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of Sambandham I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. Of course my description will be borne out by the evidence that is before us. The preliminary ceremony, in every Putamuri, is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes 585 787 184

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184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the
[564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[574] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

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the lit-up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and the bridegroom, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. 585 184 [437]

"This is an unvarnished account of a 'Putamuri.' Next morning the Vettilakkettu or Salkâram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is a feasting, etc., in honour of the occasion.

"Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídâram Kayaral is a peculiar form of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the description given above, that the Putamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people generally resort to the less costly ceremony of Uzhamporukkuka or Vídâram Kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as Putamuri; but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The toasting is confined to the relations of the married couple. The particular incident attached to this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular Putamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídâram Kayaral ceremony, and with grown-up children being the issue of such marriage, undergoing the Putamuri ceremony some 15 or 20 years after Uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally.

"The Sambandham of South Malabar, and the Kidakkora-kalyânam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of Putamuri, except the presenting of the cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also *Salkâram* ceremony, wanting in South Malabar as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

But all this formality and ceremonial is not the rule. The Sambandham is always a matter for careful arrangement, in which the wishes of the parties to it are considered, and which it is expected will bring mutual benefit to the two Taravâds concerned.

In South Malabar the girl or woman never lives in her husband's house; she lives on in her own Taravâd house and is there visited by her husband. The ordinary huggermugger, which sometimes stultifies all pleasure in existence, is thus avoided. In North Malabar the woman 591 184

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184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion, suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 585 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is 421
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

582
613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
553 dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
585 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth
178 it change even in such an important piece of life as marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection. 564 585 178

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, which is much more conservative than the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâranavan and the women † of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home." [582] [181] [184] 585 564 613 [787]

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd), [574]

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

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585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are separate; at different ends of the
[574] house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
613 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathîra she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

"*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important ceremony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

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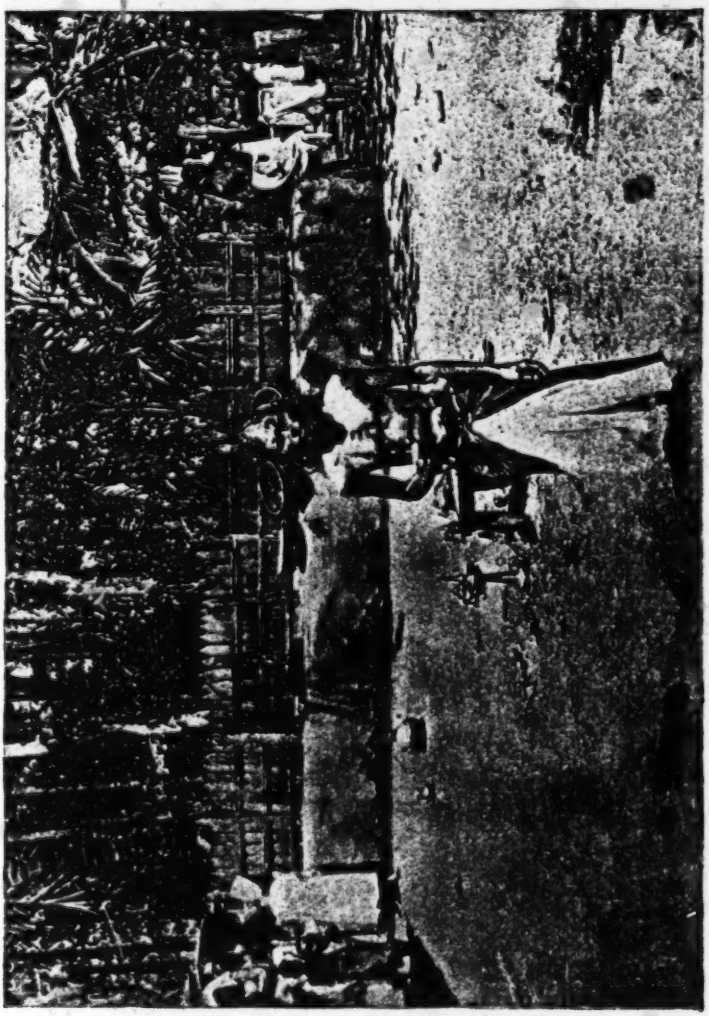

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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family. 843 613 [574]

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan* caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. 846 564 783 613 [844] [237]

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places. [828]

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important 846 613 553

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

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613 event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to
553 the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar
and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls
[574] it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed
by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of
which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

853 "*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the
Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The
852 first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no excep-
613 tion to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is
not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice
being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with
jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain,
known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple
food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first
time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended,
[787] of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the
astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the
child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is
the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on
a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a
lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are †
served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a por-
tion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some
tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan*
or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down
facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child
a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some
rice; and lastly a little sugar.

[301] "Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is
rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and
especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or
'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles,
rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving
ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in
some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite
one for this purpose.

844 "*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman
352 is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a
reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam),
her back supported by a companion, generally an old
woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

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the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

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613 in the larger houses), and, if there is not, is taken to the [351] front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandalwood paste and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is then done what is called the Potavekkuka ceremony or placing new cotton cloths (kóti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the (deceased's) Taravâd followed by all the other members, also sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse when being taken to the place of burial or cremation. In some parts [184] of Malabar the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried (well covered in the cloths) by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is [364] removed there is done another ceremony called Para Virakkuka (filling up pâras—a pâra is a measure nearly as big as a gallon). All adult male members of the Taravâd take part in it under the direction of a man of the Atikkurissi clan (who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisite all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit). It consists in filling up three pâra measures with paddy, and one edangâli ($\frac{1}{10}$ of a pâra) with raw rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a (burning) lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela villâku. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end, one in the middle; on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased, tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist, and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist a piece of iron, generally a

* The eldest male member of the Malabar Taravâd is called the Kâranavan, as noted already (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1); all male members, brothers, nephews and so on, who are junior to him are called Anandravans of the Taravâd.

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or [561] female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the [532] deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and [782] gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done [515] the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

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* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

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765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804]

* Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who âre junior to the deceased. They

824 765 782 613 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for [775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's [825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is [231] thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 613 574 783 When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days no member [824] of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] [431] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 613 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

[783] Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

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the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all 765
following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest 613
river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better [778]
by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory 765
ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched 613
by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he 783
enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the [504]
Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling [465]
and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, 554
well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is 621
the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day 765
after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of s-a boundaries,

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765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [604] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable [302] enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the deceased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for 765 the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After 600 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bali.

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PL. XIII.

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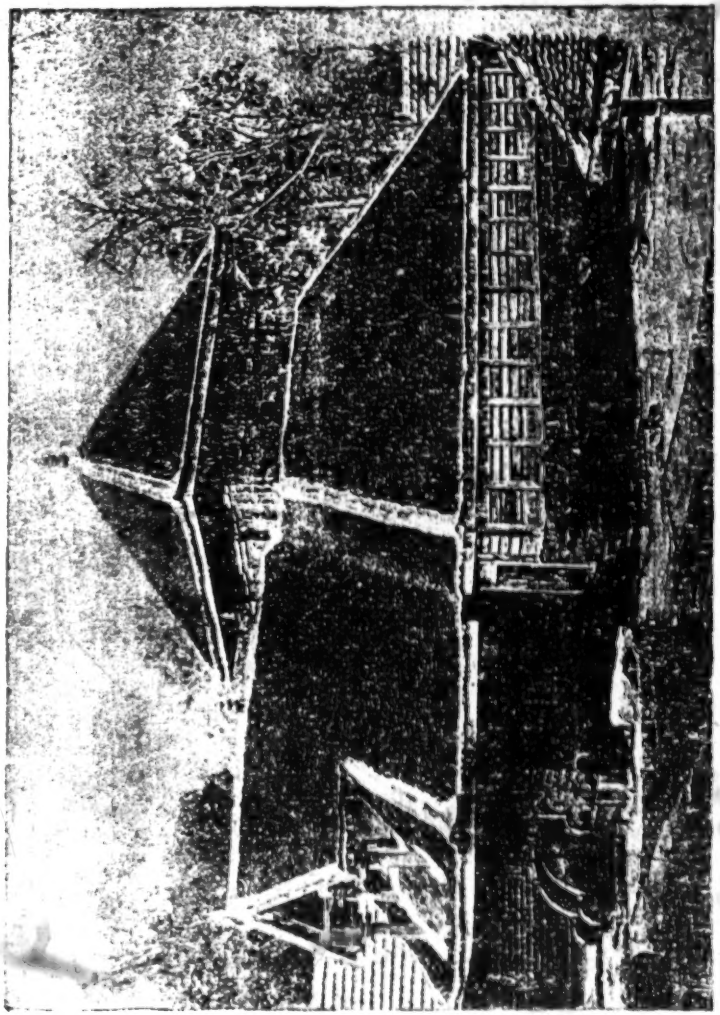

BHAGAVATI TEMPLE, PANDALUR.

[Facing P. 252]

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [822]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still [782]
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

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RELIGION.

771 It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in [181] general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and [291] women can scarcely wear less than they do in compa- [515] tibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal [264] cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally [783] twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

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the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed. [201]
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[983] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new cloths to women after menstruation, but my information on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the goldsmith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only. 796 564 [294] [326]

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple ; Vannân bringing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day. [293]

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful ; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword. 796 326 226 564

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the 796 564 [782] [482] [326]

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564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[346] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See Plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

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796
411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families [273] [465] only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be [264] sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day [834] during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot [841] cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. [782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular 796 pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in 564 it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

pit, then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and 796
puts down her plate for an instant while she makes 564
profound salaam to the goddess ere going away.

And now the procession starts out from the temple, 796
issuing from the northern gate, and for a moment con- 776
fronts a being so strange that he demands description. 536
Of the many familiar demons of the Malayalis the two most intimate are "Kuttichchâttan" and "Gulikan," who are supposed to have assisted Kâli (who is scarcely the Kâli of Brâhmanism by the by) in overcoming the Asura, and on the occasion of this festival these two demons dance before her. "Gulikan" is represented by the Vannân and "Kuttichchâttan" by the Manûtan who have been mentioned already, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tîyans. I saw poor "Gulikan" being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was and was told he was "a devil." He looked mild enough; but then his "make up" had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the northern entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, his hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; his head and neck was swathed and decorated; a wooden platform arrangement from which hung a red ornamented skirt was fastened to his hips; there was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales's feathers arrangement (made of plank) the top of which reached five feet above his head; and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchâttan was treated in much the same manner.

As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his three minutes' dance, preparation for which occupied all the afternoon, was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he moved at all, let alone dance.

The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchâttan gives his dance,

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776 round by south to the westward, and leaving the enclosure proceeds to a certain banyan tree under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 50 yards are the nine men of the Tîyan caste, mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate—*larger* than the plates used when encircling the fire pit—on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents on this occasion as well as before is called talapôli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tîyan women following, carrying their kalasams and talapôli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of "devil dancers" garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these "devil dancers" who (never ceasing his gyrations, mad-like gestures and contortions), presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment.

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The procession passes through the temple yard, the enclosure, from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tîyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let us note here as we go along the curious distribution of this rice which is heaped in the fire pit. Two-thirds of it go to the four Tîyans carrying the Pû (flower) kalasams and one-third to the five who carried the Jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy, and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is the measure of rice and the measure of paddy covered with plaintain leaves as before, beside them

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PL. XIV.

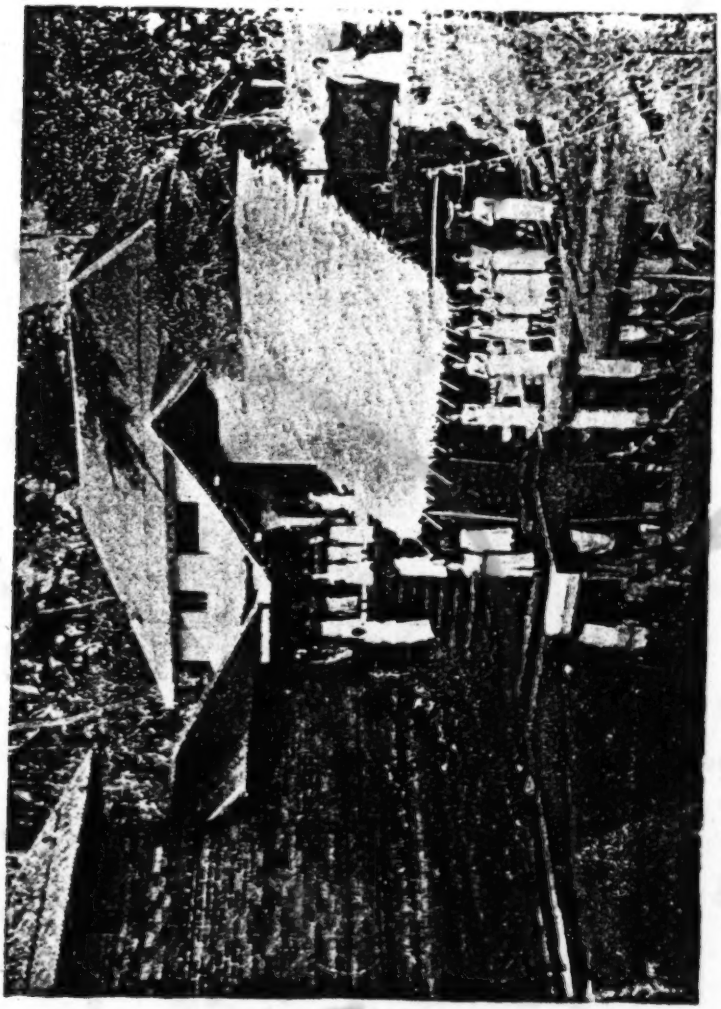

A NAYAR HOME, PANUR, N. MALABAR. THE BATHING TANK AND BATHING SHED IN THE FOREGROUND.

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[Facing p. 262]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

796 564 [778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his
564 hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a
782 a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain
793 room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple
[534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As
[533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [554] 083 [541]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564 There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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796 114 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate importance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 184 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti 782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the [346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others [126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of [532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver [326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

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leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire. The offering is never an adjunct of the prayers; it is always something done for benefit received. The thing to be noted is that a vow is *always* fulfilled; fulfilled as well as the vower can possibly fulfil it; it is never forgotten or overlooked.

> " When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be
> " When the devil was well the devil a saint was he "

is a couplet inapplicable to the Nâyar, or, indeed, to any people in Southern India, where vows, of objects to be given or animals to be sacrified, are treated always with the utmost sacredness even by people who perhaps in no relation of life behave for an hour with common honesty.

A true Malayali festival is that held at Kottiôr, in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynâd hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. The average rainfall at Kottiôr in July is probably 60 inches at least, so the devotees generally get a good ducking. Though it is a festival for high and low these do not mix at Kottiôr. The Nâyars go first, and after a few days, the Nâyars having done, the Tîyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march; and not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exhuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs.

I have not been able to ascertain with that definiteness which would enable me to offer more than an opinion, the connection between this violence of language and physical force against innocent people who are met *en route*, and the object of worship at Kottiôr, so will leave that part of the subject alone. The other day I visited the Gangamma festival at sacred Tirupati in North Arcot, and observed, together with conduct the most truly religious vows being carried out with the strongest disregard to personal comfort, the use of language truly filthy and obscene *towards the goddess herself!* "Gangamma! You have a—— (using a filthy word for the vagina) as big as a basket." "She is a whore" said another; and each one in the little crowd of votaries, evidently from the same village, as they approached the shrine, tried to out-do the other in insult and vituperation of the goddess to whom they had

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
[574] accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

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Nâyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about 30 yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot of the festival, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not accompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place unless during the few days of the festival when it is safe: at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. How much this belief has to do with Iswara need not be commented on! Nothing on earth would have persuaded either the Nâyar or the Kurichchin to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno had not embarked on so fearful a journey! About a hundred yards beyond the stream we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. Why this uncomfortable place was chosen I know not; in the rains when the festival is held it is usually under water, and the people have to stand in water. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. By the same token the lingam had been broken and displaced a few days previously by some Mâppilas searching for treasure which they thought was there. *Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds in which the people had lodged during the festival. Grass and weeds were growing high, and the sheds were dilapidated and looking as if they had not been used for years; but then the rain in Malabar brings about destructive effects with astonishing rapidity.

Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. I am not

* The circle of stones is specially interesting. Near the Angadipuram-Manjery road, between Vellila and the ferry is a monolith in the centre of a piled up platform circled with stones, the circle 30 feet in diameter. Apparently one of the many pre-Hindu remains in Malabar. Description of the ancient remains in Malabar, which are specially interesting, must be made later on. Just now let me note that stone circles are common. And I find in my notes the following: "On the hill side just about the Tirunelli temple (North Wynâd forests), where there is a clearing in the forest and the ground is somewhat flat, is a circle of stones 12 feet in diameter, and filled up with earth so as to make a raised platform nearly 2 feet in height; in the centre a small upright stone 10 inches high. To the north-east, three flat upright stones . . . . and a flat place, rudely square about 11 feet from the circle, evidently an old sacred place of some of the jungle folk."

796 778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 788 782 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from [765] the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows [302] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the [976] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

[See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

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Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him.

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890).

796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII½ shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

½ [see cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- An.]

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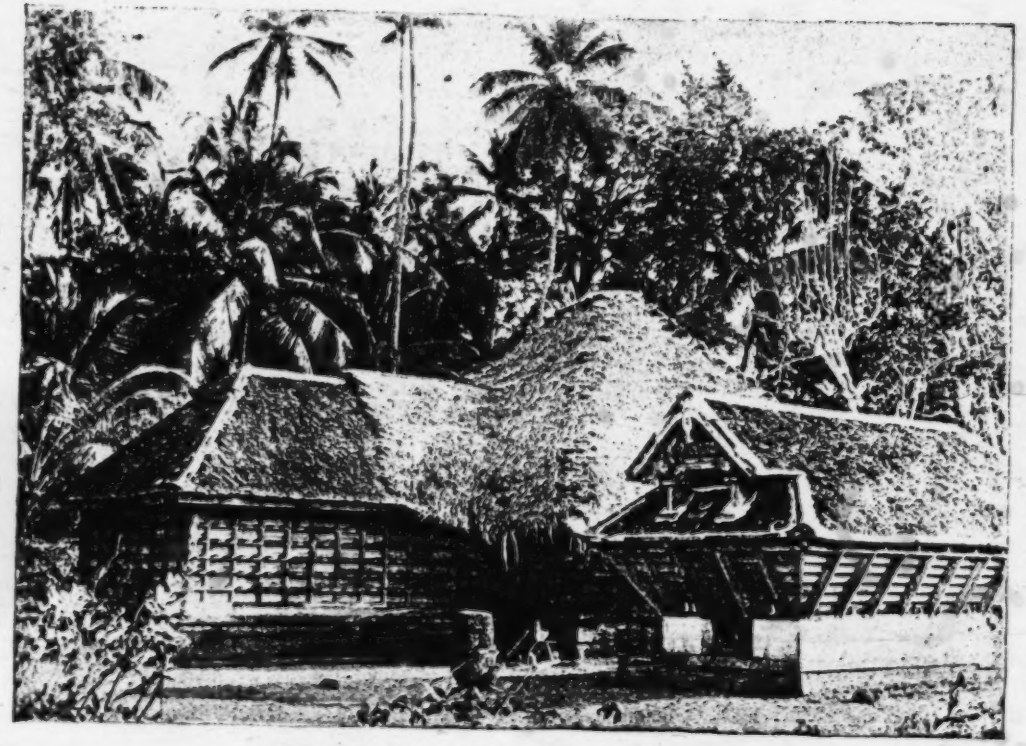

AYYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALICUT.

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187

[Facing P. 372]

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and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the [357]
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the [354]
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors 796
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

787 performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his
796 forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it
[785] against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera.
[465] The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velich-
791 chappâd about three days afterwards going to perform
796 elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

769 Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion
982 must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

[113] * The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 3).

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well- 769
known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is 782
offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the [532]
west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's 771
religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say some- 776
thing of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would [114]
refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive 776
institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This [778]
reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is
[564] regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

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776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their
825 powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends
776 also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

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As the subject of serpent-worship is one of fascinating interest, I will add to the preceding extract, which is as interesting as it is accurate, an excerpt from the "Report of the Census of Travancore" for 1891 (the Malayalam year 1066), a book which is perhaps not accessible to many. The shrine which is described therein is in the neighbouring Native State of Travancore, but it is equally representative of one in Malabar :— 776 778 [127]

"A serpent-kavoo in Travancore. Many places of Hindu worship exist in Travancore under groves locally known as kavoos. There are thousands of these in the country. Lieutenants Ward and Conner estimated their number at 15,000 seventy years ago. This number has, I think, increased since then. These kavoos are all dedicated to minor divinities such as Nàgathans, Nàgarajas, Yekshis, Gandharvas, and Sàstas. Some are of great age and repute and own enormous properties for their maintenance. One of these a well-known sarpa-kavoo in a village 70 miles north of Travancore will be here described. Mythological origin for these sarpa-kavoos is thus stated in the Kéralòlpatti. When Parasuràma's first colonists found Kérala uninhabitable and unimprovable, they abandoned it and returned to their old country. During the time of their absence the Nàgas (serpents) of the lower world, called in popular language Nàgalòkam or Pàtàla, took possession of the newly-reclaimed land and settled there. The colonists returning found that the serpents had usurped their lands, upon which a fight ensued, and Parasuràma arbitrated between his colonists and the Nàgas, wih the result that these latter were to be given a corner of every occupied compound. Thus arose the sarpa kavoos of Malabar which, as I have already described in a previous chapter, is generally at the south-west corner of every Tarvâd garden. And Parasuràma further ordained that the places allotted to the Nàgas were to be left untouched by the knife or the spade, thus enabling the underwood trees and creepers to grow luxuriantly therein. It is to such places that the name of kavoo (or grove) is given. In the kavoo are generally planted several idols of serpents on a stone basement called chittrakoodam, and sometimes a low wall is thrown round to prevent cattle or children trespassing into that space. The propitiation of the serpents is deemed essential for the well-being and prosperity of the householder. Offerings of noorum palum (dough and milk) of cooked rice, lights and songs are [782]

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782 776 778 made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. 173 Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkòttu Illam, where 776 the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's 778 parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols 825 of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent god and that of the female. [115] Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla :—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandavavanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone 778 images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, 776 a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that 782 is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Másí. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12½ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

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by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the 778
Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever 776
remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there 782
is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, 796
in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent 776
idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in
procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, 776
kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of 782
the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institu- [435]
tion and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about
2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and [423]
gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed that whenever the poojah is not performed with the
[825] strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be
776 remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to
825 exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles
[231] seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

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CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635 published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [762] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his [574] nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, 178 that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end 527 of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar [114] Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

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635 occasionally adopted this mode of escape from the cha-
527 grin of not being re-elected by their adherents." He goes on to say what Mr. Jonathan Duncan wrote about this festival, of which his account appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

635 The festival was held last in 1743.

"Those who acknowledged the Zamorin's suzerainty sent
527 flags in token of fealty; and the places where these flags used to
175 be hoisted at festival times are still pointed out. The Valluvanād Raja, who is still represented in the management of the Tirunāvāyi temple by one of the four Brahman *Kārālars*, instead of sending a flag used to send men called *Chāvers* (men who have elected to die) whose office it was to endeavour to cut their way through the Zamorin's guards to his throne in a manner presently to be described. If they had succeeded in killing him—as on the occasion cited by Hamilton, whose statement except as to date, is moreover corroborated by tradition—it is uncertain what would have happened; but probably if a capable Raja had been ruling in Valluvanād at such a time, popular opinion would have endowed him with suzerainty, for the Nāyar militia were very fickle, and flocked to the standard of the man who was fittest to command and who treated them the most considerately.

[127] "With the kind assistance of the present Zamorin, Maharaja Bahadur, the records of his family have been examined and a complete account obtained of the events attending the festival held in 1683 A.D., the festival next preceding that alluded to by Hamilton.

[821] "The festival used to continue for twenty-eight days every twelfth year when the planet Jupiter was in retrograde motion in the sign of *Karkadagam* or Cancer or the Crab, and at the time of the eighth lunar asterism in the month of Makaram the festival used to culminate.

"On the occasion in question the Zamorin some months beforehand sent orders for the preparation of the necessary timber and bamboos for the temporary buildings required at *Tirunāvāyi* and the materials were floated down stream from the Aliparamba Chirakkal lands.

"Then exactly two months before the opening day he sent out a circular to his followers worded as follows:—

'Royal writing to the *Akampati Janam* (body-guards).

'On the 5th Makaram 858 is *Mahāmakha Talpuyam* (time of the eighth lunar asterism in the festival season), and the *Lōkars* (chief people of each locality) are required to attend at Tirunāvāyi as in olden times.

'Mangātt Raman and Tinayancheri are sent to collect and bring you in regular order for the Mahāmakham.'

"The Zamorin timed himself to arrive at Tirunāvāyi on the day after that appointed for the arrival of his followers, and the

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lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank.

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction.

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand.

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp.

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

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with 'one hundred and fourteen small links and one clasp, making in all one hundred and fifteen'—as the record specifically testifies—and with golden bosses and other ornaments too numerous to be detailed. But this part of the ceremonies is not to be permitted to pass unchallenged, for it signifies in a formal manner the Zamorin's intention to assume the *rôle* of *Raksha-purashan* or protector of the festivities and of the people there assembled. On the instant, therefore, there is a stir among the crowd assembled near the western gate of the temple directly facing at half a mile distance the Zamorin's standing-place on the upper terrace.

"From this post, running due east in a perfectly straight line to the western gate of the temple, is the straight piece of road already described, but the road itself is clear and the armed crowd on the plain, it is seen, are hemmed in by barrel palisadings running the full length of the road on both sides. Two spears' length apart the palisades are placed, and the armed crowd on either hand, consisting on this occasion of the thirty thousand Ernād Nāyars, it is seen, are all carrying spears. The spearmen may not enter that narrow lane, and by the mere weight of their bodies present an impossible obstacle to the free passage of the foemen now bent on cutting down the Zamorin in his pride of place.

"Amid much din and firing of guns the *morituri*, the *Chaver* Nāyars, the elect of four Nāyar houses in Valluvanād, step forth from the crowd and receive the last blessings and farewells of their friends and relatives. They have just taken of the last meal they are to eat on earth at the house of the temple representative of their chieftain; they are decked with garlands and smeared with ashes. On this particular occasion it is one of the houses of Putumanna Panikkar who heads the fray. He is joined by seventeen of his friends—Nāyar or Māppilla or other arms-bearing caste men—for all who so wish may fall in with sword and target in support of the men whe have elected to die.

"Armed with swords and targets alone they rush at the spearmen thronging the palisades; they 'winde and turn their Bodies, as if they had no Bones, casting them forward and backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders,' as worthy Master Johnson describes them in a passage already quoted (page 137). But notwithstanding the suppleness of their limbs, notwithstanding their delight and skill and dexterity in their weapons, the result is inevitable and is prosaically recorded in the chronicle thus: 'The number of *Chavers* who came and died early morning the next day after the elephant began to be adorned with gold trappings—being *Putumanna Kantur Menon* and followers—were 18.

"At various times during the ten last days of the festival the same thing is repeated. Whenever the Zamorin takes his

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stand on the terrace, assumes the sword and shakes it, men rush forth from the crowd at the west temple gate only to be impaled on the spears of the guardsmen who relieve each other from day to day. The turns for this duty are specifically mentioned in the chronicle thus: 'on the day the golden ornaments are begun to be used the body-guard consists of the thirty thousand; of Ellaya Vakkayil Vellōdi (and his men) the second day, of Netiyiruppu,* Mūttarāti Tirumulpād (and his men) the third day of Ittatūrnād,† Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fourth day, of Ērnād Mūnāmkūr,‡ Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fifth day, of Ērnād,§ Elankur Nambiyāttiri Tirumalpād (and his men) the sixth day, and of the ten thousand,‖ the Calicut Talachanna Nāyar and Ērnād Mēnon the seventh day.'

"The chronicle is silent as to the turns for this duty on the eighth, ninth and tenth days. On the eleventh day, before the assembly broke up and after the final assault of the *Chāvers* had been delivered, the *Ernad Elankur Nambiyātiri Tirumalpad* (the Zamorin next in succession) and the *Tirumanisseri Nambūtiri* were conveyed in palanquins to the eastern end of the narrow palisaded lane, and thence they advanced on foot, prostrating themselves four times towards the Zamorin, once at the eastern end of the lane, twice in the middle, and once at the foot of the terraces. And after due permission was obtained they took their places on the Zamorin's right hand.

"After this, so the chronicle runs, it was the duty of the men who have formed the body guard to march up with music and pomp to make obeisance. On this occasion, however, a large portion of the body-guard seems to have been displeased, for they left without fulfilling this duty, and this story corroborates in a marked way the facts already set forth (page 132) regarding the independence and important political influence possessed by the Nāyars as a body.

"The *Ernād Menon* and the *Calicut Talachanna Nāyar* with their followers were the only chiefs who made obeisance in due form to the Zamorin on this occasion, and possibly by the time of the next festival (1695 A.D.), of which Hamilton wrote, the dissatisfaction might have increased among his followers and the Zamorin's life even may have been endangered

* The fifth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
† The fourth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
‡ The third Prince of the Zamorin's family.
§ The second Prince and heir apparent of the Zamorin's family.
‖ The ten thousand of Pōlanād, the district round about Calicut, formed the Zamorin's own immediate body-guard—Conf. the account contained in the *Kēralolpatti* of how these men were originally selected—Chapter III, section (*a*).

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175 as Hamilton alleges, probably through lack of men to guard
635 him. Tradition asserts that the *Chāver* who managed on one
527 occasion to get through the guards and up to the Zamorin's seat belonged to the family of the Chāndrattil Panikkar.

"The chronicle winds up with a list of the *Chāvers* slain on this occasion, viz. :—

When the Zamorin was taking his stand on the terrace apparently at the commencement of festivities	5
On the day the elephant was adorned as already stated	18
"The next day of *Chandrattil Panikkar* and followers, the number who came and died	11
'Of *Verkōt Panikkar* and followers the number that came and died the third day.	12
'The number who came to Vakkayūr and died in the four days	4
'The number of *Chāvers* who were arrested at the place where Kalattal Itti Karunākara Menon was, and brought tied to Vakkayūr and put to death	1
'The number of *Chāvers* arrested on the day of the sacrifice, when all the men together made the obeisance below Vakkayūr at the time when the Zamorin was taking his stand, and left tied to the bars, and who were afterwards brought to Vakkayūr and after the ceremony was over and the Zamorin had returned to the palace were put to the sword	4
Total ...	55

"The chronicle does not mention the fact, but a current tradition states that the corpses of the slain were customarily kicked by elephants as far as the brink of the fine well, of which mention has been made, and into which they were tumbled promiscuously. The well itself is nearly filled up with débris of sorts, and a search made at the spot would probably elicit conclusive evidence of the truth of this tradition.

627 "The martial spirit of the Nāyars was in former days kept alive by such desperate enterprises as the above, but in every-day-life the Nāyar used to be prepared and ready to take vengeance on any who affronted him, for he invariably carried weapons, and when a man was slain it was incumbent on his

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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627
This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627
this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634
when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627
another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634
chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578
being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525]
two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652]
wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423
to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427
in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178]
the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821]
a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782]
people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol.
"Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut). . . . [762]
after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—
"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

875 The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say 526 "the body is cool," is the time when, according to [827] custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises. [564] At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a [553] mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers 875 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when 526 they are believed to be properly accomplished they are 564 given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small [844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

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Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sariravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sariravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

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military element in Malabar. The opponents who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter staff, stood 30 feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, a la cancan, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with outstretched arms, came down *slowly* on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and after some preliminary pirouetting went for each other tooth and nail. 526

The sword play which one sees during festive ceremonies, a marriage or the like, done by the hereditary retainers who fight imaginary foes and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs—in ever so many impossible ways.

Nâyar swords and shields are figured in the illustration. The shields are made of wood covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle and half way up the blade ; but the one which is figured will suffice to show what the Nâyar fighting sword was like. The smaller shields are now used in play. 714 411 [531]

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THE ÔNAM FESTIVAL.

796 The popular festival of Malabar is the Ônam, occurring in the last days of August or early in September. [43] It is the great occasion for general rejoicing, when every one gives and receives presents, when the children are to be seen roaming everywhere gathering flowers, to make the flower carpets which are a distinctive feature of this happy season. For the Ônam is not merely a one-day festival. It lasts three days at least, and the ten days preceding it are occupied in preparations and in games—Ônam games. A writer (a Malayali evidently), in the "Calcutta Review" for January 1899, thus describes the Ônam season:—

796 539 "There are a great many of these Ônam ballads; but most of them are of a piece with the specimen given. It is a delight to hear them chanted in the early morning hours by bands of light-hearted children with clear bell-like voices;—

Chembil house maiden, little maiden,
What did he give you who yesterday came?
A new dress he gave me, a small dress he gave me,
A lounge likewise on which to recline,
A tank to disport in, a well to draw water from, a compound
To gambol in, a big field to sing in.
Freshen up flowers, oh freshen for me.
On the south and the north shore, in the compound of Kannan, there grew up and flourished a thumba flower plant.
Out of this plant were fifty boats gotten; at the head of each boat a banyan tree grew.
From the banyan there grew a tiny little babe, and a drum and a stick for the baby to play with.
The drum and the drum-stick, the household domestic, all together they flew away and they vanished.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.
A measure and a half measure, and elephant's chains and earrings, who goes under the flower tree beneath which the elephant passes?
It is no one at all, it is no one at all; it is the Kuttikat baby god; when we went forth to pluck of ripe fruit, a mischievous urchin sprang up and bit us.
With bitten foot when we went to the Brahmin's, the Brahmin lady, we found, had been injured.
With bitten foot then we went to the house of Edathil, whose lady with fever lay stricken.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

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At noon of Attam day a bamboo fresh sprouted, and therewith we made us a good fish trap. 796 539

And when to the tank a fishing we went, we baited a minnow.

By its tail did we hold it, on the *bund* did we dash it, and of cocoanuts, with milk full, eighteen we ground.

With elephant pepper we dressed it; with asafœtida we filled it, right up to the elephant's head.

Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

Having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the little children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M.; and then the daily decorations begin. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers and one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. Among the flowers that contribute to the exquisite design may be named the common red, as well as the rarer variegated, lantana, the large red shoe flower *(Hibiscus rosa sinensis)* an indispensable feature of the cultivated vegetation in a Malayali's homestead, the yellow marigold, the yellow aster, the scarlet button flower, the sacred *tulsi (Ocimum sanctum)*, the wee, modest *thumber* (a vermifugal member of the Nepetæ tribe), the common *tagara* (yellow wild Cassia), the beautiful bluebell, and another common species of Cassia which the natives call the "Ônam flower." In addition, various little violet and purple wildlings that adorn the margins of rice fields, and beautiful specimens of the lily and allied orders of tropical plants are requisitioned by the weavers of these remarkably handsome, but, alas, quickly perishable, carpets. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork. This object is peculiar to the naturally well favoured province of Kéralam; and it serves to remind us that the people who possess the refined taste to produce such a pretty work of art must have long enjoyed a very high order of civilisation." 796 824

It has been noticed already under description of Nambûtiri Brahmans (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1), that the cloths given as "Ônam presents" are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sunworship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest 796 431 796

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796 festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy is [132] harvested. As a rule the Ônam season is one of bright sunshine following the almost continuous rain of June, July and August.

526 I once witnessed a very interesting game called êitû 796 (êiththu), played by the Nâyars in the Southern portion [184] of Kurumbranâd during the ten days preceding Ônam. Curiously, the locality and the period are, so to speak, fixed. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to "sides." Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo about 18 inches in length, and arrows or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the leaf at one end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the "cheppu" as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight and stick in readily) carries of all the arrows lying on the ground. Each "side" strives to secure all the arrows and to deprive the other side of theirs. A sort of "beggar my neighbour." He who hits the mark *last* takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit it first was running the 25 yards to touch the "cheppu." Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it; and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much shouting, gesticulation, and laughter. Those returning after securing a large number of arrows turned somersaults, and in saltatory motions expressed their joy.

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In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, [613] the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 562 611 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person *is* and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road as Zamorin, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

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796 the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he
777 happens to fix his eyes upon on this particular morning. According to Nair and even general Hindu Mythology there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance ashes, firewood, oil and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as, reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold and such like ones on the morning of the next New Year. Whereas wholesome and favourable consequences can be produced by the sight of auspicious objects like those just enumerated. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sight-worthy objects on the New Year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known, in native phraseology, as a *kani*. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A Grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed clothe, some "unprofitably gay" flowers of the *Konna* tree, a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps filled with cocoanut oil "clear as diamond sparks" are kept intensely burning and a small plank of wood or some other seat is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house and takes them blindfolded so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the Kani. The members are seated one after another in the seat and are then and not till then asked to open their eyes and carefully look at this Kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers which they have bought
[735] and stored for the occasion. The Kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the carelessly confused noise of the crackers the morning breaks and preparations are begun for the morning
[264] meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice-kanji with a
[262] grand appendage of other eatable substances and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on grand scales.

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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give 796 to almost all the junior members and servants of the household 431 and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves 556 mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or 466 five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, 431 as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other 796 accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically 796 concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the [535] noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are [526] carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasan- [524] tries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As [776] recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the [773] burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every [515] young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decen- [533] cy, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

796 533 [515] the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is presently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths [526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 264 262 [535] "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 [586] "The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the [132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the [515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight

776 [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

776 821 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal [184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

241 Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, [243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one [132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there [776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; 241 rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 252 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar 241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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564
for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of 262
murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a 466
Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with 241
a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. 342
As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every [351]
garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four- 342
sided house, which may be taken as representative of the 556
houses of the rich:

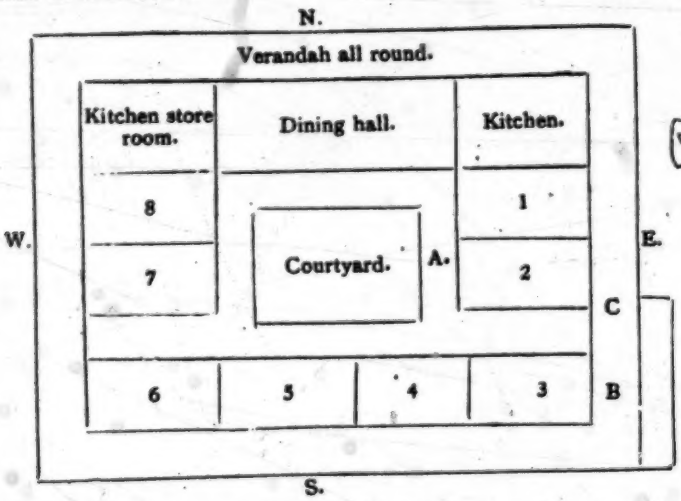

[778]

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon. [115]

342
558 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
[769] between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
[778] women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
[735] and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
[782] of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot afford to make these images, substitute simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside and offered.

The entrance is at C.

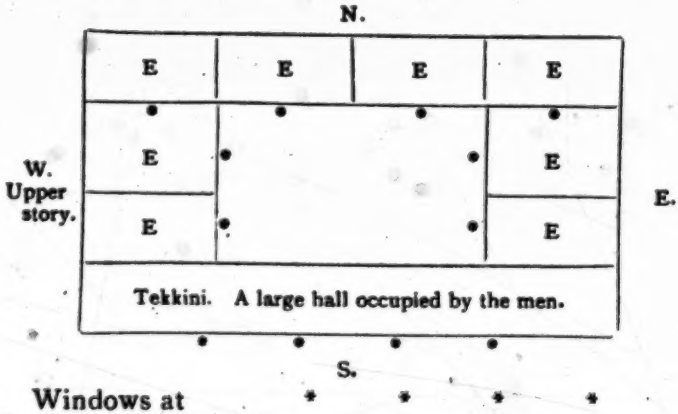

Windows at

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the school-master. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2½ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

789
[791] The Panikkars dabble also in magic. In Plates XVI, XVII are figured four yantrams, selected from a number in my possession as representative, presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver or copper plate (a yantram written on gold is the most effective), and worn on the person. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylindrical case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, or round the neck.

No. I. Aksharamâla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless; but it gives life to all others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

[782] *No. II. Sûlini.*—For protection against sorcery, or devils. This is to invoke the goddess and secure her aid. The ceremony brings a blessing to the receiver of the charm.

[776] *No. III. Mâha Sûlini.*—To be used to prevent all kinds of harm through devils, chief of whom is Pulatini—he who eats infants. May be used also as protective against enemies. Women wear it to avert miscarriage. The letter in the middle, Hûm Mâha Sûlini. That in the rim is Om.

[782] *No. IV. Kâla Bhâiravi.*—Represents the goddess. The goddess must be pleased *first* by worship. No sacrifice, which is rather odd, as this terrible goddess is generally represented in Southern India as loving blood. The letters do not form any mantram. Each letter has life in itself. Prevents all harm from enemies, and attack by devils.

Other yantrams to be used in much the same way as these are:—

[856] The *Ganapati* yantram. To increase knowledge. To put away fear and shyness.

The *Sarasvati* yantram. To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

The *Panchakshari* yantram, a square containing 81 smaller squares, in each a mystic letter; the whole representing Siva. For persons on whom medicines have no [776] effect. Also against evil spirits. A person out of whom an evil spirit has been driven is perfectly safe ever after with this carried on his person.

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PL. XVI

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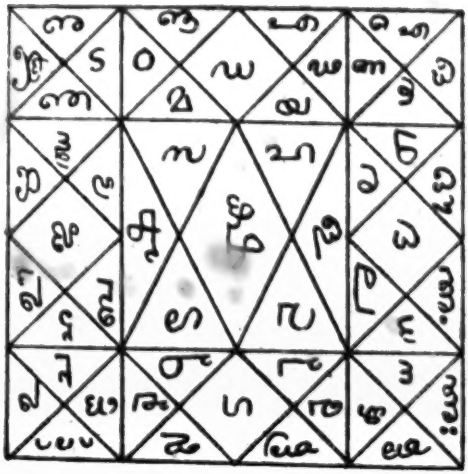

I

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ഉ ല	ഊ ശ്ര	ഋ ലി	ൠ നി
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ഒ ചു	ഓ ചു	അം സ്വാ	അഃ ചി

II

[facing P. 306, A]

PL. AVII

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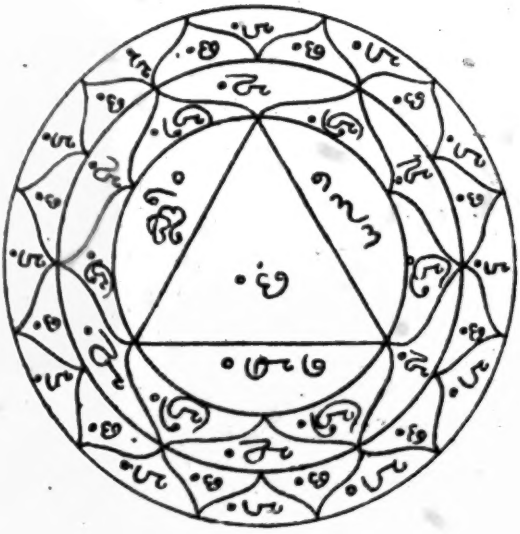

III

IV

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[facing P. 306, B]

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The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection.

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning.

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man.

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Sriparamêsvaranûm Sri Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâl Ezhunellumpôl Sri

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâi Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777]
bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [753]
has business everywhere relieving people from their oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every [761]
Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

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754 789 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan. 754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who 564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there- [262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing [673] children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

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bringing them up as their own. The belief that they will 754
steal children helps to some extent to make them dreaded 564
as well as abhorred, but it is as skilled professors of [673]
black magic that they are really feared. Ôḍi is the name
of the cult, and those who follow it, Parayans as a rule, 754
are able to do many wonderful things. The ordeals to 564
be gone through by the apprentice in the Ôḍi cult are 795
rather trying. Some are so utterly filthy and abominable, eating human excreta being a detail, that even amongst the Parayans, themselves dirty to a degree and accustomed to anything but a high class diet, very few are able to undergo them. Many try, and are unable to proceed. But the man who has gone through them all is a terror. He can make himself invisible, and he can turn himself at will into any animal in order to accomplish his desires. There occurs now and then the death of a woman—a Nâyar or other—enceinte for the first time, the fœtus having been removed for use in black magic.*

The Parayan magician, or Ôḍiyan as he is sometimes 754
called, being a pastmaster in Ôḍi, is credited with power to render himself invisible, using such a fœtus; and even without it, he may force a woman to leave her house at midnight and meet him. There would seem to be some connection, however obscure, with hypnotism and this latter. The Parayan, who turns himself into a bullock, in such guise, circumambulates a house thrice; then, still by means of magic, he compels a certain woman of the household to come out to him. If we follow up popular belief, we find that the Nâyar woman so drawn out of her house is bound to die within three days. But as it is well in a description of this kind, to proceed by illustration when possible, I will quote an authenticated story of a woman having been compelled to leave her house by night. The "walking the dæsil" by the bullock, one of those imaginative performances difficult to account for in human belief, must be left out of the story as no one is said to have seen it.

A Nâyar noticed that, for some days, his wife, who was (contrary to the usual custom, as we have seen it to be) living in his house, appeared to be under some occult influence; and under a premonition that something was

* Not very long ago there was a case of this kind, not far from Palghat, and not only was the fœtus removed but a wisp of straw was substituted in its place; apparently with an idea that, if the space were filled up somehow, the wretched woman would not die!

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754 going to happen he slept across the doorway, so that she could not without waking him leave the house. The door was closed and fastened, he sleeping *inside*. In the early hours of the morning he awoke, and, fearing something unpleasant had taken place as the door was open, he called his brother who was sleeping upstairs. Together they searched for the woman, and found her lying outside in the yard, unconscious. When she recovered her senses, she said that for some nights previous she felt as if she was being called outside, and she tried hard to resist the impulse to go out of the house into the night. At last she could resist no longer and, altogether against her will, unfastened the door and went out. What happened then she knew not. There was neither removal of a fœtus nor death in this case. Such is the story. It is quite possible that stories of the kind are inculcated by wary husbands to keep the women indoors and prevent their being crowned with horns. At any rate the story is one of the kind such as every Nâyar [364] believes. It is, I may say, quite plainly to be seen that, when the Nâyar constructs his house, he takes care that there are certain conveniences, so that the women need never leave the house at night. My narrator was a native gentleman in a position of authority, living at the scene of this strange story when the events related in it occurred not long ago. The persons were named, but I did not question them, as there is much objection to speak of such things to a stranger.

754 795 564 *The Ôḍi cult.*—The Parayan adepts in the magic Ôḍi cult are to some extent hereditary functionaries.* They form one of those hierarchies, common enough in this country, of which Europeans know so little; of which the people themselves know but little as nothing connected with them or with their system is written. It is custom pure and simple—custom which is the most difficult of all to approach and define within accuracy. We will put down what is known, in the way of popular belief of course, as may be free from error.

Those who belong to it, born into it so to speak, go through a certain novitiate, not easy; but those who wish to join it from outside the fraternity of the cult are required to *prove* themselves worthy to join it; and it is their trials as novices, terrifying and utterly filthy, which

* For much of this which follows I am indebted to Mr. U. Balakrishna Nâyar, who has kindly obtained for me matter which is in a general way, unobtainable to the European.

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are truly difficult. Members of the brotherhood are 754
bound to secrecy by solemn oaths, and the secrets of 795
their craft are not allowed lightly to pass to any out- 564
sider. A member of the brotherhood may have one or more disciples or apprentices who are in the first place bound to strict obedience. These apprentices fill vacancies in the brotherhood.

He who would be a member of the Ôḍi cult falls at the feet of him whom he would have as master, and begs for initiation into the mysteries. The master tries to dissuade him, but the would-be Ôḍiyan persists; and then, when assent is given, comes the trial. He follows his master to a lonely place by night. The master disappears in mist, and then re-appears as some terrible beast, now standing still, now rushing furiously towards the novice as if to tear him in pieces. If he stands still and unperturbed the novice is considered to have fulfilled *that* test. He is then required to pass the night alone in the forest, which he is made to believe is peopled with strange beings howling horribly. When he has satisfied the master that he is not afraid, he is subjected to other tests, and he is eventually accepted as a novice. He is introduced formally to the brotherhood on a certain selected day, when, having invited them to a feast, pûja is made to the dread spirit worshipped by them—Nîli of Kallaḍikôd or Kallaḍikôd Nîli, as she is called (Kallaḍikôd is the *place* name), through whose aid the Ôḍiyan works his devilment. Flesh and liquor are consumed, and the novice is taught how to procure the magical *Pilla thilum* (infant oil).

The principal ingredient to be used in preparing this is a fœtus of some 6 or 7 months' growth. The Ôḍiyan fixes his eye on some woman, who may be of any caste other than his own, in her first pregnancy. Then, on a selected day, usually a Friday, he proceeds to her house at midnight, provided, that is, he meets with no inauspicious omen on the way. I am not sure what omens are auspicious or the contrary; but at any rate the Ôḍiyan [787]
returns home should he meet with an omen which is unfavourable, and starts out again some other night. Transforming himself into a dog, a bullock, a cat or some other quadruped, he walks thrice round the house, shaking vigorously a cocoanut-shell containing *gurusi*, a compound of turmeric water, lime and other substances, the colour of which is red. The woman whose appearance is desired comes out. She cannot help herself. If locked in she bangs her head against the wall, and yells

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795 until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like
564 a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood—vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment.
[824] A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

776 A regular working magician tells us something more
789 of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

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ground is then plastered over with cowdung. Then you 776
mark out with rice flour an eight-cornered chakram, in the 789
centre of which you place a small piece of cadjan leaf, and you place a similar piece at four corners. You sit with your back to the chakram, facing eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening while performing pûja. This pûja is, I think, addressed to Karinkutti: not in any way to the sun God who is not then visible. For the pûja you must be supplied with fried grain, beaten rice, rice bran, a fowl, toddy, arrack, some flowers of three colours—one of them the tulsi *(Ocimum sanctum)* —sandalwood-paste, camphor, incense. (Note the use of the sacred tulsi in this diabolical incantation!) While the pûja, which I am unfortunately unable to describe (leaving my directions rather lame) is being performed the mûla mantram of Karinkutti is to be repeated 101 times.

In order to do all this you must bathe 7½ nazhikas (about 2¾ hours) before dawn, and complete the pûja before dawn arrives. But even before this you must stand up to your chest in water and repeat the mûla mantram 101 times. And you must repeat the whole thing *da capo* in the evening. The mantram is thus repeated 404 times in the day. You are not done yet, in fact this is only the beginning. The whole thing is done every day for 21 consecutive days; and then you will have the evil spirit Karinkutti entirely at your disposal. The person who remains continent, eats but once a day, cooking his own food, may it is said bring the spirit into obedience in less than 21 days.

Subjection of Vanni Bhâiravan is a much more difficult matter, involving much more elaborate ceremonial, details of which may well be spared the reader as the example which has been given is quite adequate.

And the good spirits—

Bhagavati.	Mûkâmi.
Bbadra kâli.	Vîrabhadran.
Hanumân.	Móhini.
Ganapati.	Sarabha Mûrti.
Subrahmanyan.	

The evil and the good spirits are truly a strange collection of beings! Their names help to illustrate what has [771]
been said already, that the Hinduism of the west coast is a strange medley of the higher Hinduism with the lower cult of the country. Bhâirava or Kâla Bhâirava (Bhâira- 771
van of the Telugu country) is elsewhere the object of 795
adoration of what is almost a distinct cult, a kind of 776

771 mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika reli-
795 gion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to
776 worship Bhaîri dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female. Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

776 The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

789 A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

212 It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire
789 possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books, the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

[113] * From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

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magic. Fortunately, by the kindness of Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, these blanks have been filled up in the translation which he has obtained for me—from *one who knows.* 789 212

I will give here an excerpt from it, which is fairly representative of the sympathetic side of magic such as is common in Malabar. It is not, I think, concerned with sympathetic or symbolic magic exclusively, as, unless I am much mistaken, an evil spirit is here also invoked. It is within the domain of black magic, in which, I think, an evil spirit is always made to help if not to work the evil. 754 212

It describes how to cause certain pains in the body of another. A mantram is written (here, I think, an evil spirit is called up, though such does not appear to be said), on the stem of the kâitha plant. The stem should be the length of eight fingers. A figure representing the person to be injured is (also) drawn on the stem. A hole is bored to represent the navel. The mantram is repeated, and at each repetition a certain thorn (kâra mollu) is fixed into the limbs of the figure. The name of the person and of the star under which he was born are written on a piece of cadjan leaf, which is stuck into the hole representing the navel. The thorns are stuck in 21 times; that is, removed and replaced 21 times. Two magic circles are drawn below the nipple on the figure. The stem is then hung up in the smoke of the kitchen. A pot of toddy and some other accessories are procured, and with these certain rites are performed by the warlock. When he has concluded them, he moves three steps backwards. He shouts aloud thrice, fixing in again the thorns, thinking all the while of the particular mischief with which he would afflict the person to be injured.

When all this has been done, the person whose figure has been drawn on the stem and pricked with thorns, feels pain as if *he* were being pricked with thorns.

The grandha describes also how an enemy may be stuck dumb. The head of a dark coloured fowl is cut off. The head is then split, and a piece of cadjan on which are written a mantram, the name of the person to be injured, and the name of the star under which he was born, is stuck into the split head which is then sewn up, taking care to stitch the tongue to the beak. The head is then inserted in a certain fruit, which, after being tied up with a withe of a certain creeper nine spans in length, is deposited under the enemy's gateway. [825]

In it, too, we are told how to win over a man, or a quarrelsome husband; how to quiet refractory cows which

754 object to be milked; how to cure a headache; to prevent
812 bad dreams, and so on.

N.B.—A mantram must be spoken, breathed, whispered with extreme accuracy. There must be no omission or false accent. Anything of the kind, or wrong pronunciation, destroys its efficacy at once.

FAMOUS MAGICIANS OF MALABAR.

791 We will close this chapter on magic which, though painfully inadequate, is already rather too long for its purpose, by mention of some of the famous workers in the art. Those who are familiar with the west coast will at once recall to mind the names of three Brâhman families whose scions are famed throughout the land as possessors of stores of magic, and at the same time—so interwoven is magic with religion!—revered for their saintliness. The eldest member of one of these is said to be "an honoured guest throughout the length and breadth of Kêrala; and on certain State occasions in Trevandrum and elsewhere, his presence is indispensable." A well-known tradition relates how that magic came, so to speak, into the family. (It is not necessary to give the family name, even though it is a household word on the west coast).

773 Long ago in the days of the Perumals, a Brâhman and
791 his friend were belated in the Yakshi paramba (*yakshi*—
776 female demon, *paramba*—garden) near Trichur.* The place was dreary; nothing but palms around. Suddenly they were accosted by lovely damsels who asked them to pass the night under their roof, and soon they were lodged in a sumptuous house, each in a separate chamber. But in the night, the damsels who had, *Lorelei* fashion, attracted the travellers, resumed their demoniacal forms and ate the Brâhman. His friend they could not touch as he had on his person a grandha sacred to Bhagavati; but in the morning he found himself perched on the top of a palm tree underneath which lay the bones of his friend, the Brâhman.

The Brahman's widow gave birth to a son soon after the strange death of her husband. When the boy was eleven years of age, she related to him how he had been made fatherless. He vowed vengeance on the Yakshis and Gandharvas (male demons) and, like a sensible boy, set about preparation for his life-task. It was not long before he had mastered the Vedas and all learning, and having done so he retired to the jungle, where he was

* To this day people avoid this place at night.

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engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His 773
devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared 791
before him in human form and handed him a grandah, 776
which is to this day the greatest work on magic in [553]
existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts
for the prefix "Sûrya" to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of 791
Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case. 789

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in 842
infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talis- 791
man, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan 789
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* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

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789 magician was called in to prepare one of these. Placing
791 an ordinary style and a small sheet of copper in a box, he closed it. Presently a noise was heard inside the box; and in a few moments a sound as of the style falling. The box was opened and magic figures were found to be inscribed on the copper sheet. The lady wears the talisman now! The magician must have been in a favourable mood on the occasion, as he is said to have given an additional performance on his own account. When he had placed the style and the tiny sheet of copper in the box, taking two young cocoanuts in his hands, he kept on throwing them in the air and catching them. "What will you have in each?" he asked. "Honey in one and boiled milk in the other" was the answer. Of course these were found in the cocoanuts when they were opened by the magician, but it was somewhat gross of the Nâyar gentleman to test the quality of the milk by turning it into curds the next
[493] day. Wonderful stories are told of this man who used to be seen at night carried in a mancheel by invisible bearers, whose weary chant could be heard, but whose bodily presence was beyond the reach of human eye.

791 The last and the chief of this trio is the once famous Kandeth Nayar who departed this life about a hundred years ago. Every one knows about the Kandeth Nayar,
[782] and any one now-a-days who wants to injure another invokes his aid, and resorts to his tomb to fulfil his vow. I understand that sacrifices at his tomb are common, and that his power reaches from the land of shades in almost the same strength as when he lived.

791 The rather incoherent way in which the terms
754 warlock, magician, have been used seems to demand some explanation. Strictly speaking, the Parayan Ôḍiyan is the only warlock. Magician is scarcely the correct term for the ordinary worker in magic. Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible to avoid a somewhat indiscriminate use of these terms on account of the way in which the functions of the warlock, the magician, the astrologer, and even the priest are really interwoven one with the other. The professed magician is often also the warlock and *vice versâ*. The vernacular word, which is as catholic as that which stands for "Religion," is "mantravâḍi"—mantram man; he who is sought every day of the year by hundreds of the people of Kêrala, to relieve them of their physical troubles and infirmities, to cure their cattle, to injure their enemies, aye, even to destroy them.

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APPENDIX A.

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The account of the funeral ceremonies which has been given is not, of course, full and accurate as regards all the clans; but it is precise as regards one, and suffices for the present to give a clear idea of the ceremonies as performed by all. There are many interesting features in the ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil clan. Want of space forbids more than the briefest mention of some of these.

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Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the Taravâd thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are well lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the Taravâd prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the Enangru carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round.

They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men, standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled.

After this is done the "kodali karma" ceremony, using the spade, the axe and a big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all; and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre.

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APPENDIX B.

648 [127] At the last moment I have received from Dr. E. Hultzsch, Ph.D., the Government Epigraphist, the following excerpt from the number of the *Epigraphia Indica* which is now under publication, and which with his permission I add to this monograph. It is interesting evidence of the old martial spirit of the Nayars :—

"According to an inscription of the 14th year of his reign (=A.D. 1083–84) the Chola King Kulôttuṅga I. 'conquered Kuḍamalai-nâḍu, *i.e.*, the Western hill country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the Nayars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.'—*South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 130.

TRANSLATION OF AN INSCRIPTION OF THE 14TH YEAR OF KULÔTTUNGA I. AT TIRUKKAḶUKKUṆRAM.

Line 27.—'While all the heroes [1] in the Western hill-country (Kuḍamalai-nâḍu) ascended voluntarily to heaven,' etc.—*South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 147.

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[192] [1] In Malayâlam *châvér* (Tamil *sâveru*) means 'one who has elected to die, *moriturus*.'

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/For anthropomorphic differences between various subdivisions of the Nayar caste (called clans by the author), and for similarities and differences in ornamentation, see category 116, pp. 191-224./

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THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953[*]

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

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UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tāliketukalyānam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost 564
all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine 121
this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal
Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North 611
Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the 591
double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, 121
a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other
Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much 588
controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet
no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of [175]
the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each
caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay.
In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about [127]
twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the
same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my
own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was [114]
carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin
village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight
months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

[*][Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL.—ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout. [101]

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. [114]
While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. [122]

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121 [588] be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[129] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 175 564 184 [131] This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 613 564 635 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity, the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambûdiri Brahmans (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

175 564 631 613 Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvaris*) of districts (*nāds*). These owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiriyattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavaris*) of villages (*desams*). Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sûdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sûdras and Swaroopattil Sûdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sûdra Nayars were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambûdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvari* or *desavari* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*tarawād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*karanavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurisi (Chidigans in Cochin), Velutheddans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 851 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāraṇavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite.* Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. [692] They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the 613 local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavādi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

588 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house
[564] and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad,
[793] a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bride-
groom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house
588 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times
when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabita-
833 tion would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been
178 required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is
indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi
782 took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger)
Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to
787 the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by
hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy,
793 coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following
which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then
donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the
power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.)
Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping
his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host
kāranavan that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his
insignia were removed.

776 Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar
village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol
[831] of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's
sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the
[753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She
is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar
[782] rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last
night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must
[834] observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music.
588 On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand,
they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage
[783] house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then
fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received
[264] clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At
588 the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides,
though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with
184 other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride-
595 groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never
visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological
[765] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally
observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover
[783] and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual
father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word
[851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

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Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* nd all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except hat, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed hat the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples epaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which ad been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing he other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status f a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still ake as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and er children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *āli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bride-room, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, vith her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual ridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated hat the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *āli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her elation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is ot bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define he categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no loubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. t is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *emangan* or by some elderly man of higher ub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might some-imes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. n this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule vhich forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same ineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must leflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later ays of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that he 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar he ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged amilies, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *emangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *Edavanavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *Mesavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

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Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambûdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambûdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambûdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

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588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
423 Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *taravâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite.* Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambūdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tāli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambūdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tāli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tāli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambūdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambūdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambūdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tāli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tāli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tāli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [62] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannāns, called Mannāns in the south) and barbers (Kāvutiyyans, called Vātthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [427] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

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588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The
[782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of
[787] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the
[582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a
582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-
58 605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal
[593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

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likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

564 613

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*.

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilateral or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilateral ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of
585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the *fathers appan, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system*
[428] mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kāsam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *tarwād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *tarwād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *tarwād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the surrogate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship [184] at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from [586] the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your [613] sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

184 This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's 588 wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though [582] preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. [765] Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars [601] and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the [613] legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

184 The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The 588 rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. 831 Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

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and coconut symbolise female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *asuatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *tarawād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

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000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention [262] [783] to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse [834] (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189-90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 613 564 602 [586] Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *kāranavan*. This man is usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but particularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

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The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *tarawād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

182 184 593 613 843 [827] [822]

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

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The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate *the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage*) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

184 843 789 182 [564] [787] [782]

Again, in all the groups studied the *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

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[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *tarawād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pedhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *ima*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the

776 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one
782 or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes
787 then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*pradham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tāli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [183] [165] [169] [183]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

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184 68 The unconscious
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about

593 the spirits of dead *kāraṇavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavar*' spirits,
775 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
595 however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
184 sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tavarāḍ*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
182 the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
613 through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children for the sake of *tavarāḍ* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons. This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
182 who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but unmarried girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
184 avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed, however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother. He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are permitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
593 clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
182 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond

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between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

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588 182 184 sambandham lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing', Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after [533] the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [789] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [782] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

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pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion.

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'.

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of ostracism by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bride-groom only half ties his wife's *tāli*: his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his older kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdurari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] 305 [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 [588] [793] [852] [764]

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

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The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-theertham* ('disc-water').

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *Kannichāru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 92).

Nayar
Tiyyar

vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-therrtham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol. 773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son. 588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet. 841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

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Nayar
Tiyyar

796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nâdhuvari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
78 ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted
182 in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
881 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted'
182 bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emotional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and
564 masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400–05) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333–43).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar
Tamil AW16
Brahman

to the mother. It seems likely that the same unconscious Oedipal fears lie behind the institution of 'real' pre-puberty marriage in high Hindu castes in other parts of India,[1] whose kinship systems, though strictly patrilineal, are similarly characterized by gerontocratic authority and the joint holding of property by lineage-segments. The disappearance of the *tāli*-rite among Nayars and Tiyyars in the past twenty years, and its replacement by a 'normal' post-puberty marriage ceremony, is undoubtedly associated with the collapse of their lineage systems; with the development of cash wages and personal property and thus of a new economic autonomy of young men and a decline in attitudes of submission to elders; with the associated strengthening of the marriage-tie and weakening of the bonds with the mother and other natal kinswomen; with, related to this, a decline of observance of avoidance associated with incest-taboos in the lineage, and a relaxing of the rule of lineage exogamy; and, finally, with an increased emotional autonomy of both men and women in respect of the parental generation which, it must be supposed, accompanies a gradual decline in strength of Oedipal wishes and fears among young and middle-aged men.

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It seems probable that my hypothesis concerning Nayar and Tiyyar *tāli*-rites might be shown, given sufficient data, to apply also to certain Middle Indian pre-puberty token marriages recently described by Dr S. C. Dube (1953). In these groups, as in the Malabar castes, the pre-nubile girl who has not been married is regarded as sacred; she would be permanently polluted by any sexual act which took place before the rite was performed. Should she attain puberty before the rite, she falls, like the Malayali girl, into permanent ritual pollution and, though she is not excommunicated, she is inauspicious, is suspected of witchcraft, and may not marry with the normal rites. The token-marriage gives her the status of a married woman, and is followed some years later by a real post-puberty marriage. As among modern Nayars in some parts of South Malabar and Cochin, and among Tamil temple-dancers, the proxy-bridegroom is a weapon (here an arrow instead of a sword). Alternatively it may be a wooden paddy-pounder, probably a phallic symbol throughout southern and middle India. It may be significant that the man who goes through the rites and carries the phallic symbol is the girl's elder sister's husband, a probable father-image to her; and that, like the Malabar 'bridegroom', he is paid for his services. It seems clear from Dr Dube's account that the rite is a symbolic defloration, that it releases the girl from the sexual guardianship of her natal kinsmen, and changes her from a dangerous, sacred, and forbidden creature into a normal woman who may be married without fear. It would be interesting to know whether it is preceded by a mock menstruation ceremony. To test my hypothesis, that pre-puberty mock marriage issues from strong incest taboos and the (originally Oedipal) fear of deflowering a virgin, we should need also to know whether, like the *tāli*-rite, this rite marks a change in the etiquette of behaviour between a girl and her natal kinsmen; whether the incest taboos in these groups are culturally elaborated; whether economic and legal power are in the hands of old men of the kin-group; whether the post-puberty marriage tie

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[1] This is particularly clearly so in the Tamil institution Brahman of pre-puberty marriage. Traditionally, a girl must be married before puberty and the marriage consummated in the fifteen days following the first menstruation, if possible, to avoid loss of the female seed after menstruation has begun. Failure to carry out the pre-puberty marriage and prompt consummation after puberty brought opprobrium on the girl's father, who was regarded as an unclean man guilty of embryo murder through failing to give away his daughter's fertility. Pre-puberty marriage (*kanniga dhānam*, 'gift of a virgin') is said to transfer the sexual sin of the girl's father to the son-in-law and thus ensure the father's salvation after death. The Brahmanical pre-puberty marriage is therefore at least partly prompted by incest taboos. The unconscious fear of deflowering a virgin appears in the Brahmanical consummation rites, at which the bridegroom declares his wife to have been previously married to the Vedic gods Soma, Agni, and Gandharva. In some groups, at the rites before consummation, a stick representing Gandharva is placed between the couple and removed before the consummation, at which the bridegroom says: 'O Visvavasu Gandharva, I pray you to make this girl my wife. Unite her to me. Leave her and take another.' Similarly, Brahmans rhapsodize over their former pre-puberty marriages when the girl was an infant and the boy often ten to fourteen years old, on the grounds that the participants were innocent of the sexual implications of the ceremony. As among Tiyyars, the couple were brought to the ceremony on the shoulders of their maternal uncles.

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7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
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is strong or (as we should expect) permits divorce and return to the brother's household; whether her natal kinsmen retain strong rights in a woman throughout her life; and whether the virgin is in any way associated in myth with a phallic mother-goddess.[1]

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[1] The male fear of deflowering a virgin, who may be unconsciously associated with the mother and is thus thought of as the rightful property of a father-figure or of an infant son-figure, appears in the marriage customs of several other South Indian peoples. The patrilineal Tamil Non-Brahmans of Tanjore, who have post-puberty marriage, formerly required the brahman priest who performed their marriage rites to deflower the girl as well. The fact that in these castes the mother's brother is considered the rightful husband of a girl gives further evidence of the belief that a girl should rightly be married by a man of the parental generation. Thurston (1906, pp. 49–50) reports that in the Malayali hill-tribe of Salem (also Tamil) a small boy is married to a mature woman, but the bride's father-in-law and not the husband cohabits with her and begets children on behalf of his son. When the son reaches maturity and his own legal sons are married, he in turn cohabits with their wives and raises children on behalf of his 'sons'. The Vellalas of Coimbatore are said to have a similar custom, in which a boy marries a mature woman, with whom the girl's father-in-law cohabits until the boy is adult. Similarly among the Reddis of Tinnevelly, a boy of five is reported often to be married to a girl of twenty. The girl after marriage cohabits with one of her own kinsmen on the maternal side, frequently her mother's brother, or else with the father of her boy-husband. When the husband grows up, he may in some cases never cohabit with his wife, but instead form a liaison with the wife of some other boy-kinsman. Among the Tamil Vallambans a boy is obliged to marry one or other type of cross-cousin, who may be older than himself. The girl then cohabits with her husband's elder brother, mother's brother or father, and the boy-husband legitimatizes the children when he comes of age. In all these customs we appear to have the reflection of a strong Oedipal conflict which, on the one hand, prevents a man from deflowering and sometimes from cohabiting at all with his wife and causes him to give her to his father or some other father-figure, and, on the other hand, gives such free rein to incestuous desires towards women of the filial generation as to permit men to deprive their social 'sons' of their legal wives. The defloration of a girl by one who is a father-figure to her husband is not, of course, confined to India, but appears for example in the European custom of the *droit du seigneur*. At the initation of a Banaro girl, her prospective bridegroom's father, being 'ashamed' to do it himself, engaged his sib-friend to deflower the girl (Thurnwald 1916, p. 261).

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CHART I. *Variations in Essential Features of the Tali-Rite in Four Groups*

Essential Features of the Ceremony	*South Malabar and Cochin Nayars*	*North Malabar Nayars*	*North Malabar Tiyyars*	*South Malabar and Cochin Tiyyars*
Basic economic and residential group in the Kinship System	Matrilineal lineage segment, uxorilocal	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence; or patrilineal or ambilineal group	Patrilineal, patrilocal extended family
Descent and inheritance systems	Exclusively matrilineal	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Double unilineal descent; patrilineal inheritance
Age of girl at *tali*-rite	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty
Place of ceremony	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house or father's own house	Patrilineal group's ancestral house
Expenses of ceremony met by	Matrilineal lineage as a whole	Matrilineal lineage as a whole with help from fathers	Senior MB and father jointly	Father with help from senior MB
Preliminary mock menstrual seclusion	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes
Girl ceremonially 'given away' by	Brother or head of matrilineal group	Brother or head of matrilineal group	MB, MBW, or father	Father; secondarily, MB
Tali tied by	*Enangan*, district chief, or elderly Nambûdiri Brahman	Elderly Nambûdiri Brahman	MBW, FSi, prospective mother-in-law, or barber woman (Barbers – elderly man)	Young boy, sometimes prospective husband
Supplementary 'fertility' or 'defloration' rites performed by	Nambûdiri Brahman priest or village military leader	Marar (lower caste of funeral priests)	Barber	Village headman's wife
Subsequent seclusion of girl	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Uncertain	Girl secluded with 'bridegroom' or with bridegroom's loincloth

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/Information on tests of marriageability required of Tiyyar girls prior to the Tali-tying, will be found in category 588./

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THE JOURNAL

OF THE

ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

VOL. XLVIII.

PUBLISHED BY THE
Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland,
50, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, LONDON, W.C.

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Title Page

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SOME ASPECTS OF NĀYAR LIFE.

By K. M. Panikkar.

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121 Note.—I have not attempted here to write anything like a detailed study of the Social Life and Customs of the Nāyars. My purpose in this Essay has been mainly to put together a few facts which do not seem to have been sufficiently dealt with by previous writers. It is therefore offered rather as supplementary notes than as an original contribution.

128 I have everywhere depended upon my own observations as to matters of detail.
127 Wherever I have ventured either to suggest new interpretations or to question old theories my authorities generally are eighteenth-century Malayalam poets, who describe the Nāyar Society of the time with great accuracy and detail. My debt to various anthropological classics is evident, and I have acknowledged it everywhere in footnotes.

I.—Introductory.

13 The Nāyar country extends traditionally from Gokarnam to Cape Camorin along the littoral of the Arabian Sea. The geographical position of the country is very important. The Western Ghats, which extend from near Bombay down to Cape Camorin, attain near the Malabar country the character of a mountain range studded

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with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breaths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note I.

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564 the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

175 As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since
564 Marco Polo travelled in Asia.
701 "In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po! po! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

175 Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material
439 which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

127 But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer
114 examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

113 [1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

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Malayalam has an extensive 122
literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampūdiris and the 124
Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century [538]
literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without 621
an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar [421]
individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar 621
families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. 563
For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. 564
All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart [361]
in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which 631
was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before 634
the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
[874] Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa*
701 in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules
874 of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 701 even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Palayanis* (*Pala*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine
[121] myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home. 621

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*. [346]

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship). 621 622 [874] [576]

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends. 622 [796] [623] 622 585 626

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village 264 564 626

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626 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were per-
564 suaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their
621 village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all
178 matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of a[illegible] the leader[illegible] of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it
[425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar
351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called
613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women.
[562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns
421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family,
(171) according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

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When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself ; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Talikettu kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the 604 829 family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being; and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāri* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

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why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammaves* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammaves* and collateral *ammaves* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammaves* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 58) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, i.e., elder mother, small mother, i.e., younger mother.

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606 as *Ammavi Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar*.—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[264] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
613 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent
621 opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions*.—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[191] [1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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daughter never calls you by any name which, in the Hindu code of manners, is done only with regard to the husband. She is your *a priori* wife, if such an expression could be used. She is spoken of as the *Mura Pennu* (*Mura* = customary, and *Pennu* = female or wife, meaning customary wife). 582

Unlike other Hindus a Nāyar may marry a girl from a lower sub-caste as long as she also is a Nāyar. He cannot marry a woman whose caste is higher than his own without the wife losing her caste. A Nāyar lady can choose her husband either from among the allied families or others, provided they are of the same or superior sub-caste. Also, she can marry from anyone of the higher castes, *i.e.*, either from the Brahmins or from the Kshatriyas. The alliance between the Malabar Brahmins and the Nāyars is a social fact of very great interest. In no other part of India is a Brahmin allowed to marry out of his own caste. In Malabar, on the other hand, among the Nambudiris or the Aryan immigrants, only the eldest member of the family can marry among the Brahmins, the others being forced to marry among the Nāyars. The permanence through ages of matrilineal descent among the Nāyars is due to this fact. The Brahmins, being of a superior caste, and the Nāyar wife of the Brahmin being unable to live in her husband's family, the system tended to be matrilineal as well as matrilocal. Also, since the children of such a marriage are Nāyars and not Brahmins, though the father is a Brahmin, the system remained wholly unilateral without any definite bilateral development. It is only the very highest among the Nāyars that have connection with the Brahmins. Through their influence the custom preserved all its strength in the lower classes as well. 582 564

The peculiar custom of the Malabar Brahmins of not allowing their junior members to marry among their own caste introduces a complication into the Nāyar system. The idea underlying such a prohibition is evidently the preservation of the big estates which the Nampudiris own. Since the Nāyar sons of the Malabar Brahmins do not inherit anything from their fathers, their estates remain undivided and descend only to the eldest son. Primogeniture has been the custom in every country where the preservation of big landed property in the hands of a few was aimed at. The undivided family among the Nāyars is also meant to conserve their possession of the land and maintain the political influence resulting from it. A point of utmost importance which should always be kept in mind in this connection is the interaction of economic and social forces. The interest of the Nampudiris to keep their property undivided led to their custom of primogeniture, and this again induced them to use their temporal power and sacerdotal influence to perpetuate the matrilineal system among the Nāyars. Also, the desire to preserve the family estates as a whole, kept the Nāyar families from being divided, making thereby a change to patrilineal system altogether impossible. 428 564 582

the Todas also *Mackuna* (or cross-cousin) marriage is the orthodox custom. See p. 512, Rivers, *The Todas*. Also Appendix, "Similarities between the Nāyars and the Todas." 582 171

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595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

562 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship [871] and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best [875] Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

595 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars.
562 But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

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jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife." [1]

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs.

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*.

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time.

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale.

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[588] [114] to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] [613] [787] [791] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar* [301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the [576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The [605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (*i.e.*, her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

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the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which 588
was given to them the first day.

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it 174
has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has 182
been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. 588
The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families.

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the ex- [851]
penses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian [595]
evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous.

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be [765]
remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is
well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-* [171]
Dasis or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to

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588 182 174 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 564 585 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham* not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brāhmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered [554] that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. 585 [591] [198]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunderstanding or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly conducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its distinguished author. [184] [581] 586 [648] 581 [648]

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions. A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry anyone who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort. 582 [564]

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a specially aristocratic privilege. 591 [582] [178]

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for the last fifty years. 595

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the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorknam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāri* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be. 843 613 [604] [593] [787] [842]

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?" 843 613 182 [604] 843 182 789

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter. 843

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it. 846 783

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar 853 846 608

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[291] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Tīrundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 787 786 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration.*

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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abound. The militant Romanism of the Holy Inquisition, and the no less militant Protestantism of the Dutch, had their chance, in turn, for at least a century and a half. Yet, with all the great religions of the world to choose between during the last two thousand years, it is nothing short of marvellous to see the Nāyars, who have, it must be remembered, assimilated a very great deal of the material and intellectual culture of their neighbours, and, more than that, excelled them in literature and music, still maintain with undiminished vigour their spirit-worship, black-magic, and demoniacal ceremonies, and are devoid of almost every element of true religious life.

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We may be accused of the narrow use of a wide word in the phraseology of Tylor when we deny that the Nāyars have any religion apart from a veneer of Hindu influence. Their beliefs are mainly magical. Here, of course, I am treading on very dangerous ground, dangerous even to the initiated, but fatal to the novice. In this essay I have taken the distinction between religion and magic as being primarily a question of method rather than of intention or possible effect. The orthodox French opinion that the difference between magic and religion is that the latter is social while the former is anti-social, has been proved by Mr. E. S. Hartland and Dr. Marett to be wholly untenable; while the contention of Dr. Marett himself[1] is that the difference between magic and religion lies in the attitude of society towards them.[2]

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Among the Nāyars there is an implicit distinction between practices to propitiate a god and those with which to bully a spirit. Bullying a spirit for purposes of social benefit I have not considered to be religion, though it is recognised by society as beneficial and therefore according to Dr. Marett should be considered as religious—because it does not possess the emotional and the psychological elements which

[1] *Anthropology*, p. 210 (Home Univ. Series).

[2] Dr. Marett has recently expressed his view thus:—

"The dominant social tradition tolerates in a community only certain practices and the beliefs associated with them. These may be said to constitute the religion of the community. It does not matter whether they embody customs such as sacrifice and prayer which are essential to the civilised man's notion of *his* religion, or whether they involve processes of sympathetic magic, etc., such as have for us become disreputable.

"On the other hand, when resort is had to the supernaturalistic means in order to gain selfish and anti-social ends we may speak of magic." (Class Lecture on Primitive Morals.)

Here Dr. Marett seems to go back to the French view and hold that the difference between magic and religion is that the former is selfish and anti-social while the latter is disinterested and social. The view here submitted is different. It is submitted that primitive society understands the difference between magical and religious customs even when both are essentially social and disinterested. To the primitive mind, the difference between religion and magic lies in the method and procedure of the ceremonies, or, as we shall now call them, the ritual. As method and procedure only reflect the mental state of the performer and the society to the benefit of which these ceremonies are performed, this difference is essentially psychological. This position is better explained by the Nāyar customs and beliefs noted below.

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*oranda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 37.

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ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion 755
and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has [532]
a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed
of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the
village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, [373]
sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come [535]
before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying
music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric
effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like
blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible
looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into
a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who
prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and
the devil is supposed to have been cast out.

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," that they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into [775]
girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no
avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endear- 776
ment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god. He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place

[1] Note; the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[789] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The
[755] entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week : [262] [821]

> "*Ezuzcha Kulichalum*
> *Vyāzcha Kulikkarutu.*"

784 777 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this : "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

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717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
484 journey:
717
784
[539]

Yama Rudrābhi Muppēram
Trikha iva ēzhu Naal
Vitakkil vilāyā Bhōmi
Pōkunnakil arum varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

717 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, "a vast oral tradition of leading cases" connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same "rationale": that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified: for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

771 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

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valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyan* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the market.

241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 56 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly remained serfs in spite of the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 796 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 [444] The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people; but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

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This is mostly due to two reasons: 434

First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [187] without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245] on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511 fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer classes, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613] the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182] their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262 beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vizhakkā Kari yunjoru vaha*
> *Bhain Bhajana mātu Koothillā.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264 people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262 as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184 Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439] richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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291
184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood
302 paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made
412 of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this
326 does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge
178 into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny
611 undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste
564 war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharavad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intelligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following:

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patrilocal* system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars."

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

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101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as
614 *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from
174 outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were
825 called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days
791 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a
[161] community of 3½ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattus*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred ser-
[784] pents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars
174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "ɢ" to "ʏ" (as from Naɢar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 609–70.

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114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastadanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Pennānu Putava Kotulithennullathumunnikittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaicism.*"

This "essential feature," therefore, is most certainly a development of the
[195] later half of the eighteenth century. It is, as a matter of fact, only within the last fifty years that cloth-giving as a synonym for marriage has come to be used widely, and even now it is used mostly by the ultra-refined, who consider it improper to utter the name of marriage in company. Therefore, to say that the Todas emigrated from the Malabar coast because of similarity in custom which, among the Nāyars at least, is a very late development, does not carry conviction.

114 Again, Dr. Rivers sees a "possible link" between Malabar and the Todas in
192 the word *Pul-palu*[2] of the Todas and the ceremony of *Puli Kudi* of the Nāyars.
171 Because of the similarity in these words, Dr. Rivers has suggested[3] "the name
174 *Pulipal* may mean tamarind dairy and be a survival of community between the Toda ceremony and that of Malabar." This is a supreme example of the danger of drawing conclusions from questionable etymological premises. Now *Puli* is a well-known Dravidian word which means both the tamarind tree and the sour taste. It is also used as a verb, in which case it means to make anything sour. Now *pul-pali* does not mean tamarind dairy, but the dairy of sour milk. How this could be a link "between Malabar and the Todas" it is utterly impossible for me to see.

114 Dr. Rivers has enumerated a number of points in which he sees "a close resemblance between the customs of the peoples of Malabar and the customs of the Todas." But I would submit that all his points in which any similarity could be seen are Dravidian customs belonging not only to the peoples of Malabar but to the rest of the non-Aryan peoples of South India. Therefore the arguments Dr. Rivers has brought forward prove only that the Todas are a Dravidian people. They do not prove that there was any connection, other than that of neighbours, between the Nāyars and the Todas.

[1] Except the last, which means cloth-cutting.
[2] Pp. 701–2.
[3] P. 702.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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Note 3.—McLennan and the Nāyar Type of Polyandry.

McLennan, in his well-known book, *Studies in Ancient History*, divides polyandry into two classes, and calls one the Nair type and the other the Tibetan type. "It is in the nature of the cases," says he, "that all the possible forms of polyandry must lie between the Nair and Tibetan forms." A good deal of what McLennan says about the Nāyar customs is vitiated by the unsatisfactory character of the information at his disposal. Buchanan, on whom he chiefly depends, made a journey through Malabar, and his account is wholly untrustworthy. The loose character of the sexual tie and the licentious habits of the richer Nampudiri landlords, as far as their immediate Nāyar tenants were concerned, were naturally enough interpreted as polyandry by foreign observers. As a matter of fact distinct polyandry of any type was very rare in Malabar except among the Kāniyāns (or the astrological caste) and among them it is of the Tibetan type.

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If there existed any tendency towards polyandry among the Nāyars it was not certainly towards what McLennan calls the "Nair type." The wife of a brother is looked upon as a person to whom one could openly though not legitimately pay court; and any favour short of sexual relationship which she confers upon him is allowed by public opinion. A wife, for example, is the only woman who is allowed to smear oil on a man's back; and when a woman does it to a man it is considered to be a sort of semi-marital function. A man can always ask his brother's wife to do it for him, and it is done very often, even in the presence of the brother. Such customs are, however, open to two interpretations. As we have seen elsewhere, the *Machuna* marriage (or the marriage of cross-cousin) is the orthodox form of marriage among the Nāyars. To all the brothers alike the girl stands in the same relation before the marriage. *She could have been, in fact, the wife of any of them*, provided she was not older than her cousins. Even after her marriage with one of them this potential relationship continues to exist, and therefore all the brothers treat her "half as a sister and half as a wife."[1]

[582]

Or, it may be explained, that such relationship is a survival of a Tibetan type of polyandry among the Nāyars. It may be argued that these semi-marital functions which all the brothers can claim from each others' wives, prove the prevalence in a former time of a community of marriage relationship among the brothers. This does not seem to me to be true. Nāyar tradition gives no support to this view. We have no Nāyar stories that speak of one woman who was the common wife of her cross-cousins. In fact we have no tradition of any polyandry at all. Nevertheless, we find McLennan giving the Nair name to a particular type of polyandry supposed by him to be practised universally among them.

[1] It has been argued by Spencer and Gillen that the system of supplementary spouses affords definite evidence of a system of group marriage in a previous age. Their inferences on this subject have now been subjected to very damaging criticism, especially by Mr. N. W. Thomas, *Kinship and Marriage in Australia*, pp. 111-141.

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/Information on what the author calls the "Nayar family," consisting of all the descendants from the same ancestress, will be found in category 613./

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/Information on the Desa Vazhis, the "lord of the manor" and his role as military preceptor in the village community, will be found in category 631./

/The term "clan" has been used by at least two authors in this file, notably Fawcett and Thurston and Rangachari (who quote from Fawcett), to refer to subdivisions of the Nayar caste, which are actually subcastes and have accordingly been marked for category 564. These "clans" as listed by Fawcett (6: Fawcett, p. 187) are as follows:

Kiriyattil	Kitâvu
Sûdra	Pallichan
Kurup	Muppathinâyiran
Nambiyâr	Vîyâpâri or Râvâri
Úrali	Attikkurissi
Nalliôden	Mânavallan
Viyyûr	Vengôlan
Akattu Châma	Adungâdi
Purattu Châma	Adiôdi
Vattakkâd	Âmayengolam./
Vangiloth	

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HIS HIGHNESS SIR RAMA VARMA, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., F.M.U.,
RAJA OF COCHIN.

[frontispiece]

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THE

Cochin Tribes and Castes

Volume II.

BY

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MADRAS:
PUBLISHED FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF COCHIN BY
HIGGINBOTHAM & CO., MOUNT ROAD.
LONDON: LUZAC & CO.

1912

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[P. 1]

CHAPTER I.

—:o:—

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS).

Introduction.

THE NAYARS are an interesting caste of people, forming a 101
considerable portion of the population of the 564
Cochin State; they constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of the pure "*Sudras of Malayala*". They were mostly nobles who engaged [554]
neither in handicraft, nor in commerce, nor in any other occupation but that of arms, which they always carried; and no one could be called a Nayar who was not of noble lineage. They were in fact the magnates of the rulers of Kerala, and exercised as much authority over their inferiors as their rulers did over them. They formed in ancient times a warlike race with military leaders and civil administrators of all kinds. Very much [177]
influenced as they are by modern civilisation, their customs widely differ from those of other people, in marriage, family and social organizations, as also in maternal filiation. These customs, which are primitive, are being tenaciously retained by them; and they are even now, as they have always been, a [178]
unique people whose customs may appear peculiarly strange to foreigners.

The word *Nayar*, which is the honourific plural of *Nayan*, is derived from *Nayaka*, which means a leader of the people; and the name, which in the widest sense at present includes a large number of sub-castes quite distinct from one another, may have been given by a class of Brahmans called the Nambuthiris [1] to the Nayars proper, who formed a military class in ancient times. Some consider it to be more correct to derive *Nayars* from *Nagas* (snakes or snake-worshipping Nagas or Scythians) from the worship of the Nagas or snakes which has been the characteristic cult of the community.

1. See account of the Nambuthiris.

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[173] Origin and tradition of the caste.

According to *Kerala Mahatmyam*, the Nayars are said to be the descendants of the union of the junior members of the Nambuthiri families with the Devagandarva and Rakshasa women brought in by Parasurama from extra-terrestrial regions. The *Keralotpatti* regards them as the descendants of the Sudras who accompanied the Brahman immigrants from outside Kerala.

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Some consider that the Nayars came from Tibet where polyandry prevails, while others consider them to be a very early division of the Newars of Nepal. The mere existence of polyandry in Tibet is not sufficient to suggest a racial identity, nor is the form of polyandry prevailing amongst the Nayars the same as that found amongst the Tibetans; [1] but the marital relations, mode of inheritance and other customs, as well as the style of architecture of Nepal, closely connect them with the Nayars, and go to show a common origin. [2]

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174

In the serpent worship of the Nayars, and also their matriarchal customs, others have found traces of a Scythian origin. It is said that the Dravidian languages retain a more intimate connection with the Scythian or Turanean tongues. Philology also comes in to support this view. It is said that Tamil and its cognate tongues were founded upon the ancient Asura or Dravidian speech, and this is strongly confirmed by the fact that the language of the Brahuis, a tribe on the borders of Sind, has been found to be closely allied to them. "The Brahuis' language", says Dr. Caldwell, "enables us to trace the Dravidian race to the southern confines of Central Asia, and that this country was the home of the Nagas to which race apparently belonged the founders of the Dravidian kingdoms." It may therefore be safely concluded that the Dravidians of South India were of the same stock as the Nagas of the North, and to these tribes of Naga colonists belonged the original serpent worshipping Nayars.[3] "The name Dravidian Races," says Friedrich Ratzel, "fits only the Tamils, Telugus, and Canarese of Southern India, remoter kindred of the dark aboriginal population to whom Aryan population brought the religion of Brahma, a high civil order and of course the opportunity of extensive intermixture. The selection of the term is connected

1. The Evolution of Marriage, Letourneau, page 80.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, C. F. Oldham, page 158.
3. The Sun and the Serpent, Chapter VII, pages 162-165.

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with its use in the sacred writings of the old Indians, where it is applied to the old Kshatriyas on the east coast of the Deccan who had fallen to the rank of Sudras. As a rule, however, all are called Dravidians who are not Aryan or Semitic and speak agglutinative languages like Tamil. They are distinguished by their dark colour, Mongolian features, and smooth hair. "The nucleus of the Tamil race was indeed," says Grant, "devoted to the nomad life, the fundamental institution of Turanean existence, but the hypothesis of their close connection with the population of Tibet has not attained the rank of scientific certainty." [1]

The passage, quoted above, supports the general consensus of opinion, that the Malayalam language is an offshoot of Tamil, and that the Nayars are the immigrants from the Tamil country.

It has always been a matter of controversy whether Malayalam is the mother, sister, or daughter of Tamil. The popular opinion seems to be, that it is the archaic form of Tamil before it became a written language, and this corresponds with the information derived from the Greek writers that the country was known by the name of Limurike, Tamilike or Tamil country. [2]

Relying mainly on literary evidence, Mr. Kanakasabha Pillay has attributed a Mongolian origin to the whole Dravidian race of Tamils, among whom he includes the Nayars, but anthropometric results point otherwise. [3]

As has been seen, many distinguished authorities are unanimously agreed that the Nayars belong to the Dravidian race with no doubt a considerable admixture of Aryan blood, but the date of their arrival in Malabar cannot be accurately determined.

It is assumed by some writers that the Aryans were conquerors who reduced *Asuras* (Dravidians) to slavery. Whatever might have been the fate of the aborigines, the *Asuras* were not subdued by the Aryans, and never became their serfs or dependants, but were converted gradually to Aryan usages by a regular fusion. Bishop Caldwell supports this view and says, that the subjugation of the Dravidians by the Aryans is

1. Races of Mankind, Vol. III, page 359.
2. Malabar Law and Custom, Introduction, page 2.
3. The Tamils, eighteen hundred years ago.

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174 not borne out either by any Sanskrit authority or Dravidian traditions;[1] but certain legends refer to conflicts between them and the Hindu colonists of later times, and these are said to have been led by Parasurama, and the Nagas from Pätäla whom they found in possession of the country.[2] The latter were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kshatriyas or warriors who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmans, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle in which victory alternated with defeat. These internecine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally gave birth to a military aristocracy called the Nayars.[3]

701 The Nayars of ancient times formed the chief militia in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, and their valour and other fighting qualities evoked the admiration of foreigners, and inspired even the restless Portuguese poet Cameons, who described them in the following apt lines:—

The military character of the Nayars.

> Poliar the labouring clans were named;
> By the proud Nayars the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandished in the right;
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight.

175 One of the earliest accounts of the Nayars is found in the
701 writings of Duarte Barbosa, who described them as men of noble descent, who had to be armed as knights by the king or lord with whom they lived, and who could not call themselves Nayars until they had been so equipped as to bear arms. They were generally sent to school at the age of seven to learn all
[868] manner of athletic feats and to enable them to use their
[147] weapons.[4] Their sinews and joints were so stretched and anointed with the *oyle sesamus* by skillful fellows called "Panicars," who were captains in war, that they became very light and nimble; and could "wind and twine their bodies" as if they had no bones. They cast themselves backwards and forwards, high and low, to the astonishment of the beholders, and the delight in their weapon was so great that they

1. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, Introduction, page 107.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, page 107.
3. Primitive Folk, page 107.
4. A description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar by Duarte Barbosa, page 128—129.

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persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

175 701 648 175 411 [714]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

175 726 [701]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers and his peculiar weapon is an instrument with a thin but very broad blade hooked towards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet' or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

175 411 [714]

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies,

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien,

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175 411 disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

704 Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The sol-
714 diers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried
411 swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella
[293] formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane,
[643] for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the
726 other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brah-
704 mans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same
[465] course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant,
[701] and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

701 The Nayars whom the king received in his service were
643 never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even
[784] in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family
[752] of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdannis, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

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361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
[47] tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
343 Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
342 order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
[787] ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
[764] ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

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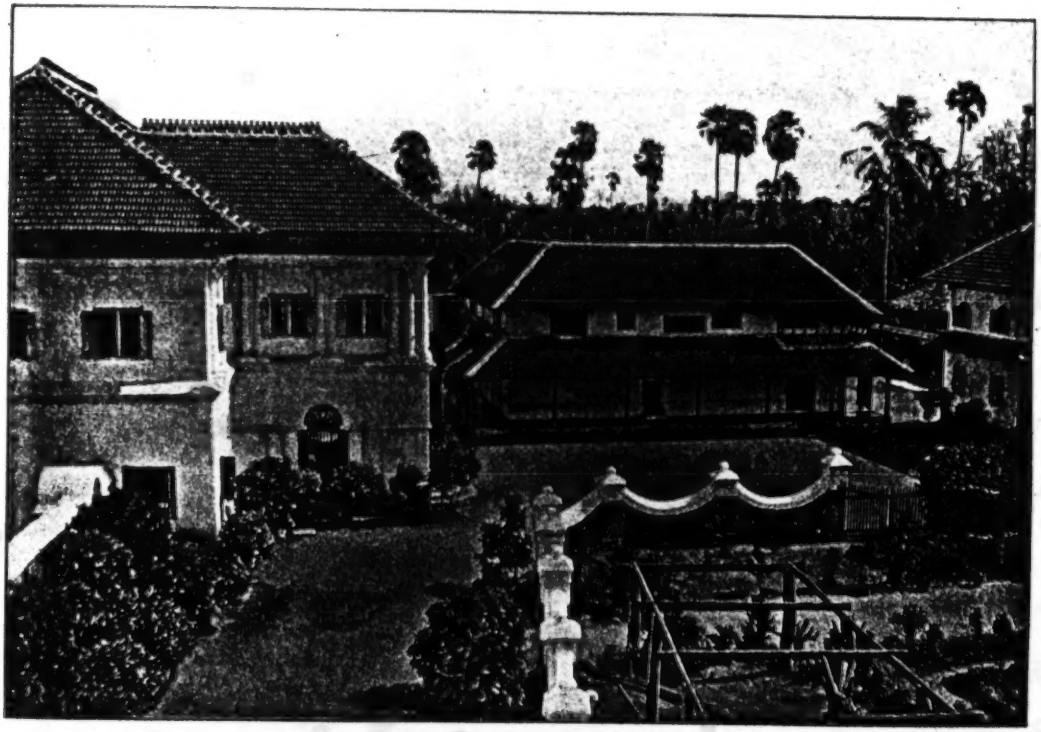

A TYPICAL ARISTOCRATIC NAYAR HOUSE.

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[facing p. 8]

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THE NAYAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

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[facing p.5]

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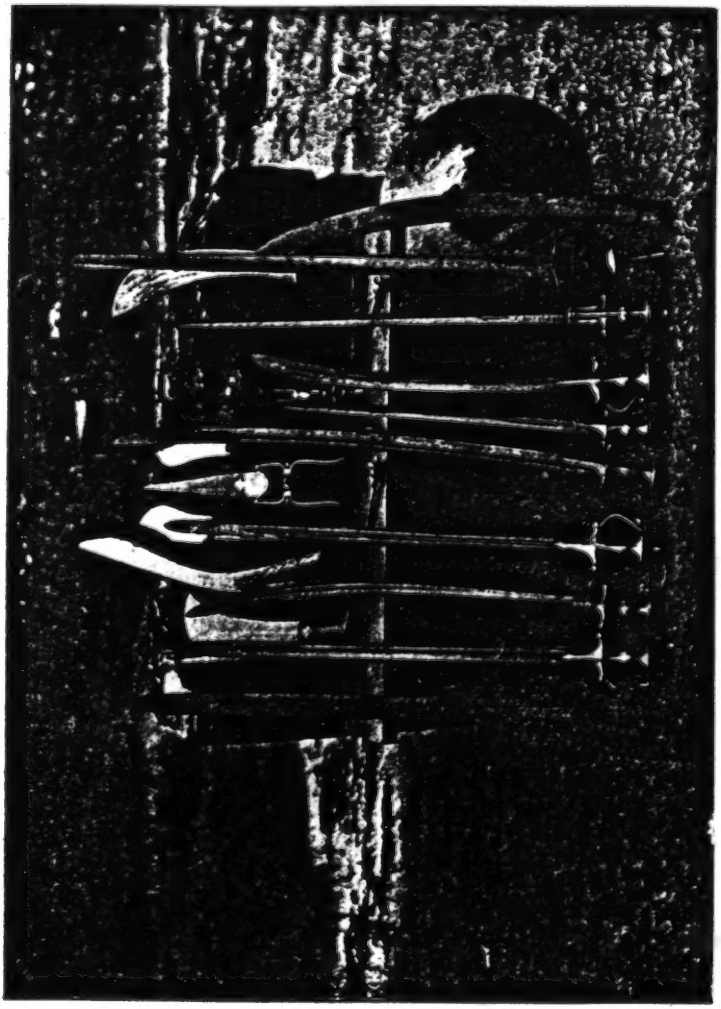

THE WEAPONS OF THE OLD NAYAR WARRIORS.

[facing p. 6]

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space *(mittam)* in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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177 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of
342 European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated
[312] tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a
[515] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen. an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman
[574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[343] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[245] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality. [1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas; and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramrax's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-23.

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342 351 823 372 [524] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses. If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times. Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an elevation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 342 823 an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi), 824 or *peràl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342 *athi* (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351 southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823 or milk plant on the west, *nàga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayàl* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peràl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Aràyal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

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Internal structure of the caste.

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting [626] the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine dis- [688] pleasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world and in the world to come.

It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the 564 division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the 174 Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional [463] groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and [114] Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

564 In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

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certain families from time to time are being looked upon as sub-castes. *Jâtinirnayam*, a Malayalam work of some authority, which gives an account of Malayali castes, limits the number of subdivisions to eighteen, fourteen of which belong to the high caste Sudras, the remaining four being of low caste Sudras. In the last Census Report of the Cochin State, the same number is kept up with slight modifications, to which I am not inclined to agree. It is not possible at this stage to state the exact number of subdivisions, and the following are those that have come under my personal investigation in the State:—

1. *Kiriyattil Nayars.*—They form the highest of all the Nayar subdivisions in the Cochin State as well as south Malabar. The word *kiriyattil* or *kiriyam* is said to be derived from the Sanskrit, *graham*, which means a house. The derivation is doubtful. The members of this subdivision are believed to have been the descendants of the early Brahmans in their union with the Deva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women brought into Kerala by Parasurama, and their duty has been primarily to serve them. The members of the aristocratic class, who still bear the titles of Panikkar, Kurup, Kaimal, Kartha, Menon, and Menokki belong to this class; in this class are included the old *niduvázhis*, and *desavázhis*—rulers of *nids* and *desams*—the military leaders, Pattola Menons and other *sthánis* or titled persons. Being superior to the members of other subdivisions, the *Kiriyattil* Nayars can cook for all others. The Nayars of this class are, according to current tradition, connected with the sixty-four families of Vellalas, whom Dr. Oppert has tried to identify with the Pallavas.

2. *Illattu Nayars.*—They are known in Cochin and South Malabar also as Sudra Nayars. They are par excellence the attendants and retainers of the Nambuthiris. In many parts of the State and in Malabar, they have, by close contact with the Nambuthiris, fashioned many of their personal habits after the truly Brahmanical style, and are, on that account, classed among the high class Nayars. Very seldom does a Nambuthiri woman go outside without being accompanied by a maid-servant or *dasi* belonging to this class, and every woman of this class is her constant attendant and is indispensable for her various ceremonies. They are, I understand, found very largely in Travancore also, where they form

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the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illams*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patinâluvittukar* and [357] *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chàrnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[167] 4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chàrna Nayars or Chàrnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of [582] the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice* [264] *versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[451] 5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

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The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State.

6. *Mdrár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies. [534]

7. *Pidamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision. [788]

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Vániyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :— 564 326

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1] [778]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses. 564

12. *Edachéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

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564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

14. *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and [264] Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage [582] between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks.

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, 554 Titles. the origin and significance of which are given below:—

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur [551] Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha.

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2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others. 533 554 [644]

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar. [1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play. [874]

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *avan*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British [451]

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

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554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Asán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Manndtiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

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783 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous. This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam* from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted. [1]

Marriage prohibitions.

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783 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolatheri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

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Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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Ambalavásis form alliances with Nayar women, but the latter and their children cannot touch their husbands and fathers without polluting them. The children of this union belong to the mother's family. In the clan system, descent was at first reckoned in the female line; consequently, uterine ties alone constituted kinship. The father was not regarded as related even to his children, and not considered as a member of the family. In this system all the children bear the clan name, and the clan name becomes the test of blood relationship. But the moment the descent is recognised through the male, the clan system breaks down. Among the Nayars the kinship is still reckoned through the female line. 564 582 783

Marriage is endogamous among the low caste Sudrás. The following restrictions are however in force among all classes of Sudrás. There cannot be intermarriages between the descendants of any female ancestor. It is strictly prohibited even in the case of two persons belonging to the same *taravid* or family whose relationship cannot be traced to its origin, but is only traditional. A man cannot marry the sister of his deceased wife. The custom is more changing. A man cannot marry from the family of his deceased wife, but is now limited to the *thdvazhi* to which his wife belonged. Even this is now being overlooked. 564 582 [614]

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the
585 Marriage customs. Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*tâli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity,[1] and the omission or neglect of it
[688] will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered
[182] a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *tâli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *káranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of
[787] the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Brihmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnittu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Brihmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purinic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *tâli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Athizham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Brikmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *tâli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpâd in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the maternal uncle or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and brings the girl, who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with ornaments,
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. She is then
[326] seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes presents of cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *tâli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

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A TALI-TYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *kiranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Brihmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Anán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *táli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pán supári*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *páyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *tâli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkâkkarappan* temple and tie the *tâli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahâdévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpâd is the *tâli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *tâli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tâlikettu kalyânam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tâlikettu*

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588 171 *kalyánam* of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials [533] [789] in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pittu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig védic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathâyam* Hindus, the *tâli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathâyam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at 588 174 hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on the occasion of *tâli* tying. The reason for this departure may 585 have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the [182] early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *válkannáti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 89.

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881 she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Bráhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. [184] In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

585 The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only [184] two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs con- [582] nected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other [584] classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bride- [787] groom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kúranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bride-groom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly wel- comed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Rámáyanam* or other sacred book, referring to [583] marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read [574] by the Asán or village school-master. Some music is also provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

Sambandham.

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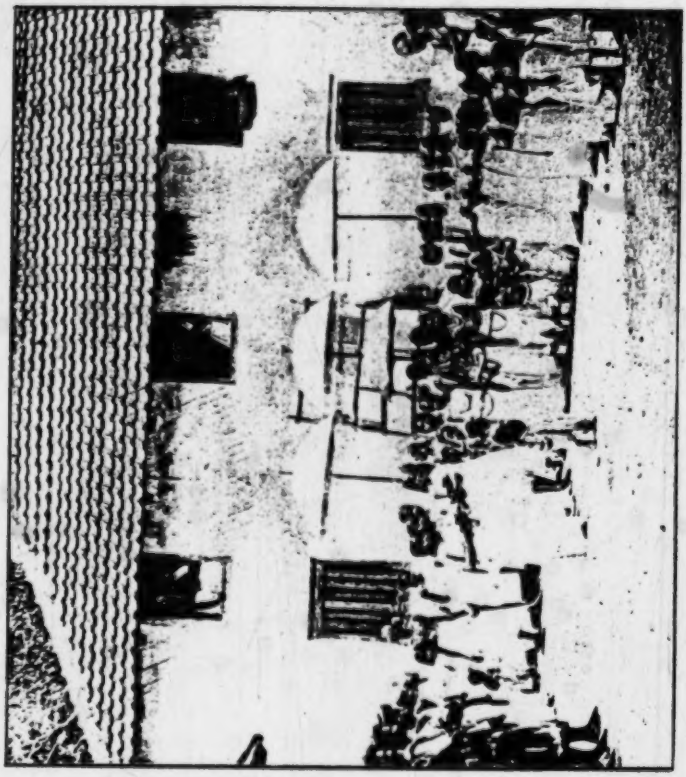

A NAYAR GIRL RETURNING HOME IN PROCESSION AFTER BATH ON THE FOURTH DAY AFTER THE FIRST MENSES.

[facing p. 29]

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *kâranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *kâranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pîcu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvâthira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyânam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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A NAIR GIRL FOR SAMBANDHAM (MARRIAGE) WITH HER BRIDESMAIDS.

[facing p. 31]

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585 184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, [586] but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a [581] marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *vivâham* 192 is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the 197 *marumakkathâyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *vivâham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradânam* used in South Malabar.

3. *Uzhamporukkuka*, and *Vidâram Kairuga* of North Malabar.

4. The *Kidakkóra kalyânam* of Palghat and parts of Nedunganád.

Pudamuri, *Vastradânam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidâram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word 184 denoting marriage among the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars. It

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will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, 585
that the principal features of this *sambandham* ceremony all 184
over Keralam, are, in the main, the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the [787]
examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether the stars agree astrologically, the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony, the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place, the presentation of the *dánam* (gifts) to the Brahmans, the sumptuous banquet, the meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are the features which will invariably be found in all well conducted *sambandhams* in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state, that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all *sambandhams* among respectable Nayars, and I would further say, that they ought to be gone through at every *sambandham*, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of *sambandham*, with the particular incident attached to certain forms of *sambandham* in South Malabar. I shall describe the *Pudamuri* or *Vastraddnam* as celebrated in North Malabar, and show how the other forms of *sambandham* are related to it. I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The preliminary ceremony in every *Pudamuri* is 585
the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom 184
by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride 787
in the presence of the relations of the bride and the bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculation on a piece of palmyra leaf with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's *kúranavan* and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bride- [574]
groom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the [431]
former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth, and this preliminary ceremony is invariably performed

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184 at all *Pudamuris* in North Malabar. It is called *Pudamuri*
[787] *Kodukkal* (giving pieces of cloth for dressing), and it is unknown in South Malabar.

Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the *Pudamuri*, the bridegroom visits his *kúranavans* and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nut, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house of the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends, to seats
[431] provided in the *tekkini* or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*dúnams*) or money gifts to the Brahmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now the time for the
(787) astrologer to appear and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *patinjúttu* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated and turned into a bed room for the occasion.
[354] There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps and *ashtamangalyam* which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangalyam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, lighted fire and a small round wooden box called a *cheppu* made in a peculiar fashion. They will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his best man enters the room through the western door accompanied by the bride's aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the *ashtamangalyam* and lits up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom are touched, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to
[431] perform another duty. At the *tekkini* or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes and betel leaves and

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkaram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a marriage in the legal or sacramental sense of the term. The views of the members of the orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kdranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37.

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562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo-
556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste,
564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris,
581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar.

581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 138.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 85.

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177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawâds*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

Polyandry.

[593] [604] [582] [584] The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83. death.

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sdmanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti* says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkatháyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of [833] a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

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impossible to determine. It was under the influence of the tangible fact of maternity, that the notions of race, family and inheritance were elaborated and developed. Against this is the fact, that the jungle tribes and very low castes have a regular system of marriage and a kind of paternal inheritance.

Sir Henry Mayne maintains that the origin of society in patriarchal lines, is that polyandry and kinship through females are of temporary duration, liable to be brought about at any stage in the progress of society by peculiar circumstances under which it may be placed. If this were true, the popular belief that Nambuthiris brought it about to accommodate their domestic habits is easily proved.

Letourneau says that there is no warrant to consider this form of conjugal union as having been general, but that it is in exceptional form brought about by necessity in a good number of gross societies. This view to some extent is shared by Herbert Spencer who says that polyandry is one form of marital relations or arrangements independently originating in the earliest societies by successive limitations of promiscuity. Lastly, the opinion is unanimous that the Nayars and other *marumakkathâyis* are Dravidians and that polyandry and its accompanying incidents prevailed in Southern India among the non-Aryan tribes. There is strong reason to think, that the *tâli* tying ceremony, the prohibition of sexual union outside the caste, and the doctrine of *Anulomam* and *Pathilomam* were orginally introduced by Nambuthiri Brahmans as restrictions on promiscuities. Thus, so different are the views of anthropologists on this subject, that it still remains an unsettled problem in the ethnology of Kerala. As has been already said, the custom of polyandry is dead. The women of the upper and middle classes are monogamous, and marriage in practice amply satisfies the definition of Lord Penzance in Hyde v. Hyde, namely, "the voluntary union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all other".

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Polygamy.

There is nothing which prevents a man from entering into conjugal relations with more than one woman at a time; nevertheless, it is seldom practised. Indeed, when a man feels happy and contented with his own wife, very seldom has he any inclination to form *sambandham* with another for the sake of novelty unless forced by the

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595 circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, [554] his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *kâranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kâranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kâranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvâthira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks
[602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation offi-
ciates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked
[824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains
placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to
[574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremo-
ny is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and
[787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil
over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the
left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a
male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by
[564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as
[184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 852 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

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551 The names of Nayars present great varieties and those most commonly met with are the following:—

(a) Andi Menon
Kandar Menon
Kannan Menon
Ittirayarachan
Korappan
Koman Menon
Kumara Menon
Thenchu Menon
Konthu Nayar
Eacharan Nayar

(b) Raman
Krishnan
Govindan
Gopalan
Achyuthan
Sankaran
Narayanan
Madhavan
Sreedharan
Raghavan
Neelacandhan
Velayudhan

(c) Names of females:
Kunjikavu
Chirutha
Ichon
Kotha
Nangeli
Ooli
Cheeru
Cheeronna
Ichi
Ittiri
Mukami
Oonni Maya

(d) Kalyani
Lakshmi
Madhavi
Rugmani
Seetha
Subhadra
Narayani
Dakshayani
Karthyayani
Meenakshi
Gowri
Bhargavi
Janaki
Parvathi
Sreedevi

(e) Pet names of males:
Appu
Appukuttan
Kuttan
Balan

(f) Pet names of females:
Nani (Narayani)
Mathu (Madhavi)
Kunju (Kunjukutti)
Eacheri (Easwari)
Parukutti.

55 The names of males given under (a) are those which appear
564 to be caste names, probably given by the Nambuthiris, who are generally fond of these contracted and disguised appellations. The Nambuthiris say, that the Sudras were so ordained by Manu as not to be called by fair names. They were the landlords and priests, and the Nayars had to do servile work for them. They thought that they ought to keep the Sudras in complete ignorance, and could not endure to hear them talking distinctly in their presence. On one occasion, it is said that when a Sudra servant uttered the words "*Sûrya Rasmi* (sun's rays)," his master was so displeased, that he closed his ears, for he could not bear to hear a servile fellow using so elegant a phrase from Sanskrit. On another occasion, when a Brahman overheard a Sudra uttering the words *ahimsa paramo dharma* (the highest of all duties is not to injure anybody), he said to himself, "what a pity it is, that a Sudra should be able to quote a vedic expression!". Their influence in these and other matters began gradually to diminish after the time of the great Malayalam
[776] peot, Thunjathu Rámanujan. The names of the caste-men given under (b) are chiefly the various designations of Krishna, Rama and Siva, all of whom are worshipped with equal rever-
[782] ence. Some think that the Nayars are chiefly the worshippers of Vishnu, but the fact that, when at Benares, Rameswaram and
[769] other places, they perform the ceremonies of offering of rice-balls in honour of their deceased ancestors, calling their ancestors

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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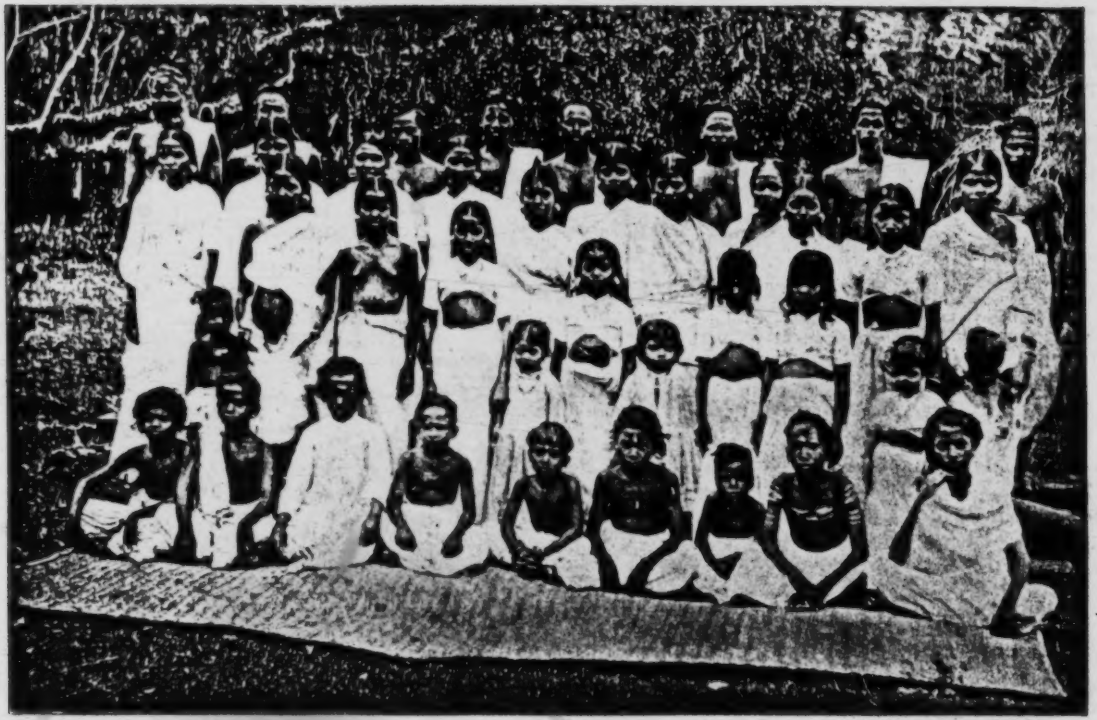

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY.

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deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large number of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the breakfast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *kâranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *tâvazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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613 592 [421] by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *káranavan.*

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawád* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawád*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *káranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawád* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The [562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

613 592 182 178 The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *káranavan* and the other members, the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawád* splits up into *távashis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

[562] It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

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of many joint members dependent on the *káranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *káranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *káranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable ; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *tévashis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

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1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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CHAPTER III.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Inheritance.

The Nayars follow the *marumakkathâyam* law of succession, *i. e.*, the law which regulates succession through the female line. The senior male member called the *kâranavan* is entitled to the full possession of the property, and is absolute in its management. The junior members, on the other hand, have a claim to residence and maintenance in the family house. They cannot call for an account except as an incident to a prayer for the removal of the manager for gross misconduct, nor claim any specific share of the income, nor even require that the maintenance provided for them should be in proportion to the income of the *tarawâd*. An absolute discretion in this direction is vested in the manager who is the legal guardian of every member of the family.[1] He is not accountable to any member in the *tarawâd* in respect of its income, nor can a suit be maintained for an account of the *tarawâd* property in the absence of fraud on his part. He is under no obligation to support any member of his *tarawâd* by his own labour or from his self-acquisitions. The only restraint on him in the management is, that he cannot alienate the lands of the family except with the consent of all the other members and without proper necessity.[2] If a family has so far increased in the number of its members that they cannot conveniently live under the same roof any longer, it divides itself with the consent of the senior member into *tâvazhis* to each of which is assigned a portion of the property for maintenance, and such *tâvazhis* may reside in separate houses or farm-houses belonging to the family and appropriating from the lands newly assigned to them an income sufficient to maintain themselves. In the partition of

1. Vide Mayne's Hindu Law, sec. 268.
2. I. L. R. II, Mad. 328.

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a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathíyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

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631 and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and plea-
643 sure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many
[644] of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the funda-
mental and long established laws of the country.

646 Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by
[203] right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were
[428] despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

643 The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were
646 conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuo-
578 sity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly
[687] sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

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rights. Thus did these *kittams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramdnis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste 623 disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 681 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There 564 was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom [671] fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

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564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days
during which every method of torture known to the keepers of
the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued
in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore
that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty
person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into
a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted
guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form
of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not
confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a
mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrap-
ped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was
guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of
alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom
seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a
cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178]
and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428]
sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Nádavázhi* (ruler of a *Nád*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désa vázhi.

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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavízhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yules Marco Polo, page 374.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles [1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 **Village organisation and village life.**

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old terri-
[634] torial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Náduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja.
622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two func-
634 tions in the village. The *Náduvázhi* was the military chief of
[622] his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march
[701] wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his terri-
[451] tory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective vil-
[651] lages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an
621 old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes,
[564] the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

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fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kúval-kkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asins*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asín* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

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872 youngster got a mastery of the letters. Then he was taught to read and write short sentences on cadjan leaves (*Ola Ezhutal*). He was made to commit to memory short verses, and lessons in arithmetic were added to his curriculum. Thus the youngster acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in about two years, and was thereafter recommended to an advanced course of studies, which consisted of a study of Sanskrit, the perusal of the *Purânas*, and also arithmetic sufficient to enable him to calculate the position of planets and help him in the casting of horoscopes. Girls also were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were encouraged in the reading of the *Purânas*. Such in brief was the course of instruction imparted in these small institutions.

872 The schools were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture,
876 while the boys sat on small mats or on the floor, which was
[346] covered with sand for purposes of writing. The teacher had a
[350] raised seat from which he supervised and listened to the loud recitations of the lessons set on the previous evenings. The boys went to him, one by one, repeated their lesson, and received another written by him on the palm leaf, which was to be learnt during the day. The school hours were generally from seven to ten in the morning and again from two to five in the afternoon. During the latter hours, the budding scholars were instructed in the reading of the Ramayana and other *Purânas*; and before the end of the lessons for the day, the boys were made to repeat with one voice, some mathematical formula. At home, the boys revised their work and recited the names of Gods and short verses as prayers to them. They had no work for about 12 days in the month, besides the usual Hindu holidays.
[875] Twice during the month, when the fortnightly holidays commenced, *i. e.*, on *Dwddesi* (the 12th day after the full or new moon), the teacher was remunerated by each boy with the payment of an anna or two, and even this was sometimes evaded by the opportune absenting of some pupils. He also received presents of cloth with a rupee or two from some of the richer families to which a few of his pupils belonged. Boys were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; caning was freely resorted to as a mode of correction, and the teacher was often regarded with terror rather than with respect and admiration. Their only books were manuscripts on cadjan leaves; their

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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536 538 the early ages, and *Krishnáttam* and *Rámanáttam* are among the earliest productions in the Malayalam literature. The origin of the former is interesting. A pious devotee, Vilvamangalattu Swámiyar, by name, resided in the temple of Guruváyúr in the Chaughat Taluk, which belonged to the Zamorin of Calicut. One of the Zamorins, while on a pilgrimage to the temple, asked the pious Swamiyar to show him the person of the God Krishna. On his wish being gratified, he was so much attracted by the handsome countenance of the divine 'Child God' that the Raja attempted to detain him by catching him by the head. But, alas, he vanished, leaving in the hands of the Raja a single peacock's feather which had adorned the crown on his head. The Raja who was a great scholar determined to write a drama which would contain the life of Krishna—from his incarnation to his departure to heaven—and *Krishnáttam* was the outcome of that resolve. This play, which is seldom 536 acted outside Calicut, takes eight days for its performance beginning as a rule, each night, at 10 p. m. and lasting until 3 a. m.

The cost of a night's performance is 64 fanams (eighteen rupees, four annas, and seven pies). Once it is said that when the actors went to Tripunathura, the residence of His Highness the Raja of Cochin, who had a night's performance in his palace, *Kamsavadham* (death of Kamsa, an *Asura* king, who was the maternal uncle of Krishna) was the play selected for the night; and to try the strength of the actor Krishna, a tusker who was brought to the stage was caught hold of by the tusks and killed. The play was never thereafter sent either to Cochin or Travancore.

The other play which is equal in importance to the one just described is the *Ramanáttam*, and was composed by the *Kottarakkara Tampuran*, a distant relative of the then ruling sovereign of Travancore. Once this prince asked the Zamorin of Calicut to send his actors for a few nights' performance in his own palace; but his request was refused on the plea that the prince as well as the southerners generally, were not able to appreciate so important and erudite a drama. This led to the composition of a play by the prince himself.

Plays, as a general rule, are not very popular at present, perhaps with the exception of the one kind which is now being

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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

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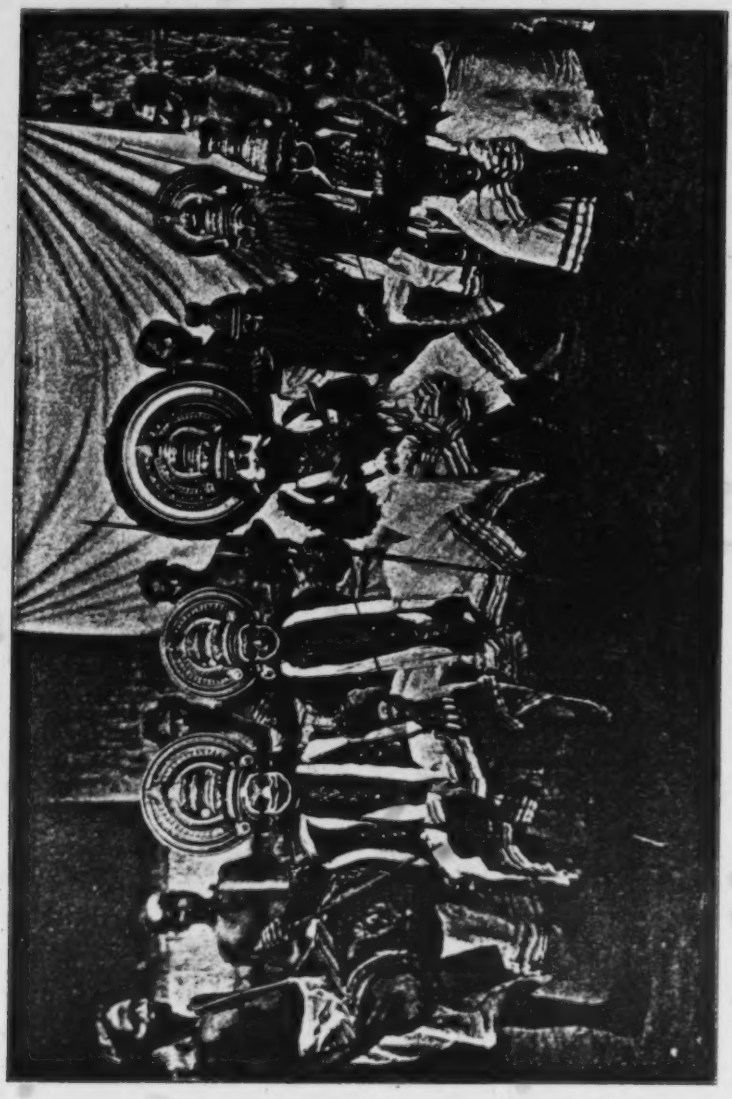

CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p. 65]

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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the [782] drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniyáttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

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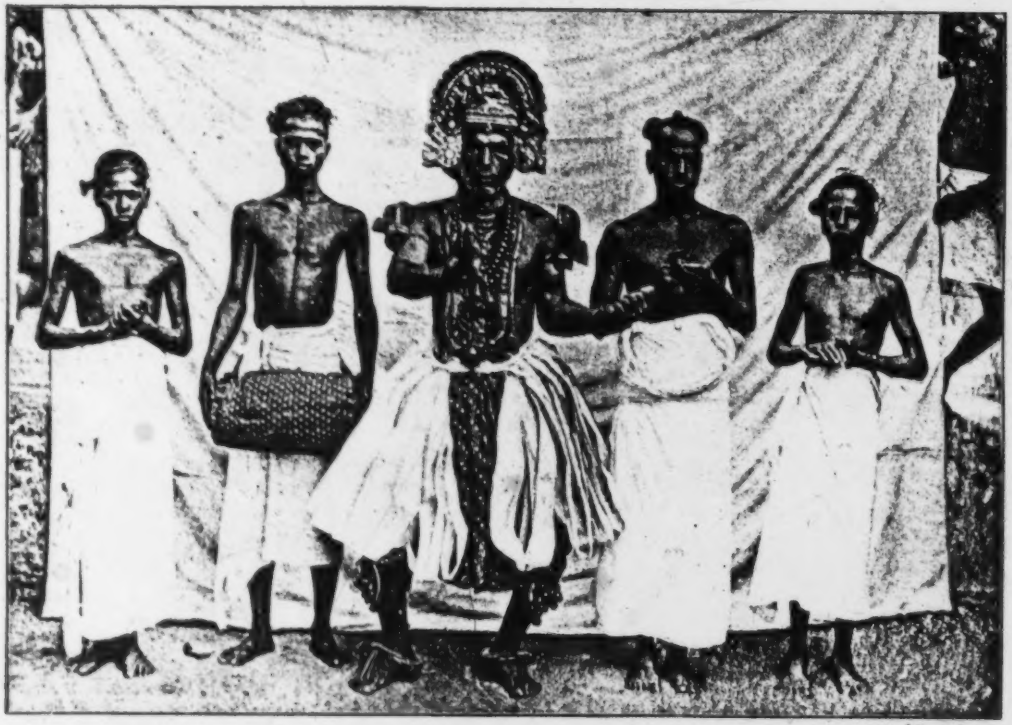

OTTAMTHULLAI.

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[facing p.66]

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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.—There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them:— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Páttu:—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta pittu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati páttu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs:—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam*:—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkákarappan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *káranavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nentranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*.

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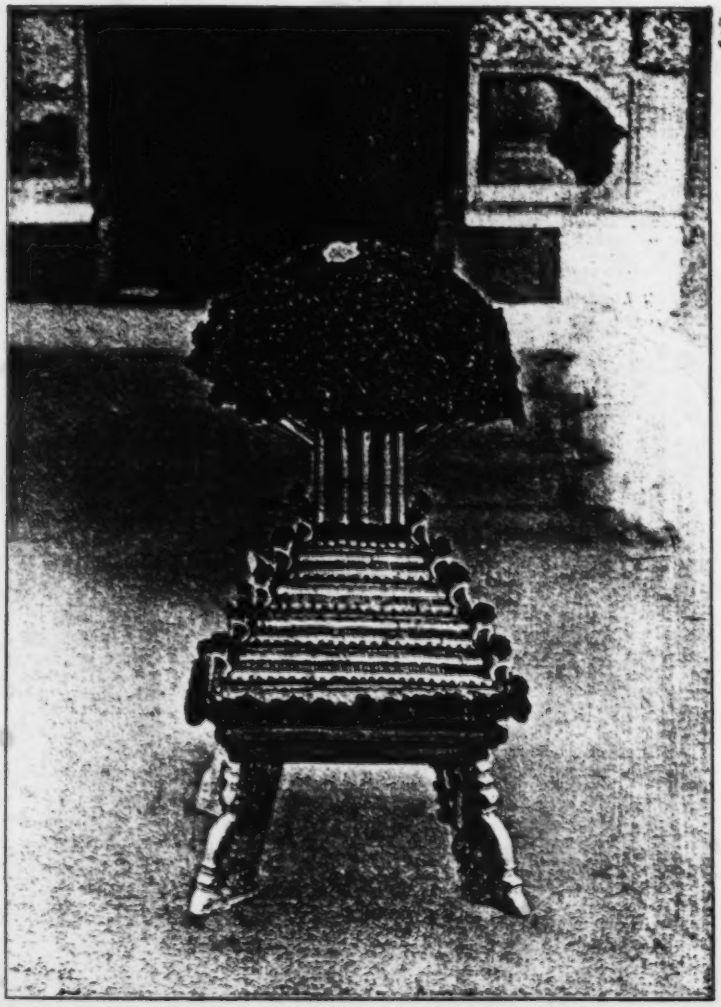

MAHADEVAR.

[facing p. 68]

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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening. 796 [264] [526] [535] [524]

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before. 796 526

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a 796 534

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pâttu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil,
[431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

(3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national
[804] festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam
[777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kúranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Púrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

1. Vide Vol. I, page 178.

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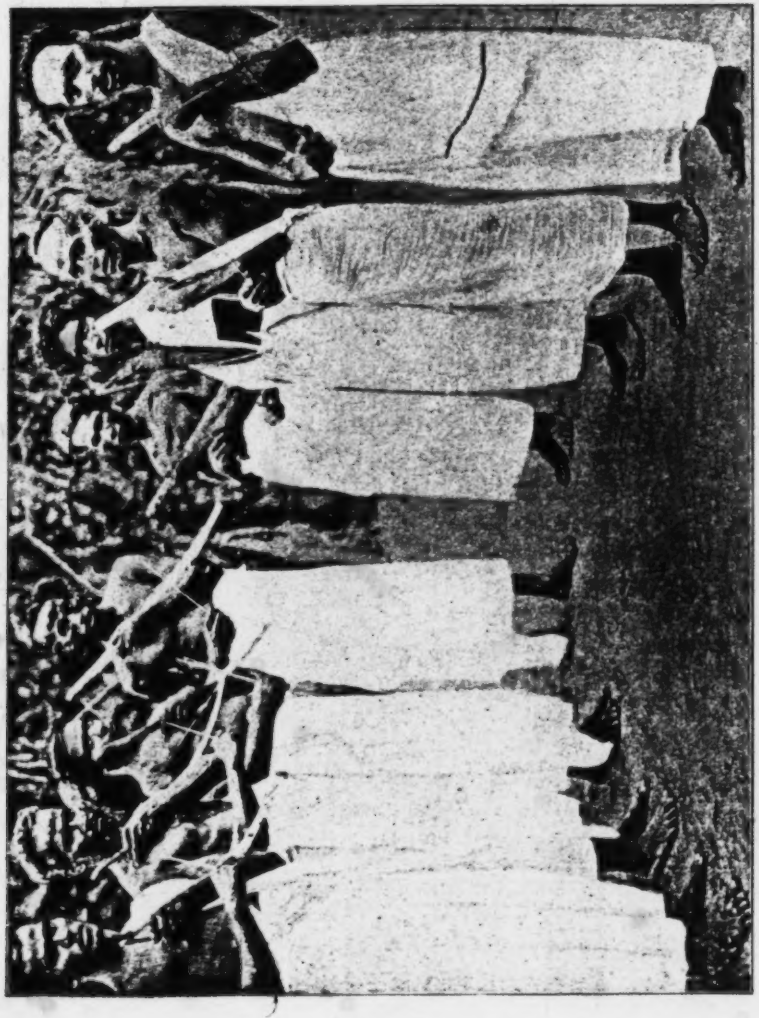

A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[facing p. 71]

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184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or
796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora-
184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali,
773 widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati,
776 in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Talūk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after
173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra-
796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the
184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, corian-
[439] der, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu
[492] Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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796 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation,
184 birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the people. The battle was fought with the result already mentioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Konga-
796 pada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by
184 the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Nâduvázhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

[101] [174] 1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

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supposed to take part under the supervision and guidance of the Srikandath Panikkar, whose family is the military instructor and leader of the people of Chittur. The Panikkar's duty is to train the youths of the 100 houses in the military arts. The performance referred to is, more or less, an exhibition of the bodily prowess of the youths trained by the Panikkar, and at the end of it he receives presents from the *Náduvázhi* and one hundred fanoms—one fanom for each house—from his pupils. The amount of one hundred fanoms is still paid to him every year, and is defrayed out of the collection made for the Kongapada festival for which the Panikkar's family is exempted from the payment of all subscriptions. The training of the youths of the place is begun a few weeks before the Kongapada festival in the *kalari* (military gymnasium) of the Srikandath Panikkar, and the Panikkar takes a prominent part in all the functions connected with the festival from beginning to end.

The "Pana" festival of Chittur.

Once in a few years and commencing on an auspicious day after *Vishu*, this ceremony is performed on a grand scale, in which the Nayars of the town (one male member from almost every house) organised themselves into parties, one party for singing songs in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati, another for dancing before her, and the third for playing on musical instruments. These men have, during this period, to bathe early in the morning, cook their own food and remain under a vow to be ever in devotion to the deity. Preliminary to the celebration of the actual festival, which sometimes run for a number of days, the men are given 41 days' training in the several courses of dancing in the Porayattu family house, one of the four *Pramánakkars* (leading members) of the place, and the final performance takes place in the Pokkumarath house.

In the court-yard of the latter house a large pandal supported on 64 posts, is put, up and in its middle is drawn a floral diagram (*padmam*) over which a lighted brass lamp, and in front of it a stool, are placed with a metal pot of water surmounted by a full pod of cocoanut flowers and a washed cloth arranged in the form of a beautiful crown. The Goddess, who is supposed to be located therein by means of holy *mantrams*, is propitiated every night between 9 and 12 P. M., with offerings and *pujas*, to the accompaniment of drumming, singing,

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, [789] the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which

Agricultural ceremonies.

[787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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the gate of the houses, he is met by a woman with a lighted lamp and some leaves on which is placed the rice. This is carried into the yard in procession, while those assembled cry out, 'Fill, fill, increase, fill the house, fill the basket, fill the stomach of the children'. Three times is it carried on a plantain leaf placed on a wooden plank while the lighted lamp is placed on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and stalks of paddy with ears of grain in them are stuck with cow-dung to the various parts of the house, to the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous breakfast brings the ceremony to a close.

Puthari:—The next ceremony is the formal cooking and eating of the new rice (*Puthari*). It sometimes takes place on the *Nira* day, but generally it is an independent festival. An auspicious day is chosen as soon as the first crop is harvested and threshed—a day which must be before the *Onam*. The rice is cooked and eaten with a special curry made of *tagara* (Cassia tora) peas, the fruit of *puthari chunda* (Swertia Cherata), brinjals (Solanum Melongena) and green pumpkin.

Ucharal:—At the end of Makaram (January-February), when the second crop has been harvested, the year's agricultural operations are supposed to be over, and Mother Earth, *Bhúmi Dévi*, is considered to rest during the hot weather until the first shower begins. At the beginning of this period the Malayali observes a festival in honour of the Goddess' menstruation, which, like the *Roman Februria*, is supposed to take place at this time. On the last three days during this festival, all granaries are closed, paddy is not sold, and no implement of agriculture is touched, while even the rice to be eaten during these three days is pounded before-hand. On the first day before sunset the granaries are closed, some thorns and shrubs of broom are fixed to the door and cow-dung and ashes are spread in front of it. The next two days are holidays for all; the house must not be swept, nor the floors smeared with cow-dung, and the garden even may not be swept or watered. On the fourth day the granaries are opened, and a basketful of leaves is taken to the field and burnt with a little manure perhaps to indicate that the cultivator remains in possession.

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Ucharal is the date on which all agricultural leases should expire, and demand for surrender of property should not be made at any other time, but the courts, by a liberal interpretation, have extended the term up to the day of *Vishu*. Special *Ucharal* festivals are held at Cherpulasseri in the Walluvanad Taluk and near Shoranur, at which straw models of cattle are taken in procession to the temples of Bhagavati.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

564 771 776 **Religion.**

The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-cháttan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kavus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, and require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic. [782]

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand maladies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which Brahmans also share. 769 [532] 771 776 [789] [754]

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be found in the compounds of every Nayar house in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi. 771 778 825

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve their condition, returned to their old country. After their departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or *Páthála* took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled 773 778 825 [776]

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a 841 woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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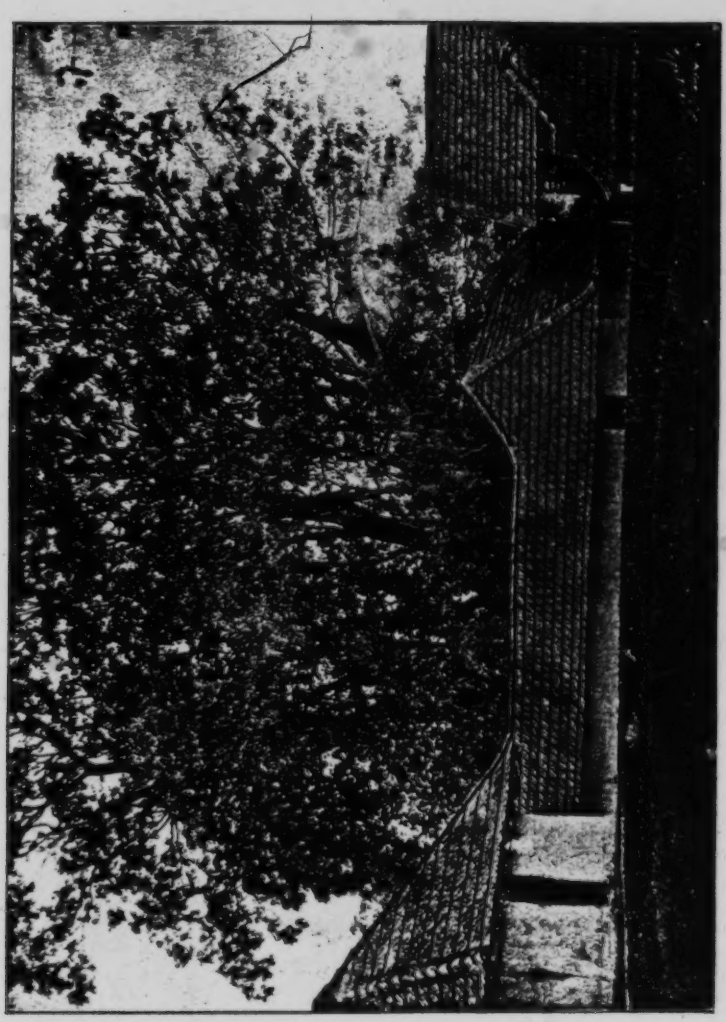

A TYPICAL KAVU.

[Facing p. 83]

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
[791] to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
796 man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[534] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a
[532] scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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A VELICHAPADU

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhútas* on the one hand, and *Prétas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

Demon worship.

1. Vide Religion of the Izhuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
[789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
[783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
[753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil
[796] Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
[793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
825 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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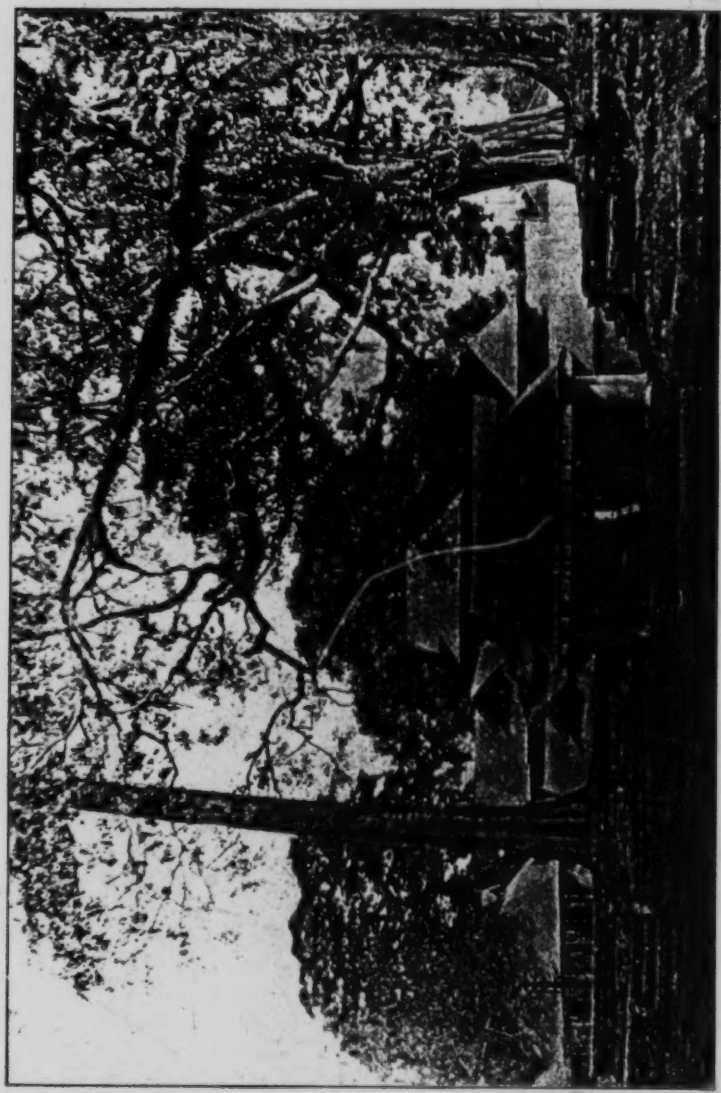

CRANGANORE BHAGAVATHI TEMPLE.

[facing p. 86]

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *práyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pújas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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771 824 From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 **Folk-tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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During the exile of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, they 825
lived chiefly by hunting. One day, when Sita was drying some 539
pieces of flesh, a crow accidentally pecked at one of Sita's ruddy toes, taking it for one of the blood red pieces of meat. She thereupon told her husband about it, who shot an arrow at the crow and blinded it in one eye, and thenceforth its descendants have been blind in one eye.

When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea, for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asura*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

Ari-pravu or the common house-dove has a story told of it. These birds, male and female, are always found in pairs together. Once, it is said, they were quarrelling about a game, and the quarrel ended in the desertion by the male bird of his mate, who recognizing the mistake called for him, and her cries are said to be ever calling out for her mate.

Rain, Thunder and Lightning:—In the aërial regions are 539
huge monsters of extraordinary strength (*Kilaméghattanmár*) [821]
who are supposed to possess two horns with the aid of which [776]
all the water from the earth is drawn up during the summer, to be spat out in the rainy season at Indra's (Rain God's) bidding. Lightning is caused by the friction of the horns, while engaged in the task of spitting out water. Another version of the story as to the origin of lightning is, that it is caused by the brandishing of Indra's sword, while engaged in ordering the monsters to supply the earth with water.

It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger [825]
every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that [826]
organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined.

Evil spirits are believed to have the power at times of [776]
changing men into tigers, such being distinguished by having [825]
no tails.

The claws and even the teeth of the tiger are used as [789]
charms against witchcraft and the evil-eye. They may frequently be seen set in silver, and worn round the necks of [825]

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a por- [789] tion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykatta Pisichus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore 824
transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one 539
of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning.

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those 764
of children under two or three years of age [766].
as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point 763
of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, [778]
they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the [823]
water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed.

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed 764
from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at [824]
the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para* [804]
Nirakkuka (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon)

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764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks 613
round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on 764
the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses. [532]

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the 765
second day after death and continues for seven days, the parti- 782
culars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the 613
family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chithayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the 824
belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in 826
the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Sa-* 764
mánan, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Déva-* 774
dathan and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brah- [789]
man sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the [775]
palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 782

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned care- 824
fully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 765
613

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824 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring
765 with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an
782 obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread
613 some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank
[825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the
[775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave
[231] any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

During the seven days the house of the deceased and all
765 its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the mem-
783 bers of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can
613 members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting them-
574 selves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawád* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawád*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawád*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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765 613 [782] and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when [825] clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other [613] hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

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CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by occupation is not possible. They were at one time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkars* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

Occupation.

564 178 [555]

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

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464 The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as
564 regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population be-
[212] long to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning
[357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worship-
[515] ping in the temple close at hand. Their meals
[771] are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between
262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice
264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular
[272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for
[556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation
[562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged
556 to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by
[357] the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

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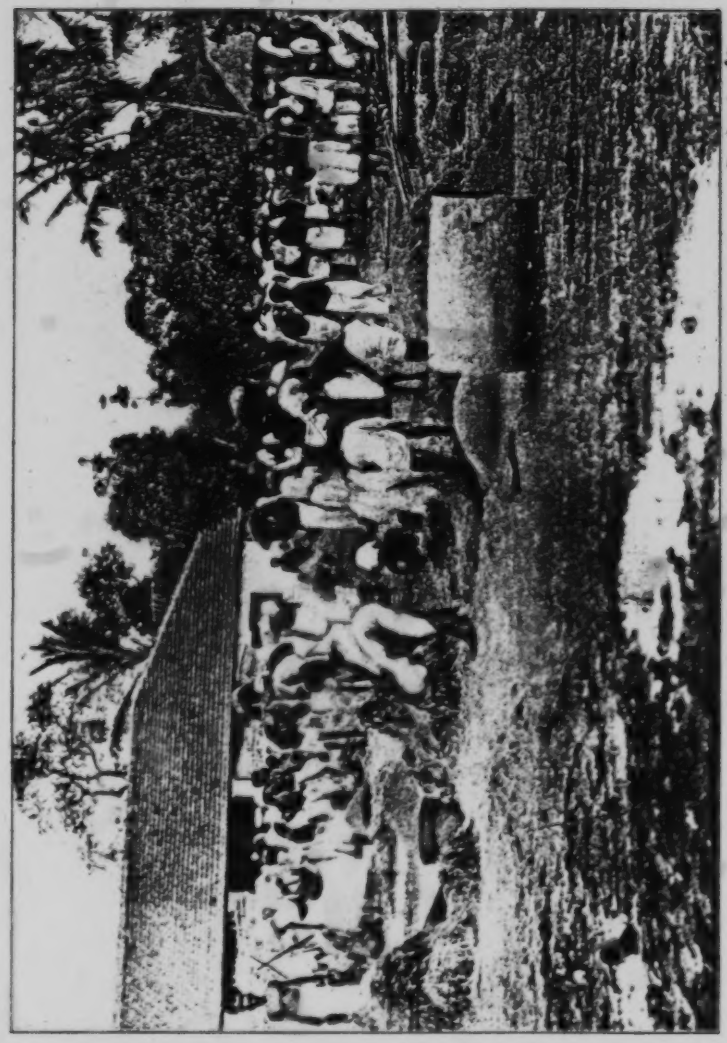

NAYAR WOMEN THRESHING CORN.

243
576
291
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137

[facing p. 98]

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

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291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pévu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars [177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

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below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

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301 There are various ornaments for the neck, of which the one called *addiyal* is the commonest. Other ornaments for the neck are the so-called *yanthram*, *poothdli*, *avil mdla* and *pulinakham*. The latter is worn by children, and *pálikka-*
[291] *máthiram* is the ornament which is worn by maidens. Gold and silver belts are worn round the loins. Grown-up women do not wear anklets, while the younger ones use *káppu* and *goluss*. Rings of all kinds are worn on the fingers.

[pp 103 ff. not processed]

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OLD ORNAMENTS OF NAYAR LADIES

[facing p.102]

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International Journal of Comparative Sociology

ISSUED BY

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY
KARNATAK UNIVERSITY
DHARWAR, INDIA

[title page]

Volume III — Number 1

September 1962

E. J. BRILL — PUBLISHERS
LEIDEN — THE NETHERLANDS

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[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 [591] [593] [429]

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 [564] [471]

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1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. [114] [122]

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. [113]

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

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613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
656] the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad*
occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an
[594] independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

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except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad*; and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

[text continues on p. 21]

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[Marayil Tarwad]

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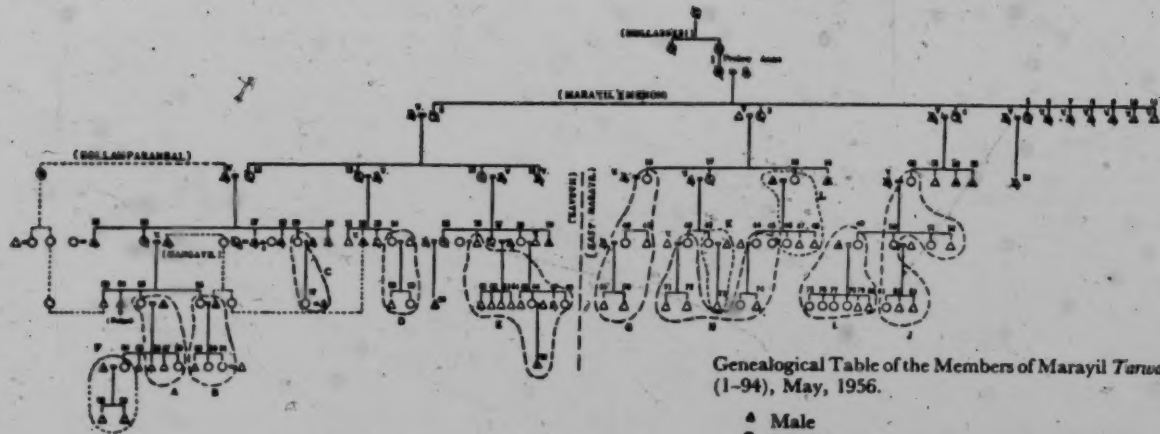

Genealogical Table of the Members of Marayil *Tarwad* (1–94), May, 1956.

- ▲ Male
- ○ Female
- ▲● Dead
- ▲ Husbands who practised a visiting marriage
- ▲ Husband who established his own household with his wife and children
- ◌ Independent household; households of F, K and L are not in Ernaklam.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*1*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 193 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 193 591 968 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death. Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 175 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898, the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 591 593 182 175 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations, took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 591 175 182 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter

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[Marayil Tarwad]

group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name "Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one.

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12* and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband, Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their elementary families, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional visiting marriage; the second daughter *29* returned to this house after her husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children, occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional *tarwad*, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

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left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
613 the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.
613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
602 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
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children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building, but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

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The observed ambivalent attitudes found in Nayar men during and after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system is very similar to that of many matrilineal peoples, where the system allows the cohabitation of husband and wife. There it is a characteristic feature that a man is placed in an ambivalent situation between the obligations and duties towards his own matrilineal kin and towards his wife and children. From this angle, the present Nayar still live in the matrilineal atmosphere. It is very interesting to speculate where Nayar system will go. How long does it take the Nayar to become free from a matrilineal ideology, the shadow of the *tarwad* life? Many of the present Nayar population have experiences of the *tarwad* life, so the real change might be expected in the next generation. However, even then, it seems to me it would not shift to a patrilineal system, though it could possibly take the patrinominal system with a kind of bilateral arrangement. Whatever it may be, I think the future of the Nayar family and kinship system presents one of the most interesting examples for its study of the effects of historical and economic changes on a kinship system; and how far this kinship ideology can persist.

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/Information on recent socio-cultural disintegrative changes in the tarawad will be found in category 182./

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/For specific information on the political division of the Kerala state see the following:
kingdoms---635
nads (chiefdoms)---634
desams (villages)---621./

794
795

/Information on Nayar "snake cults" has been filed in the following categories: snake shrines and temples--778; snakes as deities--776; general beliefs about snakes--825; the "snake cult" as a part of the general religious order of the Nayars--771; ceremonial practices associated with the "cult"--796./

/For religious ceremonies and feasting associated with the Nayar Tali-rite, see category 588./

/Data on the Tali-tying ceremony performed for the pre-pubescent Nayar girl, will be found in category 588./

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Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala

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National Council of Applied Economic Research.
New Delhi

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© NATIONAL COUNCIL OF APPLIED ECONOMIC RESEARCH

December 1962

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PRINTED IN INDIA
AT THE NATIONAL PRINTING WORKS, DELHI AND PUBLISHED BY
THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF APPLIED ECONOMIC RESEARCH, NEW DELHI

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Preface

THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC Survey of Kerala, conducted at the request of the State Government of Kerala, is one of the last few in the series of Techno-Economic Surveys of the various States of India undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research. For some time past this small State has been attracting increasing attention of the public. Although Kerala has come into limelight on account of its political turmoils, the basic problems which the State faces are primarily economic in nature. The acute intensity of its unemployment aggravated by increased population pressure, the relatively lower per capita income of the people of the State, and highly limited scope for extension of cultivable area, pose a challenging task for the economic planners.

The main objective of the Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala, as in the case of similar surveys for other States, has been to assess technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade. The first step towards this objective was to prepare an outline of the present structure of the economy and make an assessment of the existing physical and human resources of the State. A team of economists and technical experts was constituted for this purpose. The preliminary work on the project was started early in 1960. Relevant data were collected and the members of the survey team discussed the problems and potentialities in different fields, with a number of knowledgeable persons in the State. A number of working papers dealing with problems and potentialities in respect of various aspects of the economy were also prepared. Technical Appraisal Reports analysing growth potential in different sectors were then prepared by the technical members of the team.

The Preliminary Economic Report was ready by September 1961 and it was sent to the State Government for comments. The final report as printed here brings together the material contained in the working papers and the Appraisal Reports. The Appraisal Reports contain a detailed technical analysis of each of the major fields of development, e.g., Industry, Power, Transport, etc. The Economic Report, on the other hand, aims at presenting a broad and coordinated picture of the outline of the probable growth of the State Economy. It indicates the main lines along which future development of the State should proceed and highlights the strategy required for achieving a rapid growth of the State economy.

The economy of Kerala is marked by a number of distinctive features. It is the most thickly populated State in India with an average density per square mile being over three times the all-India average. In addition, the rate of growth of population has been noticeably higher in Kerala than in the other parts of India. A high density of population combined with a fast growth of population has been responsible

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades.
* 433 In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial
47 sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

rate of growth if economic and social stability is to be attained within a reasonable period. 433* 434

Growth of this magnitude can be achieved in a balanced manner over the decade through an increase of about 60 per cent in the income from primary sector, 175 per cent from the industrial sector, and 103 per cent from the tertiary sector. Sectoral growth rates of this magnitude would bring about structural changes in the economy. Over the decade the proportion of income contributed by agriculture and other primary activities would decline from 48.2 per cent to 42.8 per cent while that from secondary sector would increase from 15.7 per cent to 21.2 per cent. Income from the tertiary sector would remain more or less constant around 36 per cent. Similarly the inter-sectoral distribution of working force would undergo changes. By 433* 1971 the proportion of employment in the primary sector would decline from 54.9 464 per cent in 1956 to 42.2 per cent while in the secondary and tertiary sectors it would increase from 19.3 per cent to 24.6 per cent and 25.8 per cent to 33.2 per cent, respectively.

In planning the strategy of growth for Kerala two important factors need to be 433* stressed: (*a*) a proper system of crop priorities in the sphere of agricultural development and (*b*) technological improvements in the industrial sector.

In the sphere of agriculture, the trend of thinking up till now has been to emphasize the need for achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains within the State. This has led to a sizable increase in the area under foodgrains at the expense of high value adding cash crops, despite the fact that Kerala offers highly favourable conditions for cash crop cultivation. The right policy for the State Government to adopt would be (*a*) to meet its foodgrains deficit by import from surplus States and (*b*) to reserve to the maximum extent all new lands coming under cultivation, for cash crops.

For raising the yield of foodgrains, a programme of widespread use of improved seeds, intensive use of fertilizers, control of soil erosion and provision of major and minor irrigation have been suggested. It is estimated that over the decade the various measures contained in the report would raise the output of foodgrains by 7.28 lakh tons. By 1970-71, the output of foodgrains would be about 16.5 lakh tons leaving a big gap to be filled by imports from other surplus States.

This report does not agree with the view sometimes propounded that the need for providing irrigation facilities is less in this State because rainfall is high. Irrigation is essential for double or triple cropping, stabilization of crops and for effective application of fertilizers. Moreover, in view of the terrain of Kerala, it is also necessary to develop irrigation facilities through minor irrigation schemes. Irrigation projects suggested in the report therefore require an investment of Rs. 39 crores in major works and Rs. 20 crores in minor works.

The need for a faster pace of industrialization than achieved hitherto is particularly urgent in Kerala in view of the high man-land ratio already attained in this State. There is a limit beyond which employment in the agricultural sector cannot be increased. A solution to the key problem of Kerala, viz., high degree of unemployment, can therefore be attempted only by further industrialization of the State. Industrial development will also be the main spearhead of overall growth of the State economy.

*433 In the sphere of industries, the major emphasis has been placed on the expansion of engineering industries. Out of a total investment of Rs. 145 crores in the factory industries, the engineering industries alone will absorb nearly Rs. 63 crores. The majority of light engineering industries to be established or expanded are high value adding industries and would cater to regional demand for implements, tools and other engineering goods. The capital-output ratio for these industries is also comparatively low, viz., 2.1. These are some of the factors on account of which a large scale expansion of engineering industries would be quite feasible in Kerala although the raw materials required by them would have to be imported from other parts of India over long distances. A large scale expansion of engineering industries would help to improve the technological level of other industries and agriculture in Kerala. Apart from being themselves technologically superior, the engineering industries induce technological improvements in other spheres and spread the use of better equipment, tools and machines.

For a steady growth of industries in a State like Kerala where the industrialists have been shy of investing on account of its unstable political climate, it is most essential to take all possible measures to inculcate a sense of confidence among the investor class. The State Government's recent Industrial Policy Declaration expressing their desire to give all possible help to prospective entrepreneurs, marks a step in the right direction. However, the State Government alone may not be able to go far in this matter unless they have the active cooperation of the public and political parties in the execution of their economic policies.

371 One of the chief assets of Kerala from the point of view of its future industrialization programmes is its vast resources of hydro-electric power. During the Second Plan period unfortunately, signs of power shortage were visible and the growth of industries had to suffer as a consequence. For the coming years the State should keep ahead of demand for power and should plan for surplus power generation capacity. Secondly, since the State has plenty of power resources and the costs of generation are very low, it would be in the interest of the economy of the Southern region of India to form a zonal grid. The surplus power generated in Kerala could be sold at a profit to the neighbouring States, especially Madras, which is not so fortunately placed as Kerala in respect of its hydel resources. Kerala would also stand to gain from this transfer of electrical energy since it can generate power at a much lower cost than its neighbouring States, and therefore, earn sizeable revenues from this source.

Total investment effort required for execution of the plans of development suggested in this report would be of the order of Rs. 1,000 crores over the ten-year period. The share of the State Government would be approximately Rs. 500 crores, the balance being left to the initiative of the Private Sector, and the investments through Central Government projects. Total investment would be distributed over the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in the ratio of 20.8 per cent, 28.8 per cent and 50.4 per cent respectively.

371 464 The impact of the proposed developments on the unemployment situation is not likely to be unimpressive. It is estimated that of the 17.8 lakh jobs envisaged to be created over the decade, 1.8 to 2 lakh jobs would be in the primary sector, 7.8 lakhs in the industrial sector and the balance of 7.7 lakhs in the tertiary sector. It

would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent. 371 464

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough. 161 168

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff. 114 122

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

July 1962

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MAP I

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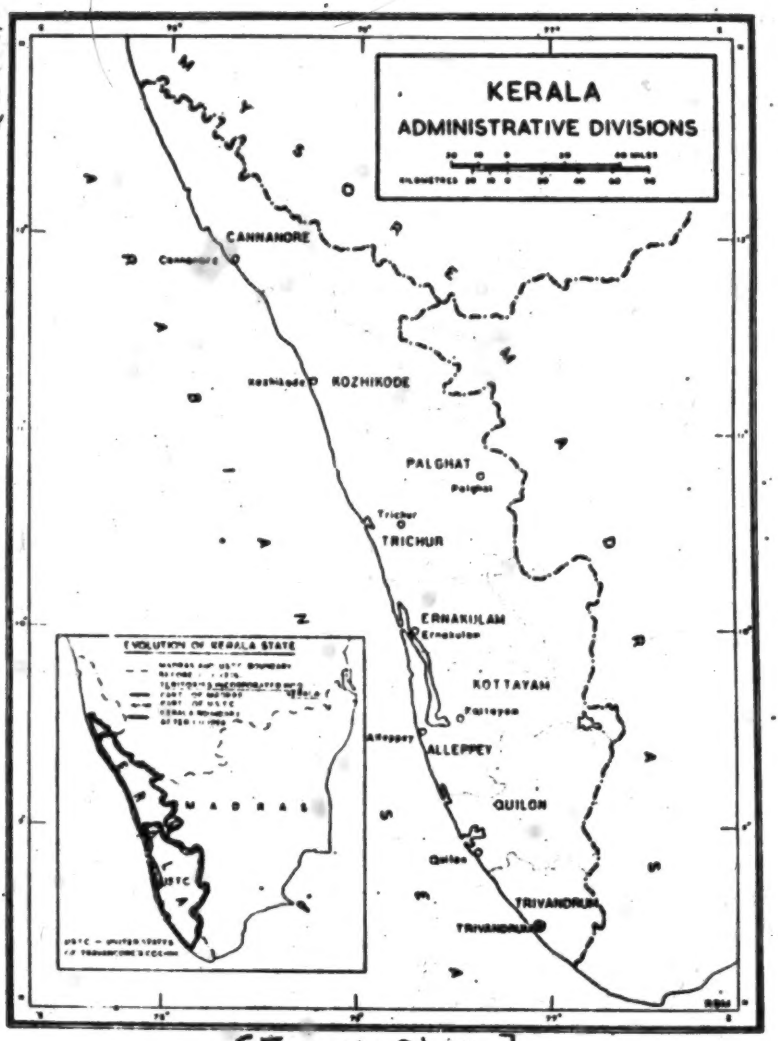

[Frontis Piece]
[facing p. 1]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

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133 is the undulating terrain of the midland with laterite soil. This middle region is [24] rich in agricultural produce ; paddy, tapioca, spices and cashewnut being some of the main crops of this area.

Climate and Rainfall

132 1.5 The same diversity which characterizes the physical features of the State, also occurs in case of the climatic conditions. Whereas the highland has a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, the plains are hot and humid. However, the range of variation in temperature is very narrow, the normal limits being 80°–90°F.

1.6 The average level of annual rainfall is quite high being in the neighbourhood of 96 inches. In fact only Konkan and Malabar–South Konkan region with 109 inches and 121 inches surpass Kerala in the annual volume of rainfall. Since Kerala is fortunate in getting precipitation both from the south-west and the north-east monsoons, the rainfall is fairly spread out over the year. January to April are practically the only months which are completely dry. Moreover, annual variations in rainfall are also comparatively low. The co-efficient of mean deviation of annual rainfall is only 6.5 which is lower than that of all the other States, except Assam (Table 1).[1] Draughts are, naturally, rare.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

133 1.7 The influence of geological formation and geographical features on the economic structure and the growth possibilities varies from region to region. However, some of these stand out distinctly in the case of Kerala. The high mountainous wall of the Western Ghats and its close proximity to the sea is responsile for the heavy and regular rainfall which this State receives. The high characteristic rainfall, in turn, is responsible for a number of features of this State. The large number of high value yielding plantation crops and the rich forest growth owe their existence to the rainfall and the suitable climatic conditions found in the Western Ghats. The abundant rainfall has also provided Kerala with a large number of rivers. These are the storehouse of water resources—one of the chief assets of Kerala. There are 44 rivers in addition to a much larger number of small rivulets and streams. Forty-one of these rivers are west flowing and yield a total run off of 2,500 T.M.C. ft.[2] This is as high as 5 per cent of India's total water potential, whereas the total area of Kerala is only about 1.2 per cent of the area of India.

1.8 Since the Western Ghats are in close proximity of the sea coast, most of the rivers are also very short, the average length being only 40 miles. Only four rivers, viz., Beypore, Bharatapuzha, Periyar and Pamba are more than 100 miles in length. Although the rivers are small, they carry sizable flows and these provide the State with rich irrigation potential.

[text continues on p. 4]

[1] Table 1 refers to the States as they existed before the reorganization. The conclusions, strictly speaking, refer to only Travancore-Cochin. However, they are broadly true of Kerala as a whole also.

[2] T.M.C. ft.=Thousand Million Cubic Feet.

Source: *Water Resources of Kerala*, PWD, Government of Kerala.

[117]

*[Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

[P. 3]

MAP 2

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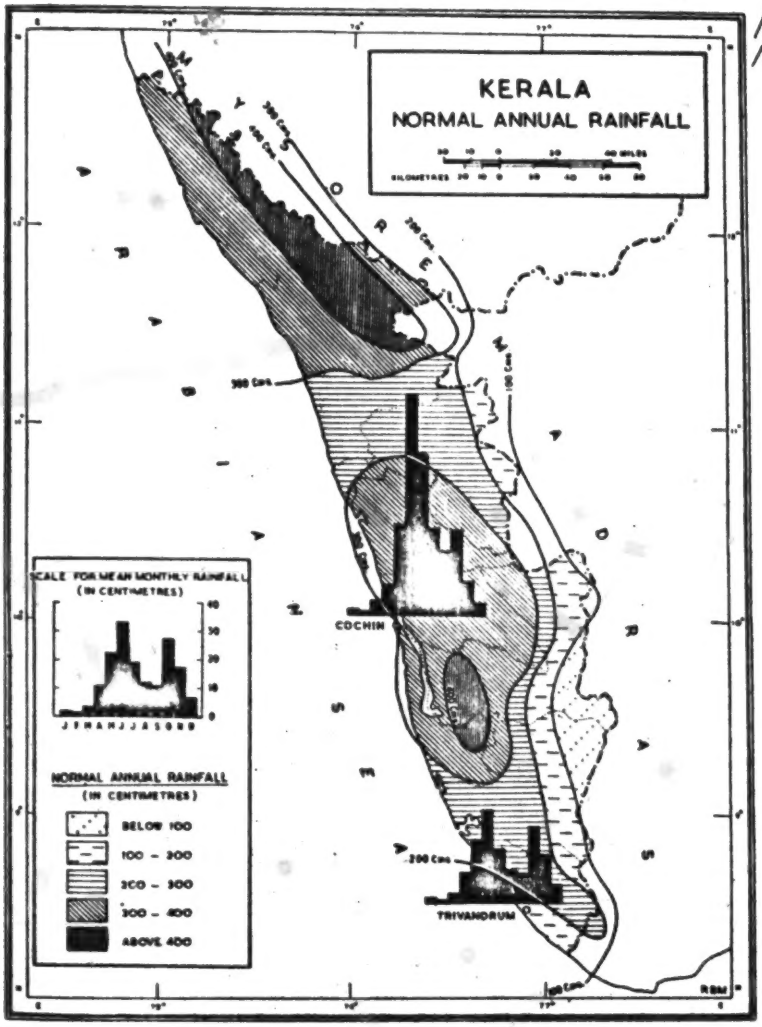

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133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

133 288 182 [364] 133 487 [508]

13 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

[234]

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[312] [339]

[text continues on p. 8]

[P. 5]

MAP 3

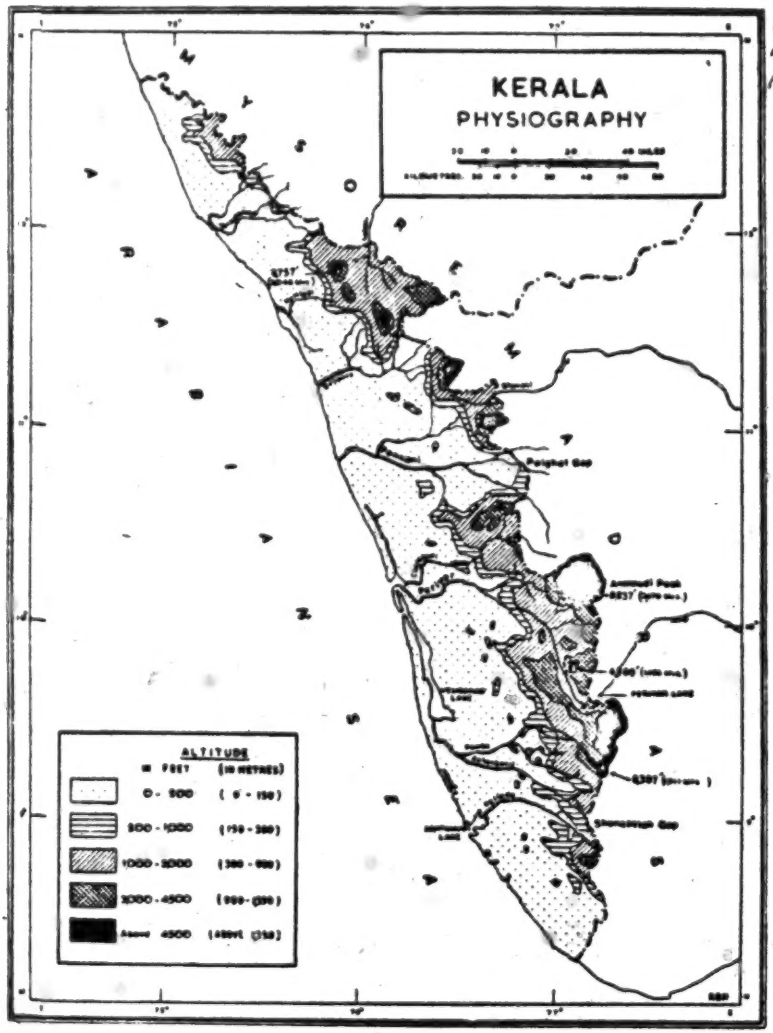

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182 1.13 These, broadly, are the inter-relationship between physical features and economic aspects of the State, and largely determine the nature and structure of the Kerala economy discussed below.

Density of Population

161 [464] 1.14 In the ultimate analysis, the basic problem of Kerala, viz., an inordinately large section of the population being without any gainful work, is brought about by the very high density of population in the State. With an area only 1.2 per cent of the whole of India, Kerala has to support 3.8 per cent (16.8 million) of the total population of India. The density of population in Kerala (1,125 persons per sq. mile) is naturally over three times the all-India average (384 persons per sq. mile).

1.15 The population, however, is not evenly spread out over the whole of the State, but shows considerable variations from district to district (Table 2).* The highland, being mostly covered with forests, is sparsely populated. The average density here is only about 150 persons per square mile. On the other hand, the lowlands bear the severest burden of population. With only about 18 per cent of the State area, they support over 40 per cent of the population. On the other extreme is the coastal strip where the average density is over 2,500 persons per square mile. In certain pockets it even shoots up to 7,000 persons per square mile. The midland, though thickly populated, is not as congested as the area lying in the immediate vicinity of the sea coast.

Growth of Population

1.16 Not only is the density of population high in Kerala, but its rate of growth has also been fairly high. The following table gives the rate of growth of population over the last half century both for India as well as for Kerala.

DECENNIAL PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN POPULATION

Year	*India*	*Kerala*
1901-11	5.69	1.75
1911-21	—0.31	9.16
1921-31	11.00	21.85
1931-41	14.23	16.04
1941-51	13.34	22.82
1951-61	21.49	24.55

SOURCE: 1961 Census of Population Provisional Figures.

1.17 As can be seen, the population has grown much faster in Kerala than in the country as a whole during the last six decades. The basic reason for a faster rate of growth of population in Kerala is a comparatively low death rate while the birth rate is only slightly less than the all-India one. The comparative position of birth and death rates in India and Kerala is given in the following table. [165] [163]

* [see p. 270, category 116 -- Analysis]
[text continues on p. 8]

[P. 7]

KERALA

CHANGING PATTERN OF DENSITY OF POPULATION, 1951-1961

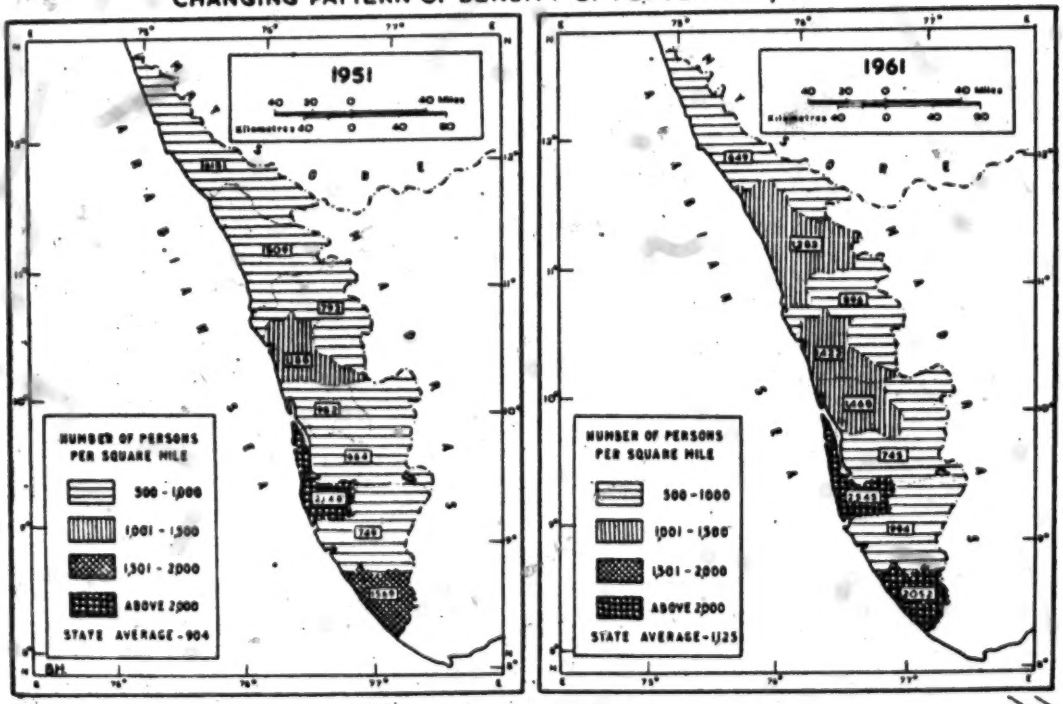

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COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

[744]

Rural-Urban Breakdown

162 1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

361 1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

437 1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,980 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] *See* Appendix 2 for details.

1.2 per cent of the total area of India, this contribution is quite significant. Yet the per capita income of Kerala in 1955-56 (Rs. 234.4) was lower than the all-India average (Rs. 261) by about Rs. 27, that is, 10.3 per cent. 434 [171]

1.22 The distribution of output and employment between primary, secondary and tertiary activities gives a broad indication of the stage of development an economy has attained. As a general rule, the more advanced the stage of economic development, the higher the proportion of income and employment originating in the secondary and tertiary activities. In Kerala the sectoral distribution of output and employment presents somewhat of a contrasting picture (Tables 3 and 4).[1] In terms of employment, the proportion of working force engaged in agriculture and allied occupations (55%) is much smaller than the corresponding all-India proportion (71.8%). This would seem to indicate that Kerala has perhaps reached a level of development somewhat comparable to that of a country like Japan. But the picture presented is quite different when one looks at the proportion of income contributed by the various sectors. The major share (49.1%) of output still originates in the primary sector (all-India: 45.4%). The secondary and tertiary sectors taken together contribute 50.9 per cent of the output against 54.6 per cent in the case of all-India. 433* 434 464 171

1.23 Thus, while the sectoral distribution of population seems indicative of a diversified structure of the economy, the sectoral distribution of income does not. Two factors seem to provide a plausible explanation for this contrast. In view of the high density of population, the possibilities of providing gainful employment in the agricultural sector are naturally limited. Super-imposed upon this is the fact that as a result of the predominence of perennial crops, especially the coconuts, in the agricultural sector, the cropping pattern in Kerala is comparatively less labour-intensive. As a result of the operation of these forces, a large section of the population appears to have been forced to turn to some sort of non-agricultural activity or the other. But this seems to be of a "make-work" character. The technology of the secondary sector is traditional and its productivity is appallingly low. 433* 464 434)

1.24 In fact, productivity in Kerala's secondary sector is even lower than in the primary sector. This reversed position of Kerala only points to one of the strange paradoxes that occur in an under-developed economy. Ultimately, it is not so much the sectoral distribution of working force as the sectoral levels of productivity that are the determinants of growth. Productivity, in turn, is a function of the level of technology. Table 4 shows that the net output per worker in the secondary and tertiary sectors is lower than the average for all-India. As may be observed, low productivity is especially marked in the secondary sector which mostly covers the industries (Kerala—Rs. 539 ; all-India—Rs. 1,294). 433* [171]

Agriculture and Plantations

1.25 On the other hand, the primary sector in Kerala is comparatively better developed. This is a distinct feature of the State economy. Primary sector comprises agriculture, plantations, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries. As may be seen from Table 4, labour productivity in the primary sector of Kerala is roughly 433* 241

[1] [see pp. 270-271, category 116 -- Analyst]

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*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilised.

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

Source: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[3] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3 [see p 272, Category 116 -- Analysis]

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and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them. 226 226 433* [514] [464]

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish. 433* 262 226

Secondary Sector 317

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance. 135

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries. 433* 433* 464

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized. 288 464 438 [258]

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

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258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

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the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

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Imports and Exports

439 1.53 Reference has already been made to the fact that Kerala is very much of an exchange economy. On the one hand it has to import a substantial part of its foodgrain requirements from the other parts of India. No exact estimates of total import of foodgrains into the State are available. The total amount of rice arriving in Kerala by train was 3.8 lakh tons during 1958 and 4.8 lakh tons during 1959.[1] This does not, however, include imports by roads or by the sea. In addition to foodgrains, almost all the industrial raw materials like coal, alumina, iron and steel, salt, etc., are obtained from the other parts of India.

1.54 On the other hand, Kerala also contributes substantially to India's export trade. As may be seen from Table 6, the total value of goods exported from the ports of Kerala to the other parts of the world is roughly Rs. 55 crores per annum, but the figure has been rising over the last few years. This is quite a substantial amount, being about 10 per cent of the overall foreign exchange earnings of India. Since this State occupies only 1.2 per cent of the total area of India, in relation to its area it may be claimed to be eight to nine times more productive in terms of its foreign exchange earnings than the whole of India.

1.55 The main export commodities of Kerala are listed in Table 6. It will be seen that the three major items which contribute about 75 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings of Kerala are tea, cashewnuts and coir and coir products. Except for fish, prawns and ilmenite, all other exportable commodities originate in the agricultural sector.

439 178 1.56 Whereas exports of most of the commodities have been rising, the trend in the case of coir, pepper and ginger has not been a promising one. Of these three commodities, pepper shows the most serious decline in foreign exchange earnings. In physical quantity the export of pepper has not declined much. It was 3,3 lakh cwts. in 1951-52 and 3.2 lakh cwts. in 1958-59. The decline in foreign exchange earnings from the export of pepper has been due to a drastic fall in the world price of pepper. The crash in prices has, in turn, been primarily due to a large increase in the production of pepper in other competing countries like Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya. Similarly, in case of ginger and coir products no preceptible rise in exports has taken place due to competitive pressure in the foreign markets.

Unemployment

464 1.57 According to the Census of 1951, Kerala had a working force[2] of 4.54 million persons out of a total population of 15 million, giving a participation ratio (i.e., working force divided by total population) of 33.5 per cent. Since a participation rate of the order of 33.5 per cent is one of the lowest in the whole of India, it gives a fair indication of the very high degree of unemployment prevalent in Kerala. A low participation rate reflects the lack of adequate opportunities for gainful employment. These conclusions are borne out by the results of an unemployment

[113]

[1] *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959: Government of Kerala.

[2] Working Force is equal to the sum of earning dependents and self-supporting persons. For a detailed note see Appendix 3.

3 [see p. 273, category 116 -- Analyst]

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survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 161

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head ; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

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STATE INCOME (RS. IN CRORES)—AT 1955-56 PRICES

	1955-56	1960-61	Proportionate increase (per cent)
Primary Sector	172.5	193.2	12.0
Secondary Sector	32.3	62.6	19.7
Tertiary Sector	126.8	144.2	13.7
TOTAL	351.6	400.0	13.7
Per capita income	Rs. 234.4	Rs. 240.0	

*433 1.63 As a result of the various measures for increased agricultural production, the value added by this sector has increased but not by any spectacular amount. Output of rice increased from 7.5 lakh tons in 1952-53 to 8.7 lakh tons in 1955-56 and 9.8 lakh tons in 1959-60, the increase between 1956–60 being 8 per cent. Other important increases during the period 1955-56 to 1958-59 were: tapioca 15 per cent; sugarcane 3 per cent, arecanut 5 per cent, rubber 6 per cent, cashewnuts 22 per cent, coconut 3.2 per cent and bananas 120 per cent. On the basis of these increments in output and shift towards a superior cropping pattern, it is estimated that the net value contributed by the agricultural sector increased by about 10-12 per cent between 1955-56 and 1960-61. A rate of growth of 12 per cent is assumed for the whole of the primary sector over the Second Plan period.

1.64 Estimates of increase in the output of industry can be made only with the help of indirect indicators. There is generally a high correlation between increase in the consumption of electrical energy and output from the organized factory sector. [377] On the basis of data for the utilization of electric energy in industries, factory output has been estimated to have increased from Rs. 18 crores in 1955-56 to Rs. 24.4 crores[1] in 1960-61.

1.65 Non-factory sector output is estimated to have increased from Rs. 32.3 crores to Rs. 35.5 crores.[2] The rate of increase of output from the secondary sector as a whole, therefore, comes to be 19.7 per cent. The rate of industrial growth may have been higher but for the fact that during the Second Plan period industries could not develop at the anticipated pace as a result of non-execution of all the power projects planned earlier. Foreign exchange difficulties were the main obstruction in the way of implementation of Plans for power projects. Consequently effective

[1] During 1955-56, the relationship between factory sector output and electricity consumption works out to Rs. 0.8/kWh. According to NCAER's study *Demand for Energy in India* this coefficient is likely to decrease with the passage of time both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and through the expansion of electric-intensive industries. By 1960-61, the co-efficient in case of Kerala is expected to have decreased to Rs. 0.65/kWh. The industrial consumption of electricity by 1960-61 is expected to have reached 376 m. kWh. On the basis of the co-efficient of Rs. 0.65/kWh, the output from factory sector is estimated to have reached Rs. 24.4 crores, by 1960-61.

[2] Non-factory sector output is assumed to have increased in the same ratio as gross purchasing power. Gross purchasing power depends upon rise in population as well as the rise in per capita income, that is, it is correlated with increase in over-all level of income. Since output from the non-factory sector mostly caters to the needs of the local village population, it is not very unreasonable to assume that output from this sector has increased at the same rate as income originating from agriculture, which roughly represents the level of purchasing power in the rural areas.

capacity increased from 89.6 MW to only 100 MW during the Second Plan period. 433*
Total availability of electrical energy increased from 347.1 million kWh (1955-56) [377]
to 515 million kWh (1958-59) mainly through an increase in the load factor.

1.66 Tertiary incomes generally grow at about the same pace as the commodity 433*
output, that is, output of the primary and secondary sector combined. Tertiary 434
income is assumed to have risen at 13.7 per cent, the same as the State Income. On
these premises projections for sectoral increase in the State Income (at 1955-56 prices)
of Kerala have been given in table under paragraph 1.62. State income is
expected to have increased by 13.7 per cent but most of this rise has been absorbed by
the increase of population. Consequently the per capita income at constant prices is
likely to have arisen from Rs. 234.4 (1955-56 prices) to only Rs. 240.7 in 1960-61.

1.67 This has been rather a slow rate of development. Obviously Kerala needs 433*
a higher rate of growth, much bigger plans that would generate it, and a strategy of
development that would ensure it These aspects are considered and discussed in
the chapters that follow. The picture which emerges out of the aggregation of [128]
sectoral plans is discussed in Chapter 12 dealing with the pattern of growth.

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 241 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 191 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

*433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

crops is about 8 per cent of the gross cropped area. A direct consequence of this type of cropping pattern is the high degree of commercialization which has been attained in the agricultural sector. This has important implications for the State economy. The State exports its commercial crops, and imports its foodgrain requirements. In this exchange the State stands to gain since cash crops yield far higher return per unit of area than the food crops. Secondly, quite a few of the commercial crops grown in the State are of a perennial nature and require large investments. This has led to the establishment of numerous large scale organized plantations and farms, although small farms also play an important role. 433* 241

2.6 A chronic food deficit is the third important feature of the agricultural sector, mentioned above (para 2.1). The current production of foodgrains is roughly 967,000 tons. Current requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs.[1] of foodgrains per day per adult (unit) work out to a figure of 24 lakh tons. The gap between food requirements and the current level of production thus works out to over 50 per cent of total requirements. This is higher than in any other State. However, this need not cause excessive anxiety. It is not necessary for every State in the Union to try and achieve self-sufficiency in food at the cost of other more valuable commercial crops. From the long run point of view, the aim should be to strike a balance between supply and demand for foodgrains at the national, rather than, strictly, at the level of the State. The psychological desire to attain a balance between local supply and demand for foodgrains in the State is a legacy of the lean period of 1940–50 when the State was hard hit by the severe food shortage prevailing in the country. 433* 241 242

Climate and Geographical Factors

2.7 The climate and rainfall in Kerala are excellently suited to the prevailing cropping pattern. The climate is cool and humid in the high ranges while it is humid and warm in the plains. The range of temperature variations during the year is very small, the maximum never going beyond 90°F and minimum rarely below 75°F. The humidity, however, is very high in the rainy season—about 90 per cent. The State is fortunate in respect of rainfall. The normal annual rainfall is 95 inches a year ; it may be as high as 150 inches in the high ranges, but nowhere it is less than 65 inches. Most of the precipitation occurs during May to September when the State receives the south-west monsoon. Taking the State as a whole, it may be said that it is one of the most wet areas in the country (Table 1).* Assam has about the same normal rainfall as Kerala. Only the Konkan coast (Bombay) and South Kanara (Mysore) exceed it. The annual deviation in rainfall is also comparatively low with the co-efficient of mean deviation at 6.5 per cent for Travancore-Cochin and 9.2 per cent for Malabar (Table 1). On the whole rains are more reliable in Kerala than in most other States. 132

2.8 Kerala has two distinct geographical divisions, namely, the Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar area. The soils of Travancore-Cochin area are generally 134

[1] The Nutritional Advisory Committee to the Government of India recommended 18 ozs. of foodgrains per adult unit per day as the desirable norm. We have used a slightly smaller figure (17 ozs. per day) in our calculations. [146]

* [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed – Analyst]

134 formed of gneissic debris by sub-aerial decomposition. The formation of coastal areas consists mostly of sands deposited by the sea. The soils are generally of poor fertility status. Some peculiar formations are found in the taluks of Ambalapuzha, [135] Kuttanad, Vaikom and Shertallai and go by the name *peaty* or Kari soils. These are black and heavy and contain plenty of potash and 10 to 30 per cent organic matter. However, the soils are highly acidic due to the decomposition of organic matter under anaerobic conditions, presence of iron and aluminium salts and absence of [242] nitrification. Attempts to reclaim the soils by liming and improvement of drainage have so far proved unsuccessful. In Trichur and Mukundapuram taluks there is yet another category known as *Kole* soils. These are fertile alluvial soils. The soils of Malabar area are quite different. They are mostly red soils formed *in situ* from the micaccons or granitic rocks below under the influence of weather and climatic conditions. The fertility of the red soil is poor. They contain very low proportions of organic matter and nitrogen. But these soils contain ferrous and aluminium ions in fairly large proportions and in the absence of humous this situation results in reversion of phosphate—a state where phosphorous when applied in the form of fertilizers, does not become readily assimilable by the plants.

Land Utilization

311 2.9 The fact that Kerala has drawn upon the margin of cultivable land much more than in the rest of India is borne out clearly by Table 8.[2] The net sown area in the State during 1956-57 was 4,525,000 acres, that is 47.16 per cent of the total area. This is about 8 per cent more than corresponding all-India proportion (39.1%). The proportion of fallow lands in Kerala is also very low. (Kerala 4.4% : all-India 7.5%). A higher proportion of total area devoted to cultivation becomes all the more significant in view of the fact that forests cover about 26 per cent of the total area of the State compared to the all-India average of 17.44 per cent.

2.10 During the period 1951–57, there has been an overall improvement in the pattern of land utilization in the State. There have been significant increases in the area under forests (15.8%), permanent pastures (19.8%), land under tree crops (18.1%), net area sown (29.8%), and the area sown more than once (24.9%). These increases were mostly at the expense of cultivable waste, which declined by about 40 per cent during the period. The next important decline (16.7%) was in the barren and uncultivable lands. The area sown more than once rose by about 25 per cent, but this was partly offset by an increase of 35 per cent in the area under current fallows. (Table 8)[2]

2.11 Another notable feature of the agricultural sector in Kerala is the high intensity of cropping.[1] During 1956-57, the gross sown area was 5.6 million acres and the net sown area was 4.7 million acres. This works out to a crop intensity of 119 per cent (all-India 113%; Punjab 130%; Maharashtra 120%). However, if the field crops alone are taken into account, crop intensity works out to as high a figure as 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which gives a more accurate idea of the

[text continues on p. 25]

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped and net cropped area.

[2] [see p. 274, category 116 -- Analyst]

[p. 23]

MAP 5

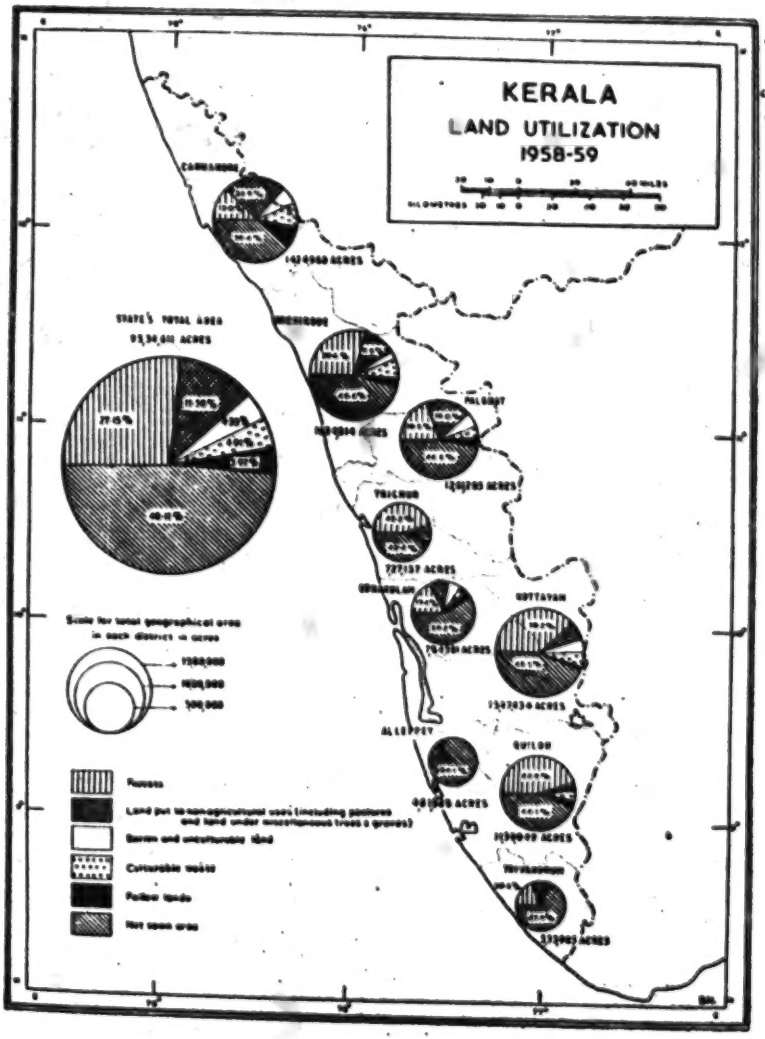

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CHART 1

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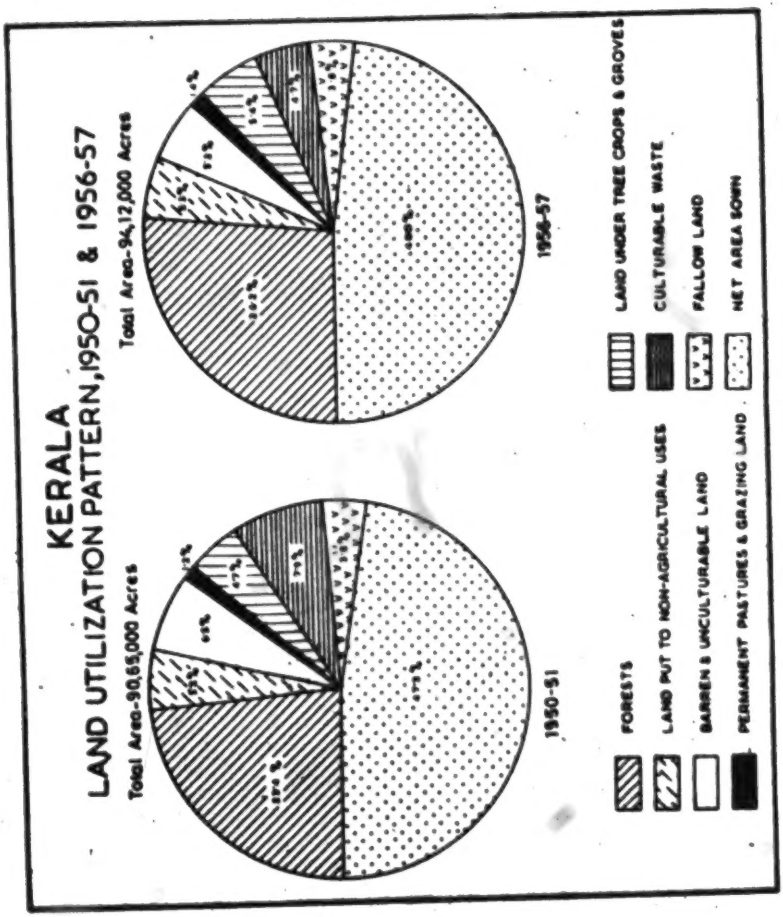

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128P

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951–59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).* The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951–59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [439] [257]

* [see p. 277, category 116 - - Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

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[P. 26]

MAP 6

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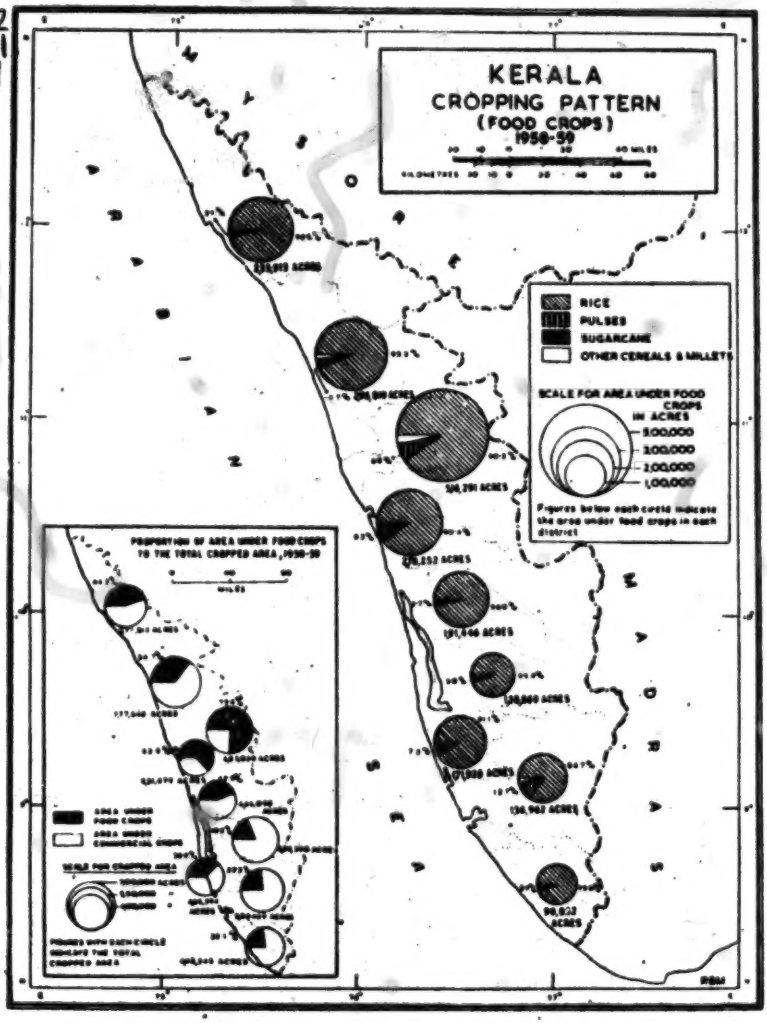

[P. 27]

MAP 7

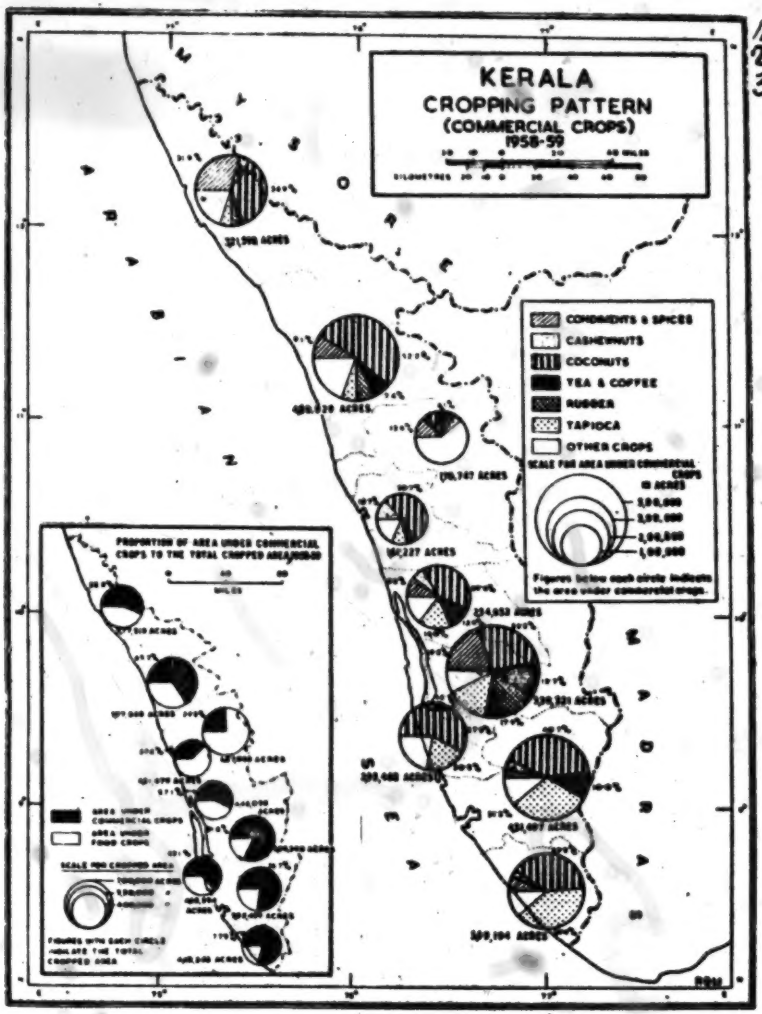

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*433 241 its success to the persevering efforts of the State Agriculture Department. The department has made a successful drive for pulse cultivation with a view to (*i*) raise the production of pulses in which the State is grossly deficit, (*ii*) to increase crop intensity, and (*iii*) to enrich soils by including a legume in the rotation.

2.16 During the same period the area under oilseeds rose by about 131 per cent. The area under all the millets, except ragi which rose by about 9 per cent, has registered a decline ; jowar area has declined by 33 per cent, and small millets by 53 per cent. Perhaps the increase in the area under some of the higher value crops such as oilseeds and sugarcane was at the expense of inferior and low value millet crops. This is another indication of the growing preference for high value crops. (Table 10)[1]

2.17 Land productivity is generally high in Kerala and compares very favourably with that in the other States of India. Yield of rice, the principal crop, was 1,108 lbs. per acre in 1958-59, which is about 20 per cent higher than the all-India average. Only the States of Madras and Andhra have higher yields. During 1951–59 the rice yield has increased by about 25 per cent (Table 11)[2] as a result of increased application of fertilizers, improved seeds and better agricultural practices. Similarly ragi is another high yielding crop with a yield of 1,290 lbs. per acre (1958-59)—the highest in India.

2.18 On the whole the yield rates for most of the crops have improved between the years 1951–59. For cotton and ragi, as in the case of paddy, the increase has been quite significant. On the other hand, there was a decline in the yield rate of jowar, groundnut and sugarcane. (Table 11)[2]

*433 438 241 2.19 The latest districtwise disposition of area and production show that Palghat has the largest concentration of important food crops grown in the State. In 1958-59 it accounted for 29.2 per cent of the area under rice and one-third of rice production in the State. Palghat also leads in the production of millets and pulses. The district of Kottayam leads in plantation crops as well as in some of the other cash crops, for example, it had 32 per cent of area under ginger, 29 per cent of area under turmeric and 16.9 per cent of area under sugarcane.

2.20 There is a considerable degree of regional specialization in some of the minor field crops. For example, Palghat accounts for over 90 per cent of the area for the production of cotton and groundnut in Kerala. Similarly sesamum is concentrated in Alleppey (61%), tur (56%) and smaller millets (69%) in Palghat, and chillies (51%) and tobacco (95%) in Cannanore. This specialization is due to favourable conditions for the cultivation of these crops in the areas where they are being grown.

*433 241 *Future Development*

2.21 It is generally known that agriculture aids economic development in three different ways. By providing a surplus of food requirements, it sustains a growing urban population. Secondly, agriculture is an important source of industrial raw materials and, in under-developed regions, generally forms the base for a large number [464] of industries. This is particularly so in Kerala where over 70 per cent of the factory workers are employed in agro-based industries. Lastly, higher agricultural yields

[1] [see p. 276, category 11b -- Analyst]
[2] [see p. 277, category 11b -- Analyst]

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ensure a better return to the farmer. This creates an incentive for achieving a still higher level of production. And at the same time, the rise in agricultural income provides a substantial purchasing power for absorbing consumer goods output of the industrial sector. The need for an emphasis on agricultural development is, therefore, very much inter-related with steady industrial growth. 433* 241

2.22 Agricultural development in Kerala can follow two possible directions. First, the aim could be to raise the yield rate and output of the existing crops with a special emphasis on increasing the food production. Alternatively, the policy could be directed towards bringing about a modification in the existing cropping pattern by giving greater weightage to the commercial crops and thus ensuring better returns from the land. On the basis of available evidence; it seems that for Kerala the latter course of action would be the more appropriate one. It has already been pointed out that it is not necessary for each State to try to achieve, complete self-sufficiency in foodgrains. 433*

2.23. A wide gap in food requirements of the extent which exists at present in the State, can be covered only through extension of area under paddy in addition to increase in the yield per acre. Whereas efforts at raising the yield rate are justified by all means, it would be unwise to divert land from commercial crops to the cultivation of paddy. Apart from direct importance of cash crops to the industrial growth of Kerala in the form of raw material supply, commercial crops make a substantial contribution to the industrial effort of India through the large amount of foreign exchange earnings they bring in annually. Export of commodities like tea, pepper, cardamom, cashewnut and coconut products from Kerala earn foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 55 crores every year—roughly one-twelfth of overall foreign exchange earnings of the entire country. It would, therefore, be in the interest of the State economy to maximize returns from land by growing higher value crops in place of low value crops like tapioca and small millets in as much area as possible. This would require a reversal of the policy pursued so far in favour of attaining self-sufficiency in food within the State. The gap in food requirements which cannot be covered through intensive measures of paddy cultivation could continue to be met by imports from the other parts of India. Since the relative advantage lies in the cultivation of commercial crops, some of which can be grown only in Kerala, attention should be focussed on the development of cash crops whereas the problem of wiping out the food deficit can be relegated to a secondary place for the present. 433* 262 439

2.24 The extension of the area under commercial crops should be undertaken on a scientific and planned basis. Considerations such as gross value of product per unit area and demand for the crop and suitability of soil are some of the important aspects that have to be examined in this connection. It is not possible to state the exact extent and nature of substitution without an intensive land use potential survey of different regions. A survey of this type was being carried out by the State Agriculture Department. However, the future scope for some of commercial field crops is analysed below on the basis of whatever information is available. The possibilities of commercial plantation crops are discussed in the last part of this chapter. 433*

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EXTENSION OF CULTIVABLE AREA

Cotton

*433 241 2.25 Prior to 1956, Kerala was considered unsuitable for the cultivation of cotton. In that year an experiment was made on a pilot scale and the results were so encouraging that the area under Sea Island (long staple) cotton rose from 126 acres in 1956 to about 3,500 acres in 1959-60.

2.26 Sea Island cotton yields superior lint which can be spun into high count expensive yarn. The latter finds a good market within the country and at present has even got to be imported. The extension of area under this crop will help in saving valuable foreign exchange and it would also provide scope for development of such industries as ginning, baling, spinning and cotton seed oil extraction.

2.27 In view of the above factors it is desirable to undertake further extension of area under cotton. A part of this increase can take place at the expense of acreage under tapioca, which is a low yielding crop. About 0.2 to 0.3 million acres out of 0.56 million acres under tapioca can be diverted in this way during the next decade. Efforts should, however, be made to keep the output of tapioca at the existing level by raising its yield which is at a very low level. [244]

2.28 There is also scope for diverting some highland area under single cropped paddy to Sea Island cotton since such a diversion would yield high returns in terms of value. The exact scope for such a diversion can, however, be ascertained only after the proposed land-use survey has been conducted. [243]

2.29 Assuming 0.3 million acres are brought under Sea Island cotton, as suggested above, additional production of long staple cotton may be expected to reach a level of 192,000 bales by 1970-71.

Sugarcane

*433 241 2.30 Sugarcane is a high value crop, and, therefore, is quite popular with the farmers. But it is one of those crops whose future extension of area is very much dependent upon the growth of sugar manufacturing industry. Its exact scope will, therefore, depend upon the growth of sugar factories.

[171] 2.31 The yield per acre of sugarcane in Kerala is very good (Kerala 40,000 lbs. per acre ; U.P. and Bihar 25,000 lbs. per acre ; all-India 28,000 lbs. per acre) and can be raised to 55,000 lbs. per acre. This factor favours the extension of sugarcane cultivation and the setting up of new sugar mills. At present there are about 25,000 acres under this crop in Thiruvella area, mostly concentrated around the Pampa river sugarcane factory. There is scope for a large increase in sugarcane acreage in the districts of Palghat, Trivandrum and Ernakulam which possess the requisite irrigation facilities. By 1971, the area under sugarcane may be doubled to about 50,000 acres.

Ginger

2.32 Ginger is a very high value yielding crop (Rs. 1,077 per acre). In view of good demand prospects for ginger in both internal and external markets, the production of

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ginger should be stepped up. The proposed phyto-chemical plant at Munnar would also consume large quantities of raw ginger. The area under ginger cultivation can be extended by 20,000 acres and attempts should be made to raise productivity to one ton per acre through better cultivation techniques, seed selection and use of higher dosage of fertilizers. The likely annual increase in output from these measures is expected to be of the order of 33,000 tons in terms of dry ginger. 433* 249

Oilseeds

2.33 Oilseeds, other than coconut, account for only a very small proportion of the cropped area, but there is scope for raising the yields and extending the area under these crops as a substitute crop in tapioca fields and in young coconut gardens. In addition, castor cultivation may be introduced in the State along field borders which are considerably wide on the banks of rivers and streams and on the borders of gardens and plantations. Assuming that the measures for increased production are reasonably well implemented, the additional production of edible oilseeds by 1971 would be of the order of 20,000 tons annually.

Banana

2.34 Since bananas need frequent irrigation, cultivation of this crop is quite popular in Kerala, especially on the banks of the rivers and near other sources of water. In view of the very high calorific value of bananas as well as good future demand prospects, the production of bananas should be increased. It is not possible to give an exact idea of the extent to which the area under this crop can be increased but there is scope for growing the crop more intensively in compounds attached to residential houses and in areas which receive the benefits of perennial irrigation. 433* 245

Pineapple

2.35 There is quite a large demand for pineapples from Kerala, as they are good both in size and in quality. Location of a few additional canning units in the State is likely to add further to the demand. Steps should, therefore, be taken to increase pineapple production. There is scope for fresh plantings in the hilly slopes of Malabar, which at present contain only wild growth.

Lemon Grass

2.36 Lemon grass owes its importance to lemon grass oil which is extracted from the grass. Kerala produces over 88 per cent of the world output of lemon grass oil, most of which is exported. It is a good foreign exchange earner. The output of lemon grass oil has been increasing year after year in spite of unsteady and fluctuating market conditions. From a mere nine tons in 1920, the output rose to 1,400 tons in 1957. 433* 249 [439]

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*433 249 2.37 The lemon grass oil industry in Kerala has good scope for expansion provided the prices are kept competitive. However, since the Second World War some of the Latin American countries have started cultivation of lemon grass on a commercial scale and extraction of oil with efficient methods of distillation. Compared to these countries both the yield of grass as well as its oil content are low in Kerala. Internal demand is also likely to increase considerably in view of the new synthetic chemical industries that are going to be set up within India in the near future. It is, therefore, suggested that the present level of output of lemon grass oil may be raised through measures such as manurial trials, evolution of high yielding and quick maturing strains, control of pests and diseases, designing of efficient stills of small capacity to suit the needs of small growers, etc.

MEASURES FOR INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY

*433 2.38 Replacement of some of the low value crops by high value ones, as indicated above, should be taken up side by side with raising the yield rate of different crops. There is good scope for increasing the yields which can be achieved through (*i*) greater coverage by improved seeds, (*ii*) larger application of manures and fertilizers, (*iii*) increase in irrigation facilities, and (*iv*) improved agricultural practices. These measures are discussed separately in the succeeding pages.

Improved Seeds

*433 242 2.39 Improved seeds are found to increase the yields by 10 to 15 per cent, on an average, while in case of certain crops like sugarcane, hill paddy, groundnut, etc., the output may even go up by 25 per cent. The area covered by improved seeds is very low in Kerala except in the case of paddy and sugarcane, where it is as high as 50 per cent and 90 per cent respectively of the area under these crops. Farmers in Kerala are aware of the benefits of higher productivity of improved seeds, but are unable to take advantage of it owing to inadequate supplies and delay in delivery. According to the Department of Agriculture, the improved strains available with them are suitable to cover about 60 per cent of area under paddy in the State.

2.40 Complete replacement of local seeds by improved seeds would require a large number of strains which can suit all conditions. Evolution of new strains either by breeding or by selection is a long term process requiring facilities and funds. A programme of full coverage is possible only when the number of seed farms to produce and multiply the necessary seeds is large enough. By the end of the Second Plan, the State was expected to have 24 seed farms in addition to a large number of certified growers who were to multiply the nucleus seeds.

2.41. During the next 10 to 15 years the State should aim at complete replacement of local seeds by improved seeds. For a programme of this size, the existing number of seed farms and certified private farms would have to be increased considerably. Due to difficult terrain and scarcity of land, the area of a seed farm in Kerala generally does not exceed 15 acres—of which only one-third may be suitable for wetland cultivation. The number of nucleus seed farms to cover a given area with

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improved seeds would, therefore, be much larger in Kerala than elsewhere in the country. For full coverage of the area by improved seeds, it is estimated that by 1971, 120 new farms would have to be organized. Investment on each of these farms, including a seed store, would be about Rs. 75,000. Total investment on additional seed farms would, therefore, amount to about Rs. 90 lakhs. Assuming an increase of 10 per cent in yield, additional production due to full coverage from improved seeds by the end of the Fourth Plan would be about 75,000 tons of foodgrains alone. Similar increases may be achieved for other agricultural commodities also. 433* 242

Manures and Fertilizers

2.42 The soils of Kerala are not fertile. Being of lateritic origin they are highly porous. More than 50 per cent of the cultivated soils contain less than 15 per cent of clay complex. Continuous cropping accompanied by heavy leaching (a direct consequence of heavy rainfall) has made the soils extremely deficient in phosphates, nitrogen and potash, and also in calcium, magnesium and other minor elements. 134

2.43 Inspite of the poor fertility of soils, the crop yields are good. This is primarily due to the application of a large amount of organic manures to the fields. In addition to organic manures, the farmers also use fertilizers. Farmers of Kerala were among the first to realize benefits of fertilizers and put them to use. But the quantity used is small owing to inadequate supplies. Even a modest consumption target of 14,200 tons of fertilizers[1] per annum for the Second Plan had to be revised to 5,800 tons on account of this shortage. During 1958-59, the State consumed 5,000 tons of nitrogenous ferilizers mostly in the form of ammonium sulphate and potassic fertilizers. This works out to roughly 1.2 lbs. per acre of nitrogen and less than 0.1 lb. per acre of phosphate and potash. 433* 241

2.44 In future, the emphasis should be placed both on manures and on fertilizers. Organic manures, in addition to providing the plant nutrition, help in conditioning the soil, whereas fertilizers are necessary for supplementing nutritional needs which the organic manures are not able to provide fully. A joint and balanced application of organic manures and fertilizers is, therefore, necessary for getting the desired results.

2.45 All possible sources in the State should be fully exploited for increasing the supply of organic manures. There is scope for greater utilization of urban wastes and green leaves. There is also scope for fuller utilization of the existing production of press mud and for increasing the supply of green matter by raising green manure plants on the borders of fields and banks of river streams. The supply of organic manures may be further augmented by fuller utilization of fish waste and inedible or spoilt fish. Such possibilities should be investigated.

2.46 As emphasized above, a desired level of crop nutrition will not be possible unless manures are adequately supplemented by fertilizers. The supplementary dosage of fertilizers differs from crop to crop depending upon the nature of the crop, length of the growing period and the yield rates. The dosage is the highest for banana, with NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potash) ratio at 150 : 150 : 300 lbs.

[1] 9,680 tons of N, 3,720 tons of P_2O_5 and 840 tons of K.

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*433 241 per acre, while the same for paddy is only 40 :40 :30. It is very low for leguminous crops—at 0 :20 :20 for pulses and 20 : 20 : 20 for groundnuts.[1] These dosages are not the optimum. These are just the average that may be considered adequate during a period of shortage of fertilizers. There are many farmers who apply as much as 80 lbs. of nitrogen per acre to rice while there are others who, on account of shortage of fertilizers apply only 15 lbs. per acre. Since fertilizer allocations are not made for individual crops, a dosage ratio of NPK 40 : 40 : 30 per acre may be considered as an average requirement for the State in the future. But in view of shortages in the country for phosphatic and potassic fertilizers, the dosage may be put at 40 : 20 : 15. The total annual requirements of crop fields on this basis would be 35,700 tons of nitrogen, 17,700 tons of P_2O_5 and 13,400 tons of K_2O.

2.47 In view of the peculiar soil conditions and reaction, attention will have to be paid to the correct choice of fertilizers. At present fertilizers are being used indiscriminately. For example, ammonium sulphate, the most popular fertilizer in the State, is being used even on high acidity soils. Such applications may do damage to the soil by increasing further the soil acidity. The selection of various types of fertilizers in the future should, therefore, be on rational and scientific basis, so that the fertilizers also help in correcting the soil deficiencies. Urea is, perhaps, eminently suited for Kerala. It is, however, not possible to make any specific suggestion on the requisite type of fertilizers for the State as adequate data on the performance of various types of fertilizers are not available. It is, therefore, suggested that a large number of trials should be conducted all over the State with a view to choosing the right type of fertilizer and dosages for various crops in different regions. The result of such trials should be made known to users through the extension machinery.

2.48 It is not possible to give a precise estimate of the increase in agricultural production from the proposed fertilizer consumption programme owing to difficulties in estimating the share of fertilizers for different crops. Knowledge about the rates of return from fertilizers for various crops, is also inadequate. Assuming, however, that roughly three-fourths of the proposed quantity is used for rice and other foodgrains, the additional production of cereals and pulses on the basis of available yardsticks may be expected to be 387,000 tons by 1970-71.

Irrigation

133 2.49 *Existing Position*: Irrigation resources of Kerala are very rich. In all, there are 44 rivers in the State. The run off of water from the west-flowing rivers is estimated to be of the order of 2,560,800 million cubic feet per annum, while that of east-flowing rivers is 196,000 million cubic feet.

241 2.50 The first irrigation project to be taken up in the State was the Kodayar
153 Extension Scheme which was completed by 1947. At the beginning of the First Plan

[1] Dosage for NPK (ratio in lbs. per acre for other crops) is

Tapioca	80 :80 :160	Ginger	30 :50 :100
Oilseeds	10 :20 : 20	Sugarcane	100 :80 :100
Cotton	30 :30 : 30	Fruits/ Vegetables	30 :50 :100

period, the State had three major irrigation projects, viz., Peechi and Chalakudy I, apart from the Kodayar Extension Scheme. During the First Plan, two more projects viz., Vazhani and Neyyar I were added to the list. At the time of the reorganization of States, Nanjinand area, served by the Kodayar Extension Scheme, got transferred to Madras but in return Kerala gained three projects through the annexation of Malabar area viz., Malampuzha, Walayar and Mangalam. During the Second Plan period, six more projects have been completed. By 1956-57 the total irrigated area had reached 8.29 lakh acres, that is, about 30 per cent of the net sown area under field crops. 241 653

2.51 Canals are the main source of irrigation in Kerala accounting for about 50 per cent of the gross irrigated area (Table 12). Tanks and wells irrigate 9.28 per cent and 3.49 per cent respectively of the gross irrigated area. One interesting feature about irrigation in Kerala is that irrigation from the 'other sources' accounts for a particularly high percentage of area irrigated, viz., 37 per cent. These other sources include hill streams, small diversion works, water pumped from streams and rivers, etc. These are quite numerous in Kerala on account of the high rainfall received in the State. 241

2.52 *The main beneficiary from existing irrigation facilities is paddy*, accounting for over two-thirds of the gross irrigated acreage. The remaining irrigated area is shared by other food and non-food crops. The exact breakdown is not available but it is believed that banana and coconut account for much of what is left.

2.53 The benefit accruing from the 13 irrigation works which had been taken up till the end of the Second Plan and their relative importance are given in the following table.[1]

Benefit	*Area benefiting* (acres)	*Percentage*
One new crop	55,314	20.11
New conversion to double cropped paddy	63,786	22.98
Stabilization of one crop	25,300	9.11
Stabilization of two crops	120,660	43.48
Drainage, flood control, dewatering, etc.	12,000	4.32
TOTAL	277,060	100.00

2.54 It can be seen from the above table that the largest extent of benefit is received from the stabilization of two crops. Conversion of fresh areas to cultivation of paddy as a result of the new irrigation facilities is only 22 per cent of the total area benefited. A large proportion of benefit in the form of stabilization of existing crops rather than in the form of double or triple cropping is due to the fact that Kerala gets assured rainfall both from the south-western as well as the north-eastern monsoon. There are thus very few patches of land which are not able to grow paddy due to the absence of rainfall.

2.55 In terms of additional output of foodgrains, however, the benefit from new conversions is much greater than from stabilization, as can be seen from the [423]*

[1] Based on figures supplied by the Department of Irrigation, Kerala.

[see p 278, category 116 -- Analyst]

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*433 following table.
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Benefit	*Additional output of food-grains per acre* (in tons)
One new crop	0.5
New conversion to double cropped paddy	1.0
Stabilization of one crop	0.1
Stabilization of two crops	0.2

On the basis of these co-efficients, increase in output contributed by the 13 projects comes to 129,636 tons, giving a weighted average of 0.47 tons of additional output of paddy per acre.

4 433 24 653 2.56 *Future Development of Irrigation*: Due to a difficult and uneven terrain, the cost of digging canals and constructing dams is comparatively high in Kerala. The average capital cost per acre for irrigation from major and medium schemes is roughly Rs. 885 per acre as against the all-India average of roughly Rs. 500 per acre. The expensive nature of irrigation schemes and the high level of rainfall which Kerala receives, naturally set a limit to the development of irrigation works.

2.57 The proportion of new conversions out of the total area benefited is rather small. However, double and triple cropping can be made possible only by ensuring regular water supply through the irrigation schemes. Irrigation facilities are also essential for increased application of fertilizers to the second and third crops.

2.58 A Master Plan for the irrigation resources of Kerala was prepared by the Irrigation Branch of the Public Works Department. According to it, the additional irrigation potential available in the State is about 896,000 acres. Of this 822,000 acres would be for the existing area and only 74,000 acres for conversion of dry land to irrigated area. The cost of the above programme is estimated at Rs. 79.34 crores. Rice would be the main beneficiary from this irrigation programme. Additional annual production of rice from these schemes would be roughly 4.49 lakh tons valued at Rs. 17.9 crores. In addition, if other benefits such as raising the third crop of pulses and the extension of area under high value crops like coconut, sugarcane, banana, cotton, etc., are also taken into account, the benefits may amount to another Rs. 10.0 crores. This would give a capital output ratio of about 2.5.

2.59 In view of the particular conditions prevailing in Kerala, it seems desirable that a greater emphasis should be placed on minor rather than on major irrigation works. There is justification for adopting this point of view on a number of grounds. Major irrigation works are a necessity in those areas where vast areas of cultivable land can be opened up by construction of major irrigation projects. In Kerala, as pointed out above, the benefit lies mainly in providing irrigation facilities to those areas where one crop is already being raised. Since the size of investment required for major irrigation works is much larger is comparison to that required for minor work and capital resources are scarce, minor irrigation works are far more suitable for Kerala. The nature of terrain in Kerala also makes it difficult to lay a vast network of canals. Moreover, for major irrigation works, the State has to bear all the investment cost whereas minor irrigation works help in tapping localized investible resources available with the agriculturists.

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2.60 Minor irrigation works have other advantages as well. In the first place, the period of construction being much shorter than in the case of major works, the lag between investment and yield is comparatively short. Secondly, since the minor works are executed on a decentralized basis they have greater effectiveness in utilizing the pockets of surplus manpower. The problem of organizing manpower squads is likely to be less intractable. Thirdly, in Kerala there are a large number of irrigable tracts which do not occur in contiguous blocks. These scattered areas cannot get the canal water facilities provided by major irrigation dams but there are a number of streams which are conveniently situated for minor irrigation development.

2.61 Keeping these points in view, it is suggested that during the coming decade it is not necessary to develop the full potential of 8.96 lakh acres through major irrigation projects. However, the State should try to implement the schemes which have been suggested by the Master Plan for inclusion during the Third and Fourth Plans. The list of these schemes is given in Table 15. These would benefit an area of 4.33 lakhs at an investment of Rs. 39.3 crores. On the basis of current yardsticks, additional output of foodgrains from these major irrigation schemes is expected to be 2.16 lakh tons. The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 11.23 crores for major irrigation. The balance of Rs. 28.1 crores will have to be invested during the Fourth Plan. These figures only indicate the rough order of magnitude and will have to be changed, if the cost estimates given in the Master Plan are revised after further investigation.

2.62 *Minor Irrigation*: A Minor Irrigation Team, which was appointed by the Committee on Plan projects has submitted its report on Kerala. This report reveals many interesting features regarding the scope for various types of scheme. Some of its important recommendations, which should be implemented expeditiously, are discussed below.

2.63 *Spring-fed Tanks*: There are a large number of spring-fed tanks in Kerala, but the tanks are exposed to dangers of silting, breaching by storm water and heavy evaporation losses. In order to obviate these difficulties, the streams should be tapped underground by means of open jointed pipe drains placed in a reverse filter, cutting across the springs, in preference to traditional tanks.

2.64 *Diversion Weirs and Channels*: Construction of such channels is feasible on a large scale as the Kerala rivers carry a good flow from May to February due to the two heavy monsoons. Moreover, waters from the hydro-projects, now being planned for construction in the mountains, could be diverted for irrigating the coastal plains by means of diversion works. Since most of the river beds are covered by paddy fields, any increase in the water level due to afflux above diversion weirs is resented by the people whose fields get submerged. Therefore, weirs with control gates ought to be provided.

2.65 *Lift Irrigation*: The topographical and other features of the State are eminently suited for the development of lift irrigation as there are a large number of small blocks of field located on the fringe of the rivers, spread all over the State. Another factor in favour of lift irrigation is the availability of cheap electric power. Implementation of an extended programme of lift irrigation would, therefore, be highly desirable even though the operational cost of these schemes is higher.

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*433 241 653 2.66 *Surface Reservoirs*: Adequate provision should be made for silting capacity in tanks and reservoirs. In the case of small tanks at least about 20 per cent of the total capacity should be reserved for silting.

2.67 *Prevention of Ingress of Salt Water*: Large areas of cultivated land in Kerala are well below the mean sea level and are subject to flood by fresh water brought over by rivers in the monsoon season and salt water during other seasons. There is need for construction of suitable projects to prevent the onrush of salt water into the paddy fields. The scheme to dewater such areas should also form an important item in the minor irrigation programme.

2.68 No estimates are available for the likely area that could be irrigated from minor irrigation works. Nevertheless, it is considered to be quite substantial. It is learnt from discussions with the State Government authorities that the extent of such possibilities is around 300,000 acres. Of this, the share of lift irrigation and ground water utilization (wells, filter points, etc.) may be put at 100,000 acres. Lift irrigation and ground water utilization are works of a small size and, therefore, should be undertaken by the beneficiaries themselves with the help of Government aid.

2.69 In view of the emphasis laid on minor works, it is suggested that 200,000 acres of area (this also includes area benefited from flood control and drains) should be developed from minor irrigation sources. Of this, about half may be from lift irrigation and ground water sources. The average capital cost of providing minor irrigation would be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 1,000 per acre. Total investment for minor irrigation development schemes as suggested above would come to Rs. 20 crores. Of this Rs. 10 crores would be in the public sector and the rest will have to be provided by individual agriculturists.

2.70 The minor irrigation schemes proposed here would benefit not only rice, but also other crops such as arecanut, lemon grass and banana. For purpose of calculations it may be assumed that only half of proposed irrigation is used for rice. The additional production of rice on account of minor works would thus be about 50,000 tons annually by 1970-71.

Improved Agricultural Practices

*433 242 2.71 Agricultural practices in Kerala are relatively of advanced type. Rice, the principal food crop of the State, is cultivated quite intensively. Transplanting is practised all over the State, even under the submerged type of cultivation. In case of dry seed bed crops like tapioca, ginger, groundnut, etc., the farmers generally take care to see that interculture and earthing operations are satisfactorily done.

2.72 However, there is further scope for increasing crop yields by improving the agricultural practices and techniques. Improved practices such as scientific crop rotation by including a legume crop as against the existing practice of successive rice crops, deep ploughing, adequate plant protection, etc., can increase the yields to some extent.

2.73 With the proposed increase in irrigated area it would be possible to raise a third crop of pulses either of black gram or green gram in succession to two crops

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of paddy. This would not only give additional production of pulses which are deficit in the State, but also enrich the soil by leaving a nitrogen residue, and thereby constitute a better rotation. It may be possible to develop pulse crops on 250,000 acres. Assuming an yield of a quarter ton per acre, the additional production of pulses by crop intensification, as suggested here, would be roughly 62,500 tons per year. 433* 242

2.74 Better plant protection is another measure for getting a substantial increase in yields. It is estimated that yields increase approximately by about 10 per cent through this method. The Department of Agriculture should tackle this problem more effectively. This would only be possible by strengthening the Plant Protection Wing of the Department of Agriculture. [642]

Implements

2.75 Agricultural implements in use in the State are antiquated and inefficient. The wooden plough continues to be the master implement and is used for tillage operations of almost all the crops. Iron ploughs and other tillage implements are not popular. In fact the number of iron ploughs decreased by 22 per cent during 1951–56 and at present stands at 10,225. Tractors during the same period, however, increased from 59 to 187. Irrigation pumps too have shown an increase of 116 per cent. 407

2.76 The slow adoption of improved implements is mostly due to non-availability of implements and machinery suited to local conditions as well as due to their high cost. The topographical conditions and techniques of cultivation are unique in Kerala and there are no implements designed and developed to suit such conditions. There is, therefore, need for developing efficient implements for rice cultivation, plantation crops, soil conservation work and also for specialized implements such as ridgers and earthers for ginger and tapioca. It would be necessary to have a well equipped and adequately staffed agricultural engineering station to undertake the type of work suggested here. The proposed station may also do some work in designing of irrigation aids and may advise farmers on the selection of pumping sets and cane crushers. 433* 407

Soil Erosion

2.77 Soil erosion is a serious problem in Kerala. Conditions prevalent in the State such as lateritic soils, undulating to steep topography, the system of farming followed and heavy cloud burst—all these constitute towards excessive soil erosion. There is no reliable estimate regarding the extent of area affected or vulnerable to soil erosion, but it is estimated that about one-third of the cultivated area—approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres—is affected by it. It should be possible to protect at least one million acres through soil conservation measures by 1971. 134 185

2.78 Soil conservation work as carried out by the Department of Agriculture has become very popular with the farmers. The Department gives technical advice on soil conservation matters and undertakes operations in specified areas in water-shed units. [647]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be
[464] Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conservation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
649 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should
[656] be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and net value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise, both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

*433 245 [439] 2.85 The country is deficit in the output of coconuts and annually imports about Rs. 15 crores worth of copra and coconut products. This is a heavy drain on foreign exchange resources of the country. Even after imports the total available supply of coconuts is not enough and the oil millers are, therefore, hard hit by this shortage. The demand for this commodity is increasing year after year while the production has been more or less stagnant at 3,100 million nuts. If this situation is allowed to drift unchecked, imports of coconuts will have to be increased progressively. In view of these factors, measures to increase productivity and the output of coconut are of extreme urgency.

2.86 Coconut cultivation in the State today faces a multitude of problems. The average yields are only about 40 nuts a tree per annum, that is, 3,000 nuts an acre, as against 60 to 100 nuts per tree in Philippines and some of the other Far Eastern countries. Moreover, the yield has shown no tendency to increase over the last 10 years. The focal point of coconut development programme, therefore, should be to break through the stagnant levels of productivity of coconut. The following discussion follows this line of argument.

*433 245 241 2.87 Poor yields are largely due to the absence of regular and adequate manuring. The crop needs large quantities of manure. But the farmers, majority of whom are poor, cannot afford to spend on fertilizers which in the case of coconuts show results only after two or three years. Farmers, therefore, prefer to invest whatever resources they have in manuring the field crops which bring in quicker returns. Coconuts thus get neglected. In addition to starving the coconut trees of fertilizers, many farmers grow exhaustive crops such as banana and tapioca as an understorey. This practice exhausts the soil and it needs large funds and a long period ranging from 3 to 5 years, to rehabilitate such gardens.

[647] 2.88 To raise the yields, an intensive application of fertilizers containing NPK has been recommended by the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The Committee is of the opinion that fertilizers are more suited to acidic soils on which coconut is generally grown in Kerala. It estimates the cost of requisite fertilizers to be of the order of Rs. 93 per acre per annum but that is beyond the means of a small farmer. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should arrange to advance loans for the purchase of fertilizers, and these loans may be recovered after three years. To start with, 30 per cent of the area may be brought under this programme. The annual requirement of fertilizers would be about 26,000 tons of superphosphate. The programme would cost Rs. 3 crores per year, that is, Rs. 9 crores for the first three years after which the loans may be granted out of the recoveries. The programme may be extended to cover 75 per cent of the area earmarked for coconut during the Fourth Plan. Better manuring coupled with the necessary cultural operations, can raise the yields from 40 nuts to 60 or 70 nuts per tree which would thus amount to an increase of 50 to 75 per cent over the present rate of production.

*433 245 242 2.89 Coconut crop is subject to a heavy incidence of diseases and pests. The diseases such as "leaf rot" and "root diseases" are rampant and widespread and have spread to six districts affecting over 50 per cent of the trees in the State. The annual loss of production due to these diseases is estimated at Rs. 2 to 3 crores. There is already a scheme in force to spray about 7 million trees in the infected pockets.

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But mere treatment of infected trees is not enough. The healthy trees lying side by side, or trees exposed to infection, should also be sprayed as a preventive measure. The proposed plant protection programme should cover the whole State in progressive stages by the end of the Fourth Plan. This would cost about Rs. 5 crores during the next 10 years, but a part of this may be recovered from the farmers as spraying charges. 433* 245 242

2.90 Coconut is mostly grown as an unirrigated crop. During the summer months they are drought-affected in many parts of the State and drought has a telling effect on the trees. It is found that under irrigated conditions, the trees regularly give higher yields and there is very little premature shedding of buttons. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture should start popularizing irrigation of coconut gardens. Filter point tube-wells and pumping sets would be suitable as means of irrigation and the State should arrange for loans on easy terms for their installation. 433* 245 241

2.91 The average economic life of a coconut tree is about 60 years. It is estimated that over 50 per cent of the trees in the State are over 50 years old and, therefore, in about 10 years, these trees would be past their economic life. Unless immediate steps are taken to replace the aged trees, the production of nuts after a few years is bound to decline in spite of all the measures suggested so far. A campaign should, therefore, be launched to replace old trees by fresh plantings.

2.92 There is not much scope for extending the area under coconut since most of the suitable area has already been brought under the crop. This is particularly so in the former Travancore-Cochin area. However, there is some possibility of raising new coconut plantations in the interior strip of Malabar along the foot of the western ghats. The Indian Central Coconut Committee estimates this area to be of the order of 100,000 acres. It is suggested that Government should make all efforts to bring this area under coconut cultivation. There are some difficulties in the way of bringing about the extension of area, for example, lack of adequate funds with the small farmers, and their preference for rubber plantations because they do not fall within the purview of the Land Ceiling Bill, etc. Some of these hurdles could be overcome if the State offers long term loans to intending farmers for the purpose of raising fresh plantations. Assuming that loans at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per acre are distributed, the total loan fund required to plant 100,000 acres during the next decade would be around Rs. 10 crores.

2.93. Production of quality seedlings from approved stock in large numbers is also necessary for the programme of under-planting and raising new plantations. The State nurseries, at present, have a capacity of 2.2 lakh seedlings a year. This capacity would not be enough to meet the future needs. It is suggested that the nursery capacity should be doubled during the Third Plan by starting 15 new Government nurseries. This would require an outlay of about Rs. 600,000 during the next two Plans. However, as even these would not be able to meet the anticipated demand, private nurseries may also be encouraged to produce quality seedlings in the different regions of Kerala. As a result of the improvements suggested above, the output of coconuts may be expected to double by 1970-71. 433* 245 654

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Tea

*433 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest 245 number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total [439] exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

[132] 2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees. [133] The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is [171] higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution. [452] The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas ; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government. [427]

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

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433 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation 249 in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951-56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

433 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since 249 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were 423 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

433 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in 249 Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)

[171] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

433 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific 249 manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires 242 manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large [471] fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted [244] to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

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per cent of over 200,000 acres planted from 1902 onwards belonged to non-selected and low yielding strains. The Board has also estimated that more than half the rubber area contains trees that have outlived their economic life. Therefore, about 164,000 acres need immediate replantation. The total area planted till 1958 was 45,194 acres and of this replanting accounted for only 7,060 acres. To tone up the yields as well as to keep the trees in a good condition, it is necessary to replant at least 20,000 acres annually. A programme of this magnitude would need an investment of Rs. 50 crores at the rate of Rs. 2,500 per acre. 433* 249 242

2.112 In certain well managed estates in Kerala, the yields are reported to be as high as 1,600 lbs. per acre. A large number of estates yield between 700 to 1,000 lbs. This shows the potentialities of raising the yields if the gardens are properly managed. There are also instances of estates, which yielded only 150 lbs. per acre, which have yielded 500 to 600 lbs. per acre after reorganization and improvement of the estates. 433* 249

2.113 India is the only country in the world which is a producer and at the same time an industrial consumer of natural rubber. The indigenous production of natural rubber in India at present meets about half the needs of the country, the other half being met by imports. The demand for rubber is increasing at a very fast rate and is estimated to be 55,000 tons by 1961, 82,000 tons by 1966 and 125,000 tons by 1971.[1] This means that by 1971 the demand for natural rubber would be about eight times the present level of production. It is, therefore, suggested that utmost possible effort should be put in to step up the production of natural rubber in Kerala. 433* 249 438 439

2.114 Rubber production can be raised by increasing the yields as well as by extending the area under the crop. An increase in the yields is a short term measure which can be realized, say, by the end of the Third Plan, provided the necessary measures are quickly implemented. Adequate annual application of fertilizer mixtures (NPK) coupled with soil conservation measures, working the soil and regulated tapping are some of the important measures that may be adopted. These measures can be undertaken more effectively and economically if the holdings are of larger size. Efforts at intensive cultivation should, therefore, be co-ordinated with increase in the size of small holdings—especially the small ones with less than 15 acres. This could be best achieved through the formation of cooperatives. The Government and the Rubber Board should initiate future development on these lines. 433* 249

2.115 In addition to replantation, as suggested above, a regular plantation programme is necessary for a sustained increase in output. Raising new plantations to the extent of 300,000 acres may be suggested as the target for the next two Plans. A higher target would be only too desirable. There may, however, be some difficulties in implementing the plantation programme owing to scarcity of land. The exact scope for extension of area under rubber is not known. Various sources put the likely extent of this area to be between 2.25 lakh and 7.5 lakh acres. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture and Forestry should conduct a joint survey to make an accurate estimate of the extent of such land in the State. However, it is necessary to emphasise that the proposed plantations should consist of

[1] NCAER estimates.

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433 large estates. The small holdings, as explained before, are not economical and
249 have low yields. It is, therefore, necessary to make adequate safeguards against the creation of small units.

2.116 Moreover, care should be taken to see that all future plantings are done with improved clones. This can be much better ensured if departmental planting and working of the estates by Forest Department is undertaken instead of leasing the land under Government ownership to individual growers. It may be assumed that out of 3 lakh acres of proposed plantations, 2 lakh acres would be under Government management and the rest would be planted by private growers. The programme may be phased at the rate of 30,000 acres per year. The total investment for the whole programme would thus be Rs. 75 crores.

2.117 In well-managed estates, the trees begin to yield after seven years. Assuming that the new plantings yield at an average rate of 700 lbs. of rubber per acre, the output of rubber from these would increase progressively from 9,380 tons to 37,520 tons in 1971. Full results from the proposed 3 million acres of new plantings would be visible only from 1978 onwards at the rate of additional 93,800 tons per annum.

Pepper

433 2.118 The cultivation of pepper in India is almost entirely concentrated in this
244 State which produces over 95 per cent of the country's total output. During 1958 India produced about 27,000 tons of pepper, approximately 45 per cent of the overall
[432] world production. Before World War II, Indonesia was the leading producer and exporter of pepper, but since then India has assumed that role. Between 1939 and 1951 production of pepper in the country increased by 16 per cent.

2.119 Large scale cultivation of pepper is confined only to the submountain tracts on or below the Western Ghats. It is also grown in the plains but as a protected garden crop in the compounds of houses and not as a plantation crop. Pepper is a perennial climbing crop and lasts for 20 to 30 years. There are on an average 300 to 400 standards (pepper bushes) per acre. On an average, each standard under plantation conditions yields 1 to 2 lbs.; but it is not uncommon to find standards in house compounds yielding even 40 to 50 lbs.

2.120 As in the case of coconut, it is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate of
[659] the area under pepper. The estimate prepared by the Directorate of Statistics in Kerala is of the order of 224,658 acres for 1957-58. Of this, Malabar region accounted for 136,854 acres and the rest were in Travancore-Cochin area. The output of pepper during the same year was 26,020 tons in the whole of Kerala, of which the share of Malabar region was 42 per cent. Malabar with over 60 per cent of the area under pepper produces only 42 per cent of the output.

2.121 Per acre yield was the highest in Alleppey and Quilon (402 lbs. per acre) followed by the districts of Trichur, Ernakulam, Trivandrum and Kottayam (375 to 381 lbs. per acre). Malabar region has comparatively very low yields (180 lbs. per acre). This may, perhaps, be due to cultivation of pepper in Malabar on extensive rather than on intensive lines.

2.122 The development of pepper has not been receiving adequate attention. The crop was practically neglected during the First Plan. However, the high price of pepper which prevailed during early fifties provided a good incentive for extension of the area under pepper. The main work during the Second Plan was directed towards establishment of nurseries, extending the area under the crop and replacement of unthrifty vines with better ones. A total of 2,000 acres have been replanted so far. 433* 244

2.123 It is possible to increase the yield of pepper from the present level of above one lb. to 2 or 3 lbs. per standard through intensive cultivation, better manuring, better varieties, and plant protection measures, especially against *pollu* disease. Manuring of pepper has been a neglected field and with the application of fertilizer mixtures (3 cwts. of ammonium sulphate + 4.5 cwts. of super phosphate + 1 cwt. of muriate of potash per acre) the existing yields could be almost doubled within a year. Moreover, some extension of area under pepper vines can also take place in house compounds, as an inter-crop in small holdings and in tea and rubber plantations on land unsuited for the main crop.

2.124 Since pepper is primarily an export commodity, 75 per cent of the produce being annually sent out of India, its future scope is very much dependent on the foreign markets. After the last war, India emerged as a major exporter of pepper in the world. The USA was our largest importer, accounting for over 70 per cent of our exports. But, of late, other countries such as Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya have begun to export larger quantities and as a consequence, the USA, now accounts for only about 20 per cent of our exports. The prices have also fallen from a peak of Rs. 4,158 per candy during 1951 to Rs. 677 in 1959. 433* 244 433

2.125 The above evidence points to an increasing degree of competitiveness in the world markets for pepper, and India is fast losing ground to the new entrants. So far India has been able to maintain the volume of exports because of large off-take by USSR and other East European countries. However, demand from these countries cannot be expected to fully compensate for the likely fall in future exports to the USA and other Western countries. It may, therefore, be seen that for maintaining the existing level of exports, not to speak of increasing it, it is essential that Indian prices should be competitive.

2.126 Prospects for internal demand, on the other hand, seem quite bright. Between 1952 and 1958, internal demand rose by about 25 per cent from a level of 5,000 tons. In view of rising population and fast developing food processing industry, future internal demand is likely to maintain this trend. 433* 244 [438]

2.127 Oleorisin, a pharmaceutical product, is extracted from pepper. A considerable amount of pepper in the western countries is used for extraction of this alkaloid. Oleorisin could be extracted in Kerala and an export trade developed out of this. This aspect needs further investigation. [228]

Cardamom

2.128 Cardamom is the most expensive as well as the most delicious of all the spices. India produces about 70 per cent of the world output of cardamom. The 433* 245

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*433 total area under cardamom in the State during 1957-58 was 69,658 acres, i.e., 245 about 54 per cent of total acreage under the crop in India. It is grown in high ranges at altitudes varying from 2,000 to 5,000 feet under the shade of trees as an understorey. The crop requires more or less the same natural conditions for growth as pepper or tea.

2.129 Production of cardamom in the State during 1957-58 (1,242 tons of dry pods), however, was about 65 per cent of the total output of the country, which shows a higher per acre yield in Kerala than in the rest of India. Even within Kerala, [438] cultivation of cardamom is highly localized, Kottayam accounting for over 80 per cent of the area under cardamom in the State. The major cardamom growing areas in the State are: the *Cardamom Hills*, Nelliampathi, Wynad, and Vembanad.

2.130 There has been a noticeable increase in the rate of yield in Kerala during the last decade. It rose from 30 lbs. per acre in 1952 to 40 lbs. per acre in 1958. This increase has been largely due to better cultivation practices and manuring.

2.131 There was no plan for cardamom development prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan period research and development schemes for improvement of cardamom were initiated. It was proposed to evolve high yielding varieties and also to devise ways and means of controlling and eradicating pests and diseases which do harm to the crop. These are comparatively long term measures. To help further intensification of work on cardamom development, it is suggested that 10 additional nurseries should be established for raising and distribution of disease-free plants as well as for studying the local problems. Five to eight of these nurseries may be established in Kottayam and the rest in other cardamom growing areas. Cardamom yields could be raised by at least 100 per cent during the coming decade, provided the crop is adequately manured and reasonably protected against diseases and pests. There is a disease locally known as *Kattee* which does great damage to the crop. More vigorous steps should be taken to control and prevent this disease through intensification of efforts as well as through widening the scale of operations.

2.132 There is scope for extending the area under cardamom within the existing rubber and tea plantations, since some parts of unoccupied area in these plantations are suitable for cardamom. There are also some lands suitable for cultivation of cardamom under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, mostly in the Silent Valley. It is suggested that the State should start cardamom plantations in such lands and, 20,000 acres may be put as the target for the area to be covered during the Third and Fourth Plans. At the rate of Rs. 200 per acre, the total investment for covering 20,000 acres with cardamom would be Rs. 40 lakhs.

Coffee

2.133 Kerala is the third largest coffee producing area in the country. With 41,123 acres and 3,000 tons of output per annum in 1957-58 it accounted for about 15 per cent of the area and 17 per cent of coffee production in the country. Coffee thrives in the tropical belt lying between 25°S and 30°N of equator. It requires a [132] rainfall of 60 to 90 inches per annum with a distinct rainy and dry season and an average temperature of 70°F. The conditions required for coffee growth are present

to a considerable degree in Malabar and Nelliampathi (Travancore-Cochin) areas. The major concentration of area occurs in the Kozhikode district of Malabar. It had 89 per cent of the total coffee area in the State during 1957-58. Between 1955 and 1958, coffee production in Malabar rose (18%) while that in Travancore-Cochin declined (16%). Similarly, the area under coffee during the same period registered an increase in Malabar (28.3%) but declined in Travancore-Cochin region (15.0%). 433* 245 [438]

2.134 The average yield per acre of coffee in Kerala is rather low. It has been lower than the all-India average and is far below the average yield in Mysore, the principal coffee growing State in India, (1955-56 Kerala, 285 lbs. per acre; all-India, 369 lbs. per acre; and Mysore 395 lbs. per acre). Moreover, while the yields elsewhere in India, especially in Mysore, have been rising, in Kerala they have fallen from 368 to 285 lbs. per acre during 1951-58. Within Kerala, the yields are the highest in Kozhikode district which is largely due to the better management of estates in this district. [171]

2.135 One of the characteristics of coffee plantations in Kerala is the overwhelmingly large number of small estates. In 1958, there were 14,475 registered estates with a total area of 47,675 acres. Of these, 12,412 were of less than five acres in size. There were only 99 estates out of 14,475 with an area over 50 acres. (Table 14)[2] 433* 245 423

2.136 There is a distinct relationship between the size of coffee estates and the output per acre. It is noticed that yields increase progressively as the size of the estates increases. The yield per acre of *Arabica* variety in estates in the size group of 5-10 acres was 0.68 cwts. per acre, while for the estates with 200 acres or more, it was 2.26 cwts. Moreover, the quality of coffee produced on small plantations is also inferior and fetches only 65 per cent of the price of coffee produced on big estates. It is difficult to ascertain the most economic size but it is believed that for effective and profitable functioning, the minimum size would be 50 acres. If this is accepted, then only less than one per cent of coffee estates in Kerala are economic. The question of making these plantations economic through consolidation or extension of area under coffee plantations should, therefore, receive serious attention. Two more points need attention. First, new areas should be planted with coffee *Arabica* rather than coffee *Robusta* since the former gives higher yields. Secondly, as in the case of tea, replantation is also over-due in the coffee plantations. Remedies on the same lines as suggested for tea hold good for coffee also. 433* 245

2.137 Unlike tea, the major portion of which is exported, coffee plantations are substained largely by the demand for internal consumption. Internal demand, however, has not been keeping pace with rise in the output of coffee. At present India has quite a large surplus in coffee and efforts are being made to export the surplus. In spite of an enormous surplus of coffee in South America, efforts in India have yielded good results as shown by an increase in exports from 3,000 tons in 1952-53 to 15,228 tons in 1956-57.[1] Most of our exports go to East European countries. There is scope for stepping up the exports further, in spite of the world 433* 245 439 [438]

[1] Source: Coffee Board, Bangalore.

2 [see p. 279, category 11b -- Analysis]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 glut since the better type of plantation coffee, for which India is well known, is in 245 demand at a premium in the continental markets. At the same time internal market, [439] about half of which is in North India is yet to be explored. This should also be developed.

2.138 Higher production can be achieved both through higher yields and through the extension of area under coffee. Increase in cultivated area under coffee is possible by fuller utilization of the estate areas. It is estimated that there were about 21,000 acres of land at the end of 1957-58 attached to the estates which were not being utilized for coffee cultivation. These could be planted with coffee. The cost of planting coffee and bringing it to the bearing stage is about the same as that in the case of tea, that is, Rs. 2,500 per acre. The total investment required, therefore, comes to Rs. 5.2 crores, which may be provided to the growers in the form of loans and the Government and the Central Coffee Board should help farmers in securing the necessary credit. The productivity per acre can be raised to 400 lbs. per acre by better manuring, larger application of fertilizers and efficient management of the estates. Efficient management, however, could become effective only after the size of the farms has been increased to a basic minimum.

Cashewnut

[258] 2.139 Cashewnut forms the main raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala. The cashewnut industry stands in importance next only to that of coir in the Kerala economy. In view of current shortage of raw nuts, which is adversely affecting the local cashew industry, measures to supplement indigenous supply are of great importance.

2.140 Cashew is grown on a wide variety of soils—ranging from coastal sandy to laterite hill top soils. It is hardy and drought-resistant but very susceptible to frost. In 1957-58, the total area under cashew in Kerala was 109,000 acres which is about 44 per cent of the total area under cashew in the country. Of this, the former Travancore-Cochin area alone accounted for over 71 per cent (77,481 acres), the rest being in the Malabar region. The production of raw cashewnuts in 1957-58 was 68,000 tons as against 54,000 tons in 1952-53, showing an increase of 26 per cent. The area under cashewnuts during the same period increased by only 1.8 per cent.

2.141 Cashewnut, at present, is rarely grown on a plantation scale. It is grown in compounds of houses, inter-spersed with coconuts, mangoes and arecanuts, and in outlying areas which are considered unsuitable for the growth of any other crop. When grown on plantation scale, about 60 to 70 trees can be planted in an acre, but it is not rare to find as many as 200 trees per acre in certain areas of Kerala. Such congestion, however, has adverse effect on output. Consequently, current yield per acre of cashewnuts (1,400 lbs. per acre) is much lower than what it could have been, had cashewnuts been grown on plantation scale. Under good conditions and in good season an acre may even yield up to one ton.

2.142 The scope for increase in the output of cashewnuts, through increase in yields or through extension of area, seems to be rather limited in Kerala. Raw nut is a low value commodity. Manuring the trees and spending on their maintenance,

therefore, does not look attractive to the growers. In addition, in some parts where rubber can be grown, cashew is being slowly replaced by rubber, the latter being more profitable. Under these circumstances, since there is no incentive for farmers either to resort to intensive methods of cultivation or to extend the area under cashewnuts, it may not be possible to achieve any significant increase in their output within Kerala. There may, however, be some scope in Cannanore district, for not more than 10,000 acres. Most of this area would be on Government lands under the jurisdiction of Forest and Land Revenue Departments. It is suggested that the proposed plantation should be from clonal progenies of selected parent trees. 433* 245

2.143 Assuming that 10,000 acres of land is available for cashew planting, total investment necessary to plant this area during 1961–71, at the rate of Rs. 100 per acre, would be Rs. 10 lakhs. The major extension of area under cashewnuts, however, will have to take place in the other States of India, mainly, Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Orissa.

Arecanut

2.144 Arecanut is an important cash crop of Kerala. The State possesses about 50 per cent of total arecanut area in the country. Arecanut is a high value as well as a labour intensive crop. [423]

2.145 The total production of arecanut in the country is about 25 lakh maunds, which falls short of requirements by about one-third. This is made good by imports from Pakistan, Malaya and other countries. The need for conserving foreign exchange resources of India brings out the importance of increasing the production of arecanut.

2.146 Short term as well as long term measures are necessary to raise the output of arecanut. Short term measures are needed to effect a quick increase in the production. Long term measures are necessary for sustaining the gains achieved through short term measures as well as for effecting a progressive increase in the output over a longer period. Adequate manuring, irrigation, and prevention and control of diseases are some of the short term measures, while under-planting or filling in and extending area under the crop are the long term measures. [242]

2.147 Considerable scope exists for raising the output of arecanut by providing irrigation in summer months. It is found that some of the well-managed irrigated gardens yield over Rs. 6,000 worth of produce annually as against Rs. 700 to 800 in unirrigated gardens. At present about 50 per cent of the arecanut area is solely dependent on monsoon rains and only about 25 per cent of the area receives adequate irrigation. Provision of irrigation facilities to arecanut gardens is, therefore, a prime necessity. Since the crop is grown scattered in the valleys and in patches on hill slopes and on small holdings, the irrigation development so far has not benefited the arecanut area to any extent. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should aid arecanut farms by granting long term loans for sinking wells and for the purchase of pumping sets. The gardens being mostly small, it may not be possible for individual garden owners to fully utilise the well and the machinery. This difficulty may perhaps be surmounted by organizing irrigation cooperatives for arecanut gardens. 433* 245 241

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 245 241 2.148 Manuring of arecanut gardens is grossly inadequate in Kerala. It is found that when the gardens are adequately manured and intercultured, the yields are high and there is much less of premature shedding. A combination of chemical (NPK) and organic manures has been found to give the best results. However, since arecanut is a tree crop like coconut, the benefit of manuring would accrue only from the third year of application of fertilizers. Most of the farmers are reluctant to wait for such a long time. Only cheap long term loans for manuring could bring a favourable change in attitude. In addition, as in the case of coconuts, a systematic replanting programme is also desirable.

*433 245 2.149 Knowledge regarding the scope for extension of area under arecanut is too meagre to hazard any accurate estimate of possible future planting. However, there is a feeling that the area can be increased by at least 50 per cent, most of which will be in the Malabar region. But irrigation facilities are a pre-requisite for any fresh planting. It is suggested that 25,000 acres of new areca plantations may be raised during the next 10 years. The investment required up to the bearing stage is about Rs. 1,500 per acre. Total investment on 25,000 acres of new plantation would, therefore, be Rs. 3.75 crores.

2.150 Care should, however, be taken to see that all new plantings are done with improved seedlings. In order to meet the increased seedling requirements, it is proposed that five more State nurseries, apart from the present five, should be started during the first half of the Third Plan. This would need an additional investment of about Rs. 125,000. The strength of private nurseries could also be increased from the present level of 120 to 300 by the end of the Third Plan. Development programme for arecanut can, however, succeed only if it is backed by an efficient plant protection drive since diseases and pests are very common in arecanut gardens.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 241 2.151 The plantation sector, as a whole, faces a multitude of problems in Kerala. Some of them are specific for particular crops such as devastating diseases in the case of coconut, arecanut and pepper. But many of the problems arising on account of inadequate replantation and under-plantation, low yield rates, lack of funds with growers for replantation and new plantations, inadequate supplies of inputs especially of fertilizers, wide fluctuations in prices and export markets are common to all crops. [654] The State and Central Governments as well as the respective commodity committees or Boards are earnestly taking appropriate measures to solve many of these difficulties. Measures such as the provision of technical guidance, long term and short term loans at easy terms for replanting and manuring, export promotion, market research, compulsory gardening, and supply of improved varieties of planting material, etc., have been in operation for quite some years. The effect of these efforts, however, has not been very significant owing to inadequate size of the programme. This is particularly so with regard to loans for planting, subsidies and fertilizer allocations. The State should help in procurement of the necessary credit facilities and fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen. It is suggested that at least a minimum of 350,000 tons

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

of fertilizers, 200,000 tons nitrogenous and 150,000 tons phosphatic should be allocated annually to plantation crops during the next decade. 433* 241

Investment and Output Implications

2.152 It is not possible to give any exact figure for total investment needed to carry out the programmes suggested above, as a good deal of investment will be in the nature of improvement of land, better agricultural techniques and shift in cropping pattern, all of which would have to be effected by the individual farmers. However, some rough estimates have been attempted here separately for the field crops and the plantation crops. On the basis of the rough estimates made for individual crops, the total public investment during 1961–71 in the agricultural sector comes to Rs. 142.3 crores, out of which Rs. 50.6 crores will be for plantations. The total private investment suggested is Rs. 185 crores, out of which Rs. 129 crores will be for plantations, and Rs. 56 crores for the other crops. The latter figure has been worked out on the basis of the ratio of private investment to public sector investment in agriculture, as given in the Draft Outline of the Third Five Year Plan of India. Total investment in agricultural sector during the coming decade, therefore, adds up to Rs. 287.3 crores.[1] 433* 454

2.153 It is even more hazardous to venture an estimate of additional returns from the proposed investment. It may, however, be broadly envisaged that as a result of the shift towards a more value-yielding cropping pattern as well as through increase in the physical yields and extension of area cultivable during the coming decade, the net value contributed by agricultural sector would rise by roughly 75 to 100 per cent. 433* 241

2.154 The output of foodgrains is expected to increase by 16.28 lakh tons from the present level of 9 lakh tons during the coming decade. By 1960-61, the net value of agricultural output is expected to reach Rs. 174.3 crores (at 1955-56 prices). On the basis of an assumed increase of 75 to 100 per cent during 1961–71, the output from the agricultural sector at 1955-56 prices would be roughly Rs. 300-350 crores. Since the investment required for generating this increase in income has been estimated to be of the order of Rs. 327.3 crores, the marginal capital output ratio in agricultural sector during the coming decade would be between 1.9 to 2.3, depending upon actual, increase in the output of agricultural produce.

[1] The Third Five Year Plan of Kerala, as finally approved by the Planning Commission has allotted Rs. 48.2 crores to the agricultural programmes covering agricultural production, major and minor irrigation, soil conservation, cooperation, community development, panchayats, warehousing, etc. According to NCAER calculations total public sector investment during the coming decade is envisaged to be Rs. 142.3 crores, leaving a balance of Rs. 94 crores for the Fourth Plan. If the targets laid in this Report are to be achieved, investment effort in agricultural sector during the Fourth Plan will have to be considerably stepped up.

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [439] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

23/ 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon. 231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too. 433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output. 231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them. 231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry 433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 23 [464] Although animal husbandry programmes do not create any significant increase in direct employment opportunities, they do help in reducing the degree of unemployment situation within the family. Moreover, some of the animal husbandry activities such as piggery, poultry-rearing, and bee-keeping need little investment to start with and are quick to yield returns.

3.9 Development of animal husbandry on commercial lines by individual rural families may not be possible without adequate State action. Aid should be given for implementing measures of improvement with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of the livestock. The aid could be given int he form of easy loans, development of marketing and processing facilities, sale of feed and fodder at reasonable prices, etc. These are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs separately for cattle and other livestock.

CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

*433 231 232 3.10 The output of milk from cattle and buffaloes as well as draught capacity can be improved through a scientific breeding programme and the prevention and control of diseases. As stated previously, cattle found in the State are of non-descript types. Unless they are imparted with high productivity genes, any amount of improvement in feeding and rearing will not be of much use beyond a particular stage. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on improving the breed of cattle and buffaloes. There are two ways of tackling this problem: (*i*) selective breeding and (*ii*) mass upgrading.

3.11 The former is not feasible, as there may not be enough cattle to start with if rigid norms are employed for selection. There will also be the problem of finding suitable means of disposal of the useless cattle. The practical solution under these circumstances would be to resort to a scheme of mass upgrading according to which the local bulls are to be replaced with bulls of some outside breed, suited to local needs and conditions. To be really effective, the upgrading programme should be made to cover the entire State and should stretch over a span of at least four decades. During this period, no bulls, other than the approved ones, should be allowed to sire.

*433 231 232 654 3.12 The value of the upgrading programme was realized in Kerala a few decades ago. The scheme was introduced on a large scale during the First Plan by starting five Key Village Schemes. The number was raised to 14 in the Second Plan. It is estimated that by 1965-66, it would be possible to cover about a quarter of the eligible milch cattle under the Key Village and Artificial Insemination Schemes. But even though the programme is well conceived and implemented, the NCAER team was left with the impression that the scheme had not made any significant impact in the improvement of cattle and buffalo breeds in the State. Apart from the inadequate coverage of the programme, non-elimination of the local or scrub bulls is a serious problem. For success and effectiveness of the upgrading programme, it is, therefore, necessary, first, to implement the programme intensively all over the State and secondly, competition from the local bulls should also be eliminated by compulsorily castrating all the males before they reach the fourth year of their life. These suggestions may be implemented during the Third Plan.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

3.13 The Sindhi bulls which have been selected for the upgrading work in Kerala are scarce these days, and it may be difficult to procure the required number for the proposed programme. The number of bulls needed would, however, be much smaller under artificial insemination than under natural service. The former programme should, therefore, be preferred to the latter. As the State is well served with roads and has a good and efficient transport system, three or four central semen collecting centres would be needed to cover the entire State provided the product is quickly dispatched and properly stored while in transit. The centres may be located at Trivandrum, Trichur, Calicut and Palghat. Bulls should be provided for natural service in remote and out of the way places. The proposed breeding programme would need buildings, equipment and livestock for artificial insemination centres. These programmes would require an investment of Rs. 8.76 lakhs over the Third and Fourth Plan periods. 433* 231 232

Prevention and Control of Diseases

3.14 Prevention of diseases peculiar to livestock and a machinery for their control is a pre-requisite for proper development of animal husbandry. Under the present circumstances, where there is a heavy incidence of disease and high mortality rates, any enterprise in the field of animal husbandry is fraught with high risks ; and farmers are hesitant to hazard investment on any animal husbandry business. The major share of burden will naturally have to be borne by the Government. 433* 232

3.15 For effective prevention and control of diseases, it is necessary to have an adequate number of well-staffed veterinary dispensaries and hospitals. These institutions should, as far as possible, render free treatment. Under the conditions prevailing in Kerala, it is considered necessary to have at least two veterinary hospitals in every taluk and one dispensary or first-aid clinic in every Panchayat. Measured by this norm, the existing facilities are utterly inadequate. While there are 55 taluks and 892 Panchayats in Kerala, the total number of hospitals and dispensaries,[1] at the end of 1958-59 were only 45 and 69 respectively. (Table 21)[2] 3A.

3.16 Two factors are responsible for this situation : (*i*) shortage of personnel and (*ii*) paucity of funds. With the opening of the veterinary college at Trichur, the situation may be expected to improve with regard to the personnel, provided adequate funds are made available. The State should try to achieve the above norms by the end of the Fourth Plan. Investment on the proposed 20 additional hospitals and 723 dispensaries would be about Rs. 77.3 lakhs. [874]

POULTRY DEVELOPMENT

3.17 Though Kerala has the best developed commercial poultry industry in the country, conditions under which the birds are reared are far from satisfactory. The birds are not adequately fed, and consequently they resort to scavenging. A good 433* 235

[1] Includes Stockman's stations and Inspector's stations.

[2] In 1960 the numbers were 65 and 133 respectively.

3 [see p. 285, category 11b - = Analyse]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 235 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] [164] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 23 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 23 234 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs. (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter [269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

urban households and this is due to better management. Scientific goat-rearing should be encouraged in the State by educating the people about the techniques and economics of goat-rearing. For the sake of convenience and better implementation, goat development may form a part of the Key Village Programme. This would effect saving in costs and also reduce the need for additional personnel. Through this programme, the local stock can be upgraded with the desirable outside milk breeds as Bikaner or Jamunpari after studying their performance and suitability. 433* 231

Rearing of Pigs

3.22 Pig-rearing is not popular in Kerala, even though conditions such as climate and rainfall are favourable. The pig population has even fallen by 3.6 per cent during the period 1951–56. Piggery development did not receive any attention during the First and Second Plans and this, perhaps, is partly responsible for the decline of interest in pig-rearing in Kerala.

3.23 Pig-rearing needs to be encouraged in the State, as it is the quickest means of increasing meat production. But there has not been any research or studies on pig-rearing which could be applicable to the conditions prevailing in Kerala. It is suggested that the State should undertake research on these problems without any delay. In the meantime, this avocation may be developed on the lines suggested by the Department of Animal Husbandry for the Third Plan through the creation of piggery development blocks. In addition, the State should also provide certain facilities such as the supply of feed, provision of processing, grading, storage and marketing facilities and supply of credit on easy terms.

Supply of Feed

3.24 As a result of measures proposed for agricultural development, the production of cereals, pulses and oilseeds would increase by about 100 per cent during the next decade. Since livestock, especially the bovines, are fed on byproducts of agriculture (stalk, straw, husk, bran, etc.), the availability of basic feeds would also increase. Rice straw, the principal roughage in the State even may be surplus. Concentrates will, however, continue to be in deficit despite the large likely increase in the output of pulses and cereals. The situation of course, would change if oilcake, the byproduct of oil-crushing industry, is not allowed to move out of the State. This is a matter of all-India policy as the coconut oilcake is an important item that is marketed outside the State in large quantities and is even exported. Assuming, therefore, that situation regarding oilcakes does not alter, the State should do the needful towards making concentrates easily available to the farmers. This deficiency could partly be reduced by supplying concentrates (ready-to-feed mixtures) in dehydrated form. Different ready-to-feed mixtures should be evolved for cattle, poultry and other livestock. The composition and formulae for such mixtures should be worked out on the basis of nutritional experiments. In anticipation of demand for the mixtures, it is suggested that three ready-to-feed mixture factories of 200,000 tons capacity each, may be started in the State during the Third Plan. 433* 231 241 [439]

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*433 246 3.25 The supply of succulent green fodder throughout the year also needs to be improved. The farmers should be induced to grow leguminous and perennial fodders like elephant and napier grass in the field corners or on waste lands. Distribution of seeds and cuttings to the farmers and demonstration of fodder cultivation on the fields of cultivators would go a long way in improving the production of green fodder. Municipalities and panchayats may also organize fodder farms for utilizing sewage and city compost.

*433 234 3.26 The development measures and aids proposed here, when implemented, would increase the output of animal husbandry products. Proper feeding of cattle and buffaloes can bring about an immediate increase of about 50 per cent in the production of milk.[1] Egg production may increase by over 100 per cent of the present output. Similar increases may be expected in other items too. This would give rise to the problem of suitable utilization of the additional output. Surprisingly enough, even the existing production is not being suitably utilized. For instance, even though milk output in the State is very low and there is an acute scarcity of fluid milk in the urban areas, as much as 41 per cent of the milk is processed into ghee.[2] In a State like Kerala which has a shortage of milk, it would have been more appropriate to consume the maximum possible amount of milk in a fluid state rather than in the form of milk products, since fluid milk is more wholesome and the processing of [442] milk partly destroys its vital nutritional content. This situation is due to lack of purchasing power with the rural people together with absence of facilities to market the milk in the urban areas. Since milk is a highly perishable commodity, the next best course for producers to follow in such a situation is to process it into the comparatively non-perishable ghee. But this is a wasteful process and the profits are also low.

*433 235 442 3.27 It is also gathered that 15 to 25 per cent of the total egg production in the State is wasted by breakage and spoilage due to defective and inadequate marketing facilities. Unless adequate and prompt measures are taken to remove drawbacks in the marketing system, the measures proposed here cannot be expected to yield full benefits and the producers cannot be expected to take a sustained interest in these. The solution to this problem lies in providing at least some of these facilities, the most urgent being the organization of marketing and processing facilities and services for dairy and poultry products.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

*433 234 3.28 Dairy development on scientific lines is a pressing need. This was a neglected field prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan, however, dairy development received some attention. Two schemes for processing 150 maunds of milk per day, one each in Trivandrum and Calicut, were taken up during the Second Plan. Each

[113] [1] *Third Five Year Plan, Draft Outline*, Government of Kerala, 1960.

[2] In 1956 the total production of milk in Kerala was 4,940 thousand maunds, of this 2,332 thousand maunds (47%) were consumed in the fluid state and 2,020 thousand maunds (41%) converted into ghee.

[113] (SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1956-57*: Issued by the Economic and Statistical Adviser, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

of these schemes is being expanded to handle 250 maunds per day during the Third Plan. Under these schemes, milk from the surrounding villages would be collected and pasteurized before bottling them for sale. The schemes will serve a two-fold purpose: (*i*) they will give incentive for a higher production of milk in the rural areas by offering fair prices and (*ii*) they will provide hygienic milk to the urban population at a reasonable price. The unscrupulous middleman will be eliminated by this process. 433* 234

3.29 The dairy development programme of this type needs to be taken up on a much larger scale than at present. This is necessary to provide an outlet for the likely increase in milk production and for making hygienic fluid milk available to the urban people. Owing to acute shortage of clean and pure milk in the urban areas, milk supply schemes of the type discussed above might prove a great success. It would be good if all the urban areas with a population of over 30,000 are served with such schemes. According to 1951 Census there were 13 towns in Kerala with a population exceeding 30,000. At the end of the Second Plan, 11 among these were still without any milk scheme. It is, therefore, suggested that these milk schemes should be organized in all these towns. The capacity, investment required, etc., for these schemes is given in Table 22.[2] [162]

3.30 Many of the dairy units proposed here may find it difficult to get sufficient quantities of milk from the surrounding areas owing to the poor yield of animals and low marketable surplus with the farmers. In order to justify collection, marketing and sales organization of even the smallest size, it is considered necessary to have a handling capacity of 150 maunds per day. In case sufficient milk is not available, which is likely to be the case at least in some centres, a part of the capacity may be utilized for bottling reconstituted milk. Reconstituted milk can be of various types depending upon the fomulae. Milk powder is a common ingredient in all the types. A survey of consumer preference and tastes may be conducted before choosing the type, and part of the demand for fluid milk may be met in this way. Such a survey is essential before embarking upon the actual production of reconstituted milk because the new product may meet considerable consumer resistance in its initial stages. Propaganda and other measures to popularize the use of reconstituted milk will also have to be taken up side by side.

3.31 In smaller towns, that is, those with less than 30,000 population, cooperatives for supply of milk, may be organized with consumers or producers. There were 12 such societies in 1958. These societies should be encouraged. [474]

3.32 Munnar is a region which possesses the potential for growth into a large scale commercial dairy farming centre. Many exotic cattle breeds[1] are thriving in the region. The performance of some of the herds maintained by a few sterling tea companies is said to be of a high order and compares favourably with that of similar herds maintained in the countries from which these cattle are imported. It is suggested that the Department of Animal Husbandry should further investigate the economic feasibility of commercial dairying in the Munnar region. If the investigation reveals prospects, the State may organise a few such dairy farms in the public 433* 231 234

[1] Jersey and Holstein.

[2] [Table 22 appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed - Ashok]

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*433 231 234 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 235 474 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 235 439 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 23 452 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

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INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.30
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	3.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production e ll go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its l f. Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·73 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[text continues on p. 67]

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[P. 66]

MAP 8

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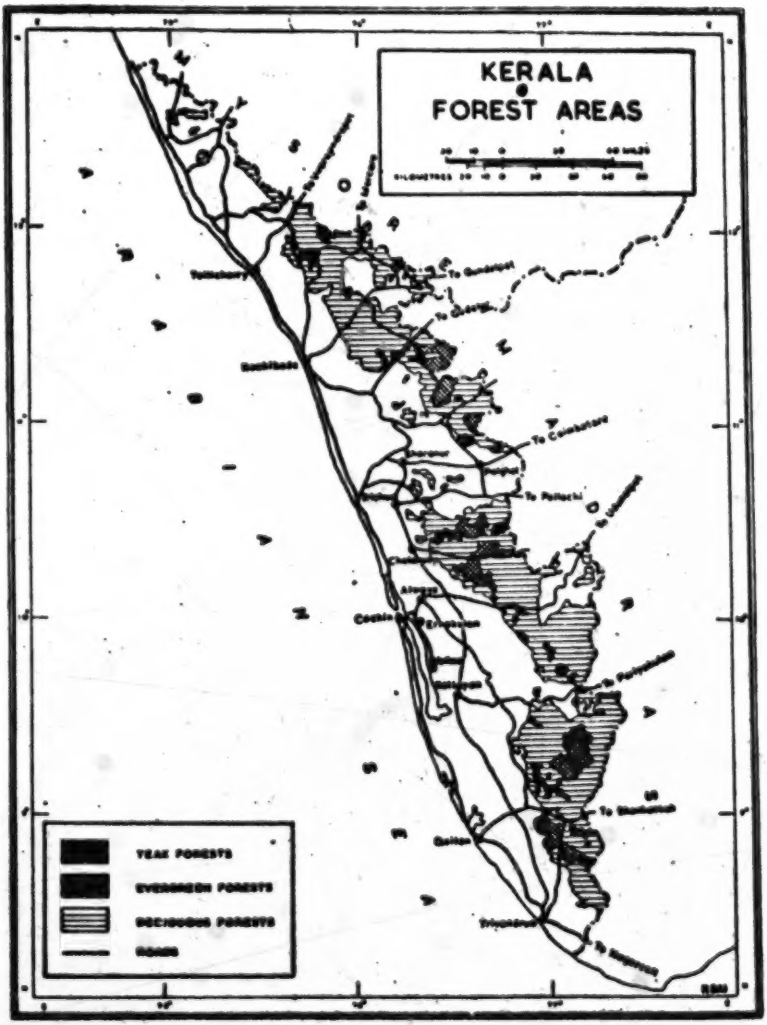

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%). 137 311

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth. 137 245

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging. 313 434 313 414

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well 137 132

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

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137 distributed over the year. The high degree of rainfall, old geological formation and
132 maritime climate have largely been responsible for the luxuriant forest growth in Kerala. Trees get the full benefit of moisture, depth of soil and protection from frost and drought. For these reasons, forests in Kerala also possess the advantage of a long growing season.

137 4.5 Most of the forest area lies in the high ranges on the eastern border of the
311 State and in the area adjacent to these. Only a few strips are found in the coastal plain. The forest area is, however, distributed over all the districts of the State. Since the forests run across the whole of eastern border while the districts in the State occur almost longitudinally, all districts, except Alleppey have a good proportion of their area under forests. The districts of Quilon and Trichur have as high as 45.2 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively of their area under forests. (Table 23) 1

137 4.6 The wide variations in climatic and topographical conditions in the State have resulted in a large variety of forests. With the exception of the desert, the truly temperate and the alpine types, all classes of forests are found in Kerala. In addition to the natural forests, Kerala has also got artificial plantations of valuable species. The State has been a pioneer in this sphere.

4.7 Among the natural forests, deciduous forests comprise 80 per cent of the growth. The rest is of the evergreen type. The evergreens are found mostly in the higher ranges above a height of 2,500 feet since they require a cool climate for their growth. The various types of forests found in the State are given below:

(1) *Evergreen Type*

(a) Southern tropical wet evergreen forests,
(b) Southern tropical semi-evergreen forests,
(c) Mountain wet sub-tropical evergreen forests, and
(d) The temperate Shola-Grasslands.

(2) *Deciduous Type*

(a) Southern tropical wet Deciduous forests and
(b) Tropical dry Deciduous Forests.

313 4.8 Among the evergreen types, most of the species are utilized in the manufacture
[322] of plywood and packing cases, which is a flourishing industry in the State. Pali Kulamavn and Vellapine are some of the well known plywood species. Anjali, which is used for boat-building and mahagony utilized for furniture, are two other important economic species found among the evergreens. Of late, a number of other evergreen species have sprung into prominence and are now finding economic uses. Since markets for these are growing, it is planned to extract these newer species also on a commercial scale.

4.9 Teak and rosewood are the most important species found among the deciduous forests. Vanteak, Rosewood, Poola and Charopine are some of the other important species belonging to this category. These species are chiefly useful in making furniture and in building and construction work. A detailed list of the trees and other major produce found in Kerala along with their present uses is given in Appendix 5.2 A list of minor produce is given in Appendix 6.3

1 [Table 23, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed--Ar.]
2, 3 [see pp. 329-333, category 116 --Analyst]

Artificial Plantations

4.10 As mentioned already, in addition to the natural forests, Kerala also ranks high among the Indian States in respect of artificially raised plantations of valuable species. In fact the teak plantations were first raised in Nilambur as far back as 1842. The planting work had been regularly carried out with the result that there were about 75,000 acres under this species at the end of 1959. 245

4.11 Although Kerala can claim to have been a pioneer in the matter of teak plantations, a beginning with the other plantations has been made only very recently with the onset of the era of planning in the State. During the First Plan period forestry could be paid little attention. Effective beginning may, therefore, be said to have been made only during the Second Plan. Some of the plantations which have been recently started in the State are:

(i) *Cashewnut plantations*: Covering an area of 1,100 acres.
(ii) *Softwood plantations*: An area of 9,220 acres had been covered by the end of the Second Plan.
(iii) *Wattle plantations*: A beginning for raising this very valuable tanbark tree has been made recently in the Hamilton Plateau of the Devicolam range.
(iv) *Eucalyptus grandis*: Plantations of this species were started in the high ranges in Peermade and Munnar and have been showing very encouraging results. They form the raw materials for making pulp, which is used for manufacturing newsprint and rayon.

It will thus be seen that Kerala has made considerable progress in its plantation programmes and leads the other States, especially in respect of its teak plantations.

Forest Produce—Its Extraction and Utilization

4.12 Total quantity of major forest produce extracted from the forests of Kerala during 1958-59 through Government Agency as well as through purchasers is given below: 313

MAJOR FOREST PRODUCE EXTRACTED FROM KERALA, 1958-59

	Government Agency (cu. feet)	*Purchasers*
Rough logs	3,950,567	5,06,079 c.ft.
Rough poles	410,202	1,088 c.ft.
Sawn and Squared timber	144,802	—
Fuel	22,791	25,576 tons
Miscellaneous	1,626	Rs. 1,224,460 worth

The gross revenue through actual sales amounted to Rs. 2.44 crores and royalties on coupes sold to purchasers earned another Rs. 0.64 crores. [434]

4.13 Extraction and stocking in the depots are undertaken by contractors but the actual disposal is done departmentally by means of auction. Standing coupes are also

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313 sold to purchasers for extraction of major forest produce but the extent of this is very limited in Kerala, Whereas for the whole of India about 75 per cent of major forest produce is extracted by the purchasers, in Kerala only about 15 per cent of forest is extracted by the purchasers directly, the rest being entrusted to departmental extraction.

[432] 4.14 The procedure in case of sale of timber and poles is to offer them first to the Government Departments and to sell only the surplus by open auction. The result is that while the Government Departments are able to obtain timber at reasonable negotiated rates, the trade obtains timber at very heavy rates.

4.15 In case of firewood, Messrs Forest Industries (Travancore) Ltd. (F.I.T.) have been given a concession for extraction of firewood for supply to M/s Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Ltd., Alwaye. The latter are now switching on to oil and, therefore, other uses shall have to be found for firewood extracted by the F.I.T. whose concession has still to run a number of years. Firewood supplies to the main cities come from the forest coupes which are sold to purchasers in auction after extraction of the timber. No area is managed purely for raising firewood as in some other States of India.

4.16 Unlike the major forest produce whose removal is done mainly through the Government agency, extraction of minor forest produce is mostly done through the purchasers. As may be seen from Appendix 6 Government earned only Rs. 50,000 as [651] revenue through sale of minor produce while it earned about Rs. 5 lakhs in the form of royalties from purchasers.

Silvicultural Systems

313 4.17 Kerala is unique in having working plans for all the Government owned 655 forest areas in the State. Since all the Government forests are managed under the latest scientific systems, there is hardly any danger of over-felling in the public sector forests.

4.18 With a wide variety of forests, both natural and artificial, the systems of silviculture practised are suited to the types. The Selection System[1] is the one that is being applied in all the evergreen forests and only the trees of little economic importance are extracted under the simple felling rules. The complex nature of the vegetation and difficulty of regeneration of evergreen species, together with the danger of heavy wild growth have caused these forests to be worked under the Selection System.

4.19 In the other timber forests clear-felling with natural regeneration, supplemented by artificial planting, is being undertaken. The climate and soil conditions are so favourable that there is generally no difficulty in obtaining natural regeneration. The only exception, and it is quite an important one, exists in case of the evergreen forests which are being worked more and more heavily as demand for new species arises in the market. Their regeneration is not keeping pace with the removals.

[1]. Under the Selection System trees are selected for felling uniformly all over the forest. Under simple felling rules patches of forests are completely cleared in rotation irrespective of age, type or growth of trees contained in that patch.

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SOME FORESTRY PROBLEMS

Acquisition of Private Forests

4.20 It has been mentioned that forests of Kerala are one of the best managed ones. But this is true only of the reserved forests under Government jurisdiction. In the Malabar area there are about 5 lakh acres of private forests which are maintained very unsatisfactorily. Unlike the reserved forests, there is no adequate protective staff for the care of these forests and no attention is paid to their regeneration or management on scientific lines. This has naturally resulted in an unwarranted depletion of forest wealth in the private forest areas. In the interests of adequate preservation of forest wealth, immediate steps are necessary to acquire the private forests and bring them within unified forest management under the control of the Forest Department. A provision for acquiring the private forests was made during the Second Plan but their acquisition could not be carried out. This must be effected during the Third Plan period.

The Problem of Encroachment

4.21 There is one other disquitening feature about forests in Kerala. Such is the pressure of population in the State that inroads are being made into the forest areas, especially where forests occur in the midland region. This has taken the form of Government deforestation of forest areas in the interests of Grow More Food Campaign. In addition, there have also been illicit encroachments and these areas are still under cultivation, although the State Government have declared them to be revertible. The extent of these areas is not very large compared to the total area under forests. About 9,750 acres fall within the former category and 16,500 acres belong to the category of revertible areas. The gravity of the encroachment situation arises from the fact that in case a lenient view is taken, these will prove a serious menace to proper maintenance of forest potential in the long run.

Regeneration of Evergreen Forests

4.22 The problems referred to above were of an administrative nature; but forestry in Kerala is faced with one or two urgent technical problems as well. One of these is to find out some way of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen species.

4.23 Of late a number of evergreen species have found new uses in the manufacture of plywood logs, railway sleepers, telegraph poles, etc., and these species have all come into prominence. Full potential of the existing evergreen forests cannot, however, be tapped since their natural regeneration takes time. The forest department has, therefore, got to keep control over the working of these forests.

4.24 In case of some species because of difficulties connected with regeneration, there has been a shortage of supply. The problem of regeneration of these forests is intimately connected with the problem of light. Regeneration requires light to

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be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilizers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. An amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

[Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

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in the early years has been due to the fact that either the sanctions from the Government were received late or the staff was not appointed in time. The shortfall in performance during the Second Plan period emphasises the need for devoting greater attention to forest development programmes during the Third Plan period.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY

4.29 Forests are an important source of raw material for industry in Kerala. Their importance is brought out by the fact that forest-based industries are more predominant in the economy of Kerala compared to the position they occupy in the industrial structure of India as a whole.[1]

4.30 In view of the important position occupied by the forest-based industries in Kerala, the policy towards forest resources should aim at long-run enhancement of the forest potential so that an increasing surplus of raw materials could be made available to industry. Forest development policy in the State should, therefore, be guided by the following objectives :

(*i*) Utilization of resources as yet untapped.
(*ii*) Raising the long-run forest potential through:
  (*a*) acceleration of the process of conversion of poor deciduous forests into valuable teak and softwood plantations.
  (*b*) extensive reclamation of grasslands on the basis of experimental Eucalyptus plantings carried out during the Second Plan.
(*iii*) Incorporation of technical improvements in the methods of logging, etc., so that wastage could be reduced. These aspects are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Existing Potential

4.31 In Kerala, the existing potential of forest resources is being exploited comparatively much better than in many other States of India. Due to easy accessibility provided by the numerous rivers and roads, many of which serve the forests, extraction has been very much facilitated. The importance of the role of river transport in exploitation of forest wealth is shown by the fact that two big centres of forest produce, viz., Kallai and Chalakudy are both located by the side of rivers. Although the general picture as regards exploitation of existing resources is quite bright, some pockets still remain untapped. These are discussed below :

4.32 (*i*) *Bamboo Resources* : In spite of a large bamboo potential in the State, this source remains completely unutilized for industrial purposes. Out of the total available supply, about two-thirds is utilized for local requirements of construction, etc. The position regarding the quantum of surplus available is as follows.

[1] See Chapter on Industries.

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*433 313 [423] [438]

AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	38,347	..	..
Kozhikode	20,045	61,479	14,755	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,336	20,988	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,654	2,890	5,386
Nemmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,467*	*172,878*	*64,100*	*143,353*

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Kerala.

[384] 4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

313 289 4.36 (ii) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

*433 314 4.37 (iii) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

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number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [311]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

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Second Plan, 9,220 acres had been covered by artificial plantations of these species. In view of the current shortage, it is proposed that another 45,000 acres be added to these plantations. 3,000 acres out of these may be kept apart for the matchwood species.

Sandalwood Plantations

4.43 During the Third Plan period, it is proposed to take up 1,000 acres of this plantation at Nachivayal, Marayr, and Maunanthura, in the Devicolom range. The general prospects for sandalwood in the State are not very bright but if some additional suitable areas could be located, they may be taken up for plantation during the Fourth Plan period.

Bamboo Plantations

4.44 The existing resources (para 4.32) are largely being consumed for local uses leaving only one-third of the overall supply as surplus for industrial utilization. In order to augment the existing supplies, it is proposed to raise Burma bamboo over an area of 1,000 acres during the Third Plan, by under-planting it in teak plantations in Nilambur area. During the Fourth Plan another 2,000 acres may be taken up.

PLANTATIONS OF FAST-GROWING SPECIES

4.45 So far, the trend of thinking has favoured an emphasis on the growth of plantations of hardwood species like teak and rosewood which find a ready demand but have got a long rotation period. Attention has only recently been focussed on the fast-growing species. In view of the growing pace of industrialization and the consequent steep rise in demand for forest materials, it would be desirable to supplement the long rotation species with fast-growing types which give the yields much more quickly. The three main species of this type which can be grown in Kerala are *Eucalyptus Grandis*, cashewnut and wattle.

4.46 The whole of the area under *shola* grass is suitable for conversion into *Eucalyptus Grandis* and wattle plantations. The productivity of these grasslands will be very much enhanced if these economic species are planted there. The success which has already attended the planting of eucalyptus promises a bright future for this species. These plantations can be extended over 25,000 acres during the next 10 years. The State Government proposes an allocation of Rs. 75 lakhs for the purpose of raising this plantation during the Third Plan period. The economic importance of eucalyptus plantations arises from the fact that they form the raw material for mechanical pulp and rayon industry.

4.47 The seeds for these plantations were first obtained from Australia. It is suggested that the advice of an Eucalyptologist may be sought through the Colombo Plan and the State officers may also be sent to Australia for training. This will help in perfecting the technique of raising these valuable plantations all over the grasslands in the State..

4.48 Compared to the eucalyptus plantations, the area over which wattle can grow is rather limited. This tree can only grow in the high ranges at elevations above 4,000 feet. The Hamilton Plateau in the Devicolom range is a suitable locality and there is a proposal to afforest, 5,200 acres during the Third Plan. The cost of afforestation is between Rs. 120 to Rs. 150 per acre. This plantation would supply the raw material for wattle bark extract industry. There does not appear to be much scope for extension of area under this species after the Third Plan period. 433* 245

4.49 As these plantations are to be raised in the high ranges, it will be desirable to establish regular labour colonies and employ labour on a more or less permanent basis. Some agricultural occupation will also have to be provided to the labour force. It is, therefore, proposed that the establishment of regular forest villages in the grasslands should be seriously considered by the Government. They will also provide the much needed labour for raising and upkeep of the plantations and later for manning the newsprint mills which will be established at the end of 10 years. The exact employment potential is difficult to work out but it is estimated that the plantations will be able to support about 500 families, each family providing two able-bodied workers. [168]

4.50 Cashewnut trees can be raised in the barren forest areas which are considered unsuitable for any other type of forest growth. In Trichur and Malayathur divisions, where these plantations are located, there are further tracts of barren unproductive reserves. Attempts at raising useful forest species having failed, these areas may be put under cashewnut plantations. If Malabar forests are acquired promptly, another 5,000 acres could be planted with cashewnuts during the next decade.

4.51 The technique of cashewnut afforestation is still in an experimental stage, but the highest success obtained so far has been with dribbling seed to a depth of 3 inches at a spacing of 30 ft. × 30 ft. which gives 49 plants per acre. Plantations raised at a spacing of 18 ft. × 18 ft. (125 trees per acre) have also given good results. Experiments on spacing should continue and the optimum spacing in different types of soil may be determined. The cost has been worked out at Rs. 35 per acre plus another Rs. 5 per acre as establishment charges.

Rubber Plantations

4.52 Rubber is one of the chief plantation crops of Kerala. The present area under rubber is roughly 2.5 lakh acres. Since rubber plantations provide a valuable raw material and a good source of employment in the primary sector, it is proposed to raise rubber plantations over a fairly large area of secondary forests. So far as protective functions of a forest area is concerned, this would be a change for the better, as areas under rubber are better protected than a forest and trespasses are not allowed. Other aspects of the problem are discussed in the Chapter 2 on Agriculture and Plantations. 433* 249

4.53 The targets for additional acreage to be brought under different type of plantations, discussed above and the figures for investment required are summarized 433* 245

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*433 245 in the following table :

Type of Plantation	Third Plan		Fourth Plan		Fifth Plan	
	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)
Teak	20,000	15.0	40,000	30.0	60,000	45.0
Softwood	15,000	15.0	30,000	30.0	50,000	50.0
Grassland Sholas[a] (Eucalyptus grandis)	10,000	75.0	15,000	102.5	—	—
Burma Bamboo[b]	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Cashewnut	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Casurina and Matchwood on Coastal Perrumbavur	1,000	2.0	2,000	4.0	3,000	6.0
Wattle	5,200	7.8	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	53,200	115.8	91,000	168.0	119,000	104.0

[a] All grassland sholas would be afforested by the end of the Fourth Plan.
[b] Most of these plantations in the Fourth and Fifth Plans will be in the private forests acquired in Malabar.

SOME TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS

*433 313 4.54 The existing logging techniques and modes of extraction entail a lot of wastage of timber. Since there is a general shortage of timber, supply of timber from the forest areas could be enhanced by incorporating some of the improvements disscussed below.

Proper Seasoning Facilities

4.55 A large amount of timber at present goes waste or is used as fuel. This could be more economically utilized if proper seasoning and preservation facilities are introduced. Seasoning and preservation plants should be encouraged in all areas where there is a concentration of saw mills. This would make possible utilization of a large variety of secondary timber through upgrading them and making them commercially profitable. Government departmental rules may have to be modified to insist on the use of seasoned timber in place of the more valuable teak timber in all Government construction works.

Better Logging Techniques

4.56 The present methods of logging need to be mechanized, especially as a good network of roads exists through which mechanical saws, etc., can be taken to the actual coupes. The techniques currently employed are antiquated and involve a lot of wastage. With improved techniques, the extent of wastage could be reduced. [231] The extraction of timber by elephants in Malabar should be continued as it has proved to be cheap and quite efficient.

Forest Roads

4.57 Although in respect of overall position regarding forest roads, Kerala is comparatively better off and accessibility is quite good, there are some remote areas for which new roads are required. Opening up of these areas through forest roads would permit tapping of certain pockets of forest resources uptil now lying untapped. Some of these important roads which have been suggested for being taken up during the Third Plan are :

(a) *Roads from Dhon to Palamalai*—to tap the Chenat Nair reserved forests and to make Palamalai a summer resort.

(b) *Extension of the Silent Valley roads to the borders of the Nilgiris district*—to tap the rich resources of the Silent Valley reserved forest and the improvement of its existing natural regeneration.

(c) *Construction of a road from Nelliampathy Parambikulam Tellikkal.* This will make Sungam and Parambikulam Ranges accessible through the Kerala territory only. At present, the State has to depend on the goodwill of the Madras Forest Department for the extraction of forest produces.

The cost of constructing these roads is estimated to be Rs. 50 lakhs.

Training Facilities

4.58 The programme for raising forest plantations can be implemented smoothly only if there is adequately trained personnel to deal with the several technical problems. At present the staff is generally deputed to Forest Colleges at Dehra Dun and Coimbatore for training. These colleges cannot, however, meet the requirements of training lower grade staff. It is, therefore, suggested that in view of the importance of forestry to Kerala, this State should have a separate training institute of its own. This institute, may be located at Peechi.

Resource Survey

4.59 For proper planning of forest-based industries, the exact extent of availability and location of different types of forest resources should be known. In the past, development has been impeded by industries being allotted more areas than was warranted by their capacity. This has thwarted development of other industries which could have utilized the surplus raw material from the forest coupes. These defects can be remedied only if a full inventory of forest resources is available. Uptil now only a survey of bamboo areas has been carried out. During the Third Plan a full resource survey should be carried out.

ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED FOR THE DEVELOPMENTS PROPOSED

4.60 If the development programmes proposed in this report are to be carried out, strengthening of the Forest Department will be necessary. Appointment of

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*433 313 647 two more Conservators of Forest, one to deal with general development works of the State and the other for the new plantations may be considered. It is also proposed that an additional Chief Conservator of Forests to cope with the heavy work may be appointed as soon as the tempo of development work has gained momentum, say, by the middle of the Third Plan period. The Territorial Divisional Forest Officers should each be given a gazetted assistant to deal with all the development works in their divisions. The present annual expenditure on Establishment amounts to Rs. 8.23 lakhs (1958-59). If the above suggestions are accepted there should be an increase of about 25 per cent. It is also expected that if the tempo of developments is maintained, higher amounts will be needed in the Fourth Plan. The establishment expenditure is, therefore, worked out as under :

Third Plan period	Rs. 10.29 lakhs annually.
Fourth Plan period	Rs. 10.97 lakhs annually.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

*433 313 655 651 4.61 The major part of investment during the coming decade will be on raising the various commercial plantations discussed above. Investment on other items is summarized in Table appearing under Para 4.53. The amount of Rs. 3 crores[1] which is expected to be spent during the Third Plan period on acquisition of private forests, does not appear in the investment figures since the amount is only in the nature of a monetary transfer.

4.62 As a result of the development programmes suggested above, output contributed by the forests may be envisaged to increase from the following sources during the coming decade :

(1) Sale of forest produce from areas clear-felled for teak plantations. This item will be quite substantial.

(2) Income from thinning of teak plantations.

(3) Income from bamboo and eta reed resources, which will start accruing by the end of the Third Plan period when all the flowered areas would have been regenerated.

(4) Income from other plantations would start accruing only towards the end of the coming decade or during the beginning of the Fifth Plan since gestation period before the plantations start maturing is rather long.

4.63 It is difficult to give an exact forecast but taking the above factors into account, the increase in income accruing from forestry during the coming decade is taken to be as follows. It is assumed that income at the end of the Second Plan, that is, during 1960-61 would be 10 per cent higher than that in 1955-56, in 1965-66 twenty per cent higher than that in 1955-56 and by 1970-71 it would be one and a half times the income in 1955-56. On this basis projections for State income from forestry would

[1] The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 3.75 crores for Forest Development which compares quite favourably with investment suggested by us. However, it has to be kept in mind that our figure does not include finances for acquiring private forests, which the State Plan has to provide for.

be as follows :

	Rs. crores
1955-56	5.0
1960-61	5.5
1965-66	6.0
1970-71	7.5

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4.64 It will be noticed that in the earlier period income is projected to grow at a lower rate than towards the end of the period. This is naturally to be expected in view of the fact that gestation period for growth of forest potential is rather long and the effects of the development programmes will start becoming visible only towards the end of the Fourth Plan period and during the Fifth Plan period. During the Second and Third Plan periods rise in income is expected only from clear felling areas for teak plantations and intermediate felling in the older areas.

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [17] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [464] [58] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25). Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ana]

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 177 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [894] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

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the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them.

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26.

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon.

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species.

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries.

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture.

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*433 228 5.23 One of the reasons for the poor development of culture fisheries is the absence of suitable species of fish in the State. However, organized fish culture in fresh waters has been introduced recently. The varieties of fish stocked are Pearlspot, Tilapia, Mullets, all collected locally and major carps obtained from Madras, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.

DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS OF FISHERIES

*433 226 5.24 Fisheries hold a prominent place in the economy of Kerala. Their basic importance arises on account of three factors (*i*) in a food deficit State like that of Kerala, the shortfall in the local output of paddy can be counter-balanced to a large extent by increased consumption of fish. Being rich in proteins, they can form a valuable supplement to tapioca which is deficient in protein. In fact, a combination of rice, tapioca and fish can form a well balanced diet; (*ii*) some of the important species found in Kerala, e.g., prawns and shrimps are very good foreign exchange earners; and (*iii*) in addition, fishing is a source of livelihood for a large section of the population. The object of fishery development programmes should be to aim at a progressive increase in the catch of fish with a view to promote its consumption within the State as well as to enhance the foreign exchange earnings through the export of Prawns and the other valuable species.

Marine Fisheries

*433 228 5.25 Considerable scope exists for the development of marine fisheries in the State. For increasing production from off-shore waters more trawlers and other large vessels will have to be operated. While production from the coastal waters could be raised substantially by operating mechanized boats, more trawlers and other vessels will be necessary for increasing the catch from off-shore waters. Introduction of mechanized boats would call for the provision of adequate docking and navigational facilities.

Off-shore Fisheries

5.26 The potentialities of the off-shore fisheries are yet to be determined. Some of the richest Prawn grounds of the world are located off Kerala coast, and Prawns caught there are of excellent quality. Besides Prawns, fairly large quantities of other valuable species are also caught in the off-shore waters. It may, therefore, be useful to undertake shrimp and purse-sienning. It will also be desirable to operate one or two vessels for Tuna fishing on an experimental basis. Tuna is at present landed in small quantities, but it is believed that there are good prospects of large catches in the off-shore and more distant waters. Since both bull-trawling and other trawling have proved almost equally successful in the Kerala waters, it will be desirable to continue and enlarge these operations further.

5.27 The fishing pressure in the off-shore waters of Kerala is at present negligible. Judging by the intensity of fishing in many other parts of the world, it seems likely

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that the addition of about 35 trawlers, 50 medium-sized boats and one or two Tuna boats may not have any adverse effect on the resources. However, it is advisable to proceed cautiously in this matter. It is, therefore, suggested that during the next five years only 15 trawlers, 20 medium-sized boats and one Tuna boat be put into operation. If the suggested operations prove successful, the number of off-shore fishing vessels can be increased by another 20 trawlers, 30 medium-sized boats and a few Tuna boats during the Fourth Plan.

5.28 For the present trawlers like Japanese bull-trawlers operating in the off-shore waters of Maharashtra may be employed in Kerala too. The cost of such a trawler with the necessary gear and equipment including navigational and fish finding aids is expected to be Rs. 500,000. The investment in the Third Plan period, for putting into operation 15 such trawlers will be about Rs. 75 lakhs.

5.29 It is expected that the total landing of each of the proposed trawlers will not be less than 700 tons per annum. On account of large proportion of prawns and other quality fishes landed by the off-shore fishing vessels, the value of the catch of a trawler may be estimated at Rs. 210,000 and that of the 15 trawlers about Rs. 30 lakhs.

5.30 For shrimp trawling, purse-seinning and gile netting, medium-sized boats of 50 to 60 feet in overall length, fitted with 80 to 100 H.P. engines may be suitable. A Tuna boat may have to be 120 feet or more in length with a gross tonnage of 250-300. The capital cost of 20 medium-sized boats and a Tuna boat would be about Rs. 45 lakhs. On a rough estimate, the catches would come up to 3,000 tons valued at about Rs. 9 lakhs. The total capital cost for all the vessels would thus be Rs. 1.2 crores, and the anticipated additional annual production by the end of the Third Plan about 12,000 tons valued at Rs. 39 lakhs. The additional investment for the new vessels proposed for the Fourth Plan would come to Rs. 1.75 crores, and the additional production by the end of 1970-71 to about 19,000 tons valued at Rs. 57 lakhs. Thus, the total capital cost of developing the off-shore fisheries during the next decade would be about Rs. 2.95 crores and the total annual additional production would be of the order of 32,000 tons, valued at Rs. 96 lakhs. A total crew of about 850 will be necessary.

5.31 As far as possible commercial off-shore fishing should be undertaken by private companies in collaboration with foreign fishing interests. Such collaboration will not only save the foreign exchange necessary for the purchase of the fishing vessels, gears and other equipment, but it would also provide valuable opportunities for the training of Indian personnel.

Coastal Fisheries

5.32 Introduction of mechanized fishing in the State would substantially increase the output from coastal fisheries. In addition, encouraging results are expected from a more extensive use of improved fishing gear. Mechanization of fishing will require several ancillary facilities like berthing, landing, preservation, marketing, etc. A 22 feet mechanized boat yields about 60 per cent and a 25 feet boat about 110 per cent larger catch as compared with the catch by non-mechanized boats.

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*433 228 435 654 5.33 The introduction of about 1,600 mechanized boats during the next decade is not likely to subject Kerala's fishing grounds to undue pressure. A beginning may be made with 600 such boats during the Third Plan. The cost of a new mechanized boat (engine, fishing gear and equipment) would be about Rs. 29,000. It is desirable to continue with the present pattern of financial help to the fishermen for boats and gears in the form of loans and subsidies for some time to come.[1] A subsidized mechanized boat would cost about Rs. 19,000. This amount should be advanced to the fishermen by the Government as a long-term loan. On this basis, the total capital cost of putting 1,600 mechanized boats into operation during the next 10 years will be of the order of Rs. 4.64 crores (Rs. 1.76 crores as subsidy and Rs. 2.88 crores as loan). The consequential annual production is expected to be of the order of 30,000 tons by the end of the Third Plan, and 80,000 tons by the end of the Fourth Plan. The value of the additional production of 80,000 tons will be Rs. 2 crores.

*433 228 5.34 These mechanized boats should be operated from a select number of Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, each centre being provided with such basic facilities for the fishing industry as the supply of oils and lubricants, refrigeration, processing, etc. The establishment of a number of such Integrated Centres should be the utilimate aim. The Indo-Norwegian Project has already developed an Integrated Centre at Neendakara. About 15 of these centres may be established during the next two Plans. Among other places, Quilon, Alleppey, Cochin, Azhikode, Ponnani, Beypore, Tellichery, Cannanore and Balliapatam would provide good sites for developing such centres.

5.35 The introduction of 1,600 mechanized boats will create employment opportunities directly for about 6,400 fishermen. In order to obviate the unemployment situation, the Government may undertake a programme of supplying about 6,000 indigenous boats which will create employment for about 22,000 fishermen by the end of the Fourth Plan. The average cost of an indigenous boat with the necessary gear would be Rs. 2,000 (Rs. 1,000 for the craft and an equivalent amount for the gear). A subsidy of 25 per cent on the cost of the boat and another 33⅓ per cent on the cost of gear may be given to the fishermen. The total capital cost on 6,000 boats would be about Rs. 1.2 crores. The additional catch from these indigenous boats is expected to be of the order of 60,000 tons per annum by the end of 1970-71, valued at Rs. 1.5 crores.

5.36 The existing boats can increase their catches considerably if they are provided with better fishing gear. At present there are about 22,000 indigenous crafts in the coastal waters of Kerala. Initially, at least a third of these boats should be supplied with better gear. The cost of such a programme would be about Rs. 85 lakhs. At the present rate of subsidy of 33⅓ per cent, the Government's share in this cost will be Rs. 28 lakhs. An additional production of 25,000 tons of fish valued at Rs. 62.5 lakhs may be expected by the end of the Fourth Plan.

5.37 Thus, the development of coastal fisheries would entail a total investment of about Rs. 7 crores, of which Rs. 3 crores would be required during the Third Plan. As a result of this investment, an additional annual production of 80,000 tons valued

[1] A subsidy of 50 per cent is given on the cost of engine, 25 per cent on that of hull, and 33⅓ per cent on that of gear and tackle.

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at Rs. 2 crores may be expected by 1965-66 and of 165,000 tons valued at Rs. 4.6 crores by 1970-71.

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INLAND FISHERIES

Estuarine and Backwater Fisheries

5.38 The catch of fish from the backwaters could be increased considerably by establishing fish farms on a large scale. Out of the 300 square miles of backwaters, the area that can be profitably converted into fish farms is not known. It is however, believed that it will not be difficult to develop about 15 square miles of this area.

5.39 Areas close to the entrance to the sea can be partly reclaimed by putting up embankments and then converted into fish farms. The fish tanks thus formed can be filled with water from the sea at high tides through channels fitted with sluice and wire gauze shutters. It would be desirable to encourage the private fish farmers and their cooperatives to take up this work on a large scale with the help of Government loans and subsidies. The total initial capital cost for this purpose will be of the order of Rs. 1 crore, of which Rs. 50 lakhs will be required during the Third Plan. The yield per acre of the existing fish farms is about 250 lbs. per annum. But with proper stocking of suitable species, the yield can be raised to 400 lbs. per acre. On this basis, the total output from 15 square miles would be of the order of 1,800 tons valued at Rs. 9 lakhs by the end of the Fourth Plan.

Reservoir Fisheries

5.40 Reservoir fisheries in Kerala also have scope for development. Since the wild stocks comprise mostly cat fish, minor carp and other uneconomic varieties, the reservoirs will have to be stocked intensively with fingerlings of more valuable species. At present there are about 15,000 acres of reservoirs available for fish culture, and an additional area of the same order is likely to become available during the Third Plan. In view of the existing dearth of fish seed, an area of not more than 23.16 square miles may be intensively stocked during the Third Plan. This may be raised to 46.32 square miles by the end of the Fourth Plan. The annual fish seed requirement for stocking 23.16 square miles by the end of the Third Plan will be of the order of 15 millions, increasing to 30 millions by the end of the Fourth Plan. A number of fish seed farms where induced breeding can be undertaken, will have to be established with facilities for rearing the seed into fingerlings. The capital cost of such farms and of five vehicles for transporting the fish seed, etc., would be about Rs. 12 lakhs, half of which could be implemented in the Third Plan. The total annual production of fish from 30,000 acres of reservoirs is expected to be of the order of 2,000 tons, valued at Rs. 9 lakhs.

5.41 Although fish seed production and the stock and management of reservoirs would be the responsibility of the State Fisheries Department, their exploitation should

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*433 228 be entrusted to Fishermen's Cooperatives. This can be done either on lease or on royalty basis. The Department should, however, provide the necessary technical guidance for exploitation work.

5.42 Effective exploitation of the reservoirs may present some problems on account of the depth of water and presence of obstrcutions at the bottom. In reservoirs still under construction or planned for the future, all the obstructions like tree stumps, boulders, etc., should be removed before the water is impounded.

GENERAL MEASURES

5.43 An increase in the output of fish or for that matter of any other commodity is not an end in itself. Adequate measures have to be taken to distribute these to the final consumers. A proper distribution system assumes a much greater importance in case of a perishable commodity like fish. The three important aspects of the distribution system viz., refrigeration, transport and marketing are discussed in what follows.

*433 228 254 *Refrigeration*

5.44 The provision of adequate refrigeration facilities is important for the preservation and marketing of fish. The present production of ice in Kerala is about 100 tons. The bulk of this production is consumed in restaurants and other similar establishments ; the quantity available for the fishery industry is far from adequate. The State Fisheries Department has established four ice and cold storage plants, two of them having ice and cold storage equipment only, and the remaining two having freezing facilities as well. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has a freezing plant at Vizhinjom. The Indo-Norwegian Project also runs an ice plant, and the ice produced there is utilized for the marketing of fish undertaken by the Project as well as by the fishermen of the Project area. Nearly 814 tons of ice were produced at this plant in 1958-59. Two more ice plants, one each at Chowghat and Azhikode, with a capacity of 5 tons of ice per day and ice and storage capacity of about 40 tons, are expected to be established shortly.

5.45 The existing refrigeration facilities in Kerala will have to be expanded considerably during the Third and Fourth Plans. It will be desirable to set up ice and cold storage plants at all production centres, especially at the proposed Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where the bulk of the sea fish will be landed. Important consumption centres like Kottayam, Trivandrum, etc., will also require these facilities. It is estimated that about 10 ice and cold storage plants will be required during the Third Plan and another 15 during the Fourth Plan. The total capital expenditure for the installation of these 25 ice and cold storage plants will be of the order of Rs. 75 lakhs of which about Rs. 30 lakhs will be in the Third Plan. It is worthwhile considering the grant of some subsidy to the prospective operators for the installation of such plants. Cooperative societies should also be encouraged to set up and operate these plants.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

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*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
647 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be espe-
655 cially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

will be essential to provide a properly trained and experienced Fisheries Development Officer in overall charge of each Integrated Centre for coordinating its activities.

Training

5.57 At present there are three centres to train fishermen in the State. The training course which extends over six months aims mainly at training the fishermen in the operation, servicing and maintenance of marine engines, making of nets and tackles, improved fishing methods and the fundamentals of navigation.

5.58 These centres are located at Neendakara, Ernakulam, and Beypore. The first two centres can train 20 fishermen each in a batch, and the last can train 15. So far, 272 fishermen have been trained at the Ernakulam and Beypore centres (run by the Fisheries Department), of whom 150 are now actually employed in mechanized fishing. At the Neendakara centre, which is run by the Indo-Norwegian Project, 121 fishermen have undergone training so far.

5.59 The programme suggested for the next 10 years would require a crew of about 6,400. This would involve a huge training programme and entail a heavy burden on the State. Arrangements can at best be made to provide training facilities to about half the number. The rest can receive on-the-job training from the trained fishermen. As about 1,200 trained fishermen would be required by the end of the Third Plan, not only will the capacity of the existing training centres have to be increased but also at least five new centres will have to be established.

5.60 The operation of the proposed medium-sized boats will also require the services of trained skipper-cum-master fisherman. Either a special centre for training skippers should be established in the State, or the facilities at the Government of India Deep-Sea Fishing Stations at Bombay and other places should be expanded. For operating trawlers, the State Government should enlist the collaboration of foreign fishing companies in order to obtain along with the fishing vessels, the services of trained technical personnel. At the same time efforts should also be made to train Indian personnel in the various fields by appointing them as understudies to the foreign technicians or by sending them abroad. The training of Fisheries Development Officers, Marketing Officers and other high level technical staff can be arranged at the Institute of Fisheries Education, which is proposed to be started by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture. For training the middle and lower level staff, it is desirable to establish a Fisheries Training Institute in the State.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

5.61 A substantial part of investment will be on mechanization of boat craft and acquisition of trawlers for off-shore fishing. These two items alone will absorb Rs. 6.35 crores out of a total investment of Rs. 10.72 crores.[1] Details of investment on various items are given in Table 27.[2] This does not include expenditure on deve-

[1] The outlay allocated for the Third Plan is Rs. 4.5 crores, which will leave a balance of Rs. 6.75 for the Fourth Plan, if suggestions made in this Report are to be implemented.

[2] [Table 27, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed — Ed/wt]

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lopment of fishing harbours, landing and berthing facilities, rail transport, training, welfare work, cooperatives, research, etc. A considerable part of the expenditure will be in the form of loan to fishermen recoverable in course of time.

5.62 As a result of this programme the additional production of fish by the end of the Fourth Plan can be expected to be of the order of 200,800 tons per annum, valued at Rs. 5.26 crores. These programmes for fishing development would create additional employment opportunities for about 33,000 persons in Kerala during the next decade. This figure, however, does not include employment opportunities which would be created by the development of culture fisheries, marketing, net-making, transportation, supervision and training.

Chapter 6

Minerals

FROM THE POINT of view of its industrial development, Kerala's mineral resources are a weak link in the State's economy. With a share of only 1.7 per cent in the all-India production of the minerals, Kerala lags behind most other States in the output of minerals. During 1955-56, the net value contributed by the minerals (Rs. 1.95 crores) was 0.6 per cent of the State income against one per cent of country's income. 433* 136 [434]

6.2 The important minerals of the State are beach sands comprising ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, zircon, china-clay and tile-clay. Among these ilmenite and china-clay are the most prominent. The reserves of these minerals are adequate to last more than 20 years and may, therefore, be classified as "minerals with adequate reserves". Graphite, iron ore and mica are also found, though only in very small quantities. The deposits of limeshells occur in lakes and along the coast, but are rather modest in content. The metallic minerals and fossil fuels, however, are almost completely absent. It is the deficiency of these minerals which presents an obstacle to the growth of large scale industries.

6.3 Apart from beach sand collection and limeshell winning from the lakes and estuaries, there are eleven workings, all open cast. These do not include tile-clay working about which no data is available. The number of persons engaged in all these 11 mining enterprises (inclusive of beneficiation) is roughly 6,900. However, according to 1951 Census, the number of persons employed in mining as well as in stone-quarrying is about 18,000, i.e., 0.3 per cent of total working force (all-India 0.4%). 316 317 464

6.4 Table 28[1] gives the output of minerals from the various workings and their value. In 1955, the value of minerals production was Rs. 1.35 crores. Next year, the value of production went upto Rs. 1.95 crores, representing an increase of approximately 37 per cent. This steep rise was mainly due to the increase in ilmenite production, which went upto 314,348 tons in 1956 from 231,585 tons in 1955. Production registered a further increase of about Rs. 20 lakhs during the next year, (that is, 1957), reaching a level of Rs. 2.1 crores. This was maintained during the next two years, that is, 1958 and 1959. In 1960, however, there was a setback as one of the mineral sand companies had since closed down; and it is likely that the value of the output might not have exceeded Rs. 1.3 crores. 433* 316 317

[Text continues on p. 92]

1 [Table 28, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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MAP 9

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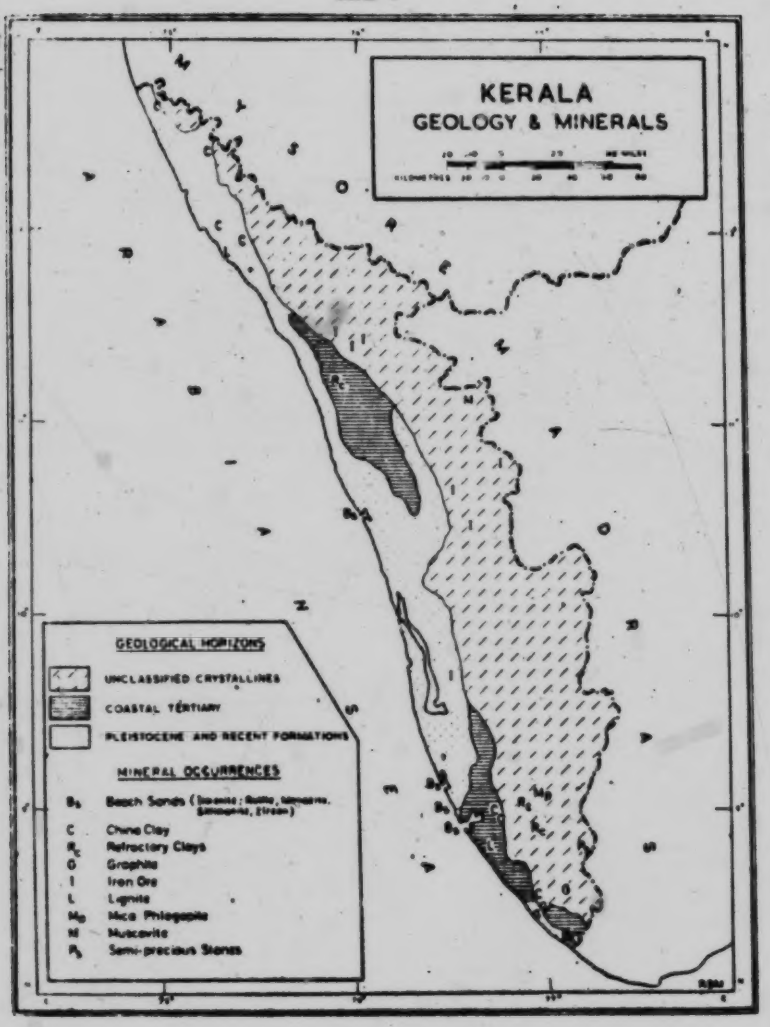

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MINERAL RESOURCES: SIZE OF DEPOSITS AND EXTRACTION COST

6.5 In the following pages the importance of the mineral resources, the size of the deposits, costs of extraction—and allied factors, as they affect the industrialization programmes for Kerala, are discussed at some length. 128

Ilmenite

6.6 Foremost among the mineral resources of the State are the beach sand deposits in Quilon district which contain large concentrations of heavy minerals like ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite and zircon. Some of the ilmenite is of inferior quality due to leucoxenization, particularly along the Neendakara—Azhiyikkal bar. 317 [438]

6.7 The heavy mineral occurrences are of three types:

(i) Back beach sand dunes, which form a wasting asset.
(ii) Beach washings, which are renewed seasonally during the monsoons.
(iii) Sand bar.

In general, the beach washings have a higher content of ilmenite and other heavy minerals than the dunes and the sand bar. The extent of the variations in this respect may be seen in the table below:

	Beach washing (Per cent)	*Dunes (Per cent)*	*Sand Bar (Per cent)*
Ilmenite	75/78	60/70	40
Other heavy minerals	15/20	10/25	--
Quartz	around 50	10/15	60

6.8 Of these, the dune deposits are rapidly being used up; and as for the washings, it is not possible to predict the quantities that are likely to be available from time to time. The main reliance for ilmenite has, therefore, to be placed on the sand bar, the total reserves from which are estimated at 34.08 million metric tons.[1] Another estimate places the reserves at 50 million tons. In addition, there are a few minor occurrences in the lake deposits, and in the interior of the country beyond 500 feet of the shoreline. 433 317

6.9 At present, however, nearly half the requirements of raw sand come from the washings and the other half from the dunes. The collection of raw sand is done through contractors who supply the sand to the mineral companies. The dune sand is worked manually with a wooden scraper and the pools are very often not backfilled. Beach washings are merely scraped off the beach wherever they accumulate. The cost of the raw sand from these sources works out to nearly Rs. 8 a ton.[2] [435] [113]

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, Geneva, 1958, p. 106.
[2] *Quartz sand at Pallipuram*—pits mouth value Rs. 1.50 a ton.

*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

*[433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

rest of the production is exported to various countries, the bulk of it going to the USA and the UK. Export figures are given in Table 29 for the period 1956–59.

6.17 Irregular supplies made through the Koilthottam port, mainly due to labour difficulties, have resulted in the loss of contracts with importers in the USA. Export possibilities of ilmenite are now limited only to two contracts to UK totalling 1,50,000 tons per year. This setback has occurred in spite of the fact that the Chavara ilmenite has a high TiO_2 content (55-60%) and is cheaper when compared to Malayan ilmenite (about 45% TiO_2) which, however, finds a ready export market.

6.18 India, which at one time used to hold almost a monopolistic position in the export of ilmenite has now to face competition. Side by side with the expansion of titanium industry, other world sources for supply of ilmenite have come into operation as in Norway, Canada, Malaya, Australia, South Africa, etc. Whereas in 1940 India used to contribute 90 per cent to world production of ilmenite, now its share is only 25 per cent.

6.19 In view of the rapid expansion of India's steel industry, the consumption of TiO_2 pigment is itself expected to go up. The total requirements of ilmenite by 1965-66 would be 150,000 tons a year for export and 36,000 tons a year for the manufacture of TiO_2 pigment, on the basis of proposal for expansion of Titanium Dioxide plant at Trivandrum incorporated in this report. Table 30 gives demand for Titanium Dioxide pigment from steel industry and various other sources. The two existing companies can produce about 160,000 tons a year. Extra capacity of 30,000 tons a year will have to be installed, and this along with certain improvements suggested earlier may require an investment of Rs. 20 lakhs. Very little increase in labour force is envisaged. The existing labour force itself appears to be excessive, since the output per man per shift works out to a low level of 0.4 tons.

6.20 During the Fourth Plan period, steel production is expected to double itself. Therefore, by 1970-71, the demand for Titanium Dioxide may also be expected to be roughly double of the demand in 1965-66. This would necessitate another 30,000 tons of ilmenite per annum. Total requirement of ilmenite by 1970-71 would thus be 220,000 tons a year, comprising of 150,000 tons for export and 60,000 tons for the manufacture of Titanium Dioxide. This would involve further additional outlay of Rs. 10 lakhs. Even this order of expansion can be achieved with the existing labour at an output of one ton per man per shift which would measure a fairly reasonable level of productivity.

Monazite

6.21 Monazite is a phosphate of thorium and cerium with rare earth elements and small quantities of Uranium Oxide. It constitutes a source of the radio-active element, thorium being used for atomic energy purposes. Monazite was first discovered in India, by C.W. Von Sohomberg, a German citizen, in 1909 along the beach at Manavalakkurichi.

6.22 Monazite occurs along with other heavy minerals in the beach sands. Reserves of the order of 6.7 million tons are estimated to be present in the bar between Neendakara and Kayarkulam. There is, however, no production of monazite

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135 concentrates from Chavara, the Manavalakkurichi (in Madras State) material being preferred because of its higher thorium content.

317 6.23 A rare earth factory is located in the State at Alwaye, which processes 1,500
328 tons of monazite a year ; but it obtains its requirements from Manavalakkurichi in the Madras State. This factory produces Thorium Oxide, rare earth salts and
[439] Trisodium Phosphate. The Chavara Monazite may be considered for use in the rare earth factory instead of the monazite from Manavalakkurichi in Madras State, particularly in view of the fact that monazite would be a byproduct of ilmenite which is won in larger quantities in Kerala and may, therefore, prove cheaper.

Rutile

317 6.24 Rutile is another titanium mineral occurring in smaller quantities in the beach sands. The beach washings contain, on an average, about 4 per cent of rutile. A portion of the sand bar at Neendakara is estimated to contain 740,125 tons of the mineral.[1] Kerala is the only State in India producing rutile.

317 6.25 At present only one of the mineral sand factory units produces this mineral.
328 Electro-static separators are used in concentrating rutile from the non-magnetic tailings after the extraction of ilmenite. Recovery is one-fifth of the rutile content of raw sand and the rest is allowed to go into the tailings for lack of equipment.

*433 6.26 Only small quantities of rutile are produced. During 1959, 482 tons valued
317 at Rs. 4.75 lakhs were beneficiated. The current price is Rs. 1,000 a ton. The mi-
328 neral is not utilized in the State, but is sent to Bombay and Calcutta for the manufac-
[439] ture of welding rods. During 1957, 155 tons of rutile were imported to meet the
[435] requirements of this industry. Future requirements of welding rods within India is estimated to go up from 417 m. ft. in 1960-61 to 2,022 m. ft. in 1970-71.[2] To meet this rise in demand, output of rutile would have to be stepped upto 6,750 tons by 1970-71. An expansion in capacity of this order would require an investment of the order of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Sillimanite and Zircon

135 6.27 Sillimanite as well as zircon occur in small amounts in beach sands in association with ilmenite and other heavy minerals. They average 5.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively of the beach washings. In addition, 1,916,260 tons of sillimanite and 799,350 tons of zircon are estimated to form a part of the Neendakara bar.[3] Only experimental production of either of these minerals has been taken up so far.

*433 6.28 Sillimanite is mainly used in refractories, but the internal requirement of
317 sillimanite refractories is very small. Moreover, the material from Assam which is of a massive variety can be shaped into blocks and used directly. Export possibilities are also dim and due to the development of artificial mulite bricks from domestic kyanite in the USA. Exports have dropped from 20,000 tons to 6,000 tons in 1957.

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, P. 102.
[2] NCAER estimates.
[3] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Op. Cit., p. 102.

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6.29 Zircon is also commonly used in refractories. The pattern of consumption of zircon is as follows: 433* 317

	(Per cent)
Refractories	45
Vitreous enamels	7
Electrical and chemical industries	3
Foundry facings	19
Glass	1

In addition, zircon was considered for use in nuclear reactors. But the great geochemical coherence between zirconium and hafnium makes it unsuitable for this purpose, since their separation is very costly. Niobium is, therefore, replacing zirconium in reactor technology. In view of these factors both zircon and sillimanite do not possess very bright prospects.

China-Clay

6.30 China-clay is the principal raw material for the manufacture of china and other porcelains. Apart from this, it finds a number of uses, as for example, in sizings for textiles and as fillers for paper, rubber, linoleum, soap and cosmetics, as well as for pastels, pencils and insecticides. The quality of china-clay found in Kerala especially in Kundara, is claimed to be one of the finest in India. The china-clay occurrences, reported from Changanacheri in the north to beyond Trivandrum in the south, constitute one of the most important horizons in South India. 317

6.31 According to a survey carried out by the Geological Survey of India, the china-clay deposits in Trivandrum and Quilon districts are extensive. In the Kundara area, it is estimated that one square mile would yield 22 million tons of china-clay. In addition, reserves of the order of 40,000 tons are stated to be available at Murukkampuzha. In the Vanchi clay mines at Chathannoor, the clay horizon has an average thickness of 10-15 feet. The occurrences reported from Ernakulam and Kozhikode districts are either very small or very inferior. 433* 317

6.32 There were six mines in operation in 1960; one of these, viz., the Kundara clay mines is run by State Government; the others are privately operated. All the mines are open surface workings and mining is by manual labour. With the exception of the working at Kurukkampuzha, all the others have washing plants attached to them. Production of crude china-clay in these concerns during the past few years has been steadily rising as may be seen from the following table:

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value Rs.
1956	15,401*	355,000*
1957	15,578	319,000*
1958	17,047	486,000
1959	21,454	605,000

*Mineral Production in India, 1957

6.33 The quantity in the Kundara Clay Mines has already been taken to a depth of 35′ in the china-clay horizon. Further deepening, it is feared, will only result in material of lower or partly altered basement gneiss being won. However, in view of

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the extensive horizontal spread of this horizon, mining operations are capable of considerable lateral expansion.

6.34 The china-clay from Quilon and Trivandrum districts is mostly consumed within the State by the Government-run ceramic factory at Kundara and the other privately owned ceramic factories, as well as by the rubber, paper, insecticide and cement (for white cement) industries in the State. A few hundred tons are supplied to consumers in the neighbouring States and a small quantity is also (75 tons in 1959 and 44 tons during Jan.—August 1960) exported to Ceylon. The crockery and sanitaryware plants in the State consume about 1,900 tons of refined clay and another 1,700 tons are used by the insecticide, rubber and paper factories in the State. The china-clay produced from Cannanore district is mostly exported to other parts of India.

6.35 It is worth noting here that India imports textile grade china-clay. Import figures for 1956 and 1957 are 7,282 tons and 4,354 tons respectively. The State could very well fill this gap particularly in view of the excellent quality of the material it possesses. Increase in output to meet this demand should be undertaken from the Quilon district, where large reserves are available.

6.36 Demand for china-clay (in terms of crude material)[1] is likely to be as under by 1965-66:

	(Tons)
For ceramics, inclusive of insulators	9,000
For the rubber, paper and insecticide industries	10,000
For the textile industry	15,000
For white cement manufacture	12,000

6.37 During the period 1966–71, china-clay requirements are likely to go up still further as a result of setting up of another high tension insulator factory and increase in demand from the paper, textile and insecticide industries, and are estimated to reach 70,000 tons in terms of unwashed clay by 1970-71. To meet this rise in demand, mining in the public sector at Kundara can be expanded to produce an additional 13,500 tons by 1965-66. This would hardly involve any mechanization. Along with this, the capacity of the washing plant will have to be increased to 30 tons a day. The expansion of mining operations and installation of additional washing capacity proposed would roughly involve a capital outlay of Rs. 5 lakhs.

6.38 Reopening and development of the mines at Chathanoor should also be considered at a rate of exploitation of 22,000 tons of crude clay per year. A washing plant with a capacity of 30 tons a day would be required at this mine. This mine and washing plant may be operated in the private sector. The capital outlay required would be of the order of Rs. 5 lakhs and the mine and washing plant would together provide employment for 310 persons.

6.39 In order to produce an anticipated 70,000 tons per year by 1970-71, representing an increase of 24,000 tons a year over the Third Plan period, a further expansion of mining operations and additional washing capacity of the extent of 20 tons a day will have to be considered either at Kundara or Chathanoor. The additional

[1] Refined china-clay is roughly one-third the weight of crude china-clay.

investment for this will be about Rs. 5 lakhs and additional employment for 350 persons. 433* 317

Graphite

6.40 This mineral occurs in the form of disseminated grains, stringers and thin veins in surface laterites and the crystalline rocks underneath, mainly charnockitic and associated types. While the disseminated grains occur in charnockitic rocks, the worthwhile occurrences appear to be confined to the area of leptynites.[1] 135

6.41 Surface occurrences of graphite are known to occur in Kerala at a number of places, viz., Plachikuzhi, Nellimood, Narical, Ozhupara, Karipur, Perumpallimuzhi and Vellanad in Nedumangad taluk, Puliyarakonam and Chenagalloor in Neyyattinkara taluk and in various other isolated localities in Trivandrum district. The occurrences are being investigated geo-physically using electrical methods without appreciable success. This is probably due to the electrical anomalies being marked by the laterite host rock. Perhaps geo-chemical methods may prove more fruitful. 316

6.42 This mineral was mined in Kerala between 1898 and 1911 by the Morgan Crucible Company, altogether 35,000 tons of material being won. Consequent upon the discovery of graphite in Madagascar, operations ceased in Kerala. The most productive mine was at Vellanad. Recently operations were started at Aukulam on a small scale, but were suspended shortly thereafter. The production has been negligible. The prime need in the near future will be to have a more detailed prospecting on the lines suggested. 433* 316

Iron Ore

6.43 Quartz-magnetite bodies are reported from various localities. In all these cases, the top of these bodies is laterized and often very rich in iron. However, within a few feet the iron content decreases very appreciably. 135

6.44 The Nanminda occurrence (Pookunnu Hill) is probably the largest one. It would be necessary to explore this area in detail, possibly with core drills before any reasonable conclusion can be drawn. The ore body is steep dipping and will have to be won by underground mining, and further, magnetite concentrate obtained. All this would make the prospect very dear when compared to other iron ore occurrences elsewhere in the country being currently exploited. Further, the possibility of establishing a pig iron plant based either on low-shaft furnaces or electrical furnace techniques, is fraught with difficulties because of the non-availability of coke or lignite and fluxing material within the State. 433* 135

Limeshell Deposits

6.45 Even though no important horizon of limestone is found in the State, limeshell is found to occur in the various backwaters and also in the estuaries of some 135

[1] I.C. Chacko: *A Sketch of the Geology of Travancore.*

[113]

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135 of the rivers. The best known among these is that of Vembanad lake ; other less important occurrences are in the estuaries of the Kadalundi and Korapuzha rivers, Kozhikode district and Cranganore lake. Only a few of these tracts have been prospected so far. A systematic exploration programme should, therefore, be initiated in all the backwater and estuarine tracts.

317 6.46 The deposits in Vembanad lake were surveyed by the Travancore Cement Company in 1946. There was no layer of limeshell as such, but it occurred amidst sands and clays, the total thickness of the mixed deposits varying from 1-7 feet. Reserves as estimated then were 3 million tons.

6.47 In addition, in the estuary of the Kadalundi river 400,000 to 500,000 tons of limeshell are estimated to be available in an area of 300 acres.[1] About 100,000 tons of material is also likely to be available from the lower reaches of the rivers Pullut and Thathapally which drain into the Cranganore lake.[2]

6.48 These limeshell deposits provide a raw material of very high purity and which is eminently suitable for use in the chemical industry and in the manufacture of white cement.

*433 317 6.49 The present production is mainly from Kottayam and Alleppey districts, where the Vembanad lake deposits are exploited. Small quantities are also won from the Kadalundi and Korapuzha estuaries. Details of production available for 1959 are given below:

District	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
Alleppey	9,098	76,542
Kottayam	86,509	696,333
Kozhikode	500 to 1,000	N.A.

*433 317 339 6.50 Excepting small quantities sent to the adjoining States from Kozhikode district, the State's output is consumed within the State. The cement company consumes 70,000 tons of shells a year for producing 50,000 to 60,000 tons of grey cement. About 26,000 tons a year are used in lime-burning of which 25,000 tons come from the Vembanad lake.

6.51 Other limeshell utilizing industries which are under active consideration are a sand-lime brick factory at Pallathara with a capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and a calcium carbide factory at Chingavanam with a capacity of 10,000 tons a year. Both these would use shells from Vembanad lake and their annual requirements would be 8,500 tons and 10,000 tons respectively.

6.52 The total annual requirement during 1961--66 would thus be 108,500 tons of shells from the Vembanad lake. In view of the fact that the cement factory has been in existence for the last 11 years and has already consumed about a third of the original reserve of 3 million tons, proposals for new limeshell-based industries in the same area introduce problems regarding assured reserves of raw materials and their conservation.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Geological Department*, Government of Kerala, 1958-59, pp. 3-4.
[2] Ibid pp. 3-4.

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6.53 First, possibilities of an alternative source, e.g., shells from the sea, should be assessed quantitatively, which could possibly meet requirements of the local lime-burning units. This would relieve the pressure on the lake and estuarine deposits, which could then be conserved for larger industrial units.

6.54 Secondly, new industries could perhaps be located near other known shell deposits. A case in point here is the Calcium Carbide Factory requiring about 10,000 tons annually, which could be located in the Kadalundi area where reserves of the order of 400,000 to 500,000 tons are available. In this location the unit would be assured of its shell requirements for the next 40 to 50 years on the basis of an average annual requirement of 10,000 tons, whereas in the Vembanad lake location, reserves would last only for 15 to 20 years.

6.55 The requirements of the sand-lime brick factory, however, are only about 3,500 tons a year and it should be possible to accommodate this requirement from the present consumption of 25,000 tons by the lime-burning industry.

6.66 In this context, it would be relevant to mention that in absolute terms, the accretion of shells is rather small; and in terms of the proposed rate of exploitation this accretion is even negligible. Further, the proposal to construct a bar across the mouth of the Vembanad lake would change the salinity of the water and would very likely put an end even to this small accretion. As to whether the shell organism could be simulated to thrive on a large scale is a problem for long term research.

6.57 In the meantime, in view of the rapid depletion of reserves in the Vembanad lake, strict control should be exercised over the exploitation of this deposit with periodical inspection to check unauthorized collection. The rate of exploitation may be kept at the present level but should not be allowed to rise.

Mica

6.58 Two varieties of mica, muscovite and phlogopite are known to occur in the State. Muscovite is reported from Kulikhoor, and Sholayaramson from Palghat district and phlogopite from Punalur in Quilon district. However data relating to reserves are not available for any of these deposits.

6.59 At Kulikoor in Palghat district, a few prospecting pits have been put down which exposed a small vein of ruby mica with very little strains. The presence of ruby mica on a fairly large scale along the same belt in the adjoining State may be taken as a favourable indication. Further prospecting should be undertaken in the area.

6.60 Production from the only mine in the State at Punalur has been intermittent. Figures for production since 1957 when mining activity was revived are given below:

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1957	72	40,000
1958	72	40,000
1959	46	23,000

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433 6.61 Formerly mica used to be exported from this mine, but now because of its 316 inferior grade and development of cheaper substitutes, the market has ceased to exist. Production has been giving demand and the mine is again on the verge of closing down.

Quartz-Sand

135 6.62 An extensive deposit of quartz-sand occurs along the Shertallai-Pattanakad-Pallipuram-Panavally area. Reserves of the order of 80 million tons are said to exist here. However, all the sand is not glass grade, being gritty in large portions.

317 6.63 There are two workings in Shertallai taluk, one at Pallipuram and the other at Panavally. Mining is selective in that only such areas which contain finer material are worked. The workings are not mechanized. The raw sand is sieved and winnowed at the workings. Further sieving is done at the glass factory, the final recovery standing at 50 per cent of the original, and represents the portion between 30 and 80 mesh screens.

433 6.64 About 3,000 tons sand is produced annually with a pits-mouth-value 317 of Rs. 1.50 a ton. A major portion of the output is consumed by the glass factory at [323] Alwaye, while the rest is supplied to silicate factories in the State and consumers outside the State.

6.65 A sand-lime brick factory is coming up at Pallathara in the public sector with an installed capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and it will be a major consumer of quartz-sand. Its sand requirements would be 33,750 tons a year. The total raw sand requirements by 1965-66 would be 46,000 tons a year. Exploitation at this rate would require an investment of Rs. 2 lakhs. By 1970-71, the sand requirements would further increase to 90,000 tons a year requiring an additional investment of Rs. 15 lakhs. At the same time, an integrated scheme to work the sands systematically and utilize both the coarse and finer grades should be undertaken, rather than leaving the sand collection to contractors.

Salt

6.66 Salt, besides being an essential ingredient of food, also serves as a basic raw material for the manufacture of alkalies. It is commonly extracted from sea water by solar evaporation. Production of salt in Kerala during the last few years has been as follows :

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1955	56,094	1,180,000
1956	783	10,000
1957	336	5,000
1958	708	10,000
1959	1,087	13,000

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) [435]

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 [439]

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 [464]

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31.[1] 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon,

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

[1] [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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*433 formation of a large number of companies which together won 600 ozs. of metal.
316 During the last war, operations were again commenced but mainly for pyrite, which were also given up.

6.76 It is obvious that all surface occurrences have been worked out. However, prospecting for hidden lodes could still be carried out. A preliminary survey by panning up the stream to the heads of the tributaries in search of mother lodes is indicated.

135 6.77 *Lignite*: A lignite occurrence two feet to eight feet thick exposed on the beach at Varkalai had been reported, but it has proved to be abortive on drilling.

6.78 *Semi-Precious Stones*: The presence of semi-precious stones like cats' eye, amethyst, and iolite are reported from various places in Nedumangad taluk, Thiruvalla and Kollengode, but none has proved worthwhile. Recently beryl has also been reported from mica bearing area at Kulikkoor in Palghat district.

6.79 *Kankar*: In the black cotton soil tracts of Kozhinjampara and Chittur firkas in Palghat district kankar limestone is met with and is used locally in lime burning.

6.80 *Gypsum* : It is known to occur in similar soils in the Coimbatore district of Madras State. An intensive search may, therefore, be made in these black cotton soil areas for this mineral.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 6.81 Mineral resources play a vital role in the economic development of any
135 region. The process of industrial development generally involves a shift from industries based on primary raw materials like agricultural or forest produce to more technologically advanced industries using a higher content of metallic minerals. Kerala is unfortunately placed in this respect as its mineral resources are marked by absence of any of these basic minerals, namely, coal, iron and copper.

*433 6.82 Some of Kerala's industries, however, do have good prospects. Beach sands,
317 the chief mineral assets of Kerala, are the source of titanium bearing ilmenite. Although possibilities of increase in export of this sand are not bright, internal demand for ilmenite from the Titanium Dioxide industry is expected to rise substantially. Similarly, extensive deposits of quartz sand and fine quality china-clay occur in the State. This report envisages a considerable expansion in demand for both of these from existing industries as well as from new factories suggested for production of high tension insulators, sand-lime bricks, etc. In contrast to these three, the other minerals have only limited potentials of development. Thus monazite which contains the radioactive element thorium is available in quantity but has a restricted demand at present. On the other hand, the known reserves of limeshell are in short supply and do not offer scope for expansion of the cement industry based on it.

[135] 6.83 Among the rest, iron ores are not capable of being developed for lack of coal while mica and graphite would depend entirely on future discoveries.

6.84 On the whole, an increase in mineral production from a value of Rs. 130 lakhs in 1961 to Rs. 197 lakhs by 1965-66 and Rs. 250 lakhs by 1970-71 is envisaged here. Between 1956 and 1961 there was, however, a fall in the value of output from

Rs. 200 lakhs to Rs. 130 lakhs mainly due to the loss of export market for ilmenite in the USA. 433* 317

6.85 An increase in the minerals output between 1961–71 of the above order is estimated to require an investment of Rs. 56 lakhs during 1961–66 and Rs. 35 lakhs during 1966–71. Additional employment, however, is expected to increase only by about 2,000, that is, from 7,000 to 9,000 persons. The existing labour employed in ilmenite concerns is rather excessive, and it is considered that output of ilmenite can be raised without much extra labour. These results are summarized in Table 32.[1]

[1] [Table 32, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed --Analyst]

Chapter 7

Power

KERALA HAS IMMENSE potentiality for the generation of hydro-electric power. The State does not possess any resource of coal or oil (within its own boundary) for generation of power but there are 44 rivers which constitute a storehouse of hydel power. This favourable factor compensates for the absence of any fossil fuels. Investigations so far have led to an estimate of this potential to be roughly of the order of 1,539 MW.[1]

7.2 One of the basic problems of Kerala's economy is posed by the situation of acute unemployment prevailing in the State. A long run solution to this lies in an intensive programme of industrialization only. An accelerated pace of industrial development, in turn, requires an ensured supply of adequate power. One possible way of looking at power development activities is to consider power as a complementary factor in the programme of industrialization of the State. Targets for power generation capacity in such cases should be fixed slightly higher than what the demand is expected to be.

7.3 The alternative approach, which is the more feasible one for Kerala, is to consider power, generation itself as an industry and to develop the State's abundant hydro-power resources to the maximum extent possible. The surplus of electricity generated over local requirements could be exported to the neighbouring State of Madras, which is not so well placed in respect of its power resources as Kerala. The electricity exported would provide a means of earning revenue, which is turn could be utilized for capital formation within the State. Moreover, a surplus in power generation capacity is desirable in itself since for a State like Kerala, where some factors deterrent to industrialization have been operating in the past, a regular supply of adequate power should be made to act as an incentive for setting up new industries. Planning for a power surplus and export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States should, therefore, form the keynote of the future power development policy in the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

7.4 The process of power development in the State is already well set. What is now required is to harness the huge energy potential of the State and convert it

[1] By the Central Water and Power Commission.

[text continues on p. 112]

MAP 10

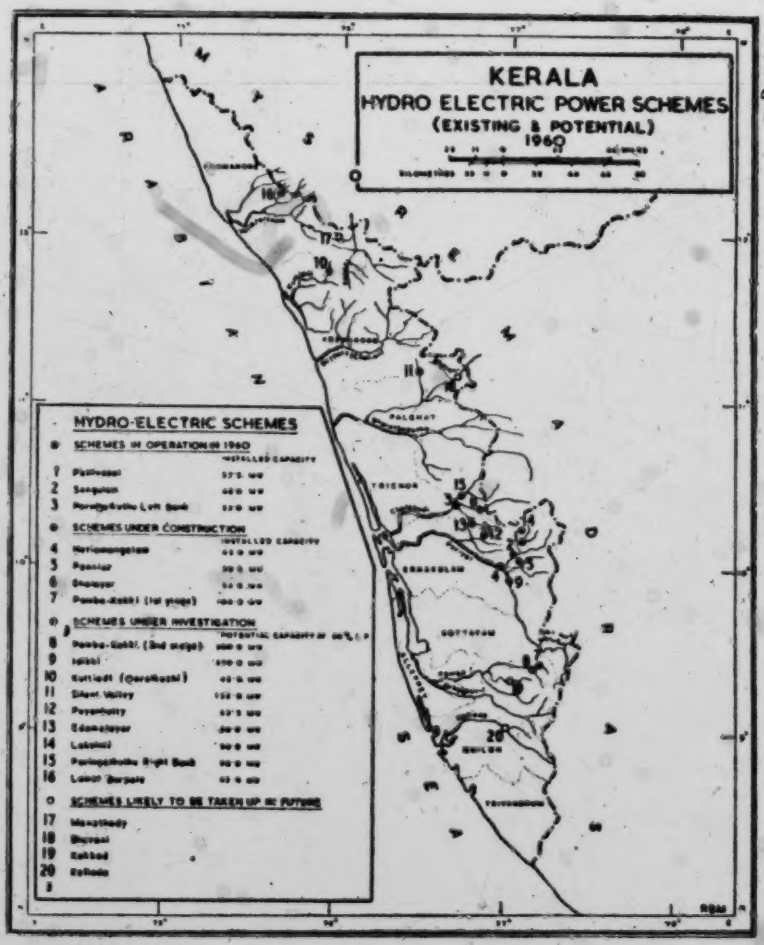

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*433 377 into a useful commodity. If this is done, it is possible to visualize that from 1965 onwards the State can be made the seat of bulk hydro-power generation not only for meeting the requirements of its own development programmes, but also for export to neighbouring areas in the southern zone. During the coming decade activities in connection with power development should, therefore, be geared mainly to the need of achieving this objective.

Prior to the Plans

*433 377 655 7.5 The beginning of an extensive power supply system, utilizing hydro-power resources of the State, was first initiated with the establishment of the hydro-electric power station at Pallivasal in 1940. During the years of the Second World War the power system registered significant progress as a result of increased industrial activity in the State. Just prior to 1951, the State had developed a total installed capacity of about 33 MW, of which 14 per cent was in diesel stations and the rest in hydel projects. A 66 KV transmission system covered the State and power was distributed to about 28,000 consumers in 19[illegible] towns and villages.

First Plan Period

7.6 Out of a total Plan provision of Rs. 30.03 crores, the largest share (Rs. 11.4 crores) was allotted to the development of power. Four hydro-electric projects viz., Sengulam Project, the Poringalkuthu Project I Stage, Poringalkuthu Project II Stage and the Nariamangalam Project, were taken up. During the First Plan period, the Mattupatty Dam (of the Pallivasal Project) with a storage capacity of 1,900 million cubic feet was constructed for augmenting the summer flow to the Pallivasal hydel station. The installed capacity of the station itself was raised to 37.5 MW providing for an effective generating capacity of the order of 32.5 MW. The Sangulam Project was commissioned in 1954 with an installed capacity of 48 MW. The Poringalkuthu Project, I Stage, was almost complete by 1956, and the remaining two projects were taken up for execution only during the last year of the First Plan. By 1956, the generating capacity had risen from 28.5 MW in 1951 to 85 MW, and the energy generated from 151 million units to 350 million units. Besides this, the transmission network was further expanded and 744 villages were electrified. An additional 51,456 consumers were connected to the system.

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Second Plan Period

7.7 The share of power was quite large in the Second Plan allocations. Out of the total outlay of Rs. 87 crores, the allotment for power development alone was Rs. 23.45 crores.

7.8 The total expenditure on power was made up of Rs. 11.40 crores for hydro

electric projects, Rs. 4.82 crores for extension of transmission lines and Rs. 7.23 crores for rural electrification-cum-distribution schemes. The physical targets aimed at under the Second Plan were as follows.

A. Additional Generating Capacity		
(i) Poringalkuthu, I Stage		24 MW
(ii) Poringalkuthu, II Stage		8 ,,
(iii) Neriamangalam scheme		45 ,,
(iv) Sholayar project		54 ,,
(v) Panniar project		30 ,,
	TOTAL	*161 MW*
B. Transmission Lines and Sub-stations		
(i) 110 KV lines		388 circuit miles
(ii) 66 KV lines		43 circuit miles
(iii) 110 KV sub-station		4 nos.
(iv) 66 KV sub-station		6 nos.
C. Rural Electrification and Distribution Schemes		
(i) Villages to be electrified		1,344 nos.
(ii) Additional consumers to be served		105,260 nos.

7.9 The capital investment in the Second Plan, till the end of the year 1959, was nearly Rs. 18.75 crores. Almost all the essential items of plant and equipment had to be imported for working the power schemes included in the Second Plan. The foreign exchange component of the cost is of the order of 45 per cent. The difficulties experienced with regard to the availability of foreign exchange during the early years of the Second Plan affected the progress of the planned hydro-electric schemes in Kerala. Further, pending a decision on the riparian rights of Kerala and Madras regarding the waters of Poringalkuthu and Sholayar, the execution of Sholayar hydel scheme had been delayed. Only the Poringalkuthu II Stage extension could be completed by the end of the Second Plan. The first two units of the Neriamangalam scheme, having a total capacity of 30 MW, were also installed. In consequence, as against a much higher target that is, 246.5 MW, the total installed capacity in the system reached only 147.5 MW as shown by the breakdown below in the table :

INSTALLED CAPACITY IN MW

Name of Station	*At the end of the First Plan (By March 1956)*	*Addition during the Second Plan (1956-61)*	*Total (By March 1961)*
Pallivasal	37.5	Nil	37.5
Sengulam	48	Nil	48.0
Poringalkuthu I Stage	—	24	24.0
Poringalkuthu II Stage	—	8	8.0
Neriamangalam	—	30	30.0
TOTAL	*85.5*	*62*	*147.5*

7.10 Owing to non-commissioning of the Panniar and Sholayar projects, sufficient water was not available for running the machines to their rated capacity either at Poringalkuthu or Neriamangalam. Consequently, by the end of the Second Plan,

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*433 377 effective capacity was only around 84.5 MW. This will rise sharply with the execution of Panniar and Sholayar schemes during the early years of the Third Plan.

655 7.11 The position at the end of the Second Plan was as follows :—

Transmission, Distribution and Rural Electrification schemes had made good progress. The works which were completed include:

(i) the 110 KV Sengulam-Pallom-Kundra double circuit transmission lines and the 110 KV sub-stations at these places;

(ii) the 110 KV Neriamangalam-Alwaye-FACT double circuit transmission lines;

(iii) the 110 KV Sholayar-Poringalkuthu double circuit transmission lines;

(iv) the 66 KV single circuit line from Viyyur and Palghat; and

(v) the 66 KV sub-station at Peermade, Thiruvalla, Alleppey and Vythilla and 33 sub-stations at Karumagappally.

Besides a carrier communication system linking all the generating and receiving stations and the headquarters of the State Electricity Board was completed and taken into service. In the sphere of rural electrification, the benefit of electricity was further [365] extended to 1,003 centres, additional 97,662 consumers were connected to the system and 57,282 street lights were installed in various parts of the State.

GENERATION AND UTILIZATION OF ELECTRICITY

*433 377 7.12 Table 33[2] summarizes the progress of electric power generation and utilization in the State of Kerala during the period 1954-55 to 1958-59. Some of the characteristics are worth noting. Of the total available electrical energy, about 20 per cent is lost in transmission and distribution or used for power station auxiliaries (all India 17.5%). Of the rest, as could be expected, industries are the most important consumers. They account for about 65 per cent of total electricity consumption in the State, the comparable proportion in the country being 50-55 per cent. Next in order of importance is domestic lighting which absorbs about 6.5 to 8 per cent (all India about 10%). The proportion of power used for irrigation has varied between 2 and 4 per cent of the total. Pumping out of water from the water-logged areas of Kuttanad is one of the main source of utilization of electricity in the sphere of irrigation.

7.13 Apart from these, two other important points may be noted : (i) Practically all the energy generated (97-98%) is from the hydro-electric power stations. This is in marked contrast to the pattern of power generation in the rest of India where roughly 55 per cent of electricity is from thermal sources. However, unlike the rest of India where it is necessary to have thermal stations to stabilize supply of power throughout the year, in Kerala because of an exceptionally well distributed rainfall and consequently assured supply of water over the different seasons, there is no such necessity and (ii) It is significant that the load factor has been steadily increasing during the recent years. The units generated annually per kW of installed capacity reached a figure of 4,400 during 1958-59 from 3,200 in 1954-55, that is, the load factor increased from 37 per cent to 46 per cent. Additional demand for power since 1954 has been met, almost entirely, by more intensive utilization of the existing capacity.

[2] [Table 33, appearing on p. 292 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

As explained earlier, the effective capacity could not be increased beyond 84.5 MW mainly on account of foreign exchange difficulties. 433* 377

7.14 The relative shares of various consumers in the coming years will naturally depend on the pace of economic development. Nevertheless, it can be reliably forecast that the relative proportions will not significantly change and industry will retain its predominant place since it is expected that the industrial development will continue to be considered the pivot for economic growth of Kerala.

7.15 Per capita consumption of electrical energy in the State was about 27.75 kWh in 1959-60, which was slightly less than the all-India level of 30.45 kWh.

Regional Distribution of Electricity Facilities

7.16 There is some imbalance in the distribution of electricity in Kerala. The southern districts which were part of the former progressive State of Travancore-Cochin, are more developed from the standpoint of industry and power, whereas the northern districts constituting the Malabar area are comparatively backward. The relative position of different districts in this regard is indicated in Table 34.† 377 184

7.17 Similarly, the network of transmission and distribution lines also depicts a concentration of electrical facilities in the south or south-central region. Naturally, this has led to a clustering of industries in this area. However, it is possible to even out the position in future by undertaking the extension of transmission lines to the northern parts of Kerala as well. The present programme of extending 110 KV line to the north is a step in the proper direction.

Cost of Power Generation

7.18 One of the outstanding features of power development in Kerala is the low cost of generation. Generally investment per kW of installed capacity is higher in the case of hydro schemes than in the case of thermal power stations. In Kerala, however, the figure for investment per kW of installed capacity is Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 for hydro schemes which is no higher than in the case of thermal stations. Most of the hydro sites are still unexploited and are ideally suitable for hydel generation. Since the catchment areas of hydel projects receive rain from both the south-west and north-east monsoons, the storage capacity required per kW of generating capacity is relatively small which in turn reduces the overall capital cost per kW. It is because of these factors that the initial investment normally incurred in case of hydro-electric schemes in Kerala, excluding transmission and distribution, is as low as Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 per kW of installed capacity against the all-India average of Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,000. Not only investment per kW of installed capacity is about the same for hydro and thermal projects in Kerala, the foreign exchange component of investment on hydro schemes up to generation, will also be of the order of only 25 per cent whereas in case of thermal schemes it is about 50 to 60 per cent. 377 435

7.19 Since the capital cost of hydro-power in Kerala is exceptionally low, the average cost of generation from the existing hydro stations is only 1.7 nP per unit. In the case of schemes under execution as well as the schemes already investigated,

† [Table 34, appearing on p.293 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. 435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35 presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as 432 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, [439] purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis 377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more [328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[113] [1] *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.

[2] [Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

emergence of new power-intensive industries, from 0.8 kWh/Rupee in 1955-56 to 1.7 kWh/Rupee in 1970-71. Considering that power-intensive industries like aluminium will not grow as fast as the other less power-intensive lines of manufacture, the power coefficient is not likely to increase as rapidly in Kerala as in the rest of India. Assuming that in 1970-71 2.0 kWh of power would be needed on the average to produce one rupee worth of output in the factory industry, the projected net output of factories in that year, viz., Rs. 89.2 crores would require about 1,750 million kWh.

7.25 Assuming that the industries still account for 65 per cent of total energy consumption, total demand for energy in 1970-71 would be nearly 2,700 million kWh. This corresponds to 675 MW of generating capacity considering that 4,000 of kWh are generated per kW of capacity. Simultaneous peak demand for energy by 1970-71 may be taken at 675 MW.

7.26 The probable phasing of this demand necessarily involves a certain amount of conjecture. If it is assumed that Kerala's power consumption increases at roughly the same rate as in all-India, the demand for energy would reach about 1,000 million kWh by 1965. However, in view of the fact that there is already unsatisfied demand for about 40 MW, and since the availability of power is one of the main means by which the State can attract industries, Kerala would be well advised to plan for a faster rate of power development during the next five years. Tentatively, simultaneous peak demand for 1965-66 is estimated to be 350 MW. Installed capacity may be about 15 per cent, higher than the simultaneous peak demand. The results are tabulated below :

	1965-66 (*MW*)	*1970-71*
Simultaneous peak demand estimated	350	675
Approximate installed capacity required	400	800

The Kerala State Electricity Board has estimated that the demand for power within the State by 1965-66 will be about 365 MW. The installed capacity of 400 MW as suggested above should be adequate for this demand.

7.27 To meet a peak demand for 350 MW by end of the Third Plan and 675 by end of the Fourth Plan, installed capacities of 400 and 800 MW will have to be built up to have effective capacities equal to simultaneous peak demand. This will be the requirement of Kerala alone and any demand from the south zone including that of Madras State will have to be added to this figure to arrive at the overall installed capacities to be built up.

7.28 In the sphere of transmission it appears necessary to build a high tension trunk line of 110 KV or higher throughout the length of the State from north to south. This will facilitate interchange of power amongst various hydel stations and thereby help to reduce the standby capacity. This is also expected to bring down simultaneous peak demand in the State by taking full advantage of diversity in different loads. The State Electricity Board is already at work on this line.

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PROSPECTS DURING THE THIRD PLAN

*433 377 7.29 The total allocation of the Third Plan for the State is fixed at Rs. 170 crores and the outlay for power is fixed at Rs. 43.56 crores. According to the proposals for power development under the Third Plan, the implementation of the spill-over schemes of Panniar, Sholayar and Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) will be the principal developmental activity during the Third Plan period. With the completion of these schemes, the installed capacity in the State will rise to 546 MW. Two new hydro-electric schemes, viz., Kuttiadi in North Malabar (installed capacity 75 MW) and Idikki Hydro-Electric Scheme (installed capacity 500 MW) are also proposed to be taken up during the Third Plan period. The Idikki scheme has been planned with the long range power requirements in view. Due to these continuing schemes, the total installed capacity available at the end of the Fourth Plan is expected to be about 975 MW.

7.30 An intensive rural electrification scheme has been programmed for the Third Plan. It will extend the benefits of electricity to about 750 more villages in the State. This, if fully implemented, will bring the total number of electrified localities to 3,100 by the end of the Third Plan. The distribution schemes during the Third Plan are expected to connect 100,000 new consumers and install 40,000 street lights.

FUTURE OF POWER DEVELOPMENT IN KERALA

7.31 Three important factors have to be taken into account in considering the future of power development in Kerala. (*i*) In view of the heavy pressure of population on agriculture and acute unemployment in the State, rapid industrialization is essential which in turn requires an abundant low cost power generating capacity; (*ii*) shortfalls in the supply of electric power should be avoided or at least minimized during the next five years, and (*iii*) Kerala has not only abundant hydel resources but it is also possibly the only State in the South which is likely to have a surplus in hydro-power potential.

Zonal Intrgration

7.32 Since during the next decade Kerala is likely to be the only power surplus State in the South, zonal integration should form the keynote of its power planning. It is expected that if implementation progresses according to Plans, by the end of the Third Plan period, Kerala will be able to have a surplus of power of about 150 MW over its own requirements. This will gradually go down until the spill-over schemes in the Fourth Plan start materializing. This surplus of 150 MW will then be steadily maintained and can be exported to the neighbouring State on a permanent basis so far as power development is concerned. Mysore and Andhra can, at best, remain on the fringe of self-sufficiency, at least for the next two decades, and Madras would have practically harnessed all its power resources by 1965-66. True, Madras has sizable lignite resources, but in view of manifold uses of lignite in industry, its utilization for

power generation will naturally be restricted. It is, therefore, essential that in the interests of the national economy, hydro-power generated at low cost in Kerala flows abundantly, and in bulk, to Madras State.

LIMITATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS OF EXPORT SALE OF POWER

7.34 The generation and export sale of the surplus electricity potential of the State, as a business proposition with a definite profit motive, just like any other industrial undertaking, has certain limitations and obligations which should be understood in advance. It is not as if this surplus generation places the State in a comfortable position of meeting any unanticipated demands of sizable magnitudes within the State itself at any time and gives it the option to export only whatever is in surplus to its needs from time to time. Export commitment is a definite contract and, except in the case of valid *force mejuri* conditions, contractual obligations have to be met even when there is an acute power shortage within the State itself due to normal causes of development. Electricity industry is capital-intensive and involves the use of sizable foreign exchange for capital equipment. Electricity projects also take a long time to materialize. In a planned economy for the country as a whole, the available resources are equitably distributed for maximum regional growth. Therefore, when the economic surplus power potentials of the State are exploited for export to the neighbouring State, on considerations of overall national economy, corresponding provision for power generation in the neighbouring State is at the same time avoided and it is made to depend on import of power for its needs. These long-term commitments have, therefore, to be firmly and clearly understood in advance.

Rates for Export Sale of Power

7.35 Viewed as a commercial proposition, the maximum price which can be demanded for this exported power will have to be just less than what it would have cost the neighbouring State if it were left to its own costly thermal generation. In addition, the selling State should surrender a small prefixed margin of its profit to the purchasing State in order to make the purchase attractive and worthwhile. In the case of Madras, there can be no difficulty at all. It will have to pay for Kerala power what it pays for Neyveli power. There is also an added advantage for Madras in taking Kerala power at thermal rates. Neyveli will give only a firm power all through the year and can serve only as a base load station. Excepting the hydro stations in Nilgiris, all other hydel stations of Madras are tied up with irrigation regulations and the varying seasonal outputs have to be largely firmed up by an integrated operation of all these stations. There are limitations in this when seasonal power growth tends to assume sizable proportions and the full utilization of the seasonal discharges for power generation may not be possible. Luckily the position is different in Kerala. The large hydro potentials of Kerala are predominantly for power generation. Integrated operation of the hydel stations of Kerala with the Madras grid is possible and it can effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of Madras State. This will also

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*433 377 439 result in mutual advantage to both the States and optimum exploitation and utilization of the water resources of the region as a whole. Kerala can thus give Madras varying power through all the seasons of the year and effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of the State. This operational aspect has also to be kept in view while planning projects for an integrated operation and export of surplus power of Kerala to Madras. Hence, Kerala power at average kWh rates of Neyveli supply, is more advantageous to Madras than Neyveli power. It benefits Kerala also.

Rates for Sale of Power to Consumers within the State

*433 377 7.36 From the economic standpoint, the use to which power is put is just as important as its production. The two chief aspects of electricity consumption are: (i) Consumption of electricity as a factor in production in the field of industry, agriculture and traction. This can be termed "productive" power, or power in relation to productivity which activates the production and distribution circuits on which the increase of a country's wealth depends. (ii) Consumption of electricity for the direct, collective and individual needs of the people that is energy as a consumer good. This can be termed "non-productive" power.[1]

7.37 In Kerala, productive consumption (industrial power, irrigation and agricultural de-watering) formed about 85 per cent of the total in 1959-60 and non-productive power (domestic, light and small power commercial light, and small power public lighting and water works) formed the remaining 15 per cent. The domestic consumption alone came to about 10.7 per cent. The corresponding figures for all-India (1959-60) were 77.9 per cent (productive), 22.1 per cent (non-productive) and 11.1 per cent (domestic consumption alone). But this small percentage of non-productive consumption contributed much more (than its reasonable share to the total revenues) from the sale of power.

*433 377 651 7.38 For ready comparison, the consumption of energy distributed by Kerala State Electricity Board to its consumer within the State (i.e., excluding bulk supplies to Distributing Licencees and to the neighbouring Madras State) and the revenue thereof are given in Table 36 for the year 1957-58. The statement is revealing.

[1] "Productive" power helps to raise the standard of living of the community while "non-productive" power rather serves to measure the standard achieved. The rate-fixing policy must take into account these two distinct categories of consumption. Generally speaking, the policy should be one of cheap "productive" power for such productive cycles as would lead to a rise in wages so that it would then become possible for "non-productive" power to be sold at normal rates. In fixing higher rates for "non-productive" consumption, the ultimate objective of raising the standard of living of the community as a whole should not be lost sight of. The rate itself should not be unduly high so deny the service altogether to the bulk of the community living in an electrified locality. To this end, the rate fixed for "non-productive" power should also take into account the capacity of the community to pay. One of the objects of a sound rate-fixing policy would be to maintain within a given community a reasonable relation between "productive" and "non-productive" power consumption. Both in productive and non-productive uses of electricity where power replaces labour, power consumption will rise in proportion to its cheapness as compared to the cost of labour. In other words, the potential expansion of power consumption in a region may to a certain extent, be measured by the ratio of labour costs to power costs in the area. A policy of power expansion, if the costs remain high in relation to the cost of labour, cannot, therefore, achieve all the desired beneficial results; lowering of power costs, therefore, becomes more imperative where labour is cheaper.

[Table 36, appearing on p. 299 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

Eleven per cent non-productive consumption contributes nearly 60 per cent of the total revenue. This is much more than its reasonable share. This amount of subsidy cannot be easily justified. Domestic consumption alone forms only a little over 7 per cent of the total consumption, contributes over 51 per cent of the total revenue from the sale of power. This is much too high a share. 433* 377 651

7.39 There was a small, generally upward, revision of rates in December 1958, without materially altering the structure of the tariff. The above conclusions, therefore, still hold good. 433* 377 435

7.40 Amongst the non-productive classes of load, item iv (Table 36) Public Water Works and Sewage Pumping is billed at "Industrial Rates" and classified as industrial loads for the purpose. In respect of item iii (Table 36) Public Lighting, the revised tariff of December, 1958 provides a rate of "15 nP per kWh for lamps for the first 6 hours of burning and 12 nP per unit for the remaining hours". This rectifies the high average rate per kWh in 1957-58, as seen in the above statement. The average unit rate per kWh of domestic consumption comes to as much as seven times the average selling rate of the total consumption through all categories of load. It is 15 times the average rate for productive consumption. The tariff revision of December, 1958 does not relieve this position. This is important. The structure of the domestic tariffs could induce optimum utilization of installed capacity with better load factor, but the domestic rates themselves have to be reduced substantially. In a State which leads the rest of the country in economic power generation, this should not be difficult. The "power surplus" position of the State can also enable the State to take effective steps to make cheap power (though costlier than productive power) available for domestic consumers extensively and may substantially raise the total domestic consumption to a higher level. In the light of the above observations, it is recommended that the State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales.

POSSIBILITY OF POWER SHORTAGE

7.41 It is learnt that power shortage is adversely affecting some of the existing big industries which are heavily dependent upon adequate power supply for their full production. Besides, starting of new industries may be hampered unless adequate power supply is forthcoming, or at least, the present power shortage is removed. 433* 377

7.42 A careful analysis of the power situation in Kerala shows that there will be no danger of a prolonged serious power gap. On the generation side, according to the present plans the Panniar Power Station with an installed capacity of 30,000 kW and the Sholayar Power Station with an installed capacity of 54,000 kW are expected to be commissioned in 1963 and 1964 respectively. Two of the six generating units of 50,000 kW each in the Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) Power Station are also expected to be commissioned by the end of 1964 by which time the State will reach a very comfortable position in regard to power supply.

7.43 Any suggestion for setting up thermal power stations in the State to bridge the likely gaps in power supply will have to be examined in this context. As already pointed out, thermal power generation costs more, both in terms of the cost of genera- 433* 375

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*433 375 tion and foreign exchange requirements. Besides, the construction of a thermal station even if immediately taken up, cannot be completed before two to three years. This time lag considerably reduces its value for alleviating the immediate problem of power shortage. Under such circumstances, there is no case at all for considering any thermal power stations in Kerala.

*433 377 7.44 At present, the best solution would be to arrange for the staggering of power load and to encourage the working of industries during the off-peak hours. Another possibility is that the Governments of Kerala and Madras may get together to alleviate the power problem of Kerala to whatever extent it is possible through the zonal grid.

INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS

7.45 Kerala's installed capacity by the end of the Second Plan was 147.5 MW. To build it up to 400 MW by the end of the Third Plan as suggested in this report an additional installed capacity of roughly 250 MW will be necessary. According to current estimates, approximately Rs. 1,600 per kW will be required in Kerala for generation, transmission and distribution. On this basis, about Rs. 40 crores will be required during the Third Plan. During the Fourth Plan, installed capacity is envisaged to increase from 400 MW to 800 MW. At the same rate of investment per kW as mentioned above, investment requirements for the Fourth Plan would be about Rs. 64 crores. Thus Kerala State would require the sum of about Rs. 104 crores over the Third and Fourth Plan periods to satisfy its own power needs. Requirements of neighbouring States for Kerala's power would require additional investment over and above this figure.

CONCLUSIONS

7.46 The abundant water resources of the State, which can be utilized for generation of hydro-electric energy, form one of the strong points of Kerala economy. Apart from the large hydro-electric potential which is estimated to be of the order of 1,589 MW, the important feature of power resources of Kerala is the low cost of generation per unit. This is due to the favourable nature of the terrain and the high degree of rainfall which Kerala receives.

7.47 In the absence of any coal or oil deposits in Kerala or in nearby regions, hydro-electric power has to be the chief source of energy requirements of industry. The favourable position of Kerala in this respect should be utilized as a factor helping industrialization. For this purpose harnessing of the hydro-electric potential should be properly planned in advance so that an adequate amount of well-assured electric supply could be guaranteed to the industrialists. In this context the State would be well-advised to plan for a power surplus.

[439] 7.48 In view of the fact that Kerala is in a position to generate electric energy in excess of its requirements, while the neighbouring State of Madras has almost exhausted its domestic resources and Mysore and Andhra are just on the verge of self-

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sufficiency, Kerala should play the role of a net exporter of electric energy to these States. A zonal grid which is now planned to be laid in the South, is essential to make the most economic use of the power generating potential of the Southern States. Since the cost of electric generation is much lower in Kerala than in Madras or the other neighbouring States even after including transmission costs, Kerala may also be in a position to earn net revenue through export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States. This revenue could be utilized for capital formation within Kerala.

7.49 The State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales specially with reference to consumption of power for domestic purposes.

Chapter 8

Transport

*433 489 IN THE CONTEXT of a developing economy, the transport system has a special role to fulfil. Apart from opening up the country and linking all areas with each other, it has to meet the growing movement of raw materials on account of more rapid development of industry and rising levels of consumption and distribution. The particular relations of production, consumption and distribution obtaining in the State and changing, according to the emphasis of the Plans, entail certain characteristic tasks for the transport system of the State. In Kerala, for example [262] [439] the persistent food deficit of the State, necessitates movements of rice and other cereals by road and rail from adjacent States,[1] and foreign or coastal imports[2] through ports such as Cochin, Calicut or Trivandrum. Fish and fish-products are distributed from the ports by road, rail and waterways in local and inter-State interchange. From her fields and plantations orginate exports of coconuts, copra, pepper, ginger, cardamom, cashew kernels, tapioca, tea, coffee and rubber. The State's forests covering about a fourth of its area, furnish varieties of timber for clearance from one of the biggest timber markets in the world ; countryside distribution and foreign exports take place from Kallayi and Calicut. Exports of mineral ores, such as ilmenite, have to be handled from ports like Quilon or Chavra. The transport media serve continually, except for the interruption of the monsoon, in the carriage of raw materials, fuels, and essential construction and other goods such as cement, iron and steel, sugar and textiles. In particular, the transport network has to cater daily to the needs of industrial establishments, e.g., rubber and titanium factories at Trivandrum ; cashew industry at Quilon, the aluminium and ceramic industries at Kundara, paper and plywood factories at Trichur ; the coir and coir products of Alleppey ; the cement and sugar factories at Kottayam, the rayon factory at Perumbavoor ; the industrial complex at Alwaye comprising fertilizer, chemical, textile, glass and aluminium industries ; the saw mills and timber-based industries, soap, etc., in the Calicut area ; the big plywood factory at Baliapatam; the tile industry at Quilon, Trichur, Feroke, Calicut and other centres.

489 8.2 As regards passenger traffic, the Southern Railway carried 16.2 million passengers in 1959, the pressure of traffic being notable at Calicut, Quilon, Ernakulam, Alwaye and Trivandrum Central. The nationalised road transport services carried 65.3 million passengers in 1959. The passenger motor-boat services operating on the inland waterways carry 27,700 passengers daily. About 1,100 passengers

[1] Over 800,000 tons.

[2] About 80,000 tons in a recent year.

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embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc.

The Transport System

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores.

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport.

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average

[1] 1951 Census figures.

[Text continues on p. 127]

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MAP II

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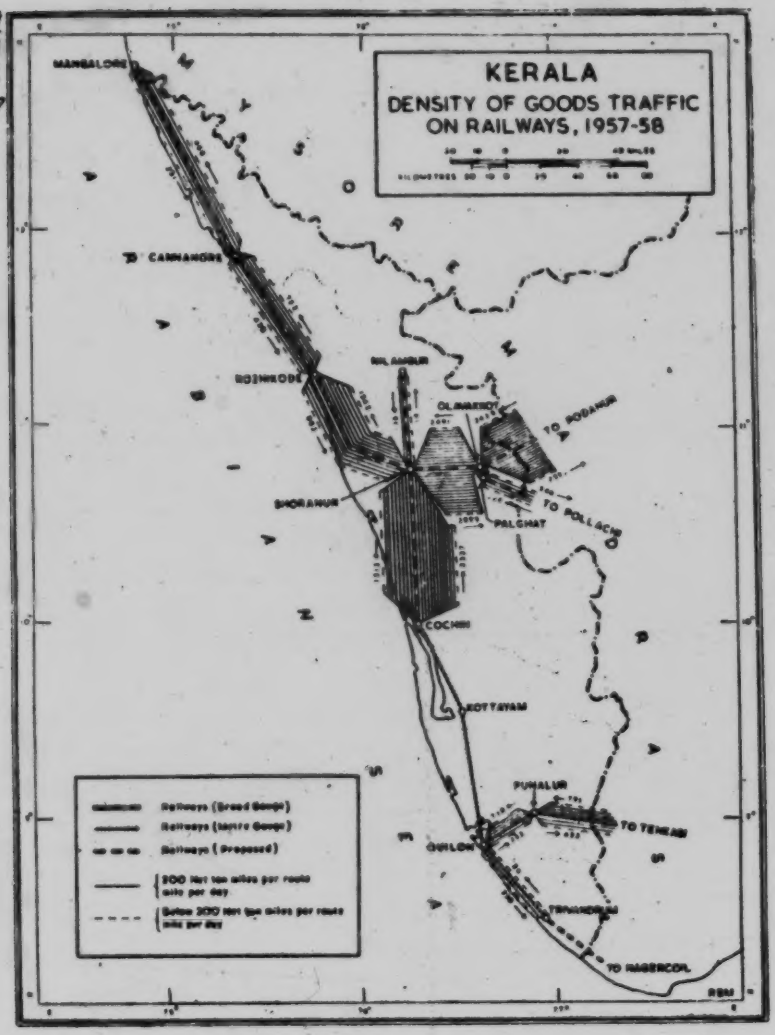

for Kerala is to be ascribed to the State's high density of population.[1] Within the State, the districts of Quilon, Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Cannanore are more favourably placed with regard to railways than others. Alleppey, which is least provided with railway mileage and facilities, and the districts of Kottayam and Ernakulam make up for their low railway mileage through roads and extensive waterways.[2] 496

8.8 The region south of Ernakulam and Cochin is served by the metre gauge line, and the region north of these by broad gauge. There is break of gauge in Ernakulam, involving transhipment of through traffic moving north or south as the case may be. Cochin harbour, however, is served by both gauges, the metre gauge giving access to the south, and the broad gauge to the north, and north-east of the State as well as the adjoining areas of the Madras State.

8.9 As the main railway line from Trivandrum to Kasargod lies almost all along the coast, except for the section between Ernakulam and Karthikapalli on the Ernakulam-Quilon section, railway facilities are not within easy reach of the eastern border areas of the State. Also a potential traffic route from Trivandrum to Tirunelveli *via* Nagercoil and Cape Comorin remains untouched by the railways.

8.10 On many sections of the railway within the State there is spare line capacity (Table 37).[3] Though at present Cochin-Shoranur section has some spare line capacity, it may be called on to handle considerable increases in traffic, requiring additional line capacity. In the hinterland of Calicut Port, however, there appears to be enough capacity to cope up with additional demands that industrial and port developments there may generate. 497

8.11 In the railway sections within the State, the traffic is not balanced. The inward (or import) movements generally trend to exceed the outward (or export) movements as measured by net ton miles per route miles, per day. The imbalance has been maximum on the Cochin-Shoranur line and had tended to increase. However, since 1955–57, the imbalance has tended to reverse its direction. Shoranur-Calicut, Shoranur-Punalur, Quilon-Trivandrum Central, Punalur-Quilon are other sections where imbalances may be observed. The twin problems of additional demands on line capacity and uneliminated imbalance of traffic are both likely to show up together on the Cochin-Shoranur line, as the traffic to and from Cochin harbour registers an increase.

8.12 The pressure of passenger-traffic bookings, already heavy at Calicut, Quilon, Ernakulam, Alwaye and Trivandrum Central, is likely to get very much accentuated since these are precisely the locations where growth of urban concentrations is likely to come about with the development of the new industries proposed by the National Council for the decade 1961–71.

[1] The backwardness is compensated by waterways, coastal movement and a working road and road transport system.

[2] The regional provision of railways is as follows:

	Mileage per 100 sq. miles	Mileage per 100,000 population
Travancore-Cochin area	3.13	2.56
Malabar area	4.22	5.08

[3] [Table 37, appearing on p. 294 of the text, has not been processed] - Analyst

*433 499 8.13 The programme of investment in the rail facilities in the State was estimated to cost Rs. 1.015 crores during the Second Plan. Till early 1960 it seems only about one-third (34.3 %) of this amount had been spent. Major items of expenditure were on re-railing of track in the Shoranur-Calicut section, provision of metre gauge facilities at Cochin harbour and conversion of a number of stations into crossing stations and improvements therein. But progress was not substantial on account of non-arrival of materials, etc. Line capacity works were undertaken on the Punalur-Quilon section, increasing the number of trains from 11 to 12 and the net ton miles by 1.24 million. Additional loops were provided at Calicut, which helped to reduce detention of trains at adjacent stations. Additional platforms, goods sheds and marshalling yards were provided at Quilon to receive and assist the traffic on the new metre gauge link with Ernakulam. Engineering and traffic surveys for a new line from Tellicherry to Mangalore *via* Coorg were completed. Proposals relating to alignments between Trivandrum and Tirunelveli *via* Nagercoil and Cape Comorin are stated to be under consideration of the Railway Board.

ROAD NETWORK

491 8.14 The total road mileage in the State at 10,739 miles (Table 38)[2] exceeds the figure of the mileage calculated in accordance with the Nagpur Plan Formula. The State has 71.6 miles for 100 square miles, as against 26 miles, derived from the Nagpur Plan Formula. However, the road system is not without certain shortcomings, such as those resulting from the uneven distribution of the total mileage among different districts and regions of the State (Table 39).[3] Calicut district and, in a lesser degree, Trichur district have fared rather poorly whether judged in relation to the extent of area served or mileage per 100,000 of population. There are considerable regional disparities between Malabar and Travancore-Cochin.[1] While the former has 61.9 miles of road per 100 square miles of area and 73.5 miles of road per 100,000 of population, the corresponding figures for the latter are 79.6 and 65.2 miles respectively. The area north of Alwaye-Munnar road presents an unsatisfactory situation in respect of road mileage. As Malabar is also relatively not so well-endowed in respect of inland water transport communications the comparative deficiency of road mileage is all the more significant in this area.

8.15 A number of factors reduce at present the maximum economic usefulness of the State's comparatively high road mileage. Among these may be mentioned (*a*) the absence of bridges on many roads (*b*) the weakness of existing culverts and bridges (*c*) poor surfacing (*d*) narrow width even on high traffic density routes (e.g. Trichur-Vadakkancheri, Malapuram-Hitchcock memorial in Calicut) (*e*) tortuous alignments, e.g., along Aroor-Ernakulam route (*f*) delays to traffic owing to reliance on road-cum-rail bridge (Ankamali-Trichur section of the Highway) and (*g*) saturation

[Text continues on p. 130]

[1] Particulars are set out in Table 6 of the NCAER appraisal report on Transport in Kerala.

[2, 3] [Tables 38 & 39, appearing on p. 295 of the text, have not been processed -- Analyst]

[P. 129]

MAP 12

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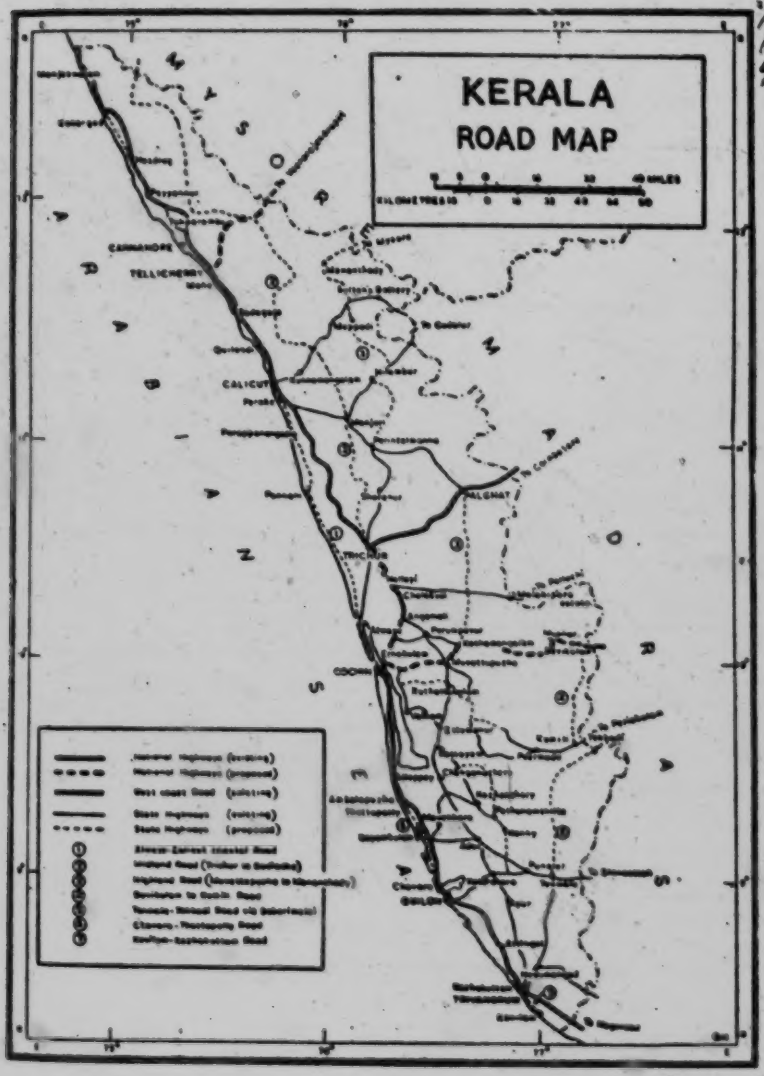

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491 of traffic on arterial routes (e.g., Coimbatore-Cochin). The opening of Aroor Bridge has failed to attract the high potential of traffic expected between Quilon and Ernakulam, as there are weak bridges at least at three points on the route. As a result of lack of bridges, inter-State traffic between Kasargod and Mangalore has to seek a diversion *via* South Coorg. Apart from this, the need for bypasses, which is felt today in and near Calicut, is likely to become an urgent necessity around every focal point of increased industrial growth, such as Ernakulam, Quilon, Alwaye, Palghat, Trichur, etc.

*433 491 8.16 Special mention may be made of two vital routes:

(*i*) *Cochin-Coimbatore Road* (*N.H. No. 47*). This road has already become fully saturated with traffic passing between the port of Cochin and the Coimbatore area. The opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge over the Alwaye river has contributed to this saturation to a great extent. Future industrial development and increased traffic at the Cochin port would require the reservation of this road (N.H. No. 47) for fast moving traffic with an additional lane. Infact, even to cater to the present needs, such an arrangement is necessary. Slow moving traffic will have to be diverted to an alternative route from Trichur to Coimbatore *via* Kollengode and Palghat.

(*ii*) *Aroor Bridge—Ernakulam Road.* This length of 9¼ miles of the National Highway is tortuous and incapable of being widened. If it is to cope up with the expanding activities of Cochin area, it will have to be realigned, even before the ship-building yard is located in Cochin. The best plan would be to reclaim land along the coast from Aroor bridge to the site where a bridge is proposed to be constructed near the Thevara College at Ernakulam approximately a distance of four miles, and divert the road on to this reclaimed land; the reclamation will have not only to provide for a road of about 70 ft. width, but could also be used to build a chain of warehouses which are very much in demand. A water frontage to handle the water-borne traffic on this entire four-mile route will also have to be constructed.

ROAD TRANSPORT

493 8.17 The number of mechanized road vehicles in the State—trucks, buses, taxies, private cars, auto-rickshaws, etc.,—has increased sharply from 9,395 in 1956-57 to 23,087 in 1959-60. The number of goods vehicles rose from 2,714 to 5,218, i.e., by 92.2 per cent. But their proportionate share declined, 28.9 per cent of the total number of vehicles, to 22.6 per cent. During the same period, the number of buses increased from 452 to 3,236, that is by over 600 per cent. The percentage to the total number of road vehicles in their case increased from 4.8 per cent to 14 per cent. Passenger transport has thus recorded a striking increase.

8.18 The State has a vehicle density of 2.14 per mile of road, 1.54 per sq. mile of area, and 146.6 per 100,000 of population. The comparative figures for all-India and an industrially advanced State like West Bengal are as follows.

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	VEHICLE DENSITY		
	Per mile of road	*Per sq. mile*	*Per 100,000 Population*
Kerala	2.14	1.54	146.6
West Bengal	1.20	0.92	111.1
India	1.20	0.32	104.0

Kerala comes up with the highest indices, but this is not surprising as the railway serves only certain limited areas and road transport has to serve the other areas.

8.19 Trivandrum and Calicut districts have the largest concentration of goods vehicles on the road ; Alleppey, Ernakulam, and Quilon figure next. As regards the stage carriages, Trivandrum district has the largest fleet ; Trichur, Ernakulam, and Calicut districts also account for large numbers of stage carriages but these are much smaller. The Coimbatore-Cochin route is saturated with goods traffic in cotton bales, fertilizers, planks, tea, tapioca, machinery, hardware, etc., particularly since the opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge replacing the Desom ferry. The traffic was expected to go up by about 50 per cent during 1961. Similarly the traffic between Calicut and Coimbatore, across the Palghat gap and between Calicut and Wynad (timber traffic) bound for destinations in Salem, Madras, Mysore, Tuticorin, etc., has been on the increase. As industrial developments presage considerable increase of traffic on these routes, problems of alignment, bridging, extra lanes, expressway sections, etc., may call for more investment and additional construction.

8.20 About 250 trucks are operating between Mysore and Kerala on inter-State routes. They are subject to the restriction that they may not operate on more than three important straight routes, not exceeding 300 miles in each State. Inter-State routing arrangements between Madras and Kerala are yet to be completed.

8.21 The business in goods transport in the State suffers from the preponderance of owner-operators of single trucks (1,717 operators). There are only five operators in the State who own more than 10 trucks. The predominance of the owner-operator of single trucks is likely to prevent the industry from obtaining the economies and advantages of enhanced efficiency resulting from better organization of road transport in the State.

8.22 Among other features of the transport system special mention may be made of chronic over-loading of vehicles and the beginning of movement in truck-trailer combinations in order to circumvent difficulties arising from restrictions of weight over weak bridges and culverts. Study and analysis of road transport problems are rendered more difficult by the paucity of data regarding traffic, the absence of regular departmental road census of vehicles and traffic, etc. A limited degree of nationalization of goods transport by road has been introduced on the Cochin-Mannar route where 10 to 18 trucks carry tea from the estates to Cochin, and rice, manures and machinery from Cochin to the estates.

8.23 Despite an early start, the nationalized road passenger services have not made much headway. About 458 vehicles are on the road, covering 24.9 million miles annually, and carrying about 65.3 million passengers. The larger revenues resulting from increased traffic and higher fares,[1] have not improved the net profits of

[1] The revenues rose by Rs. 31 lakhs.

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494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

499 8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on
491 roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was
652 about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

establishment of booking agencies and the introduction of insurance against loss or theft are crying needs of the water transport system of the State. Licensing rules have to be made uniform throughout the State; the levy of tolls at locks and toll stations in Malabar has to be abolished, the loss in revenue being made good by licence fees. The bulk transport of petroleum products, which is of the order of 72,000 tons annually, suffers from restrictions on licensing of tank-boats with wooden hulls. Since the traffic is likely to be doubled in 10 years the rules must be reviewed to see if they can be amended to suit local conditions, especially in the case of non-hazardous petroleum products. A considerable volume of traffic-potential is likely to be generated for the waterways by the proposed programme of industrialization. A proper organization answering to the anticipated demands for transportation by waterways is called for.

8.29 At present 25,030 country craft (registered tonnage 180,735), 466 motor-boats (registered tonnage 2,988) and 1,298 crafts are operating on Kerala's waterways. In spite of the shortcomings referred to above, about 2.3 million tons of goods are moved annually over the waterways. The approximate figures of tonnage between specific points are 1.35 million tons between Cochin and Quilon, 60,000 tons on the Trivandrum-Quilon route and about 990,000 tons in the area north of Cochin. Particulars of the growth of traffic in recent years are not available.[1]

8.30 Moter-boats carry about 27,700 passengers a day on 65 different routes, the length of journeys ranging from 6 to 77 miles. Of this traffic, about 15,000 passengers were carried daily by 146 powered boats operated by the Kerala Water Transport Corporation in the Cochin-Quilon area. The Corporation's fares were slightly higher than on the Valloms. The organization ran into difficulties and is being reorganized. The State ferry services, operated with 13 powered boats between Ernakulam and Cochin, have been incurring losses. But in view of the revised fares introduced recently, they are expected to work profitably in the future.

8.31 The inland waterways were allocated Rs. 43 lakhs in the Second Plan in order to (*a*) construct the Alleppey-Shertallai Canal (*b*) improve the West Coast Canal from Trivandrum to Shoranur (*c*) construct the Badagara-Azhikkal Canal (*d*) improve canals in the Malabar area, and (*e*) carry out some minor works. In the first three years Rs. 23 lakhs were spent. As most of the funds were taken up in the execution of the Alleppey-Shertallai Canal Scheme, much was not done for the other schemes. Top priority is being given for improvements to the Cochin-Quilon section. The estimated cost for the Azhikkal-Badagara canal is Rs. 1.05 crores. As the proposed alignment involved deep cutting at several places, a new alignment is being worked out for execution in the Third Plan.

THE PORTS

8.32 The coastal and foreign traffic of the State is handled at Cochin, Alleppey, Calicut and 10 other ports of the State. The major port of Cochin dominates all

[1] However, in section 8.42 the rate of growth of traffic anticipated during 1961—71 is indicated.

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transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expenditure between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport—railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[1] For particulars of a detailed assessment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

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for Indian Airlines Corporation.[1] 509

8.38 The absence of an air-link between Calicut and Trivandrum is being keenly felt, as other forms of travel including railways to and from Kerala's capital involve a long and time-consuming journey with the difficulties attendant on the break-of-gauge at Ernakulam. [489]

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS IN KERALA DURING 1961-71

8.39 An assessment of traffic that the implementation of the programmes proposed elsewhere in this survey will generally indicate that an additional overall traffic of 5 million tons can be anticipated during 1970-71. The nature, magnitude and composition of the anticipated traffic are set out in Table 41.* 433* 489

8.40 The estimate does not take into account traffic in certain items, for example, coconuts and certain types of consumer goods. An allowance of 10 per cent may be made for these omissions. Further, the transport system of the State, besides meeting the additional demands of its own traffic, will have to bear the burden of traffic of other States, such as Madras or Mysore, which is handled for them at Kerala's ports[2] and on roads and railway sections[3] within the territory of the State; the additional traffic on this account may amount to 1 or 1.5 million tons by 1970-71. The overall growth in traffic may thus be between 60 and 65 per cent over the present level.[4] The transport arrangements in the State have thus to be planned and developed to meet an additional traffic of 6.5 to 7 million tons by 1971.

8.41 There may be some changes in the character of the traffic. For instance, there may be a decline in the traffic in firewood by about 100,000 tons as oil and other fuels are coming in as substitutes. Changes in technology in the Fourth Plan period presage the disappearance of the traffic in gypsum (145,000 tons) to Alwaye and substitution by imports of sulphur (100,000 tons) *via* Cochin. Decline in foreign imports of foodgrains is anticipated, while increased imports from more distant sources inside the country are envisaged.

8.42 The distribution of the State's additional traffic between different media (including the demand for ports' services) as anticipated, is presented in the table below. The heavy dependence of Kerala on the import of materials for industry from outside is reflected in the preponderant inter-State rail traffic. By 1971 the increase in the rail traffic in the State over its traffic in 1958-59 may be about 60 per cent.[5] [439]

[1] An Air Traffic Survey has since been completed by NCAER for the Indian Airlines Corporation. Besides estimating the traffic potential of the circular route in the Southern Region, the Survey has recommended air linking of Calicut, inclusion of Trivandrum in the Madras—Tiruchirapalli, Madurai—Colombo air route, location at Thirulakara of an airport for Cochin and Alwaye, terminal facilities at the Cochin Airport, etc.
—Vide *Air Traffic Survey—Southern Region*, NCAER, 1962

[2] Predominantly at Cochin.

[3] Mostly on the highway and railway section between Ernakulam and Shoranur.

[4] The current traffic by road, rail and waterways is estimated at 10.8 million tons.

[5] The cross traffic to or from Cochin and from or to other States is taken into account.

* [Table 41, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed--Adalyr]

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*433 489

ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC ANTICIPATED BY DIFFERENT TRANSPORT MEDIA IN 1970-71

(In thousand tons)

Railways	2,337
Road transport[a]	1,859
Waterways[a]	1,126
Ports[b]	1,367

[a] Includes feeder traffic.
[b] Coastal and foreign traffic included.

8.43 The intra-State road traffic may be expected to register significant gains whereas the inter-State is likely to be steady: the decline in inter-State foodgrain movements by road may be somewhat counter-balanced by anticipated industrial traffic. The waterways are likely to compete for traffic going by road especially in low-rated commodities (sand, limeshell, ores), as well as in those which are conveniently handled at the ports either alongside berths or in midstream (e.g. petroleum, foodgrains imports, etc.).

[504] 8.44 The State's demand for port services in coastal and foreign trade is expected to go up by about 1.37 million tons by 1970-71. The services are likely to be required particularly at Cochin, Calicut and Neendakara-Quilon. At Cochin and Calicut the demand for port services will be further reinforced by the growing needs of the hinterland in Coimbatore and Nilgiri districts of Madras. The railway link with Cochin may require further additions to line capacity on the route to Alwaye, Shoranur and Coimbatore.[1]

8.45 The distribution of additional traffic among the ports of Kerala, as anticipated for 1970-71, is set out in table under para 8.42. The figures given in the table are approximate estimates based on requirements of port services of various industries suggested by the National Council. Only detailed traffic surveys can establish close and reliable estimates, allowing for such factors as traffic-potential in the hinterland, beyond the State boundaries, if any, and traffic gains or losses resulting from diversion from or to other ports. In the case of Cochin, imports are likely to be very predominant, foodgrains, petroleum products, and chemicals figuring prominently. Such gains as are likely to be achieved in exports may be in chemicals, plantation products, etc. As regards Calicut, the requirements of the newly coming up rayon-pulp factory is likely to be an important factor responsible for the import of machinery, fuel oil, coal and coke, and the coastal export of rayon pulp. Neendakara-Quilon ports are likely to receive impetus from developments in Kundara, Quilon, etc.

8.46 The effect of regional industrial developments within the State on the traffic by inland waterways is indicated in Table 42.[2] Intensification of traffic between Alwaye and Cochin, Cochin and Quilon, Tiruvalla, Kottayam and Alleppey may be expected. The growth of traffic upto the potential indicated will depend

[1] The extent to which imbalances of traffic on these and other lines of the State are likely to be affected by anticipated growth of traffic to and from the State between 1961 and 1971 is to be separately surveyed and assessed.

[2] [Table 42, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

upon the maintenance of navigability in the waterways, and removal of a number of handicaps listed in para 8.28. 433* 489

CONCLUSIONS

8.47 The conclusions that follow from the general traffic pattern outlined above are (*a*) accessions to traffic may be expected just in those areas and routes where it is strikingly high already (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur), (*b*) spare transport capacity on many railway sections will be absorbed, (*c*) the road, rail and waterway links to the ports may need improvement, and (*d*) further, the road transport capacity and terminal facilities should be increased to meet mounting demands.[1]

8.48 The railways have an important role to play, mainly in inter-State traffic and in helping the work of the ports. In the Third Plan, an investment of Rs. 1.2 crores i.e., of the same order as proposed and accepted but unfulfilled in the Second Plan may be necessary, mainly in connection with increase in the line capacity on vital routes (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur). If traffic and engineering surveys establish the economic feasibility of Trivandrum-Nagercoil-Tirunelveli line, it may be considered for the Fourth Plan. 433* 489

8.49 As the eastern regions of the State are untouched by the Railways and are likely to remain so, these have to rely mainly on road transport. It is necessary to extend, bridge, and improve the road network in these areas till at least 50 per cent of the targets set for 1981 are achieved by 1971[2]. The expenditure will be about Rs. 17 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 26.3 crores in the Fourth Plan.

8.50 The Third Plan programme for roads and bridges in the State will cover the development of arterial routes and cross-roads in the north of the State (Rs. 4.32 crores), improvement of arterial routes in the south including the opening of Thenmala-Thekkadi road (Rs. 1 crore), the Vypeen Island Scheme (Rs. 1 crore), construction and improvement of about 3,600 miles of district and village roads (Rs. 5.996 crores) and the construction and improvement of 122 major and 584 minor bridges and culverts. Schemes spilling over from the Second Plan and costing Rs. 1.62 crores will also have to be completed. It is desirable to institute a road fund in the State to finance road development. The particular areas and routes where extension and improvements are possible in the next five years are set out in Table 43. The physical targets are indicated in Table 44.

8.51 The number of trucks will need to be considerably augmented to cope up with the anticipated demands of traffic. The investment on trucks may amount to about Rs. 11 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 10.29 crores in the Fourth Plan. The number of passenger buses may require to be increased by 2,400 in 10 years. About 4,600 buses may have to be replaced by the end of 1971. This would entail an expenditure of Rs. 20.5 crores. The State's Third Plan envisages the continuance of the 433* 493 494

[1] Passenger traffic is certain to go up with rising population and concentrations of industry and trade at such centres as Trivandrum, Quilon, Kundara, Cochin, Ernakulam, Trichur, Palghat, Calicut and Cannanore but no estimate of the passenger service demands has been made here.

[2] Targets for 1981 as per formula of the Chief Engineers' Plan, Bombay (1960).

[Table 44, appearing on p. 298 of the text, has not been observed -- Analyst]

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*433 493 494 policy of gradual nationalization. In the nationalized sector, about 560 additional vehicles are proposed to be put on the road at a cost of Rs. 2.16 crores. Investment on land, buildings and equipment is to be Rs. 87.7 lakhs. A Road Transport Corporation should be formed to run the bus service. The private sector will have to meet the residual road passenger needs.

*433 503 8.52 The recommendations of the Inland Water Transport Committee for the development of the waterways of the State must be implemented since considerable traffic potential can be tapped for this transport medium at low cost. In order not merely to keep pace with but also to be ahead of industrial developments promising traffic, it may be necessary to invest even more than Rs. 2 crores in the Third Plan, as at present proposed. The improvements in navigability of the waterways north of Cochin, of the Cochin-Quilon and Quilon-Trivandrum routes and the cutting of the landlocked Azhikkal-Badagara section, are some of the items in the Third Plan budget for development of inland waterways in the State. Extensions of the waterways south of Trivandrum, and north of Hosdrug upto Mangalore, to connect up with the Mangalore-Coondapur canal works, will have to be taken up later on in the Fourth Plan.

*433 504 8.53 The State's current schemes for the development of Neendakara, Quilon and Calicut and the recommendations of the Intermediate Ports Committee have been taken into account in proposing an investment of Rs. 2.42 crores in the Third and Rs. 1.87 crores in the Fourth Plans. On account of anticipated demand for port-services by newly coming up or expanding industries in the State and outside, it would be wiser to provide initially higher investments in transport to keep ahead of the demand for traffic.

8.54 Port of Cochin can be expected to play an even more dominant role in the transport of the State as the economy takes off. An investment of Rs. 1.75 crores proposed to be incurred to improve facilities at Cochin Port during the Third Plan will benefit not merely Kerala but Madras and other States. It will add conspicuously to the State's transport capacity, created by the investments in roads, waterways and railways within the State.

[PP. 139-205 not processed]

Chapter 11

Manpower and Employment

PART I: MANPOWER

464 128 One of the chief problems of Kerala today is the vast unemployed section of its manpower. An appraisal of the analysis of employment prospects, therefore, becomes very important. The extent of urbanization, sex distribution, the size of the labour force, its rate of participation, and occupational distribution—all these are, therefore, studied in detail in what follows.

162 161 *Urbanization*

11.2 Progress in urbanization in Kerala is less as compared to the country as a whole. Of the total population of Kerala, 13.5 per cent live in urban areas against 17.38 per cent for the whole of India according to the Census of 1951. The degree of urbanization has been progressively increasing over the past few decades. This is shown by the table below which gives the relative rates of growth of the urban and rural population during the period 1921–51. As may be seen, urban population has been growing at a faster rate than the rural population.

MEAN DECENNIAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION

(Per Cent)

	1921–30	*1931–40*	*1941–50*
Urban	27.18	23.26	29.38
Rural	22.85	16.53	20.12
Total	*23.31*	*17.27*	*21.22*

N.B.: It may be noted that these figures pertain only to the old Travancore-Cochin State.

[10] Source: *Census of India*, Volume XIII, Tranvancore-Cochin (Part I, Subsidiary Table).

11.3 During the last decade, that is, 1951–61, urbanization seems to have increased at a somewhat faster rate than in the whole of India. The proportion of population living in urban areas of Kerala grew from 13.05 per cent in 1951 to 15.03 per cent in 1961, whereas in the case of all-India the proportion registered an increase from 17.38 per cent to only 17.84 per cent.[1] In view of the plans for a faster growth of industries,

[1] As pointed out in Chapter 1, too much reliance should not be placed on a comparison of urbanization between 1951 and 1961 since the definition of urban areas during the two Census operations has not been the same.

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the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census) 162 [464]

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages. [369] [166]

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56[2] gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951. 162 464

[1] *1961 Census* (Provisional Population figures).

2 [Table 56, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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162 464 11.8 In the context of an under-developed economy like that of Kerala, it is difficult to define distinct boundary lines for the working age group, since participation in economic activity starts at an early age and at the other end of the ladder there is no fixed age of retirement. However, taking 15-55 years, as roughly representing the age group within which people actively take part in work, 53.3 per cent of Kerala's population belonged to this group against 52.4 per cent for all-India. It will also be noted from Table 56 that the working age group of the population in Kerala has a larger component of younger people than in all-India. A higher proportion of persons fall within the category of 15-25 years in Kerala while the reverse is the case with those in the age group 25-55 years.

LIVELIHOOD CLASSIFICATION

11.9 The table below gives the comparative break-up of the population of Kerala and all-India according to the sources of livelihood (1951 Census data).

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

	All-India (in million)	*Percentage to total population*	*Kerala* (in million)	*Percentage to total population*
Total Population	356.7	100.0	13.5	100.0
Self-supporting Persons	104.8	29.4	3.7	27.4
Earning Dependents	38.4	10.8	0.8	5.9
Non-earning Dependents	213.5	59.8	9.0	66.7

It will be noticed that the proportion of non-earning dependents is very high in Kerala. In fact, it is the highest in India with the exception of Madras. The burden of dependence, therefore, is very acute in Kerala.

Working Force and Participation Rates

11.10 The converse of a high rate of dependence is the low proportion of working force to the total population. Working force is defined as that section of the total population which takes part in productive activity. In terms of the classification in 1951 Census, the earners, that is, self-supporting persons and the earning dependents comprise the working force. The ratio of working force to the total population in any sector of the economy is defined as the sectoral participation rate.

11.11 According to the 1951 Census, Kerala had a total working force of 45.4 lakhs.[1] The general participation rate, that is, the rate of total working force to total population works out to only 33.5 per cent against a much higher figure of 39.9 per cent for the whole of India. Table 57 gives a break-up of general participation rate in terms of sectoral rates. This table reveals that it is the rural participation rate which is primarily responsible for this wide divergence between Kerala and India. Whereas Kerala's urban participation rate is only about 2 per cent less than the all-

[1] *Vide* Appendix 2 for the method of calculation.

[Table 57, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

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India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rate** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	757	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

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162 464 The fall in the participation ratio between 1931–51[1] may be attributed to three factors:

(i) Rise in the sex ratio in favour of females.
(ii) Increase in the school-going population.
(iii) Slow growth in employment opportunities.

11.17 The force of the first two factors, however, is not sufficient to explain the steep [161] decline in the participation rate. A fall of the magnitude, as shown in the above [433] table, primarily indicates that the increase in opportunities for gainful employment has not been keeping pace with the growth of population which had increased by over 40 per cent between 1931 and 1951 without any corresponding growth of industries or development in other sectors.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN POPULATION DENSITY AND MANPOWER

[161] 11.18 Kerala is the most thickly populated State of India having an average density of 1,125 persons to a square mile according to the Census of 1961. The population, however, is not uniformly spread out as may be noticed from the district density figures in Table 58.[3] Malabar is less thickly populated than the Travancore-Cochin area. But the proportion of working force to total population, that is, the participation rate is also lower in the Malabar area. Generally, it is expected that participation rate would be lower in the more congested areas, because an over-crowded agricultural sector naturally offers limited scope for employment. The comparison of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, however, seems to belie this conclusion. The [288] reason for this contrast perhaps lies in the fact that the major part of the coir industry, the most labour-intensive industry of Kerala, is concentrated mostly in the Travancore-Cochin region.[4] Absence of this industry on a large scale in Malabar seems to account for a lower participation rate in that area.

Occupational Distribution

162 464 433 11.19 Occupational pattern generally gives a broad idea as to the stage of economic development attained by a country or a region. The distribution of working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, is given separately for the rural and urban sectors, in Table 59.[3,4] A comparison with the all-India occupational distribution brings out a marked contrast in the case of Kerala. Whereas 71.8 per cent of the working force was engaged in agricultural occupations in the whole of India, in case of Kerala the proportion was only 51.4 per cent. In fact in Kerala the proportion of its population dependent upon non-agricultural activities turns out to be the highest in the whole of India.

[1] The difference in the concepts used in 1931 and 1951 Censuses perhaps exaggerates the extent of decline in the participation rates, but it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years.

[2] Both these aspects have also been dealt with in Chapter 1.

3,4 [see p 310, category 116 -- Analysis]

11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas.

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities.

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations.

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951.

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.

[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

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464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their 128 application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemployment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

162 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to 464 concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column 1 of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference betweent labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [871] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter I.

[see p. 311, category 116 -- Analysis]

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actively unemployed persons during 1956 was 6.6 lakhs.[1] The total labour force during 1956 may, therefore, be taken to be 56.9 lakh persons, i.e., 37.9 per cent of the total population. 162 464

11.29 One striking feature revealed by this survey is the very high degree of open unemployment. Open unemployment comes out to be as high as 4.2 per cent of the total population, as can be seen from Table 60 (Category 7).[2] Generally it is under-employment rather than open unemployment which is prominent in backward agricultural economies. For example, unemployment in India is only 0.29 per cent of total rural population and 1.99 per cent in urban areas giving a weighted average of 0.58 per cent[3]. The percentage of open unemployment to population in Kerala is, therefore, roughly seven times as high as in the rest of India.

11.30 Category (6) of Table 60, that is, the proportion of casual workers to the total population gives an idea of the magnitude of the problem of under-employment. The incidence of under-employment is also higher in Kerala than in India. Of the total population, 9.6 per cent belongs to this category against about 6 per cent for the whole of India.[4] Among the under-employed section of the population, on an average, a worker was unemployed for about 2.35 days per week. This, however, does not tell the whole story. There are the seasonal variations which extend the period of unemployment to several days at a stretch.

11.31 The above figures do not include disguised unemployment. In rural areas, where family enterprise is the dominant form of organization, there is generally a large surplus of hidden manpower which does take part in economic activity, but whose net contribution towards increasing the output is very little. An objective assessment of the surplus in disguised unemployment is rather difficult. It would have to rely heavily upon notional norms regarding optimum labour requirements among the self-employed sector of rural population. Within the coming decade the problem of primary importance, however, is that of providing jobs for the large backlog of unemployed, who sit completely idle, rather than for those who are in the comparatively favourable position of being employed but below their full capacity. 464 369

RURAL-URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT

11.32 The nature of unemployment in rural and urban areas varies considerably. According to NSS Report on 'Employment and Unemployment' (9th Round), open unemployment in rural areas was rather insignificant affecting only 0.29 per cent of the total rural population (urban areas 1.99%). Because of the small size of the sample, the unemployment survey referred to above did not collect separate data for rural and urban unemployment in Kerala. Under these circumstances, only rough 162 464 369

[1] Table 60.

[2] It may be noted that in Table 60 the absolute number of unemployed persons is likely to be high since a portion of Travancore-Cochin, viz., Kanyakumari was transferred to Madras. However, the percentage figures may be assumed to be fairly correct.

[3] *NSS Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[4] *Ibid.*

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162 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural
464 and urban areas.
369 11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9	2.10	15 0
	(86%)	(14.0%)	(100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be
464 helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The im-
871 pression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of [212] the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.
[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

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Supply of Labour

11.36 In addition to the current back-log of unemployment, the two sources of future labour supply would be : (*i*) growth of population, (*ii*) changes in labour force population ratio. Of these, by far the most important source will be the growth of population. Long run changes in the labour force population ratio are difficult to predict. For the comparatively short period of next 10 years, this ratio may be assumed to remain constant at about 37.9 per cent or so.

11.37 A look at the population figures in Kerala over the last few decades shows that this State has witnessed a higher rate of growth of population than India as a whole and that during 1941–51 it was higher (22.82%) than in any other State.[1] There are indications to believe that the rate of growth of population during the coming decade may not be so fast. The following table gives the projections for growth of population[2] and the labour force arising out of it during the period 1956–71.

GROWTH OF POPULATION—PROJECTIONS FOR 1956—71

Year	*Population* (million)	*Increase in Population over the previous five years* (million)	*Increase in the labour force (Labour force population Ratio = 37.9 per cent)* (million)
1956	15.01	..	..
1961	16.68	1.67	.633
1966	18.34	1.66	.629
1971	20.12	1.78	.674
			1.936
	Backlog of unemployment in 1956		.660
			2.596
Less jobs created during the Second Plan			.200*
Additional labour supply during 1961–71			2.396

* *Employment Trends and Prospects*—Planning Commission. Approximate estimates of employment created during the Second Plan may also be derived from investment figures. On this basis we get a smaller figure for employment generated during the Second Plan period. Public sector investment during the Second Plan was about Rs. 75 crores. Adding 50 per cent for private investment the total comes to Rs. 112.5 crores. Assuming that an investment of roughly Rs. 8,000 is required to create an additional job, the number of jobs created during the Second Plan comes to about 1.4 lakhs.

11.38 The above figures may be taken to be only rough approximations, since the projections of population and labour force ratios are based on certain assumptions. However, the magnitude of the problem is well illustrated by the fact that during the coming decade an additional 23.96 lakh jobs will have to be created if something approaching the standards of full employment has to be achieved. This figure is almost 50 per cent of the existing working force.

[1] *1961 Census*—Provisional Population figures.

[2] Based on NCAER population projections. It may be noted that the NCAER projections would have to be slightly modified in the light of the 1961 Census data. However, the extent of difference would not be so large as to make any substantial difference to our calculations.

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TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

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District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	*16,875,109*	*1,188*

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	*172.5*	*49.1*	*4,520.0*	*45.4*
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0		44.9
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	70.0	
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6	60.0	0.5
B. Secondary Incomes	*52.3*	*14.9*	*1,430.0*	*14.4*
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.3	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	*126.8*	*36.3*	*3,610.0*	*36.8*
1. Communications	..			
2. Railways	3.5			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	35.9			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	3.5			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	31.3			
6. Public Authorities	14.6			
7. House Property	18.0			
TOTAL	*351.6*	*100*	*9,980*	*100*
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-56)

	Working force			Net value added per worker (Rs.)	
	Kerala		India	Kerala	India
	Lakhs*	Per cent	Per cent		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	..	413	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	50.3	100.00	100.00	700.00	651.00

* Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Integrated Sample Survey. According to this, estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Integrated Sample Survey are given below:

	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	24.5
2. Secondary Sector	9.4
(a) Mining	0.5
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	12.4
TOTAL	46.3

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 5

CONSUMER EXPENDITURE IN RUPEES PER PERSON BY ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION FOR PERIOD OF 30 DAYS IN RURAL AREAS

Items	*Travancore-Cochin*		*All-India*	
	Expenditure level (Rs.)	*Percentage*	*Expenditure level* (Rs.)	*Percentage*
Foodgrains	6.10	32.7	8.70	4.06
Milk and milk products	0.48	2.5	1.35	6.3
Edible oil	0.57	3.1	0.45	2.1
Meat, egg and fish	0.78	4.2	0.42	2.0
Sugar	0.40	2.2	0.45	2.1
Salt	0.06	0.3	0.06	0.3
Other food	2.83	15.2	2.11	9.8
FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*11.17*	*66.0*	*13.54*	*63.2*
Clothing	1.13	9.8	1.66	7.7
Fuel and light	1.13	5.9	1.16	5.4
Rent	0.08	2.8	0.30	1.4
Taxes	0.06	0.2	0.07	0.3
Miscellaneous	5.07	15.4	4.71	22.0
NON-FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*7.47*	*34.0*	*7.90*	*36.8*
TOTAL	18.64	100.0	21.44	100.0

SOURCE: *The National Sample Survey*, Fourth Round, April-September 1952, Number 13.

11: India. G-4, 5 · (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 6

VALUATION OF FOREIGN EXPORTS FROM THE PORTS OF COCHIN, ALLEPPEY AND CALICUT 439

(Rs. lakhs)

Some important commodities of export	*1953-54*	*1954-55*	*1955-56*	*1956-57**	*1957-58*
Cardamom	22.44	32.84	50.17	54.84	55.90
Cashew(kernels and liquids)	927.55	1,014.52	1,155.12	1,112.02	1,141.82
Coffee	72.39	82.88	93.69	76.50	90.73
Coir and Coir Products	804.00	731.37	856.86	878.09	704.87
Fish and Prawns	102.69	79.34	51.85	123.86	149.33
Ginger	27.94	33.24	58.71	61.40	39.23
Metals, Minerals, Ores	21.56	22.78	28.95	77.10	60.77
Lemon grass oil	72.62	104.73	130.65	147.00	138.41
Pepper	962.13	569.81	378.61	341.69	295.67
Tea	1,912.96	2,196.86	1,992.17	1,974.75	2,434.78
Others	235.72	443.83	591.64	525.75	491.40
Total Value of Foreign Exports	*5,162*	*5,318*	*5,369*	*5,343*	*5,603*
Total Value of Exports to Ports of India	*2,238*	*2,193*	*2,489*	*2,404*	*2,318*
Value of Total Exports	**7,400**	**7,505**	**7,858**	**7,747**	**7,921**

*Value of exports from Calicut includes exports to both foreign and Indian ports.

SOURCE: *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959.

TABLE 7

CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF HOLDINGS AND LAND AREA OF HOLDINGS IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN AREA AND THE MALABAR DISTRICT 423 184

Grade of holdings	*Travancore-Cochin*		*Malabar*	
	No. of holdings	*Area*	*No. of holdings*	*Area*
Up to 1 acre	66.72	16.49	28.91	2.43
Up to 2.50 acres	86.47	36.96	51.52	8.22
Up to 5 acres	94.84	57.07	69.35	17.68
Up to 10 acres	98.35	73.35	83.79	32.30
Up to 20 acres	99.50	83.50	93.91	52.38
Up to 40 acres	99.86	90.15	97.88	68.57
Up to 100 acres	..	..	99.62	82.37
All	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*

SOURCE: *Kerala 1959: An Economic Review*, Government of Kerala (1960).

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 8

LAND UTILIZATION PATTERN IN KERALA

Particulars of area	*1960-61*	*1956-57*	*Per cent (+)(—)*	*Percentage of area according to professional survey 1956-57*
1	2	3	4	5
Area According to Professional Survey	8,343*	8,696	+2.7	..
1. Area according to Village Papers	9,065	9,412	+3.8	..
2. Forest	2,121	2,458	+15.8	25.62
3. Land put to non-agriculture uses	466	503	+7.9	5.24
4. Barren and Unculturable land	596	497	+16.7	5.18
5. Total (not available for cultivation) (3+4)	1,062	1,000	—5.8	10.42
6. Permanent Pastures & other Grazing lands	101	121	+19.8	1.26
7. Land under tree crops and groves not included in N.A.S.	430	508	+18.1	5.29
8. Culturable waste	720	437	—39.4	4.55
9. Total (other uncultivated and ex-fallow land) (6+7+8)	1,251	1,006	—14.8	11.11
10. Fallow lands other than current fallow	227	207	—8.8	2.16
11. Current Fallow	115	155	+34.8	1.62
12. Total Fallow land (10+11)	342	362	+2.9	3.77
13. Net Area Sown	4,289	4,525	+28.8	47.16
14. Total Cropped Area	4,975	5,382	+ 8.2	56.10
15. Area Sown more than once	686	857	+24.9	8.93

* Corresponds to 1951-52 figures.

11: India . G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 9

VALUE YIELDED PER ACRE

Name of commodity	*Percentage value contributed*	*Percentage of gross cropped area occupied*	*Average value of produce per acre* (in Rs.) (1956)
Paddy	25.0	35.8	211.9*
Pulses	0.2	2.3	33.0
Tapioca	4.3	10.2	140.0
Banana	4.7	2.1	732.8
Sugarcane	0.7	0.3	722.2
Pepper	4.0	3.9	331.7
Ginger	1.6	0.4	1077.0
Cardamom	1.7	1.3	434.8
Arecanut	5.5	2.6	687.5
Cashewnut	2.1	1.7	408.6
Coconut	27.5	20.2	446.2
Groundnut	0.5	0.6	242.4
Rubber	3.8	2.9	425.0
Coffee	0.9	0.8	390.2
Tea	7.9	1.5	1434.3
Others	11.8	13.2	294.0
	100	*100*	*Gross Average = Rs. 327*

TOTAL GROSS VALUE = Rs. 180 crores. TOTAL CROPPED AREA = 5466 thousand acres.

* Figures given in this column are average values produced per acre gross of costs of cultivation and hence are not comparable with the net average of Rs. 361 per acre mentioned previously.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 10

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AREA AND PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA (1950-51[a] AND 1958-59[b])

	Area under crops ('000 acres)		Percentage increase or decrease	Production of crops ('000 tons)		Percentage increase or decrease
	1950-51	1958-59		1950-51	1958-59	
Rice	1,901	1,894	— 0.36	715	939	+ 31.3
Jowar	6	4	— 33.3	3	7	+ 133.3
Ragi	11	12	+ 9.1	5	7	+ 40
Other millets	30	14	— 53.3	3	2	— 33.3
Total cereals	1,948	1,924	— 1.2	726	954	+ 31.4
Tur	7	21	+ 200	1	4	+ 300
Other pulses	23	89	+ 286.9	1	13	+1200
Total pulses	30	110	+ 266.6	2	17	+ 750
Cereals & pulses	1,978	2,034	+ 2.8	728	971	+ 33.3
Sugarcane	2	21	+ 950	4	35	+ 755
Ginger	30	22	— 26.7	10	7	— 30
Chillies	8	8		2	2	
Tobacco		1			..	
Groundnuts	28	33	+ 17.8	14	15	+ 7.1
Sesamum	8	50	+ 525	1	5	+ 400
Total oilseeds	36	83	+ 130.5	15	20	+ 33.3
Cotton	18	21	+ 16.6	6	7	+ 16.6
Tapioca	505	553	+ 11	1,500	1,569	+ 4.6
Total field crops	2,578	2,718	+ 5.4	2,265	2,869	+ 26.6
Black pepper	173	224	+ 29.5	18	24	+ 33.3
Cardamom	63	69	+ 9.5	1	1	
Rubber	132	246	+ 86.5	12,998	22,158	+ 70.4
Tea	92	98	+ 6.5	24,314	39,757	+ 62.0
Coffee	28	41	+ 46.4	2,951	6,961	+ 135.8

[113]

[a] *Agricultural Statistics of Reorganised States (1960)*, Government of India.
[b] Agricultural Department, Kerala.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 11

PER ACRE YIELDS OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA

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4.33

Crops	Yields Per Acre (Lbs.)		
	1950-51	1958-59	Per cent (+)/(—)
1	2	3	4
1. Rice	829	1,108	+ 33.6
2. Jowar	1,120	560	— 50.0
3. Ragi	1,008	1,307	+ 30.0
4. Small Millets	224	448	+ 100.0
5. Total Cereals	829	1,008	+ 21.5
6. Tur	314	1,403	+ 28.3
7. Other Pulses	90	336	+ 273.3
8. Total Pulses	157	358	+ 128.0
9. Cereals and Pulses	896	963	+ 7.5
10. Sugarcane	4,480	35,616	+ 695.0
11. Ginger	739	806	+ 9.1
12. Chillies	..	..	..
13. Tobacco	..	..	..
14. Groundnuts	1,120	1,008	— 10.0
15. Sesamum	291	269	— 7.6
16. Total Oilseeds	918	582	— 36.6
17. Cotton	131	157	+ 19.8
18. Tapioca	6,640	6,352	— 4.3
19. Total Field Crops			
20. Black Pepper	224	246	+ 9.8
21. Cardamom			
22. Rubber	221	273	+ 23.5
23. Tea	597	791	+ 32.9
24. Coffee	236	407	+ 72.5

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 12

AREA IRRIGATED ACCORDING TO SOURCES

(In '000 acres)

Source	*1956-57*	*Per cent to total*	*1956-57*	*Per cent to total*	*Per cent (+)/(—) (2)/(1)*
1	2	3	4	5	6
Government Canals	321	43.15	343	41.38	+ 6.8
Private Canals	68	9.14	71	8.57	+ 4.4
Total Canals	*389*	*52.29*	*414*	*49.95*	*+ 6.4*
Tanks	82	11.03	77	9.28	— 6.1
Wells	26	3.49	29	3.49	+11.5
Other sources	247	33.19	309	37.28	+25.1
TOTAL	*744*	*100.00*	*829*	*100.00*	*+11.4*

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433

TABLE 13

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF RUBBER IN KERALA

Year	*No. of estates on 31st December*	*Area abandoned during the year* (In acres)	*New extension during the year including re-planting included in areas abandoned in the previous year*	*Total area under rubber during the year* (In acres)	*Area that has been tapped during the year* (In acres)	*Quantity of dry rubber produced* (Tons)
1951	9,026	1,856	4,386	141,750	99,078	13,800
1952	9,186	2,180	3,819	143,448	105,762	15,568
1953	14,231	1,489	1,555	163,254	143,263	19,430
1954	14,336	460	1,769	165,834	17,711	18,768
1955	14,386	2,386	4,963	168,412	152,831	21,605
1956	18,082	4,381	13,785	177,826	150,005	21,079
1957	43,783	4,230	31,699	246,793	167,421	21,496
1958	5,005	2,726	26,558	270,625	169,492	22,159

TABLE 14

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED COFFEE ESTATES ACCORDING TO SIZE AND AREA AS ON THE 31ST JULY 1958

(Area in acres)

District	Below 5 acres		5 to 10		10 to 25		25 to 50		50 to 100		100 to 200		150 to 200		200 to 250		250 and above		Total	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Malabar	9,121	16,187	1,123	4,936	515	4,956	62	2,272	46	2,965	10	1,218	8	1,293	6	1,336	14	5,650	10,905	40,813
Kottayam	3,130	3,596	185	56	58	57	14	343	5	323	1	159	1	150	..		1	703	3,395	5,367
Cochin	5	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	125	3	561	2		1	330	15	1,016
Quilon	147	N.A.	2	N.A.	..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149	30

Source: *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1957-58*, Vol. IV., Coffee Board.

[113]

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1423
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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 17

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT FROM ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN KERALA

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435

(Rs. lakhs)

Item	*1955-56*	*1956-57*	*1957-58*
Milk consumed as such	531	540	561
Other milk products	593	604	608
Beef	56	58	62
Buffalo flesh	18	19	20
Mutton	93	97	98
Hides and Skins	29	30	31
Bones and Horns	6	7	7
Eggs	84	121	136
Poultry	72	78	84
Dung	321	381	394
Increment in stock	96	113	116
Miscellaneous	4	4	3
GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT	*1903*	*2052*	*2180*

SOURCE: *Regional Income of Kerala* (At current prices) 1955-56 to 1957-58: Government of Kerala (1960). [113]

TABLE 18

LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF KERALA—MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1951 AND 1956

231

Category	*Total*		*Percentage of increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1956 over 1951*
	1951	*1956*	
Cattle	2,151,522	2,510,376	+ 16.7
Buffaloes	444,368	487,653	+ 9.7
Sheep	423,513	97,820	— 76.9
Goats	423,345	955,570	+ 125.7
Horses and Ponies	518	1,690	+ 226.2
Mules	14	2	— 85.7
Donkeys	689	1,415	+ 105.2
Pigs	117,932	113,711	— 3.6
TOTAL LIVESTOCK	*3,561,901*	*4,168,237*	+ *17.1*
Fowls	3,854,319	6,462,799	+ 67.6
Ducks	263,147	322,085	+ 26.2
Others	..	161	..
TOTAL POULTRY	*4,117,466*	*6,785,045*	+ *65.1*

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SOURCE: *Statistical Outline of Kerala State, 1960.* [113]

[Pp. 280-282 not Processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 19

NUMBER OF COWS AND SHE-BUFFALOES IN MILK PER THOUSAND POPULATION IN KERALA AND OTHER INDIAN STATES

State	Number of cows and she-buffaloes in milk in 1956	
	Total number	Rate per thousand population of the State
Andhra Pradesh	3,017,305	89
Assam	1,012,055	96
Bihar	2,592,908	63
Bombay	4,277,810	81
Jammu & Kashmir	318,105	666
Kerala	457,711	430
Madhya Pradesh	4,087,860	148
Madras	1,716,864	33
Orissa	1,950,792	91
Punjab	694,638	45
Rajasthan	2,175,132	123
Uttar Pradesh	5,149,355	150
West Bengal	1,428,996	76
Delhi	57,156	27
Himachal Pradesh	233,079	208
Manipur	32,394	32
Tripura	67,792	103
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1,616	35
All-India	31,998,171	89

TABLE 20

CATTLE AND BUFFALOES IN KERALA (CATEGORIES) 1960

231

Categories	Cattle (in '000 numbers)	Buffaloes (in '000 numbers)	Total (in '000 numbers)
1. Males over 3 years	810	279	1089
(i) Breeding	11	4	15
(ii) Working	571	268	839
(iii) Others	28	7	45
2. Females over 3 years	1098	162	1260
(i) Breeding			
(a) In milk	398	63	461
(b) Dry and not calves	577	65	642
(ii) Working	8	11	19
(iii) Miscellaneous	19	3	22
3. Young stock	816	94	1090
TOTAL	2536	515	3051

Source: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

[113]

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF VETERINARY INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA STATE (1960-61)

232
634

District	Hospitals	Dispensaries	Stockman's stations	Inspectors' stations
Trivandrum	5	3	..	..
Quilon	5	7	..	..
Alleppey	6	5	..	..
Kottayam	5	4	..	..
Ernakulam	9	12	..	..
Trichur	7	13	4	..
Palghat	5	8	..	8
Kozhikode	2	10	..	..
Cannanore	1	7	..	3
TOTAL	45	69	4	11

Source: Director of Animal Husbandry, Trivandrum.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 58

DENSITY OF POPULATION (KERALA STATE)
(Figures based on 1951 Census)

162
464
634

District		*Participation rate* (Per cent)	*Density of population*	
Trivandrum	Travancore-Cochin	36.2	1,569	
Quilon			749	
Alleppey			2,148	
Kottayam			684	
Ernakulam			982	
Trichur			1,188	
Palghat		28.5	793	783
Kozhikode			809	
Cannanore			618	
STATE TOTAL			904	

Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore formed the previous districts of Malabar.

TABLE 59

OCCUPATIONAL BREAK-UP OF WORKING FORCE (1951)

162
464
171

	KERALA						*INDIA*					
	Rural		*Urban*		*Combined*		*Rural*		*Urban*		*Combined*	
	Lakhs	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*
Agricultural Sector	22.3	60.3	1.1	18.9	23.4	51.4	990	81.8	30	18.9	1,020	71.8
Non-agricultural Sector	17.3	39.8	4.7	81.1	22.0	48.6	218	18.2	184	81.1	402	28.2
TOTAL	*39.6*	*100.0*	*5.8*	*100.0*	*45.4*	*100.0*	*1,208*	*100.0*	*214*	*100.0*	*1,422*	*100.0*

[Pp. 286–309 not Processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962. AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 60

UNEMPLOYMENT POSITION IN KERALA

162
464
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Activity status	*Travancore-Cochin*		*Malabar*		*Kerala*	
I	II		III		IV=II+III	
	Absolute number (In lakhs)	*Percentage to total population*	*Absolute number* (In lakhs)	*Percentage to total population*	*Absolute number* (In lakhs)	*Percentage to total population*
(a) Below 15 years age	41.3	40.7	20.7	36.9	62.0	39.4
(b) Above 15 years	60.2	60.1	35.3	63.0	95.5	60.6
1. Students	4.0	4.0	1.2	2.1	5.2	3.3
2. Disabled or too old	4.6	4.5	3.2	5.7	7.8	4.9
3. Pensioners or Rentiers	1.1	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.8
4. Having Regular Employment	19.7	19.6	9.8	17.5	29.5	18.7
5. Household Workers	19.2	19.0	10.9	19.4	30.1	19.1
6. Casual Workers	9.1	8.0	7.2	12.1	15.2	9.6
7. People in search of employment	3.7	3.6	2.9	5.9	6.6	4.2
TOTAL POPULATION	*101.5*	*100*	*56.0*	*100*	*157.5*	*100*
LABOUR FORCE (4+6+7)	*31.4*	*30.9*	*19.87*	*35.5*	*51.2*	*32.5*
Category (7) as percentage of labour force	*3.7*	*11.62*	*2.9*	*14.64*	*6.66*	*12.79*

SOURCE: The Statistics Department, Government of Kerala.

TABLE 61

COMPARATIVE SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FORCE

464
162

Sector	*Proportion of working force*	
	1956	*1971*
1. Primary Sector	54.9	42.2
2. Secondary Sector	19.3	24.6
(a) Factory Sector	3.4	9.2
(b) Non-factory Sector and Mining	15.9	15.4
3. Tertiary Sector	25.8	33.2
TOTAL	*100.0*	*100.0*

11: India G-4,.5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 62

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EMIGRATION FROM AND IMMIGRATION TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

Year	Number of		Percentage of population		
	Immigrants	Emigrants	Immigrants	Emigrants	Balance
1901	82,023	16,346	2.18	0.43	1.75
1911	83,278	26,112	1.91	0.60	1.31
1921	88,603	29,025	1.78	0.58	1.20
1931	164,389	48,503	2.61	0.77	1.84
1951	206,823	205,816	2.23	2.22	0.01

SOURCE: *Census of India, 1951*, Travancore-Cochin, Part 1 A, Report.

TABLE 63

INVESTMENT DURING THE COMING DECADE (1960-61 to 1970-71)

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Items	State sector (Rs. crores)	Centre and private (Rs. crores)	Total (Rs. crores)	Percentage share to total investment	Percentage share, All-India Third Plan
1. Agriculture	51.7	56.0	107.7	10.8	20.8
2. Plantations	50.6	129.0	179.6	18.1	
3. Forests	5.7	..	5.7	0.6	
4. Animal Husbandry	2.6	..	2.6	0.3	
5. Fisheries	2.5	8.3	10.8	1.1	
6. Minerals	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.1	
PRIMARY SECTOR	*113.6*	*193.7*	*307.3*	*30.9*	
7. Factory Industries	31.2	114.1	145.3	14.6	28.8
8. Small Scale Sector	14.0	28.0	42.0	4.3	
9. Non-factory Sector	..	18.6	18.6	1.9	
SECONDARY SECTOR	*45.2*	*160.7*	*205.9*	*20.8*	
10. Power	102.0	..	102.0	10.3	9.5
11. Transport	70.0	28.4	98.4	9.9	16.2
12. Social Services	65.0	100.8	165.8*	16.6	16.9
13. Inventories	15.0	60.0	75.0	7.5	7.8
14. Rural Public Works	40.0	..	40.0	4.0	
TERTIARY SECTOR	*292.0*	*189.2*	*481.2*	*48.3*	*50.4*
GRAND TOTAL	450.8	543.6	994.4	100.0	100.0
Loans from State Government to the Private Sector	+47.0	—47.0			
	497.8	496.6			

* Investment in social services has been derived from the Third Plan estimates (all-India) by assuming the same per capita investment as in all-India.

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Appendix 5

Lists of Trees and other Produce Found in Kerala Along with their Present Uses

E denotes Evergreen; *D* denotes Deciduous; *H* denotes Hardwood; *S* denotes Softwood

Malayalam name	*Botanical name*	*E or D*	*S or H*	*Uses*
1	2	3	4	5
1. *Teak*	*Tectona grandis*	D	H	Construction, furniture
2. *Mathi (Thembavu)*	*Terminalia tomentosa*	D	H	Construction, sleepers, etc.
3. *Marudu*	*Terminalia paniculata*	D	H	-do-
4. *Venteak*	*Lagerstromia Lanceolata*	D	H	Boat-building, ceilings
5. *Venga*	*Pterocarpus Marsupium*	D	H	Building construction good substitute for teak
6. *Manjakadamba*	*Adina cordifolia*	D	H	Bobbins and furniture
7. *Rosewood*	*Dalbergia latifolia*	D	H	Furniture, plywood, carpet size above 72" midgirth
8. *Chadachi (Unnam)*	..	D	H	Furniture
9. *Kinnireega*	*Albizia Odoratissima*	D	H	Building construction
10. *Ayini or (Anjili)*	*Artocarpus hirsuta*	E	H	-do-, Good substitute for teak, boat-building furniture
11. *Irimbagam or (Nanga)*	*Mesua Ferrea*	E	H	Sleepers
12. *Mahogany*	*Swietina entcanpa*	E	H	Furniture
13. *Wattle*	*Acacia mollissima*	D	H	Being introduced for tan bark
14. *Ambazham*	*Spondias mangifera*	D	S	Packing cases
15. *Choni*	*Tetramelus nudiflora*	E	S	Packing cases
16. *Mani Marathi*	*Lagerstromia flosreginae*	E	S	Building construction
17. *Cherupine*	*Hardwickia binata*	D	H	Packing cases, plywood
18. *Chuvanangil*	*Cedrela toona*	D	H	Furniture

(Continued)

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Appendix 5 (Continued)

1	2	3	4	5
19. *Mola*	*Dendrocalamus*			Bamboos for cheap housing, raw material for paper and rayon
20. *Pala*	*Alstonia scholaris*	E	S	Packing cases
21. *Irool*	*Xylia Xylocarpa*	D	H	Railway sleepers, building construction
22. *Kalpine*	*Dipterocarpus indicus*	E	S	Plywood
23. *Konna*	*Cassia fistula*	D	S	Tanning
24. *Vellangil (white cedar)*	*Dysoxylum malabaricum*	E	H	Plywood and furniture
25. *Nellika*	*Phyllanthus emblica*	E	H	Fruits for pickling and for Ayurvedic medicines
26. *Marooti*	*Hydnocarpus wighiana*	E	H	Soap-making, oil used for lighting purpose
27. *Eta reed*	*Ochlandra Travancoria and Reedi*			Raw material for paper
28. *Padiri*	*Stereospermum Chelonoidis*	E	S	Packing cases
29. *Pilavu*	*Artocarpus integrifolia*	D	H	Building construction, boat-making, furniture, etc.
30. *Poola (Elavu)*	*Salmalia Malabarium*	D	S	Matchwood, cotton used for pillows
31. *Poovam*	*Schleichera trijuga*	D	H	For lac cultivation
32. *Punna*	*Calophylum tomentosa*	E	H	Plywood and cheap timber for construction purposes
33. *Kanjiragam*	*Hopea parviflora*	E	H	Building construction, sleepers, etc.
34. *Vakkai*	*Strevlia Villosa*			Cember Bark (fibre) used for making ropes for timber dragging purposes
35. *Chakkin*	*Colonia ovalis*	E	S	Plywood
36. *Vellapine*	*Vateria indica*	E	S	A favourite plywood species
37. *Mathi*	*Ailanthus malabaricus (ovalis)*	D	S	Matchwood
38. *Pali*	*Palaquim Elipticum*	E	S	Plywood
39. *Kalamavu*	*Machilus Macrantha*	E	S	-do-
40. *Mavu*	*Mangifera indica*	E	S	Plywood, boat-building, packing cases
41. *Kalamaicha*	*Anacloset densiflora*	E	S	Plywood
42. *Kayari (chera)*	*Callonia ovalis*	E	S	-do-
43. *Shoveli*	*Hardwicka Pinnata*	E	S	-do-

(Continued)

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Appendix 5 (Contd)

1	2	3	4	5
44. ..	*Eucalyptus grandis*	E	S	Pulp timber
45. *Blue gum*	*E. Globulus*	E	S	Pulp timber
46. *Cashew*	*Anacardium Occidentale*	E	H	Nuts and apple
47. *Kadukka*	*Terminalia Chebula, and belerica*	D	H	Myrobalans
48. *Punnappamaram*	*Delonia pentagyna*	D	H	House construction
49. *Vekkali*	*Anogeissi latifolia*	D	H	Mine props
50. *Nedumar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	S	Masts and packing cases
51. *Nedumar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	H	Cabinet-making and furniture
52. *Malayappu*	*Chukrasia tabularis*	E	H	-do-
53. *Chenkurunthi*	*Elattrawancoria*	E	H	-do-
54. *Venkotta*	*Lophopetlum wightianum*	E	S	Plywood
55. *Puli*	*Tamarindus indica*	D	E	Fruit good glue material, Bobbins
56. *Aval*	*Holoptelea integrifolia*	E	S	Box and packing cases
57. *Black dammar*	*Canarium strictum*	E	S	Packing cases
58. *Pupitta*	*Sterculia companulata*	E	S	Matchwood, packing cases
59. *Kumbli (Nazakam)*	*Erodia roxburghiana*	E	S	Matchwood
60. *Vella Kumadamba*	*Hymenodiction excelsa*	D	S	Bobbins
61. *Puvarasu*	*Thespesia populnea*	D	H	Shuttles
62. *Dantpala*	*Wightia tinctoria*	D	H	Combs, and carvings
63. ..	*Gmelina arborium*	D	H	Musical instruments
64. *Pungu*	*Pongamia glabra*	D	H	Oil seeds
65. *Mukayini*	*Bridelia retusa*	D	H	Tans and dyes
66. *Chandu*	*Caesalpinia sappan*	D	H	Dyes
67. *Udi*	*Odina wodier*	D	H	Gum used for curving fishermen's nets

Source: Department of Forests, Government of Kerala.

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Appendix 6

Statement Showing Outturn of Minor Forest Products During 1958-59

Items	Unit	By Government agency		By purchasers		Total Amount (Rs.)
		Quantity	Amount (Rs.)	Quantity	Amount (Rs.)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A. Cardamom lease	lbs.	159	320.50		21191.68	23512.18
B. Honey (Big bees)	Tons	..	..	244		..
-do- (Small bees)		..	..	..	..	..
Wax		..	..	..	..	..
C. Ivory-Tusks	lbs.	1565.75	32483.00	..	..	32483.00
Serivelloes	lbs.	31.80	226.00	..	..	226.00
Elephant teeth	lbs.	88.00	25.62	..	..	25.62
Bamboo	No.	6607	620.12	6617.08	66720.99	67341.11
D. Bamboos						
,, Chillies	Head loads	..	..	163	7.24	7.24
,, Chillies	No.	..	..	29100	582.00	582.00
,, Thorns	Head loads	..	..	324	40.00	40.00
,, Thanayam Bamboo	No.	..	..	50	1.50	1.50
,, Local Mongal	No.	..	..	109800	6588.00	6588.00
,, Kalmongal	No.	..	..	54800	4392.00	4392.00
Split Bamboo	No.	..	..	2950	142.50	142.50
Sale of bamboo coupes		..	..	..	20555.00	20555.00
Reeds (Pass)	No.	4050	20251	1860393	72698.64	72718.89
(Air dry)	No.	..	..	1600025	6000.42	6000.62
(Air dry)	Tons	..	..	9975-1796	11928.67	11928.67
				Tons Cwt. lbs.		
(Ticket)	No.	..	..	227010	908.04	908.04
(Leases)	No.	..	..	9750	5130.50	5130.50
E. Rattans (Round)	No.	25	0.50	765970	13812.70	13813.20
(Split)	No.	..	..	73315	41313.90	41313.90
Sales of Rattan coupes		..	..	..	31580.00	31580.00
F. Miscellaneous						
(1) Vekka			..	..	4845.89	4845.89
(2) Vekka fibre	Head loads	..	..	2706	985.25	985.25
(3) Kynansticks	Cart loads	..	..	5	3.75	3.75
(a) -do- fibre	Head loads	..	..	3	0.57	0.57
(4) Kulavoo oil	..	..	..	..	..	..
(5) Manwoo leaves	Head loads	..	..	5078	311.06	311.06
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	966	966.00	966.00

(Continued)

Appendix 6 (Continued)

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(6) Metal	Cart loads	..	..	42400	477.00	477.00
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	1077.5	576.25	576.25
(7) Rubber		..	..	..	2826.85	2826.75
(a) -do-	lbs.	..	..	1418	708.75	708.75
(8) Gravel	Cart loads	..	..	287	71.75	71.75
(9) Laterite	Cart loads	..	..	1081.5	32.87	32.87
(10) Sand and Earth	Cubic feet	..	..	9475	146.12	146.12
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	593	148.25	148.25
(11) Thatching grass	Cart loads	..	..	279.5	279.86	279.86
(a) -do-	Head loads	416	26.0	999	351.17	371.17
(12) Grassing fee			437.00		37169.75	37606.75
(13) Minor forest produce lease		..	735.00	..	83611.38	83611.38
(14) Rubber Dn. Lease		..	..	..	2123.00	2123.00
(15) Taungya Lease			8291.10	..	49627.50	57918.60
(16) Cashew plantation lease		..	5635.00	..	2401.00	8036.00
(17) Food production lease		..	..	..	28258.94	28258.94
(18) Miscellaneous lease			580.88		2147.38	2728.26
(19) Koona leaves	Head loads	..	..	25	1.56	1.56
(20) J.N. Poles	No.	25	20.00	5820	1580.00	1600.00
(21) J.N. Twigs				..	..	..
(22) Creepers						
(23) Thai Posts						
(24) Fodder grass						
(25) Eauthal Leaves						
(26) Penning fee						
(27) Kanakamukw	No.	..	..	117945	1179.25	1179.25
(28) Wild plantation leaves		..	..	5	0.31	0.31
(29) Ginger		..	..	..	..	..
(30) Groves & boodlers	cft.	..	..	8950	181.00	181.00
(31) Coconut tope lease		..	..	..	11873.00	11873.00
(32) Tac	lbs.	192.00	192.00	..	..	192.00
(33) Seeds	lbs.	378	94.50	..	..	94.50
(34) Grass and leaves	Shraves	49250	493.00	..	..	493.00
(35) Elephant tail lair	No.	200	300.00	..	..	300.00
(36) Land lease	Acres	..	..	368.68	2236.31	2239.31
(37) Site lease		..	..	6.70	30.00	30.00
(38) Road tax	..	..	..	..	4150.00	4140.00
(39) Elephant liver	..	..	..	..	163.34	163.34
(40) Vekka drag ropes	Nos.	..	..	30881	7720.25	7720.25
(41) Value of pit fallen animals		..	..		57.00	57.00
(42) Anilala	Head loads	..	..	4	0.25	0.25
(43) Ithy Bovck	No.	..	..	6	1.50	1.50
(44) Miscellaneous sales	..	..	93.00	..	..	93.00
(45) Teak stump	..	..	..	2	20.00	20.00
(46) Departmental compound Lease		..	..	..	780.23	780.23
(47) Pepper	lbs.	..	..	30	30.00	30.00
(48) Bamboo 30' (Export)	No.	..	..	5800	1044.00	1044.00
(49) Reeds (export)	No.	..	..	245700	2456.00	2456.00
(50) Other items	..	..	..	..	1393.66	1393.66
TOTAL			80,296.47		439,961.98	509,367.44

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/For further information on economic development and planning, including the part and potential productive capacity of agriculture and various industries in Kerala, see category 116, pp. vi-viii, 9-13, 15-21, 25, 28-65, 72-125, 128, 130, and 133-138./

/Information on the "enangar" as several cooperative linked lineages, will be found in category 613./

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/For a comparison of statistical data and general information regarding employment and unemployment in the state of Kerala vs. India as a whole, see 11: India, AW11 Kerala File, category 116, pp. 206-215./

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/Information on the participation of pre-pubescent girls as a body in the Tali-tying (Talikettu Kalyanan) ceremony, will be found in category 588./

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Nayar

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/For information on the function of the Taravād as a clan, lineage and matrilineal household unit, the researcher is advised to check all three categories listed above./

/Information on the Tali ceremony as a form of temporary pre-pubescent ritual marriage for the Nayar and Tiyyar girl will be found in category 588./

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/Information on the tarawad as a matrilineal joint family will be found in category 613./

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A STUDY OF POLYANDRY

BY

H. R. H. PRINCE PETER
OF GREECE AND DENMARK
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CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. 114
Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely 184
complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south.

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical 114
all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon [132]
from June to October. The record density of the population makes for [161]
poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, [484]
the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows.

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara 131
in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is
bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which [133]
are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western

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Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

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thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

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173 sage of Malabar, gave it to the priestly caste of Brahmins in perpetual holding.

These Brahmins now declared themselves satisfied and moved to take it over, but were at first frightened away by the aboriginal *Naga* (serpent) worshippers. Other Brahmins were then brought in from the north and instructed by Parasu Raman to propitiate the serpents by installing them as their household gods. He also organized the priestly settlers into sixty [611] four villages (*gramams*) and directed them to adopt succession through the mother (*marumakkathayam*), which last injunction they disobeyed, with the single exception of Payyanur in Chirakkal, where Brahmins observe matrilineal descent to this day. He then brought in Sudras (Nayars) from the country east of the Ghats (that is from the Tamil country) and entrusted them with the protection of the Brahmins; they were organized into *taras* and to them were given the duties of supervising, executing and issuing orders, so that rights in Kerala should not be curtailed or suffered to fall into disuse.

173 From this nebulous, mythical past, history later slowly emerges. Al-
175 ready, one thousand years B.C., Solomon is reputed to have traded with the south-west coast of India. Commercial contacts with the Near East did actually exist in this part of the sub-continent much earlier than anywhere else in India, the sea acting as a medium of communication. With the discovery of the south-west trade winds by Hippalus in the 1st century A.D., the Romans carried on the profitable relation, and they are reputed to have even had a settlement at Cranganore in Travancore. In 52 A.D., St Thomas landed there, according to local tradition, and converted some Brahmin families to Christianity, thus laying the foundation of the present-day Malabar Christian communities. During the following decades, as a result of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus in 70 A.D., the first Jews are reputed to have arrived in Kerala to settle at Mattancheri in Cochin.

175 In the 3rd century A.D., the Brahmins called in a king to rule them, and the Perumal dynasty started with Keya Perumal, who came from Keyapuram, east of the Ghats. Trade with other parts of the world continued during this period, the Arabs arriving from the Hadramaut and the Persian Gulf in the 9th century. The Chinese, however, are said by Marco Polo to have been in full control of the Malabar marts when that great traveller visited the area in the 13th century. Shortly afterwards, the last of the Perumals, Cheruman Perumal, was converted to Islam and departed to Mecca never to return.

Before leaving, Cheruman Perumal put his kingdom in order, it is

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said, by dividing it up between the rajas of Travancore, Cochin, Kolattiri, Kurumbranad, Walluvanad and others. To the Zamorin of Calicut, who was later to become so famous, he left only his sword with the recommendation to "die, kill and annex". The latter potentate and his descendants took the injunction seriously and very quickly in the two following centuries, the 14th and 15th, assumed a leading role on the Kerala stage. They encouraged Arab trade in spices and other commodities, and by their scrupulous honesty and absolute security of commerce, obtained and held it for fully two hundred years. 175

It was then that the first Europeans arrived on the scene. The Portugese came to beign with, in an attempt to break the Moors' monopoly of Far Eastern products. Coming into conflict with their Mohammedan rivals and with their protégé the Zamorin, they successfully supported the raja of Cochin against these and thus gained a footing on the coast while taking over command of the sea. They were only forced out by the Dutch in the 17th century (although they still hold Goa further north, to this day), and the Dutch in turn were superseded by the British and the French, who settled respectively at Tellicherry and at Mahe, from which fortified places they fought each other for supremacy in the pepper trade for another two centuries.

In the 18th century, the Mohammedan rulers of Mysore descended on Kerala and, after forcibly converting a great number of its inhabitants to Islam, annexed large tracts of it. Tipu Sultan, however, the ally of Napolean, fell foul of the British East India Company, which eventually defeated him at Seringapatnam in 1792. British supremacy in Kerala dates from that year and a system of farming out revenue to the local rajas was instituted. It proved to be a mistaken method of collection, and was the cause of the serious rebellions of Kerala Varma, Raja of the Padinnara Kovilagam of Kottayam, the Pazhassi raja, otherwise known as Pychy raja, in 1797 and from 1800 to 1805. With their termination, the British took over direct administration of Malabar, while leaving Cochin and Travancore to that of their rajas. They were to keep it until 1947 when India was given her independence. 175 631 648

Two years later, the States of Travancore and Cochin were merged to form a United State under the Maharaja of Travancore. In 1953, France finally relinquished her hold on Mahe, and in 1957, the whole coastal region from South Canara to Cape Comorin became the State of *Kerala* which we know today. The name has been variously interpreted as meaning either "land of coconut trees" or "land of the Cheras", an ancient Hindu dynasty of south India. [101]

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3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of
[212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also
[871] very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is
[212] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography.
105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala
564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

[463] Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or
[565] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

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of the Brahmins. There are something like sixty four subdivisions of these people, from those ranking highest, in north Malabar, to the non-military, low caste ones of the south and of the Palghat taluk. Because of their very close relation to the Nambudri Brahmins which I shall describe below in detail, it can hardly be said that the Nayars are equal in caste to Sudras elsewhere in India. This is no doubt the reason for which, not only is their true position in the Hindu caste scale generally overlooked, but also why they themselves have a proud and self-assured bearing quite unlike that of the fourth and lowest caste in other parts of the country. 105 564

With the Nayars, the end of the list of caste Hindus is reached. Below come the *outcastes* who, despite their condition, are also graded in accordance with rank. First of these are the Tiyas. These bear different names in the various parts of Kerala, but there seems to be general agreement that they are really all one and the same people. Thus the name Tiya seems reserved for them in north Malabar with the exception perhaps of former north Cochin (Thiyyas); in Palghat, they are known as Iruvans, in south Malabar as Thandans and some as Irava-Panikkars; in south Cochin and north Travancore as Chovans, while in the rest of Travancore they go by the generic name of Iravas (sometimes spelt Izhuvás).

Next are the artisans or Kammalans of which there are properly only four main subdivisions. Their associates, also artisans and craftsmen, are roughly grouped into fourteen different communities. [463]

The Kammalans are followed by another category composed of farm-hands, the Cherumas and Pulayas, and a dozen or so different kinds of aboriginals, jungle and hill folk who are rarely encountered on the coast or in the cultivated area, and have to be sought for in the foothills and jungles of the Western Ghats. [563]

Non-Hindu inhabitants of Kerala include Moslems and Christians, of whom the greater number belong to the first of these two religious communities. They are both known locally as Mappillas, the first as Jonaka Mappillas and the others as Nasrani Mappillas. It is from this name, meaning "mother's son" or "bridegroom" or again "great child", that the more familiar *Mopla* for the Kerala Mohammedans has been coined. All are of the Sunni persuasion, while the Christians belong to a great number of varied denominations; some of them are Roman Catholic (the majority), others "Romo-Syrian" (Uniat), Orthodox Syrian, Malankara Syrian, Assyro-Chaldean (Nestorian), Mar Thomas, and of the Protestant United Church of south India. 105 563 795

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105 563 [795] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [984] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [984] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [765] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

000 Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

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Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards. 105 564 576 291

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1] 104 105 564 614 611 428 613 588 591

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by 611 613 582 105 564 588 463 582 428

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

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105 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger
564 Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam*
581 property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger
428 sons.

105 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar
564 and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow
611 artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [992] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative
564 such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child
[58] after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle
564 of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort
588 with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [928] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

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having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible. 105 564 588

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish. 105 564 588 428 [648] [614]

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union. 105 588

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105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an [183] unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

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as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February.

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves.

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them.

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants

105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the
[423] past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and
[464] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state.
564 Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[429] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[293] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[463] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[464] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aborigipals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
954 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, The reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

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ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: "... and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

The polyandry of the Kammalans, of the four sub-castes of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and bell-metal smiths, is in every way identical with that of the Thandans and Tiyas of the central area. This may be because they claim a common Sinhalese origin for it. The legend relates that one of the early Perumal kings of Kerala, having received some useful hints as to how to have his washing done by a *dhobi* (washerman) promised to give him a girl of the Asari (carpenter) caste in marriage. This revolted the Kammalans, and in order to avoid the degrading proposition, they emigrated in a body to Ceylon, leaving their king with none but a few workmen specialized in making roofs for the temples. The pre-historic boycott had its desired effect. The Perumal monarch, in dire distress, promised to give up the marriage he had had in mind and appealed to the king of Ceylon for the return of his indispensable artisans. These agreed to come back, but were given protection by the king of Sinhala in the form of an escort of his own subjects who brought the coconut with them, settled in Kerala and became the ancestors of the Tiyas. Presumably, the Kammalans learned the advantages of polyandry when they were in the kingdom of Kandy, and have never ceased to practise it since. 595 173 [564] [326]

I found all the artisan families which I visited polyandrous, and I was told that the custom is still very vigorous, in spite of what outsiders have to say. The same applies to those associated craftsmen castes, the Kolla- and Vil-Kurups, the Tol-kollan, Kanisans, Mannans, Panans and Pulluvans, who do not seem either to have given up polyandry in any great numbers. Their form of the institution differs in no way from that of their fellows of the senior caste. 595 564

B. POLYANDRY IN THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR AND IN NORTH COCHIN

Personal Observations

It was into this complex maze of Kerala society that I ventured, a few years ago now, to study the polyandry of some of its people. In the following pages, I give the results of this personal investigation. Thanks to my helpers and interpreters, I was able to find polyandrous households almost immediately. My first visit to the Palghat taluk and to Walluvanad allowed me to confirm that the Tiyas still practised what I was searching for, and that what I had heard about them was not incorrect. While in Tellicherry, I had the same experience, even though 595*

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

*595 I was in that town for only a very short time. I shall begin by giving a description of the little remaining Nayar polyandry that I was able to find.

114 Research, in this case, was the very opposite of easy. When I was in
*595 Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk in 1949, and had made that town the centre of my activities, all the influential local Nayars, most of them *wakils* or lawyers, got together and, threatening the severest punishments if anyone disobeyed them, decided that none of their caste would give me any information at all regarding their alleged polyandry. The town is one from which many of the most prominent Nayars in Government service in New Delhi today have originally come, and in which members of their *tarawads* and immediate families still live. It is therefore understandable that they should have taken this line, it being considered by them today that any hint of their being polyandrous is insulting and degrading. Later, I heard that I had been accused in the Indian capital of stating that Nayars were descendants of the most primitive aboriginals. There was, naturally, absolutely no truth in this, but it is easy to see how the rumour originated.

*595 On the 28th of August, 1939, I went to a Nayar household which I have marked down in my notes as bearing the name of Tsingepuram
[351] Kailott. It was in the outskirts of Tellicherry, a large house in a garden compound, with a smaller building some distance away from it. There I met a man called Apunayar and his brother Kamarnayar, and the latter who seemed to be the most talkative, told me through my interpreter that he was the youngest of the two, while his brother, the other man, was the eldest of the whole family. There were four brothers, he explained, the two other ones, junior to this pair, lived in the smaller house in the compound: their names were Kunjiramanayar and Narayannayar. Their mother, Amalu of Tsingepuram kailott *tarawad* had recently died. She had been polyandrous, and the four brothers and a daughter who was also dead now had been born and brought up in the big house by their maternal uncles. The latter had died before their
[428] mother, and they had inherited the property. They had given up polyandry and now lived each of them with a wife. Households had been split, and the younger brothers had built themselves the smaller house in the garden, and lived there with their respective wives, while the two elder men had remained in the ancestral mansion. Apunayar had four children, two boys and two girls, Karanayar one girl, while in the smaller household, there were only a little boy and a little girl, both the children of Narayannayar.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

102
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133
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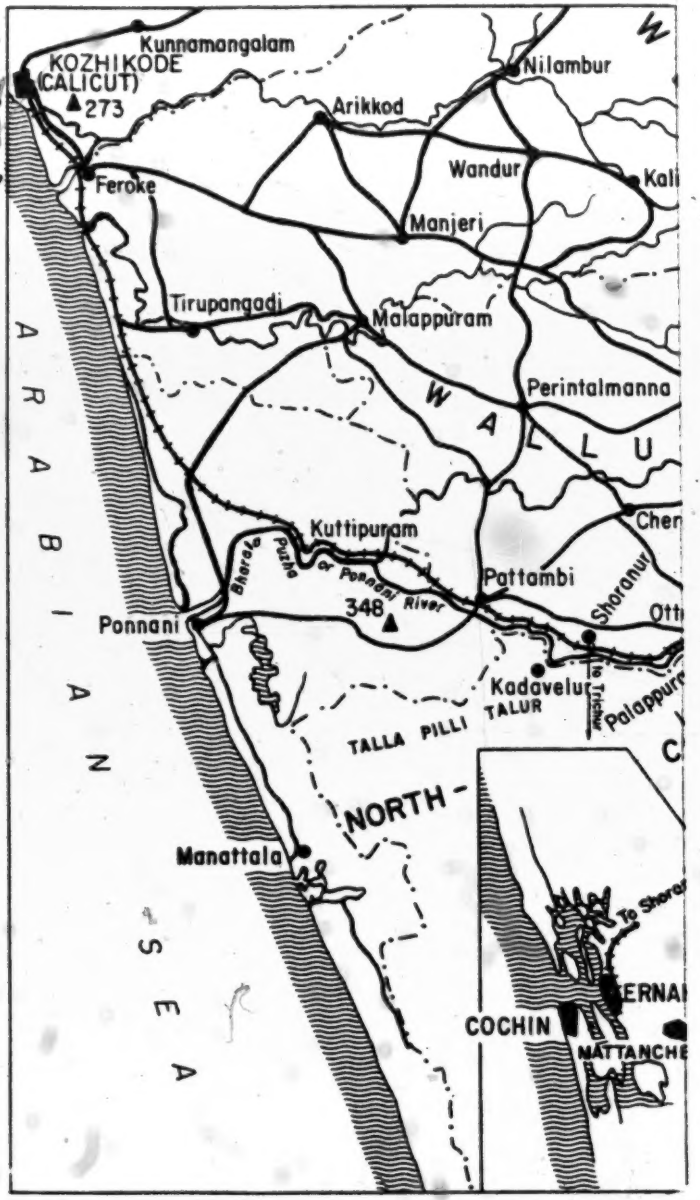

Map II. Map of South Malabar and North Cochin in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-A]

102
103
133
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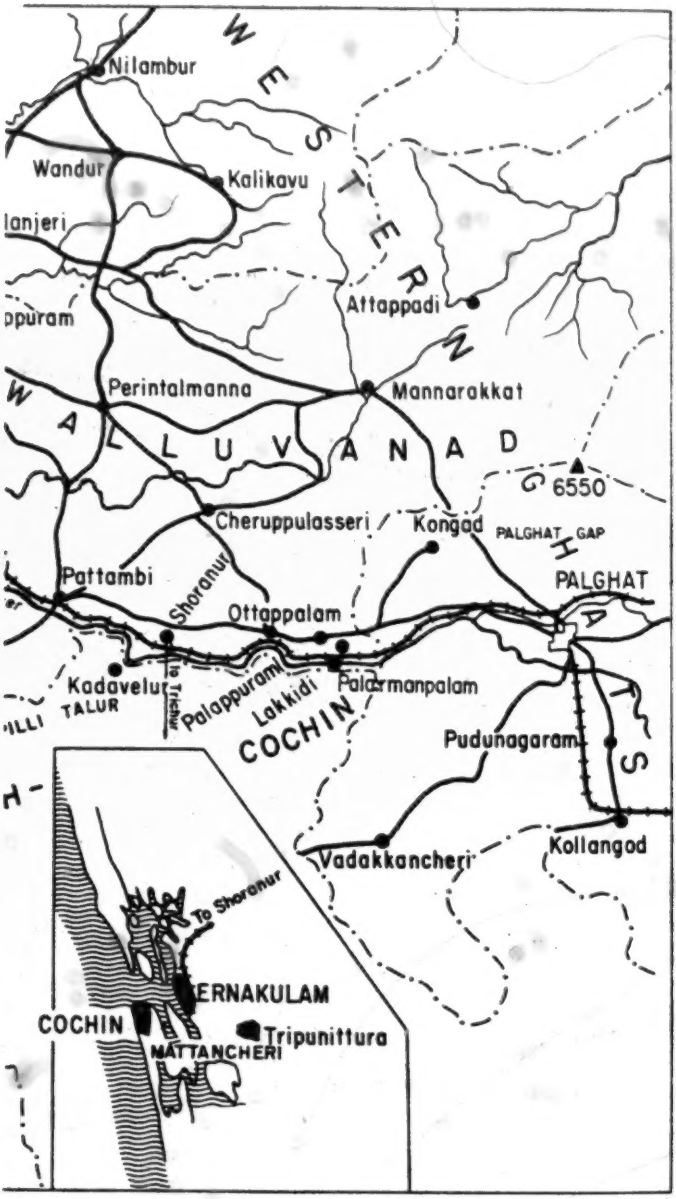

0 15 30 miles

in in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
N-YQYS

I would have liked to have returned to this household and to have got more information about its inmates; I would also have found it useful to discover other Nayar homes in which the traces of polyandry were still as fresh as in this one. Alas, war broke out within a few days and I was inexorably drawn away as related in Appendix I. 595*

I had to wait more than ten years before I again visited a Nayar household reputed to be polyandrous. It was in Palappuram, in the Walluvanad taluk, on the 23rd of November 1949, where I went to a house called Valathandath. Its inhabitants belonged to the Sudra Nayar sub-caste, and the *karanavan* whom I met, an old man, bore the name of Shekaranayar. His sister, Chimdevi, also aged, lived with him, she sat in a corner of one of the rooms, her breasts bare in the old fashioned way. She had been polyandrous too, I heard, although I was unable to discover the number and names of the husbands that she had had. Offspring consisted of two daughters and a son, the three of them living in the family house.

The eldest daughter, called Parbhatiama, had a little girl, Shandakumari. When I asked who the father was, she smiled and said that she did not know. Immediately intrigued, I asked again and why. The answer, which was not too difficult to obtain, was that she had two husbands, one "with the military" in Madras, and the other a Nayar agriculturist. Which of the two was the father, my interpreters said they could not find out for nobody knew. I was struck by the fact that this Nayar woman had a soldier as one of her husbands; it was reminiscent of the ancient classical pattern in which polyandry in her caste was reputed to exist because of the military commitments of the men.

The younger daughter, Kunyimaluama, posed for a photograph with her brother, Krishnayar (Fig. 8); she was also accompanied by a young man called Balanayar of the Velathadeth *tarawad*, who was, I heard, her paramour but not her husband. [837]

In view of the really determined opposition of the Nayar community in Kerala towards allowing me to find out more about their marital customs, I abstained from making further enquiries into the subject. Consequently I was forced to content myself with the meagre results obtained, and, apart from the information gathered from the Musad and mentioned above (see p. 174), I steered clear of the Nayars. To have acted otherwise under the circumstances might well have compromised my entire research work in Kerala and have led, I am afraid, to my having to abandon it without gaining any further data, even concerning the other polyandrous castes and sub-castes. 595* 114

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 [114] With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The [611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they [420] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they [351] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green [342] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 115 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him. [551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

community. It was confirmed that this name, meaning "headman", is really a title (like so many others in Kerala – Nayar, Panikkar, Kurup, Menon, etc.) by which the Tiyas of south Malabar are known. He also answered questions about *tarawad* and *kiriyam*, marriage rites and cross-cousin preference, the prevalence of polyandry in the community and the changing times, points which have all been accounted for in the first part of this chapter. 595* [551] [115] [124]

On the second day, I made out the family's genealogy, which is given in the accompanying Table 3. A few words of comment are no doubt needed here. I had three informants in all, since two others were added, later, to the first. I have marked them as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The generation to which the first informant belonged had originally consisted of nine children, from Kunji, the eldest, to Narayana, the youngest. Their *tarawad* was patrilineal and exogamous, as was also their matrilineal *kiriyam* in principle, but the rules of the latter were not observed very much any more beyond their immediate acquaintances. Kunji, now sixty two, was married at twenty; Kali, married when she was sixteen, divorced a year later and lived with her brothers; she was now sixty. All five brothers, when they were young, had been married polyandrously to Devaki, the eldest, Mayadi, now deceased, being sixteen at the time. Nani and Raman were issued from that marriage, and the young Raman and his family lived here, with his elder namesake in the same house. Devaki died when she was twenty nine, and the brothers were then all remarried, again polyandrously by their parents, to Kuniyama. Mayadi, then aged thirty, died the following year, and Raman senior became the *karanavan*. 595* 601 [614]

Sankara then suddenly said that he was displeased with the common wife. He expressed a desire to break away, and asked his father and maternal uncle to find him another wife. There was considerable opposition to begin with, but, eventually, they gave in, and Kodamah was found for Sankara, who, however, did not move out and put up another household, but stayed in the family mansion with Raman. The latter retained Kuniyama as his wife and had four children by her – Krishna, Janeki, Kerthiyani, and Madivi. Sankara and Kodamah, now forty five and thirty five respectively, had one daughter, Devaki, whom they married off three years ago when she was sixteen.

The breaking away of their elder brother, Sankara, seems to have given Panju and Narayana ideas of liberty as well. Kuniyama was apparently not a very popular common spouse, or else Raman monopolized her too much – it was difficult to find out which, for all that I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans
Tiyas

* 595 601 could get Panju to say at first was that she "did not look after us enough". However, when I insisted, I heard that she did not satisfy them sexually, which again might be either that Ramon got the lion's share of the marriage or that the two younger men did not find their elder brother's wife very attractive. Anyhow, they asked their maternal uncle (their father had died in the meantime) to find them another wife. After a show of resistance in which he said that it was not right and that they should remain with Kuniyama as tradition dictated, their mother's brother again gave in and got Nani for them; they married her when they were twenty and fifteen respectively. They were now forty and thirty five, and their common wife was thirty five. They had put up a separate household, to leave Raman and Sankara in the main building, and theirs was the smaller house on the other side of the yard, wholly within the same compound, however, so that the *tarawad* property was not completely torn asunder.

428 The land upon which the family lived was theirs, and not rented. After the death of their father, their mother inherited it, and when she died, it was divided up between the sons. Mayadi was also gone, but Raman junior, his son, and the four surviving brothers, Raman senior, Sankara, Panju and Narayana, each received one fifth of the whole. There was a meeting in the big house, they told me, about a year after the death of their mother (they presumably inherited the property undivided until then), and it took them three days to come to an agreement. Influential neighbours, the elders of the *tarawad* and the two brothers-in-law, Kunyadi and Maniken, also attended. The whole property, paddy fields, cattle, grain and seeds, agricultural tools, implements, the house and the household requisites and furniture, was evaluated in money and divided into five equal shares. Panju and Narayana did not split their shares; they kept the two fifths they received undivided, as they constituted a polyandrous household. The women did not inherit anything because they had been married off to others. Women among the Thandans can inherit from their parents, I heard, if there are no male heirs. *[595]

On the 27th of October 1949, I visited a Tiya (Thiyya) polyandrous family at Kadevelur in Tallapilli taluk of north Cochin. These people were *kanam* tenants of a Nambudri Brahmin, to whom they paid thirty rupees a year in rent, plus eight hundred measures of rice per crop.[1] * 595 [427]

[804] [1] I was told eight hundred *parahs*, but this is hardly possible as: 1 Cochin *parah* = 10 *edangalls* = 40 *nalls* = 1,720 *tolas*; as 42½ Cochin *tolas* = 1 lb., 1 Cochin *parah* = c. 40½ lbs. Eight hundred *parahs* would then = 40½ × 800 = 32,400 lbs. The measure may have been a smaller one, an *edangali* or even a *nall*.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Thandans

#595
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TABLE 3. GENEALOGY OF APPAYL *Tarawad*. APPAYL WATTAKKEH I

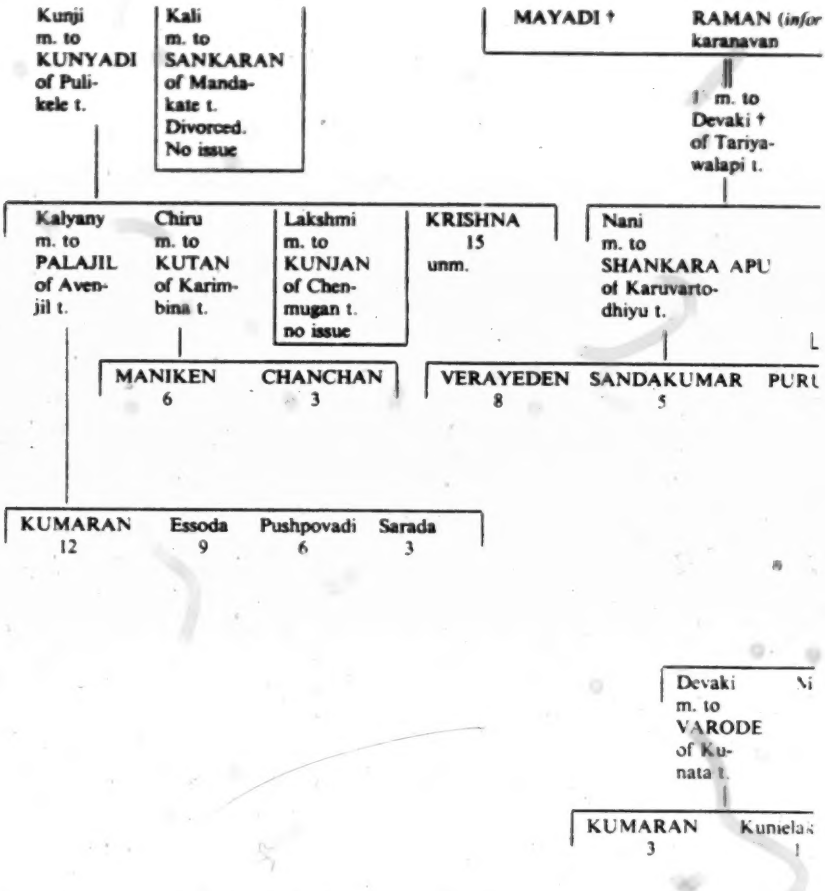

[1] Sankara and his family live in the same house as Raman.
[2] Panju and Narayana with their common wife live in a smaller house in the same compoun.
Capital letters denote males
Small characters are women
† = dead
m. = married
t. = *tarawad*
The age of small children or unmarried ones is shown below their names.

[facing P. 180-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595
601

ATTAKKEH HOUSEHOLD.

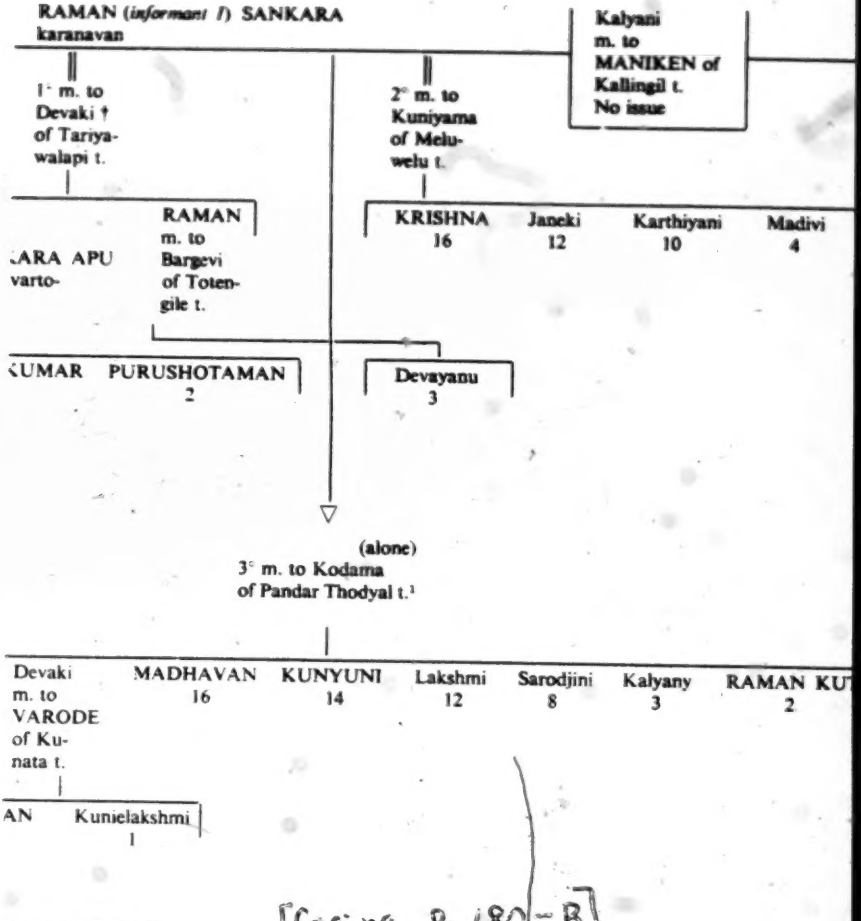

: same compound.

[facing p. 180-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Thandans

*595
601

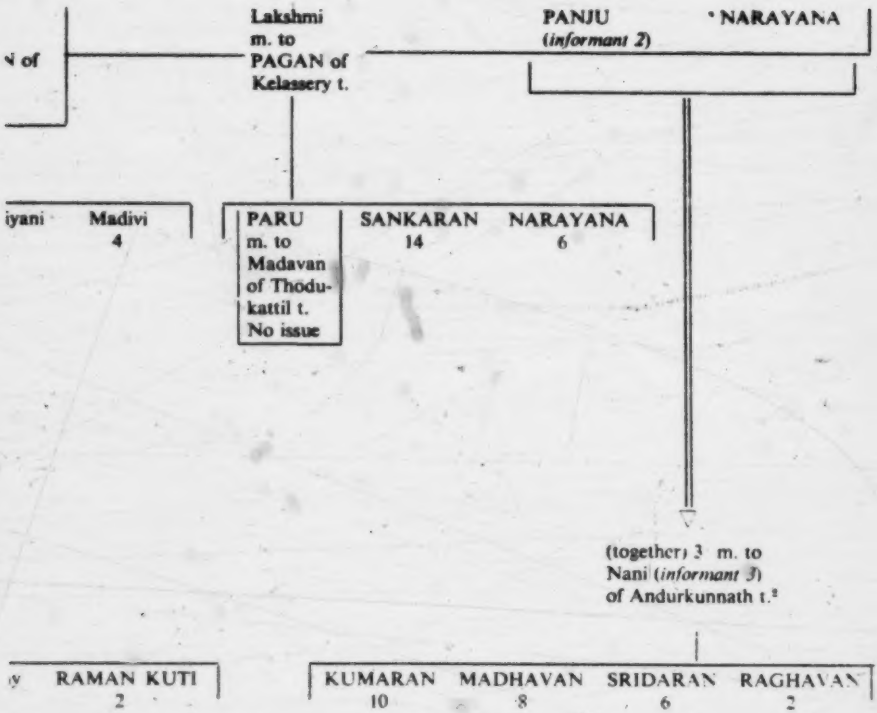

[facing P. 180-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

The informant, Velu, with whom we spoke, kept us outside the house on some chairs in the drive leading up to the property. He did not seem inclined to let us come in. 595* [123]

I made the accompanying genealogy with Velu. It is rather an extensive one since the family was large, and therefore I have laid it out in two Tables (4 & 5), separating the two lots of polyandrous families in which the older generation was divided. As regards the name, the informant told me that the *tarawad* contained five households, of which this was one; they had appellations principally of the four cardinal points, the name of his household meaning "eastern". 595* 601

Velu and his two younger brothers were married polyandrously to Kalyany, who had become their wife after her elder sister, Amalu, had died. This appeared to be somewhat reminiscent of sororate, but I understand that it was not so, the brothers simply having taken their sister-in-law in marriage because they liked her and thought it a good idea. The two elder brothers who were now dead, Pangan and Karapan, had also been married polyandrously to Mogami, who was still alive; she was sixty five at the time of my research work. They had had her all to themselves, because the three younger men had not wanted her. although for what reason it was impossible to make Velu say. All that he would impart to us was that they did not want her, and brought in Amalu as their wife, and kept her in the same house with the others. Even today, he said, they all lived together, without the property having been divided up between them.

Mogami had had eighteen children of whom thirteen were still alive. 595* I had an opportunity to meet this remarkable woman some weeks later, and I found her a lively and intelligent person, who did not appear to be the slightest bit worn out by her two husbands and many children. She was thin and rather small with flashing eyes and a very sharp brain. She told me many anecdotes of her former married life, with great relish and obvious pleasure, as if she had been extremely happy in it. She was quite unashamedly proud of her achievements and her present widowed life was kept interesting by the memories for which she lived.

Two of her eldest daughters, Lakshmi and Kuniyukuti, had been married polyandrously, and still lived under that arrangement, although Chankuni, the elder husband of Kuniyukuti, was rarely at home; he was employed as a peon in Ceylon, and only paid brief visits to Kerala. This brought the total number of polyandrous families in the Kereghetil household to four. [164] [167]

It should be noted, however, that only the men and their families as [591]

[Text continues on p. 183]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

TABLE 4. GENEALOGY OF KUTUKULANGARA *Tarawad*, KEREGHETIL E

*595
601

Kuttuma †
m. to ?
of Totupadam t.
one girl (name unknown)

Kandu †
died unmarried

Lakshmi
m. to
KOPAN &
KUNYUNI
of Peran-
kalangara t.

Kurumba
m. to
GOPALAN
of Pularu-
kotil t.

Kuniyukuti
m. to
CHANKUNI &
VELUKUTI
of Padigna-
kara t.

KANDAPAN
m. to
Kuniama
of Chateil t.
n. issue

Menakshi[1]
m. to
TUPERAN
of Vela-
kara t.

Madu
m. to
KUM
of Ali-
kute t

(A)

Amalu
m. to
GOVINDAN
of Kutat t.

BALAN
unmarried

BHARATAN
7

SINDARAN
6

Savitri[3]
5

boy (no name)
6 m.

(B)

Tangama
m. to
MATHAMAN
of Pamin-
guel t.

BALAN
15

Tankamani
13

all three unmarried

Kan

(C)

(A)

Panjali
m. to
ACHUDAN of
? t.

NANU
m. to
Kalyany
of Mute-
rat t.

KARUNAKARAN
m. to
Devaki of
? t.
no issue

BASHKARAN
17

PADMANAVAN
16

all three unmarried

Savitri
14

YESODA
13

JENARDHANAN
12

RAJAN[5]
11

Tangama
4

RAJAN
2

Su
3

(B)

SANKARAN
18

SEKARAN
16

KESSAVAN
15

Tanjorma
13

Umukuti
9

all of them unmarried

(C)

Sarojini
m. to
KUNIMAN
of Kalail t.

Srimadi
m. to
RAMANKUTI
of Machera t.

Janegi
14

Kanulach
13

PRABHA
12

KANU
11

Savitu
9

all of them unmarried

a boy
3

a girl
1

RAMAN
6 months

[facing p. 181-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Tiyas

EREGHETIL HOUSEHOLD. PART 1.

#595
601

PANGAN

enakshi[1] to JPERAN Vela-ra t.

Madu[2] m. to KUMARAN of Ali-kute t

Janeki m to KITTPA of Chara-watil t.

Kalyany m. to KRISHNA of Tara-yil t.

KESHEVAN m. to Amalu of Tondi-lil t.

ACHU 2

(C)

Tankamani 13

Kamelakshmi[4] 12

Devaki 5

Banu 2

PRABHAKARAN 7

RAJAN 5

Ja

hree unmarried

PADMANAVAN 16

SRIDARAN 15

all three unmarried

na

RAJAN 2

Suchilla 3 m.

[1] Followed by a girl who die
[2] Followed by two girls, a bo
[3] Followed by a girl who die
[4] Followed by two girls aged
[5] Followed by a girl who die
[6] Followed by a girl aged six
Conventional signs as in Table

ANU 11

Savitu 9

ASOKA 6.

arried

[facing P. 181-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

*595
601

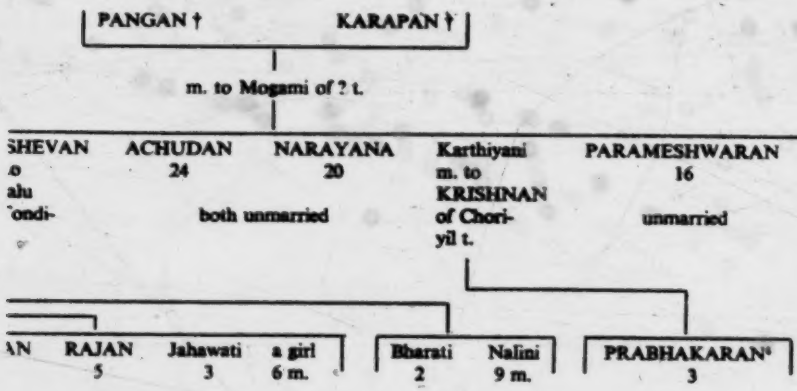

ved by a girl who died in infancy.
ved by two girls, a boy and two other girls who all died in infancy.
ved by a girl who died in infancy and another girl now aged three months.
ved by two girls aged eight and ten months respectively.
ved by a girl who died in infancy.
ved by a girl aged six months, yet unnamed.
onal signs as in Table 3.

[Facing P. 181-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
T1965

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TABLE 5. GENEALOGY OF KATUKULANGARA *Tarawad*, KEREGETHIL HOUSEHOLD. PART 2.

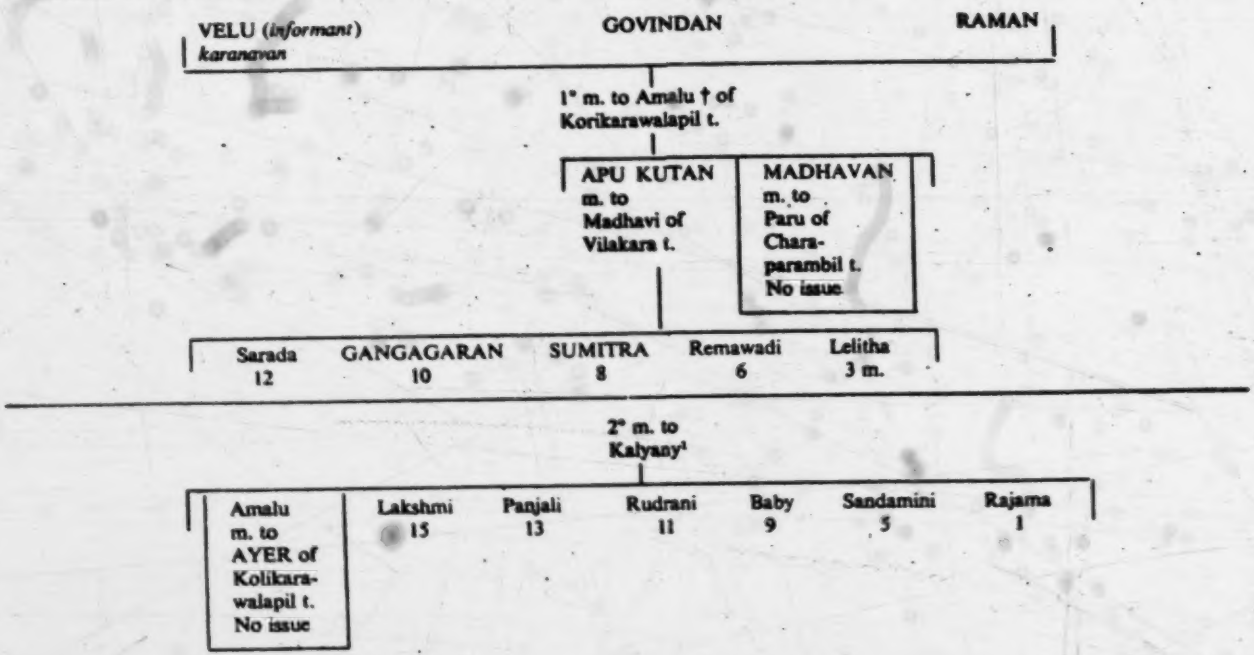

[1] Sister of first, deceased wife, therefore of same *tarawad*.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women 595*
who had married out had left and were living with the families of their 591
husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried [589]
boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I [582]
was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India.

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder gen- 595*
erations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The [656]
reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made poly-
andry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this
way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be di- [428]
vided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died.
This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children,
girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be al-
lotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages,
if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of
which the boys would get the four first.

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so 595*
that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, 178
they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not neces-
sary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system.
Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law
forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they
owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things
had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another
woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and
his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and
start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I ques-
tioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of
an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied
that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others,
carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns.

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied 595*
by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part [103]
of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perum-
pillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves [101]
"Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were [564]
assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5,
paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya
included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recog-
nized as such.")

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

*595 We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very [574] hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

*595 601 He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

427 This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the 273 introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of [463] their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles [656] within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this regulation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

regulation. They said that they were starving and that they had had nothing to eat that morning. When I asked them how they would solve their problem, they replied that it was better that I "did not ask". Evil times had befallen them in their old age, and they really did not know what they could do about it; they might hire themselves out as labourers, if they were not so old and feeble. They agreed with me that the increase in population in Kerala over the years had made the difficulty of feeding so many people increasingly great.

Their two elder sons, called Ayapakuti and Pangha, lived polyandrously, I heard, some few miles away, on a bit of land which their fathers had given them fourteen years ago, in the fifth year of their marriage and after the birth of their fourth child. The common wife, Paru, was now alone with the thirty five year old second son, as the elder had died two years ago, also at the age of thirty five. It seemed that Kandapan had originally been part of the polyandrous household but that, tiring of living in this way, he had found a wife for himself, Lakshmi, with whom he had returned to the parental house to live, after the last renewal of the lease, four years ago.

With the old folk and Kandapan's family, was also Kunyu, a daughter, twenty five years old and divorced ten years ago. She had been married at the age of fourteen to Velahu, a man eighteen years her senior. She was childless and had not remarried. She lived in the larger house with her parents.

I took photographs of the family and a group picture of them can be seen in Fig. 10. I also made their genealogy, which is attached herewith in Table 6. I stayed on and discussed various problems with these people for part of the afternoon (having provided for them to have lunch in the meantime, which was most welcome to them in their starved condition). They told me that even if polyandry was now prohibited since the Act passed in 1940, it had been dying out for some years in any case. The legislation – of which they really had no idea at all – was only the confirmation and the consecration of a *de facto* state of affairs. Concerning the inheritance of girls in Tiya families, I may mention that, since the passing of the Act, property would have to be divided. Girls would also get their share which would be half that of the boys; they would pass it on to their own children and, since they were *makkathayam*, it would become merged with that of the latter's fathers. If there were no boys and only girls in the household, its property would cease to exist after the girls had been married off, for each of them would take her part away in accordance with the above.

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TABLE 6. GENEALOGY OF KALADIWALAPIL HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*.

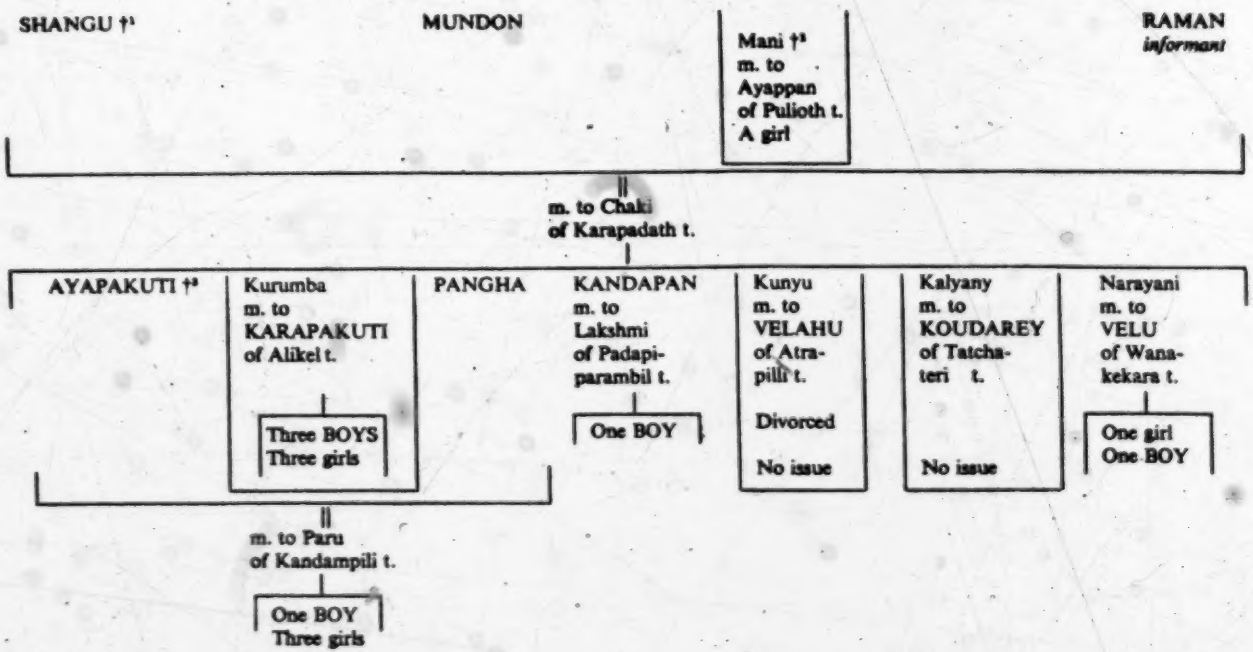

[1] Died three years ago, aged 71
[2] Died at the age of thirty, would be sixty-seven today.
[3] Died aged thirty-five, two years ago.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

We still had time that afternoon, to drive back into the village of Perumpillav and to interview some more polyandrous Tiyas. We drove to a Tiya house to have a talk with a man, a woman and a boy who confirmed to us that they belonged to families practising polyandry. 595*

The man was called Tami; he was fifty six years old and worked as a coolie. He had the *Kudiyiruppu* lease of a house for which he paid three rupees a year to a Mopla, Melethil Kunyuni Haidaros. The latter was himself the *verumpattamdar* of a *janmi* called Cheralayam Nambidi. (I was unable to find out if he was a Brahmin, an Ambalavasi or a Samantan; with the title *Nambidi* which he bore, he could have been any one of the three, but I suspect that he was a Brahmin, as this is the caste which owns the land in north Cochin.) [115] [427] [423]

Tami's household name was Kanadiwalapil, which was also that of his *tarawad*. He and his brother, Narayan, were married to Chidu, alias Sri Devi, a woman now aged fifty. The younger brother was his junior by twenty one years and had been married as second husband to their common wife when he was only five years old. There were five children, of whom the two eldest were girls, now married off elsewhere. All the boys were unmarried, and worked with their fathers as coolies. 595* 601

I found the informant extremely difficult to question. He was continually contradicting himself, and pretended that he knew no names nor ages. Thus I was unable to discover the name of his wife's *tarawad*, how many children his second daughter had had, and the ages of his two eldest sons, Velu and Kutan. I give the genealogy as I struggled to make it, in Table 7, but I fear that it is sadly incomplete and perhaps not even reliable. It was nevertheless of interest to find out something, however little, from a Tiya polyandrous labourer. [115]

We next turned to the woman. She was accompanied by her twelve year old son, Balakrishnan, and at once showed herself, in striking contrast to her predecessor, to be bright and helpful. This was a great relief after the previous painful session. I was able to record the name of her *tarawad*, but did not manage to ascertain that of the household into which she had married.

She told me that she had had five husbands, all of them paid (free) agricultural labourers, living as *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the same Cheralayam Nambidi *janmi*. She did not know the amount of rent paid yearly, but told me that her husbands' family had been settled here for a very long time – for eighty or a hundred years, as she put it. They had little work to do, not enough in fact to keep such a large family alive. They had been toddy tappers once. Kalyany had been married publicly

[Text continues on p. 189]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
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TABLE 7. GENEALOGY OF KANADIWALAPIL HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*.

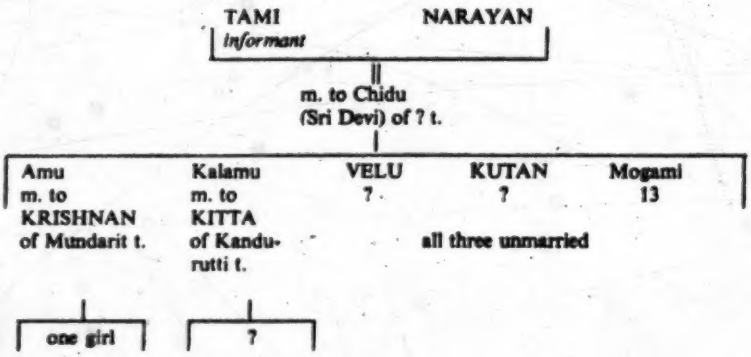

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595* 601

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed. [464] [167] [464] [166]

Kalyany told me that she was related to the brothers of the Katukulangara *tarawad* whom I had interviewed at Kadavelur on the 27th of October. She was a half sister of Velu by another mother. I found this family particularly interesting, because it illustrated, more than any other Tiya one encountered so far, the ancient and persistant connection which the caste has with Ceylon. Their genealogy is given in Table 8.

Before going on to an account of my visits to Kammalans and other artisan families practising polyandry in Kerala, I would like to give here, together with the material that I collected about Tiyas, the description of a Thandan family that I went to see on the 25th of November 1949. 595*

They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on P. 191]

TABLE 8. GENEALOGY OF A TIYA LABOURER'S FAMILY

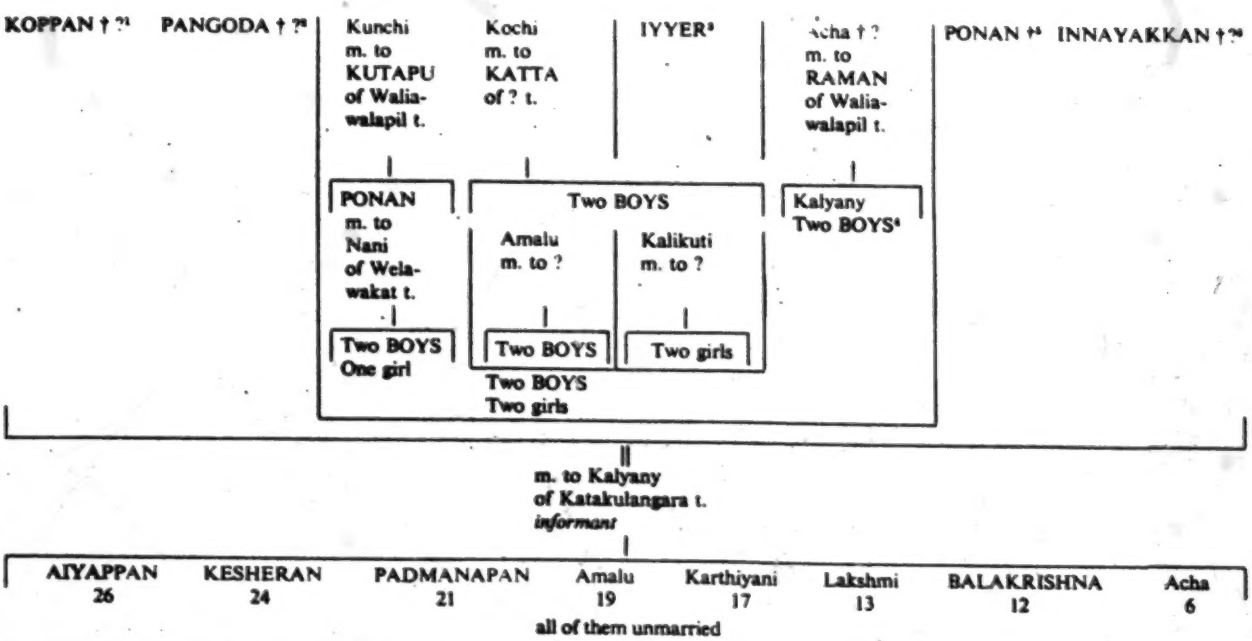

[1] Left fifteen years ago for Colombo, Ceylon; whereabouts unknown, presumed dead, aged forty five.
[2] Also emigrated to Ceylon where also presumed dead, aged thirty two.
[3] After many years in Ceylon, returned home fourteen years ago.
[4] This whole family has emigrated to Trichynopoly in Madras state, Acha is possibly dead.
[5] Died of tuberculosis, aged twenty five.
[6] Has run away from home, whereabouts unknown, possibly dead.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A Will Kerala A Will
Tiya 5
545*
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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

tarawad name was Neripatta, and the property now belonged to the old woman and her sons. They were *verumpattam* cultivators for a Nayar *kanamdar*, the Shoranur *desammangalam* (village headman) whom I had met. They paid a rent of five rupees. 595* 601 [427]

I heard that of the old generation, the four brothers, Paini, Krishna, Raman, Aiyappan and Narayan, were dead – although there was some doubt about Narayan, the last one. As he had emigrated to Singapore and had never come back, they presumed that he had died there. They had all been wed polyandrously to Kali when she was seventeen, and she was now left with her four sons, who had begun by being polyandrous, but who had eventually taken wives of their own, the common wife, Paru, having stayed with the eldest, Velandi. The property had, however, not been split up, and they lived in the mansion-sized house, which was happily large enough to contain them all. Presumably it was also sufficiently big to keep the women from quarrelling and dragging the men into their squabbles – something which people who live in polyandry seem particularly to fear. Of the third generation, the two grandsons, Velu and Krishna, had also lived polyandrously, having taken one Kalyany as a common wife. Like their two sisters they had, however, died, aged thirty and twenty respectively, leaving a couple of boys with their widow to look after. There had thus been three generations of polyandrous marriages in this family. [167]

Another point of interest was the fact that two of Kali's sons, Paragnoden and Krishna had broken away, the former after having first been married with his elder brothers to Paru. They had married their fathers' sisters' daughters, Vali in the first case, and Janeki in the second. When I enquired why this was so, I found it difficult to get a precise answer. I was told that was because this was a "right" marriage, and that if possible, marriage with a *machchunan* is "best". But I evoked only silence and some quizzical looks when I asked why then Paragnoden was first married polyandrously to Paru. It seemed to me – although this is only my personal impression and I was not told so – that the polyandrous marriage was gone through with because it was customary in those days, when the elder brother got married, for the younger ones to join in. Later, when Paragnoden, for reasons which he did not impart to me, felt like putting up a household of his own, he naturally turned to his cross-cousin, on his fathers' side. He was eighteen when he married Paru, with his brothers, and twenty two when he left her and took Vali to wife. This would not account, however, for Krishna, the youngest, not having also been married to Paru. It may be, of course that he was 595* 582 601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
582 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
60 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
582 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age[7] are some of the un-
133 married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

7 [i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]

[Text Continues on p. 194]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

TABLE 9. GENEALOGY OF NERIPATTA HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*. PAR

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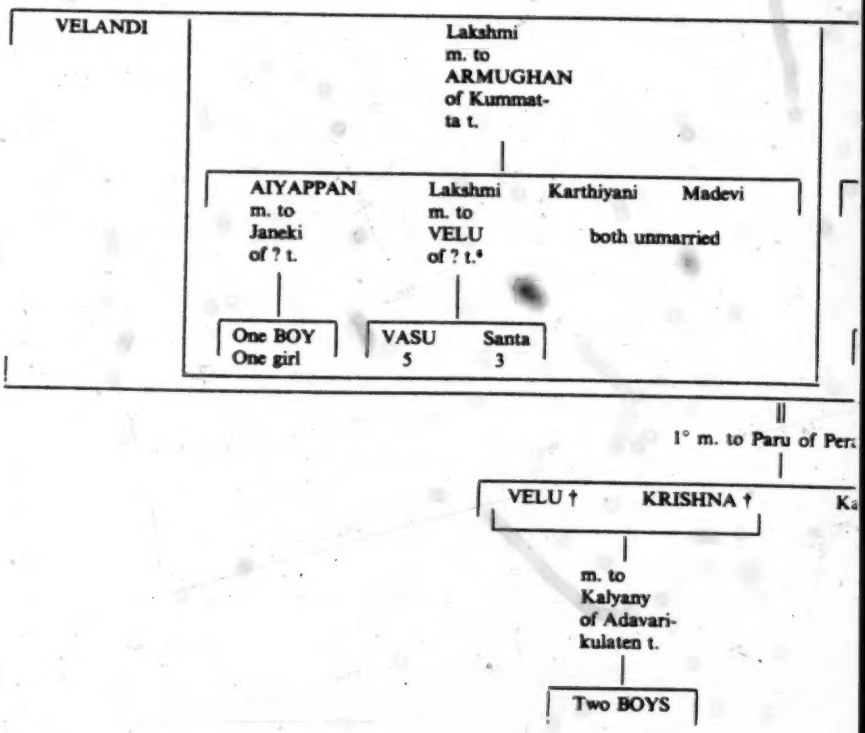

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

[facing p. 192-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

D *Tarawad.* PART 1.

*595
601

RAMAN †

AIYA

m. to Kali[3] of
Perili t. *informant 1*

AIYAPPAN[5]

PARAGNODEN
informant2[6]

Madevi
urried

VELU
m. to
Karthi-
yani of
? t.

Two BOYS

KRISHNAN
m. to
Devaki of
? t.
no issue

Lakshmi

China
m. to
APU of
Kondatot-
ti t.

One BOY
One girl

RAMAN
22

1° m. to Paru of Perakil t.

ISHNA †

Kali †

Devaki †[7]

both unmarried

[1] Emigrat
[2] Now ei
[3] 2° m. (a
Tina
of Peral
KE
[4] 2° m. (a
Vali, his
[5] His fath
[6] At Manj
very sma
[7] Velu die
died of c

[Facing P. 192-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595
601

AIYAPPAN †

NARAYAN † ?[1]

PARAGNODEN
informant[2]

KRISHNA
m. to
Janeki
of Odevan-
gatil t.[5]

Paru
m. to
ARMUGHAN
of Kanga-
lata t.

RAMAN 22 | Devaki 20 | Madevi 12 | NARAYAN 10

of
atot-

all of them unmarried

BOY
irl

[1] Emigrated to Singapore, fate unknown, presumed dead.
[2] Now eighty years old
[3] 2° m. (at 43, now 55, after 15 years of first marriage) to:
Tina
of Peralli t.

KESEVAN 11 | Lakshmi 9

[4] 2° m. (at 22, now 45, after 4 years of first marriage) to:
Vali, his fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[5] His fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[586] [6] At Manjara. Now divorced; the children are with the mother because they are still very small.
[165] [7] Velu died of "fever"; Krishna of a "stomach ache"; Kali fell into a well; Devaki died of dysentry.

[facing p. 192-C]

TABLE 10. GENEALOGY OF NERIPATTA HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*. PART 2.

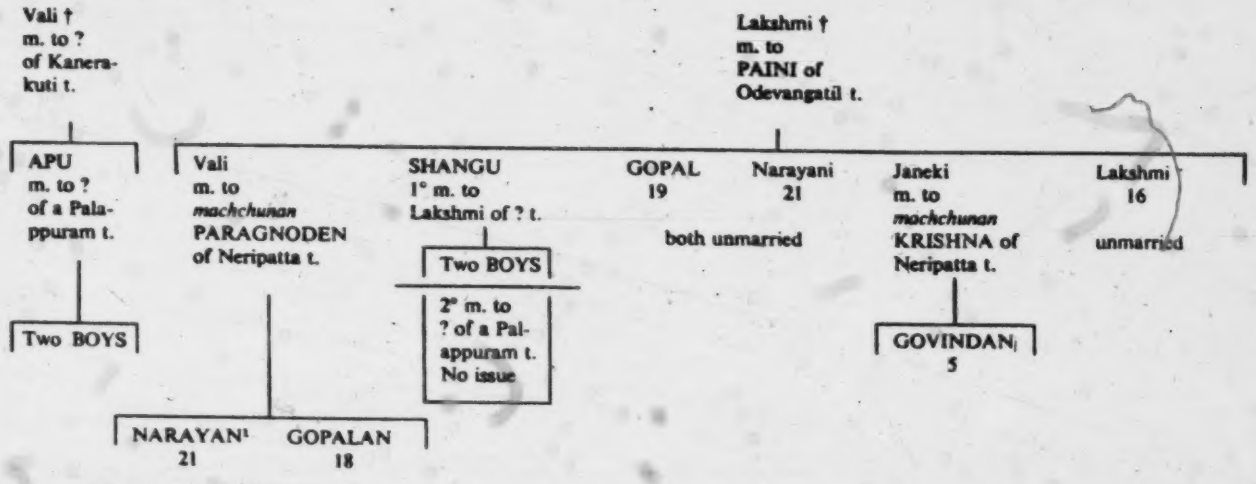

[1] A congenital idiot.
Conventional signs as in Table 3

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A Will Kerala A Will Thandans
595*
601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodierthamana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11. 595* 601 [582]

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there. 595* 564 326 [351]

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan. 595* 601 [853]

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-* [614]

[Text continues on p. 197]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kammalans
*595
601

TABLE 11. GENEALOGY OF UZHUGAPAREKIL *Tarawad*, PADIJAREHIL HOUSEHOLD.

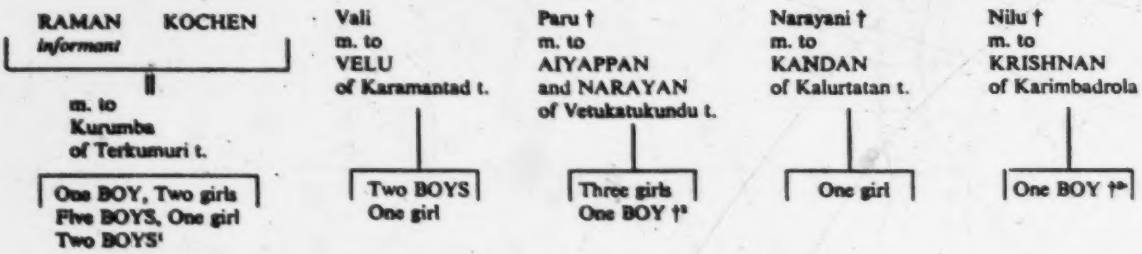

[1] KUNJU, m. to Narayani of Putanparekil t., two girls.
Kunji, m. to KRISHNAN of Tarayil t., one BOY, one girl.
Lakshmi, m. to KARAPAN of Putanparekil t. (brother's wife's brother), one BOY.
VELAIDEN, 19, unmarried.
NARAYAN, 15, unmarried.
KUNYAN, 12, unmarried.
RAMAN, 10, unmarried.
KRISHNAN, 8.
Narayani or Ameni, 5.
Nameless BOY, dead.
NAMBAN, 1½.

[2] Died at birth, killing his mother.

[3] ditto.

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p 199]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A WII Kerala A WII
Kommolans
*595
109

TABLE 12. GENEALOGY OF MUDRIKKELPARAMPIL HOUSEHOLD.

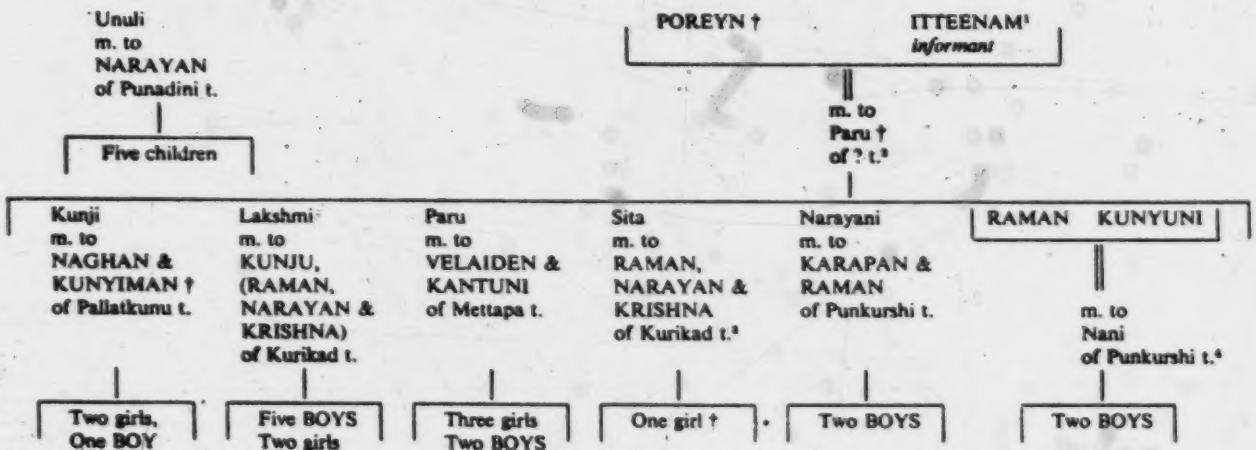

[1] Also called APPER.
[2] *Tarawad* not known.
[3] Lakshmi remained with KUNJU only, after seventeen years of marriage.
[4] Nani is the sister of her husbands' sister's husbands.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 564 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kumma Kaas
#595
601

TABLE 13. GENEALOGY OF PERINKULAM HOUSE AND *Tarawad*.

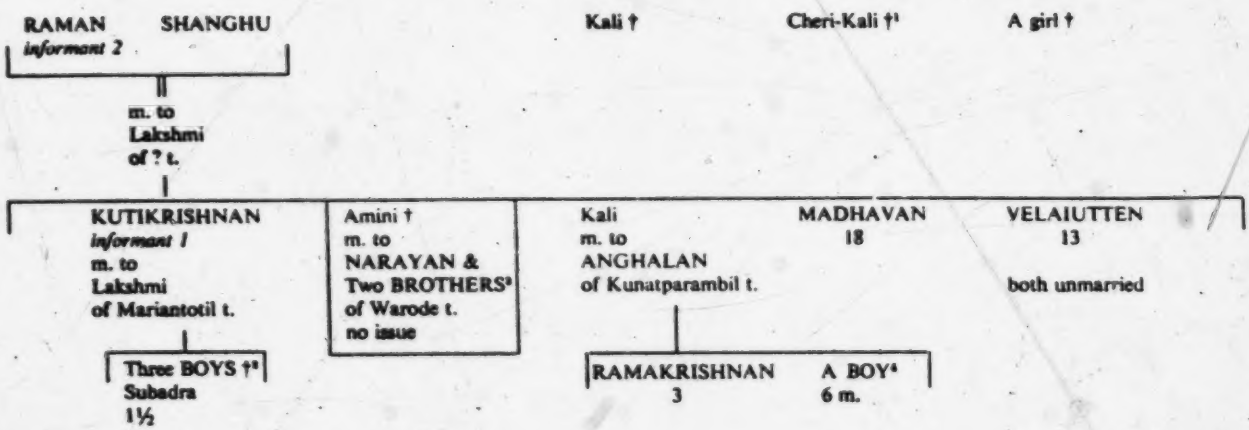

[1] All three died early, at 3, 2 and at birth, respectively.
[2] Deaths due to "convulsions".
[3] Names of brothers unknown.
[4] With no name yet.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

*595 601 lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names, and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave [614 [564] village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.

After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan [584] would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

614 564 I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad* names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they [582] observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed [582] exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for 428 564 those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*,

[TEXT Continues on P. 204]

TABLE 14. GENEALOGY OF PUAWUTTERPARAMBA HOUSEHOLD, CHELAMANAPARAMBA *Tarawad*.

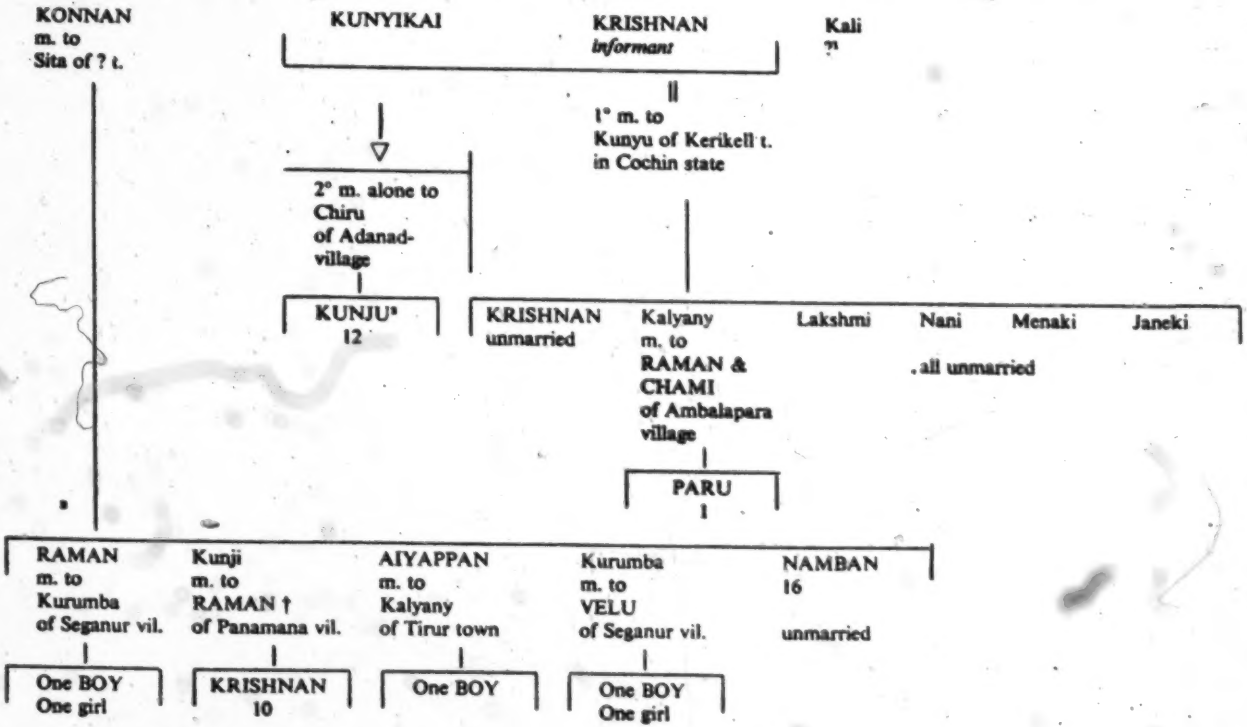

[1] The informant said he knew nothing about her.
[2] This family had remained at the original home of the family at Nedungothari near Palappuram.
[3] After marrying, this man and his family moved to Wallancheri near Kutipuram, Pattambi, for business reasons.
Conventional signs as in Table 3; vil. = village.

12;Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans
595*
601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans
Kolla-Kurups

428 564 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

427 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 564 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise [305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather [281] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lakkidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the 342 [487] south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated [351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, [291] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 206]

TABLE 15. GENEALOGY OF KALAPPURAM *Kalarikel.*

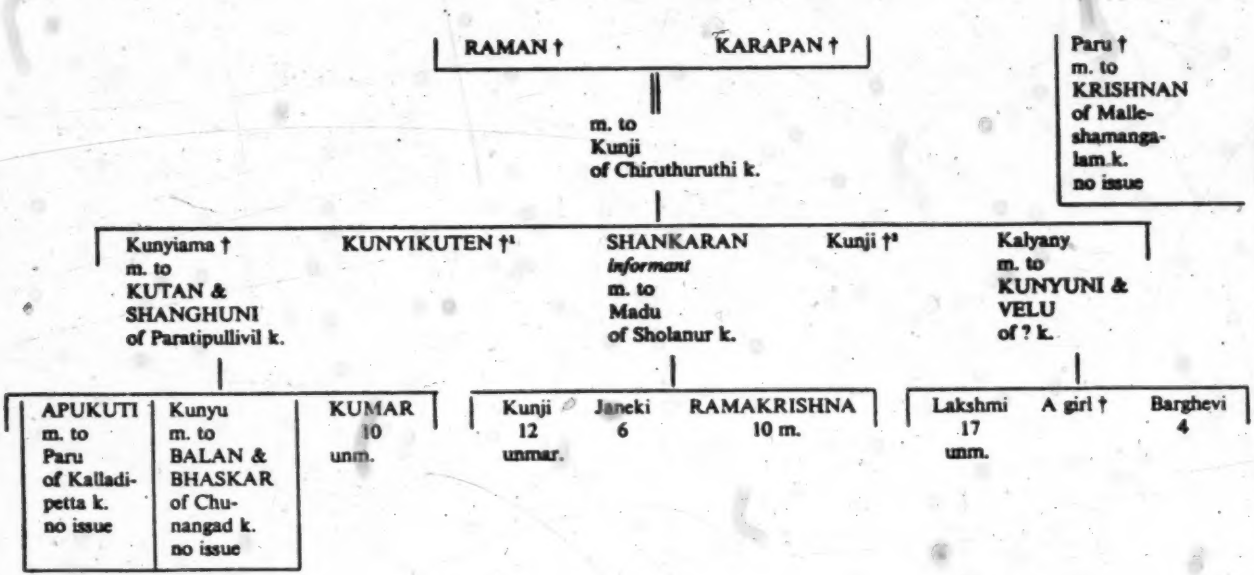

[1] Died eight years old.
[2] Died unmarried, aged thirteen.
Conventional signs as in Table 3; k. = *Kalarikel.*

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kolla Kuru PS
595 *
601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kolla-Kurups

614 The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued
564 that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in
[428] the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

*595 I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15.
601 Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing
[126] at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

*595 The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here
427 on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood
465 on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kolla - Kurups
Tol - Kollans
Kanisans

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers 595* and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an 465 average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regu- [427] lar intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at 564 Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means [282] literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of [342] all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on [361] the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see [304] Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her [574] was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said 595* that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the 564 generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same 564 interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or [791] astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a [361] better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called [574] Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on [115] and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and 564 that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not 614 have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1965 ...
Kanisans
Manans

564 siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no rela-
614 tion between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the
[428] informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *mak-kathayam*.

* 595 The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections.
601 The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

* 595 Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrol-
[591] ogers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a
[420] workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house
564 of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play
[296] an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash
[305] the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar
[535] women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village
361 of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was
351 a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

TABLE 16. GENEALOGY OF PELLARMANGALAM *Kalarikel.*

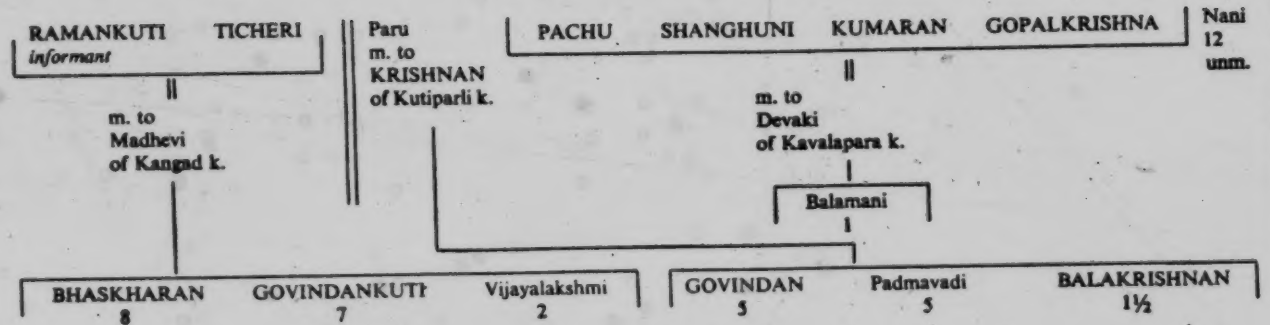

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kanisans
595*
601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Manans

*595 It was called Onadi Paramben house, and our informant turned out to
601 be an old lady called Kunji, now married to only one husband, Shangh-
[115] uni, seventy two, but of whose three other brothers she had once upon a time been the wife also. The genealogy which I made out from what she told me, was an intricate one, and it took a lot of questioning and counterchecking to do. The genealogy is given in Table 17.

From a single, monogamous father were issued four boys and one girl. The latter, Kunji, was today sixty years old and lived, childless, with her husband, Viran, at Mangod village where he came from. The four men, Shanghuni, seventy two, Erechen, sixty five, Raman, sixty and Krishnan who had died at the age of forty five, had all been married, when young, by their father and maternal uncle to the informant, Kunji, when she was twenty five. Three daughters were born from the marriage, of which the second, Lakshmi, only lived three years.

[578] Then Krishnan, the youngest husband, who never took to the marriage properly and was always quarrelling with his brothers, got himself another wife, also called Kunji, today aged fifty three, and with the permission of his former co-husbands, brought her home to live with them all. He was still resident there at the time of his death. He had had four children, of whom two were sons, and who were still in the house with their families. One daughter was married out, and the other, aged twenty and unmarried, lived with her brothers. The informant said that after Krishnan had left the polyandrous marriage, the first Kunji had given birth to another girl called Paru, twenty years old now and unmarried.

Ten years after they had all been married to Kunji, and therefore five years after Krishnan's defection, Erechen and Raman decided also to secede. Their reason for leaving was the same: there was too much quarrelling in the family. Together, they took Kali of Mangode village, to wife, and brought her home to live with them. Kunyimalu, a girl, was born from this new polyandrous arrangement, and she was now thirty and happily married off to Krishnan of Kutil *tarawad*.

A further split took place just a year later. Erechen and Raman could not agree in the new set-up, and Raman ran away. He took Chiru of Kalapara *tarawad* to wife and went on to live at Karimpuzha as the local washerman. He had a boy and a girl, and was doing well. His wife was still alive, and he was a grandfather five times over. After his departure from the house, Erechen and Kali had further offspring; a son, now aged twenty five and married, and a daughter now aged twenty, still unmarried. They had not stayed in the family house, but had

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Manans

TABLE 17. GENEALOGY OF ONADI PARAMBEN

* 595
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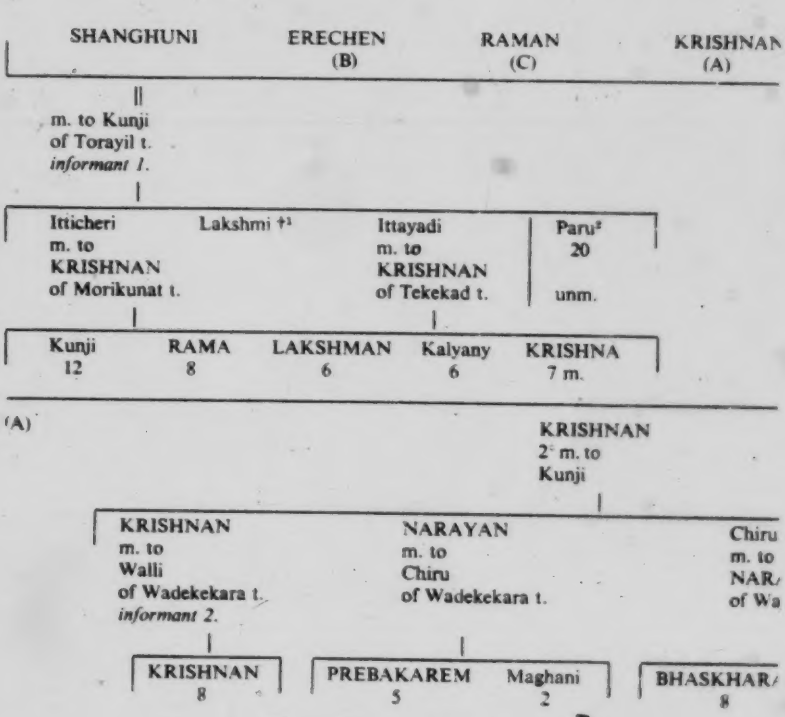

[Facing P. 210 – A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

* 595
601

EALOGY OF ONADI PARAMBEN HOUSEHOLD.

RAMAN (C) — KRISHNAN † (A)

Kunji
m. to
VIRAN
of Mangod
village
no issue

yadi
.o
ISHNAN
'ekekad t.

Paru[2]
20
unm.

Kalyany
6

KRISHNA
7 m.

KRISHNAN
2° m. to
Kunji

NARAYAN
n. to
Chiru
of Wadekekara t.

Chiru
m. to
NARAYANAN
of Wadekekara t.[3]

Ittiyadi
20
unmarried

AREM

Maghani
2

BHASKHARAN
8

Paru
2

RAMAN

i of Man-

ION

Lakshmi[5]
20

[facing p. 210 - B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

595
601

KRISHNAN 8 | PREBAKAREM 5 Maghani 2 | BHASKHAR 8

(B)

ERECHEN RAMAN

||

2° m. to Kali of Mangode vil.

Kunyimalu m. to KRISHNAN of Kutil t.	KOMON m. to Lakshmi of Monegode t.	Lakshmi[5] 20 unmarried
Three children[4]	Two BOYS	

(C)

RAMAN
3° m. to Chiru of Kalapara t.

SHANGHU m. to Kali of Kutil t.	Lakshmi m. to KUTTAPA of Aliparamala t.
Ittiany m. to KRISHNAN of Wettekera t.[6]	Three BOYS One girl all unmarried

[1] Died aged 3.
[2] Born after Shanghuni and the common wife were left alone.
[3] All brothers and sisters who married brothers and sisters.
[4] Boys or girls not specified.
[5] Komon and Lakshmi born after the departure of Raman.
[6] Divorced the following year.

Conventional signs as in Tables 3, 14 & 15.

[facing p. 210-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

*595
601

.AREM Maghani 2

BHASKHARAN 8 Paru 2

RAMAN

ı of Man-

ION Lakshmi[3] 20
ımi of
:gode t. unmarried

wo BOYS

RAMAN
3° m. to Chiru of Ka-
lapara t.

SHANGHU
m. to
Kali
of Kutil t.

Lakshmi
m. to
KUTTAPA
of Aliparamala t.

Ittiany
m. to
KRISHNAN
of Wettekera t.[6]

Three BOYS
One girl

all unmarried

were left alone.
s and sisters.

e of Raman.

[facing P. 210-D]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595*
Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601
to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repeti- [115]
tion of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [551]
helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614
obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564
be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582]
matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428]
was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564
Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 427
but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465
ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564
upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 791
went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293]
umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595*
thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342]
dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595*
androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601
to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast-
feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year [868] old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph [126] the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the vil- 614 lage. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house *595 was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve [429] annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway 564 station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our 759 visit was to see a *Pullavan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake 771 worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

[Text continues on P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Pancins

595*
601

TABLE 18. GENEALOGY OF VELLARKADEN HOUSEHOLD, KUNDILPADAM *Tarawad.*

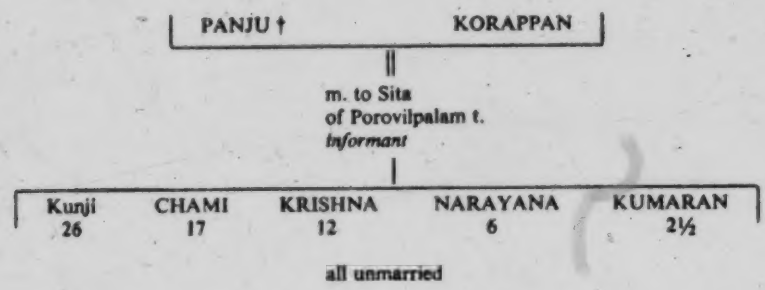

TABLE 19. GENEALOGY OF KUNDILPADAM *Tarawad* AND HOUSEHOLD.

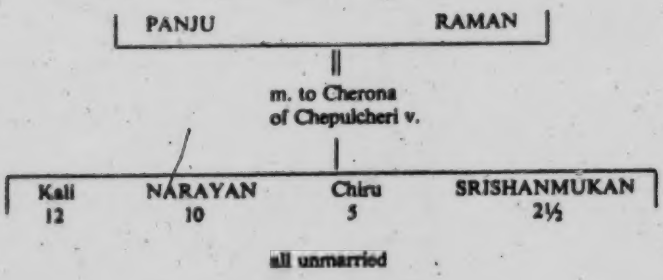

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

* 595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 614 428 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text Continues on P. 216]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Pulluvans

TABLE 20. GENEALOGY OF PUTANPUNAKKIL HOUSEHOLD.

595*
601

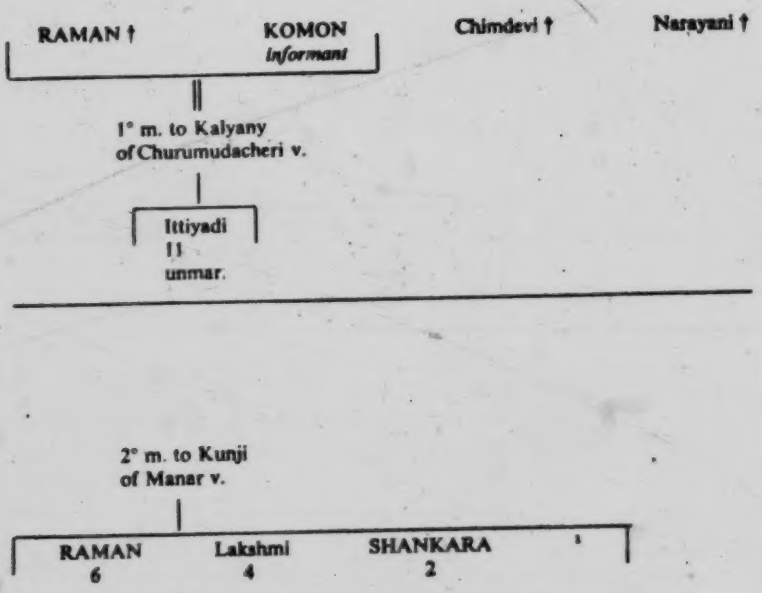

[1] Kunji was expecting seven months at the time of the visit.
Conventional signs as in Tables 3 & 14.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Pulluvans

564 582 588 114 ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar 427 *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional 534 trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

162 While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous house- 564 holds in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unob- [115 tainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans)	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

It would appear, therefore, that, far from there being an excess of men, it is the other way round: there is a shortage of them. What happens then to the unmarried women? It was even more difficult to answer that question, as only a painstaking and lengthy investigation could do this. I enquired from my guides and interpreters, from those I interviewed, from officials and from fellow anthropologists, and the consensus of opinion, which I also share, is that the spinsters stay at home – with their parents, as long as they live, and with their brothers when the parents have died. The genealogies given above somewhat confirm this view, although perhaps not as decisively as one would like. 589 [162]

C. POLYANDRY IN A THANDAN FAMILY OF THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR

While engaged in a general survey of polyandry in Kerala, in the course of which I came into contact with people of all sorts and conditions, in this complex State, it was not possible for me simultaneously to make a more special study of the distinctive features of the custom. At first, I really only obtained a superficial impression which, with time, I came to look upon as insufficient for me to speak with any authority on the polyandry practised by some of the distinctive castes and sub-castes of this south-west part of India. 595* 114 174

Because I wanted to deepen my research and also out of a feeling that the opportunity to gather everything that I could while I was there should not be missed, I decided to choose one family from among those that I had already visited with my guides and interpreters, to put it under scrutiny and study its structure and activity in greater detail. Actually, I would have liked to have chosen one family in each caste or even sub-caste, but I soon realised that this meant work over a period of time far greater than I could possibly hope to have at my disposal in Kerala. So I resigned myself to enquiring where it was thought that I stood the best chance of making such a special study. I was advised to return to the Thandan family which I had first visited on the 25th and 26th of October, immediately after I had started to work in 1949. This family, it will be remembered, was called Appayl Wattakkeh, its *tarawad* had the same name, Appayl, and it was located about two miles outside the village of Ottappalam in the Walluvanad taluk of south Malabar.

The advantages of studying these people were numerous. They were close to where I lived, and to the residence of my interpreters. We had

*595 already been to see them twice, and I had become quite well acquainted
119 with them. I had found the two younger men, Panju and Narayana,
124 especially pleasant to talk to and, as they lived in polyandry whereas the rest of the family had given it up, it seemed most appropriate to get to know them better still. Appayl Wattakkeh too, appeared to be one of the few larger and well-to-do Thandan households in the neighbourhood willing to talk about polyandry. I began the special study of this family on the 11th of November, 1949, and went back repeatedly to visit them until my stay in Kerala came to an end in December of the same year.

*595 I have explained earlier (p. 179) how all five brothers of the older generation had been married polyandrously to Devaki; then, when she died, how they had taken Kuniyama to be their new common wife, until Mayadi, the eldest husband, died, Raman became *karanavan* and Shankara broke loose to marry Kodamah, whom his father and mother's brother had found for him. This had seemed to give ideas to the two younger men, Panju and Narayana. Very soon, they too, requested that
[584] their maternal uncle provide them with a wife of their own, and they obtained her in the form of Nani, the present thirty five year old mother of their four boys, all born in polyandry.

The interesting thing about these two men was that, although they had not accepted the common wife whom they had previously shared with their elders, they had apparently no objection to polyandry as such, and were quite willing to remain wedded in this way, provided it was limited to them, and to a woman who pleased them both. I was natu-
[115] rally intrigued by this, and did not fail to ask Panju, who became my principal informant (No. 2 in the genealogy, Table 3, facing p. 179), what were his reasons for it. It took a long time to get from him that he was fond of his younger brother and that he had for the latter none of the feelings which he nursed against his elder brothers. Narayana, too, seemed happy with Panju, but there was perhaps more passivity in his case towards his partner than there was in the elder of the two men vis à vis his junior. Why had Nani had accepted the situation was more understandable: born and bred to expect that form of matrimony, she had raised no objection when it had been decided to marry her to the two younger members of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. She was the mistress of her home, too, since her husbands had put themselves up in a smaller house, separate from the rest of the family. She had thus no sister-in-law or mother-in-law to cope with, and seemed very pleased with the arrangement.

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Thandans

Panju and Narayana had taken their share of the two fifths of the common *tarawad* property undivided, as I have explained earlier, and this gave them a relatively more prosperous household in which to live and bring up their children. They were landowners in their own right, and not tenants like most of the Thandans in the area. This enabled them to work in their paddy fields for themselves, and in those of their brothers of the bigger house, and saved them from paying rent or giving part of the crop away to the *janmi* as others had to do. 595*

Accompanied by my interpreters, I spent many hours in the courtyard of the Appayl Wattakkeh farmhouse, watching the work of the men, the domestic chores of the women, and the games of the children. I was obliged occasionally to question them and to press them for answers about situations which I did not have time to watch develop, although I would naturally have much preferred to remain simply a silent onlooker. By preference, I used to go them rather than get them to come to me, for I believed that if I saw them in their own setting, I got to know them better. 124

It appeared that each time the men of Appayl Wattakkeh had been married (three times in the case of Panju and Narayana, to Devaki, Kuniyama and Nani), there had been the customary arrangement between the two families and a public wedding ceremony. Money had been given to the fathers of the bride by the boy's father and maternal uncle, and cloth to her mother. For Nani, their mother's brother had given her eldest father (she had three) twenty eight *fanans* (or sixteen rupees, fifteen annas), and a piece of cotton material to her mother. In exchange, she had brought with her a dowry which consisted of two hundred rupees worth of jewelry, household brass vessels and two gold sovereigns. This was quite exceptionally good for the Thandan caste, I was told. 583 [584]

In all three marriages, the husbands had lined up with their common bride and drunk coconut milk with her, in the presence of the respective families and their guests. The ceremony had always taken place at the woman's house, and it was only after a few days that she had gone to live with her husbands. This period varied considerably, I heard; in some cases weeks and even months went by without the partners having any sort of marital relations. People were not in a hurry to consumate marriage in Kerala, it seemed. 595* 585

I had read in Aiyappan's *Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 101, that when one husband was with the common wife, it used to be the custom that he leave his knife etc. on the door frame of the bedroom to signal 595* 114

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595 114 his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

*595 At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the [853] household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also [462] looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the [841] woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus [783] gradually come to know the children better and to influence their up- [855] bringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is how- [562] ever always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married. 595* 837

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well. 595* 578 152

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union. 851 564 428

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collectively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu- 595* 851

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWI Kerala AWI
Thandans

*595 851 late the time back from the moment of birth; but they only laughed at my insistance and said that they could not. Obviously, the right thing to do was not to make any distinction, to accept the children as collectively theirs, without individual claims on them.

This is the public attitude which self-respecting polyandrous people must apparently take. Privately, things can be quite different, and from the information which I gathered from Panju and Nani, it is obvious that human nature reasserts itself even in this situation, in spite of cultural interdictions. Asked confidentially if he had any preference for one of his four boys, Panju replied that he believed that the two elder ones, Kumaran and Madhavan, were his because they were "more fond" of him than of Narayana. To emphasize this belief, he added that outside people thought that Sridaran and Raghavan resembled their younger father, while the other two were physically more like him. I heard, later, that Nani, in private, never in front of her husbands or even before the other children, would say to Kumaran: "Go on, be a man like your *achan* (father, the name given to Panju). He is a fine fellow whom you should take after!" There seemed to be no doubt that, behind the scenes and the facade which had to be maintained socially in this polyandrous society, a great amount of preference and distinction was shown for the individual, would-be, "real" father.

*595 601 Panju claimed that he looked after the children more than his brother because he had more affection for them than Narayana. Here again, he seemed to be claiming a preferred position that could not fail to strike me. I asked him what names the children used for their fathers, and he gave me not only those for himself and his co-husband, but also (without my asking) for Raman and Sankara, who were considered to be uncles (fathers' brothers) because they were not part of the polyandrous household. Raman was called *wariachan*, "big father"; Sankara, *wawuachan*, "sickly father", because he had some kind of chronic stomach ailment (this reminded me of the "opium-eating father" in Ceylon, see p. 149); Panju, *achan*, "father"; and Narayana, *kutiachan* or "small father". In other words, even those brothers of the fathers who were no longer fathers in parental status were called "father", a classificatory term which obviously had no other reality after the break-up of the old association of all the brothers married to a common wife.

597 [928] If a family has no issue, adoption of a child is possible, the latter then having exactly the same status as if it were one's own. The child has, however, to be legally registered with the authorities if it is to be an heir. Cases of such adoptions are extremely rare; my informants

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told me that they knew of no instances. They nevertheless seemed alive 597
to such a possibility and readily gave me the above information as theoretically feasible.

Divorce was a stumbling block to my questioning, and I found it difficult to get a clear picture of it from the informants. That divorce does 586
exist, there seemed to be no doubt in their minds. The woman was returned to her parents' house with what remained of her dowry, and a piece of cloth which was handed to her father and mother, if they were alive, or to her brothers if the former were dead. The intention of divorce had to be declared publicly before representatives of both the wife's and the husbands' families. The bride-price could be claimed, but this is not often done any longer. What happened if a woman wish- 586
ed to divorce rather than the men, was a possibility which they did not 564
seem to be able to visualize. When I asked about it, Panju said it did not happen, and women did not take this initiative. I mentioned the case of the Pulluvan family which I had visited on the 21st of November, and in which Kalyany had not accepted the polyandrous marriage with two brothers and had eventually left them to go back home to her parents (see p. 214). But both Panju and his brother said that this was another caste, and that such things "did not happen with Thandans".

Panju was surprised at the idea which I put to him that, if one of the 595*
husbands in a polyandrous household wished to break away and set up 586
another home for himself with a woman of his choice, divorce from the common wife might be necessary. He insisted that all he had to do was to obtain the consent of his brothers, or, if he needed the help of his mother's brother to get new wife for him, this uncle's approval of his plan. This was not "divorce", he insisted, since the common wife remained in the family with the elder brother or brothers. His outlook appeared to stem, it seemed to me, from the polyandrous concept of the household constituted as such. The common wife was married to the household rather than to the individual men, and even if one of them broke away, the union between the principal and herself was not affected. There could thus be no "divorce", the term being reserved for the break-up of the latter marriage, which would be a much more serious occurrence.

But what then of the property? If the deserting husband took a portion of it away for himself, did that not make it look more like a divorce from the wife shared in common? And what about the children? With whom did they remain in the case of a real divorce, such as we had first spoken about?

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Panju and my interpreters agreed that even if a seceding husband took part of the family property away to found a new home of his own, no procedure of divorce was needed from the principal part, from the holders of the remaining main section, the other husbands and the common wife. He just left with the consent of the others, and to all practical purposes was henceforward considered as separated from the common spouse, without the formalities of a public divorce. It was a detachment from the family household, agreed to by the community of husbands, and the man was as free to remarry as if he had been given formal permission to do so. Nobody outside or within the kin circle could possibly object.

With regard to the fate of children involved in a regular divorce of their parents in a polyandrous household, Panju and my interpreters were prepared to reply only to questions concerning the divorce of a common wife by her husbands. The case of a woman leaving her husbands simply appeared too unreal and fantastic for them to imagine. As to the departure of one of the husbands to found another family, since there was no divorce properly speaking, the situation was plain: the children were those of the community of himself and his brothers and they therefore remained with the principal, usually with the elder brother, if all the others had decided to leave, one by one. This was the case of the family under study, Nani and Raman junior having remained with Raman senior at the death of Mayadi until Nani was married away. Krishna, Janeki, Karthiyani and Madivi stayed in the large house with the present *karanavan*, Raman senior, but then they were born after the remarriage of Sankara and the departure of Panju and Narayana. If they had been born before these events, however, the position would have been exactly the same, and they would have been left behind with Raman senior and Kuniyama; neither Sankara nor Panju and Narayana would have had any claims on them at all.

Should a woman be divorced by her husbands – a rare occurrence, both my informant and my interpreters assured me – she would be obliged to leave behind all the children whom she had had with them. The only exception to this rule would be if they were too small to be separated from their mother, who might still be suckling them. In that case she would be allowed to take them away temporarily until they were weaned, and then they would have to be returned to their fathers. They were the heirs of the household and, even if there were girls among them, they belonged to it in accordance with the *makkathayam* rule, and there could therefore be no question of them remaining with the mother.

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This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her. 595*

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture. 848 [851] [837]

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State. 548 164

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu religious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, they said, and there was no reason not to want them. 842 849 [562]

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

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Feeling That
124 I would obtain more detailed information concerning the children from Nani than from Panju or his brother, Narayana, I proposed one day to interrogate her rather than her husbands. After some initial difficulties, the principal one being that men did not like to let her out of their sight, I did, nevertheless, manage to interview her in the yard of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. Even then, I could see that Panju was uneasy about it. I noticed that all the time he was apparently playing with his favourite son, Kumaran, he cast suspicious and displeased glances in our direction, and attempted to overhear what one of the intrepreters was saying. The other volunteered to help, and took to talking with Panju during these interviews, in order to entertain him and keep him occupied elsewhere. But this was never entirely successful and it was obvious that Panju fundamentally disapproved of my speaking to his wife directly instead of through his or Narayana's intermediary.

I have already remarked how much more pleasant and rewarding I had found it to question the women of Kerala rather than their menfolk. Nani was no exception, and she proved to be much more intelligent and willing in her answers than Panju ever was. Perhaps an explanation of her husband's distaste for my speaking directly to her is to be found in this: he vaguely feared that she would tell me things which she "ought not to", and which he confusedly thought wrong to let me have. Narayana was the same, and although he, too, pretended to play with young Sridaran, it was only an excuse, I think, to remain in the courtyard, to watch us and try and overhear what was being said.

862 Nani was still suckling the two year old Raghavan, her last child. I asked her when and how she would wean it, and she answered that she would do so when she would be two months pregnant again. She [298] would then apply *nux vomica* to her breast nipples and the bitter taste would make the child stop wanting her milk. She said that she obtained the product in the bazaar as a pharmaceutical drug, not as a natural product of the country. Some children were not put off by this method, she added, and for Kumaran she had had to put chicken dung on her nipples and tell him what it was that he was about to eat. In other cases, some mothers beat their children till they stop suckling, but Nani did not like to do this, although she knew that others did.

291 Loin cloths were not put on children until they were in their third [855] year. Before that they were allowed to run about naked. In Nani's opinion, they began to realise that there was a difference of sex only [864] when they were five. (This appeared to me to be somewhat in contradiction with the fact that children received their first clothes two years

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earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.) 291 864

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them. 853

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog. 863 [854] [861]

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there. 865 [513]

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani [856]

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865 told me that she had had no experience with girls as she had only had boys, but that friends of hers who had had them, said that they are quieter and easier to manage.

864 Boys were much worse when it came to early masturbation. This began at the age of two with them, and they seemed to delight in playing with themselves when sitting in the sand or dust. Nani told her [595] own children that they must not do this, because it would make them sick, and it was always her and not Panju or Narayana who dealt with this matter. She noticed too, that her little boys, when suckling, would sometimes get an erection, whereupon she would beat their fingers away from themselves with a small twig. She had threatened them with castration, too, but she complained that this did not seem to have the slightest effect on them.

155 595 I enquired if Nani had noticed any preference in her boys for herself and any marked animosity and fear for their fathers or one of the fathers, at an early age. I asked her too, if, in other families where there were girls, these did not show a partiality towards their male parents. She replied that it was quite apparent that girls as well as boys preferred the mother to the fathers. As far as she was concerned, she thought that both boys and girls were more drawn to the mother than to the fathers because it was the mother who looked after them from an early age. It was, of course, impossible for me to look more deeply than this into the question of Oedipean inclinations as I had neither the time nor the opportunity to make a proper research into the matter.

864 I was interested to learn that it was Nani who threatened her boys [595] with castration when they masturbated, and neither Panju nor Narayana. What happened in the case of girls in other families, then? Nani said that they were told that they would have their genital organs pinched, and this was sometimes actually done, hard, so as to hurt. Here, I insidiously asked whether the little girls ever felt that they were castrated by comparison to the little boys, but the only effect of my question was to make them all laugh heartily – Panju and Narayana, who were eavesdropping just beyond us in the courtyard, as well.

Upon another day, while persevering in my attempts to find out about the early development of Thandan children living in polyandry, I asked if Nani had noticed a period of calm in which the children ceased masturbating and seemed no longer to take any interest in sexual matters. She took this seriously and replied yes, that she had noticed such a lull. Between the ages of four and thirteen, they were very quiet, with only brief, temporary interruptions. At the end of this time, boys and girls

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were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 184 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

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836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
158 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known,
755 had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

172 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

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conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully.

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change.

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State.

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people;

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but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

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"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

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members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheritance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

[1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

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There appears to be no doubt that Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of the central area are gradually giving up polyandry. Others have reported on the speed with which it is disappearing, sometimes exaggerating the rapidity, it seems to me, but nevertheless correctly stating that not many more years will pass before the custom has become simply a memory, as it is with the Nayars. I think a distinction should be made, however, between the more wealthy, upper members of the caste and the lower, poorer ones. In fact, polyandry with the Thandans and Tiyas is being abandoned from the top, and this observation is valid not only for their community, but also for polyandry in general in Kerala. 177 564 595

It is the upper castes, who have had greater opportunity to educate themselves, adapt themselves to higher standards and lead a more modern, Europeanized type of life, who are giving it up as something primitive and unworthy of self-respecting citizens. Within the castes, however, it is not always the upper strata that has progressed in this way, as can be seen with the Nayars, where polyandry is reputed to be practised still in the conservative court circles of Cochin and Travancore. Among the Thandans and Tiyans it is the other way round, the upper class either professes not to follow the custom any longer or really abstains from doing so. The Kammalans and associated artisans nearly all continue to be polyandrous, and as they are without exception people of very slender means, a distinction such as the one made here does not apply.

Aiyappan, discussing new trends in the Irava community, has written: "Differences in occupations and income and the development of new sexual standards are two active forces that one sees in operation against polyandry." (*Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 103.) Iravas, according to him, had formerly very few avocations from which to choose. They pooled their resources and worked for the house, their common wife and their children, without making any individual reservations. Today, matters have changed and the men each want a different type of work, chosen from among the numerous new occupations which are open to them, and aspire to have their own family, wife and children. The old ways are no longer fashionable, and are even despised and considered to be primitive and barbarous. Jealousy thus reappears, and asserts itself in no uncertain way. The women, too, do not want to be shared any longer by a number of brothers, and prefer to return home or refuse polyandrous marriages rather than be joined in wedlock in the traditional manner. In North Cochin, however, it was the progress of the people in higher levels of the Thiyya caste that brought about a legal inter- 177 595 463 177 595 [152]

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diction of polyandry. (For a synopsis of the Act of 1940, see p. 238 ff.)

While travelling round with my guides and interpreters in 1949, I had ample opportunity to hear what the polyandrous families were thinking about the ancient form of matrimony which was beginning to be despised. Here are some of the remarks which were made to me in the course of my interviews:

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Raman, the informant of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, said that if only twenty five per cent of two hundred and fifty Thandan families in the Walluvanad taluk still practised polyandry today, it was because the Moplas, Nayars and Brahmins ridiculed the practice as low-caste and primitive. The Thandans wanted to reform themselves and aspired to higher things, therefore they had to give up polyandry as representing something backward.

Velu, informant of the Kereghetil household of the Katukulangara *tarawad*, told me that as long as the property was undivided, they practised polyandry, as it kept them from having many wives in whose quarrels they might become involved and thus break with each other. But now, as each man wanted to go his way, things were different, and polyandry was no longer possible.

It will be remembered that, on the 2nd of November, 1949, I attempted to visit a rich Tiya household near Kunnamkulam in north Cochin, only to be put off by an old man, accompanied by a younger one, who assured me that no one was polyandrous in their family any more. When I went on to a poor labourer's house nearby, I was told that this was not true. There were three brothers in the older generation (one of whom was the elder of the two men to whom we had spoken) and they lived in polyandry, although, being wealthy, they did not like to admit it.

In the Kaladiwalapil household, that of the miserable Tiya labourers next door, in the village of Perumpillav, the informant, Raman, said that the ancient custom by which brothers shared a common wife, and thus avoided the quarrelling among sisters-in-law in which they feared to become embroiled, was changing now because the younger people found it "more convenient" to be monogamous. When I asked him what he meant exactly by this phrase, he replied that "times have changed" and that it is "easier" thus. Not yet satisfied, I insisted on more clarification, whereupon I heard that polyandry is "not done any longer", that it was "out of fashion", and not "modern". Raman was unable to express himself better, and seemed plainly puzzled and embarrassed by my request for a more precise explanation.

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I obtained the same kind of answer from Panju of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, it will be recalled, when I asked him how it was that his maternal uncle consented to get a new wife for him and his brother, Narayana, when they refused to live any longer in polyandry with Raman and Kuniyama. He said that his mother's brother had certainly begun by resisting the request, but that, in the end, he had given in because "times have changed" and he could not very well force them to remain in their present marriage if they said that they were dissatisfied with it.

It was Panju, too, who gave me the unexpected information that it was "immorality" that was breaking up polyandrous households. Women were not at all chaste any longer, he said, and anybody could have them "for a song". So every man now wanted a wife of his own whom he could control, instead of submitting himself to the old discipline and consenting to remain without complaint in the old polyandrous type of union.

My experience with Kammalans and other artisan castes was different. Polyandry with them is also threatened, but it cannot be said that it has deteriorated to the same extent with them as it has with the higher castes. Jealousy, however, seems to be coming very much to the surface, and I heard many tales of serious quarrelling among the men, leading to separation and to division into splinter households.

Raman, the *Asari* informant of the Perinkulam household, interviewed at Palappuram, said that polyandry was dying out because "Civilization is spreading". When I asked him what he meant by "civilization", he answered, rather simply, that people did not tie up their hair any longer in the typical Malayalam way, a top knot in front over the forehead, and that many had taken to growing moustaches. He added, however, to these very personal criteria of his, that women refused now to be wedded to many men; some wealthier people, he revealed, even go so far as to insert a clause into the marriage contract by which it is stipulated that their daughter will not be given in marriage to more than one man. He concluded by sighing, shrugging his shoulders and exclaiming that it was not right, but what could be done about it?

Kunji, the daughter of old Kurumba of the *Tolkolan* Palakaparampil household near Meitenadeshan, also complained of too much quarrelling among the men of a polyandrous family, and said that because of this, the women did not want to be married in this way any longer. She attributed to these reasons the fact that her household had already given up polyandry in the previous generation.

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177 595 Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

671 *Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.*

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter 1. Five articles.

[101] [564] [928] Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

[585] Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

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Fig. 5. A typical Kerala landscape: the red laterite dust road passes between green paddy fields; the blue sky is reflected in the water of the irrigation channel by the side of the road.

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Fig. 6. A Christian shrine at a crossroads in Cochin.

[P. 238 – A]

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Nayars

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Fig. 7. Parbhatiama, the Nayar woman and her sister Kunyimaluama.

Fig. 8. Kunyimaluama and her brother Krishnanayar.

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Thandans
Tiyas

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Fig. 9. Thandan women bathing in the Ponani river of south Malabar, near Lakkidi, in the Walluvanad taluk.

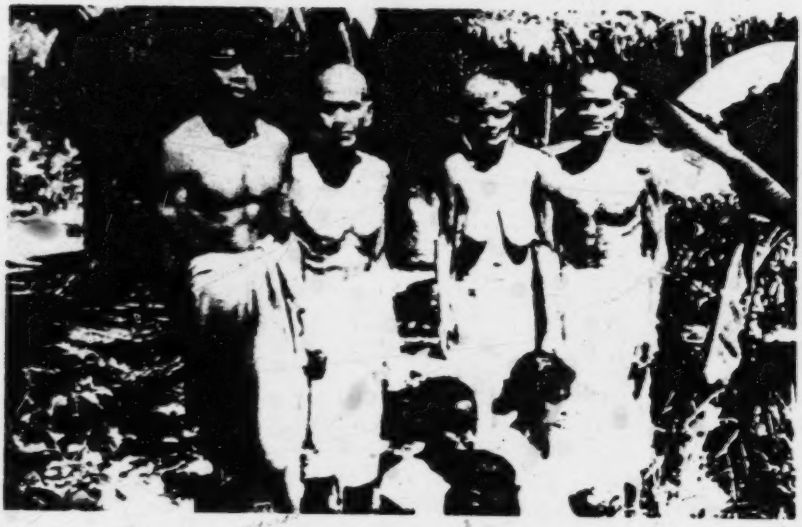

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Fig. 10. Kaladiwalapil household of Perumpillav village in north Cochin. From left to right, standing: Kandapan, Mundon, Chaki and Raman; seated in front: Lakshmi, her son and Kunyu.

[P. 238-C]

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Kolla-Kurups
Kammalans

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Fig. 11. Kalyani standing at the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *kalarikel* household gate (the others are curious onlookers)

Fig. 12. Kunji of the *Karuwan* Mudrikelparampil household.

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Kolla-kurups
Toi-Kollans

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Fig. 13. While Kunji, aged twelve, of the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *Kalarikel* sings, the rest of the family sits around her

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Fig. 14. Old Kurumba, seventy six, of the *Tolkollan* household of Palakarampil village, near Ottappalam. Note the enlarged holes in her ear lobes

[P. 238-E]

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Panans

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Fig. 15. Sita of the *Panan* Villarkaden household, Kundilpadam *tarawad*. At her breast, Kumaran, then Chami and Narayana.

[P. 238-F]

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Cheruma

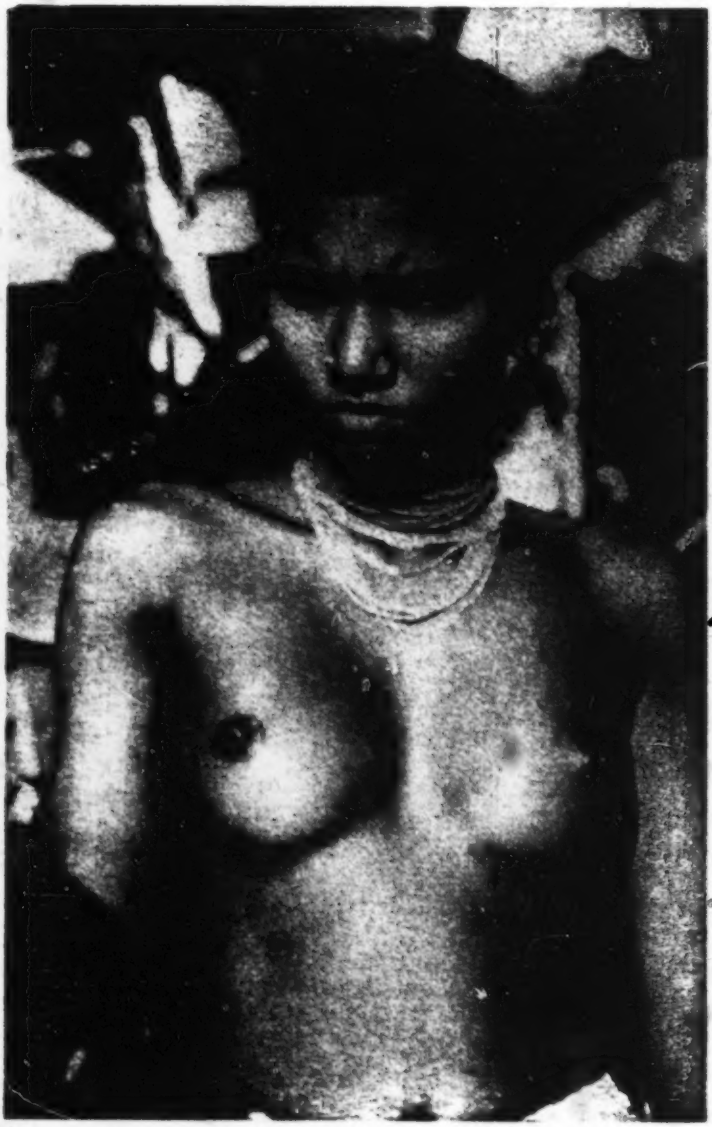

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Fig.16. A handsome girl labourer of the Cheruma caste.

[P 238-G]

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Fig. 17. An aboriginal Parayan woman with her child, in the Zamorin's colony at Chunangad, south Malabar.

[238-H]

671 [585]

e) by mutual consent evidenced by a registered instrument attested by not less than two witnesses."

Art. 12: "A polyandrous marriage performed after this Act shall be void." [595]

Chapter III. Maintenance and Guardianship. Three articles.

Chapter IV. Succession.

Five articles on testamentary succession.

Art. 26: "For the purpose of succession there is no distinction between the self-acquired property and the ancestral property or between the property of a male and that of a female except as otherwise provided by this Act." 671 428

Eight articles on Intestate succession.

Art. 28: "Property in respect of which a Thiyya has died intestate devolves upon the wife or husband or upon those who are of the kindred of the deceased in this order and according to the rules herein prescribed."

Art. 29: "When the intestate had left more than one widow, the distribution of inheritance referred to in sections 30, 31, 32 and 33 shall be made as if there is only one widow, all the widows together taking equally one widow's share."

Art. 30. "When the intestate has left a widow, if he has also left a son, or lineal descendant of a son, a share equal to that of a son shall belong to the widow."

Eleven articles on distribution of intestate's property.

Art. 39, (b): "If some of them (lineal descendants) are his (the intestate) sons and others are his daughters, each daughter shall take a half of the share of a son if the intestate is a male, and if the intestate is a female all children shall take equally."

It should be remembered that this legislation is that of a former princely state which has ceased to exist as a separate unit. Today, since the coming into being of the State of Kerala, made up of Malabar, Mahe, Cochin and Travancore, this Act has been superseded by the provisions of the India Code in force now in the whole of the Indian Republic. In accordance with the stipulations of the Code, a larger share of inheritance is granted to daughters and widow than was formerly allowed by the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act. [648]

[PP 240-594 not processed]

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[p 575]

APPENDIX 1

NARRATIVE OF JOURNEYS MADE

In 1937, having completed my preliminary studies of Anthropology at the London School of Economics, I decided on India as the most suitable place to investigate polyandry. Together with my wife, I set off in the spring, to travel to that country overland by car. 114

We travelled by way of France, Italy, north Africa (Cyrenaica), Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Irak, Iran (Persia), and entered Baluchistan at Mirjawa in April, 1938. We went on by Quetta, Dera Ghazi Khan and Multan, to Lahore, where we remained for some time, in order to gather information about the possibilities of studying polyandrous peoples in or around the Punjab.

Eventually, I decided to proceed to the Kulu valley in the north, where the Kanets were still said to practise polyandry. As I have related, this proved to be a fallacy, but, while in Kulu during May and the beginning of June 1938, I obtained information about the custom further north, in the Himalayas. I also made a short excursion to Malana, where some polyandry was reputedly in existence, but failed to find any evidence of it.

After the snows had thawed and it became possible to cross the Himalayas, we went over the Rothang Pass (13,050 ft.) into the valley of Lahul. Here, in the capital, Kyelang, we remained for a month, gathering extremely useful information and studying actual polyandrous families for the first time. My interpreters and informants repeatedly mentioned to me during this period that theirs was only a pale reflection of Tibetan polyandry practised still further north. So insistent were they and so interesting did the prospect appear of discovering other people even more addicted to this special form of marriage, that in the end I decided to go on and to return to the Indian plains by way of Kashmir and the trade routes from Kulu to that State.

I hired some ponies from a Tibetan Gya-kar Kham-pa (*rGya-gar K'hams-pa*) horse dealer and caravaneer, called Tsewang Norbu (*Ts'he-*

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114 *dbang Nor-pu*), who had already brought us to Kyelang from Kulu. Towards the middle of July, with some added personnel recruited from him and placed under the authority of his daughter, Dölma (*sGrol-ma*), we left for Rupchu and Ladak. (For an account of this journey, see *Chevauchée tibétaine*, by the same author, Fernand Nathan editeur, Paris, 1958.)

My first stage was the Shar Shu monastery, near Kolong, where the [792] Wazir of Lahul and his family resided. Here we attended the annual [796] masked dance of the lamas, and spent the night at Thakur Partap Chand's fort-like castle. It was here, too, that I met the *goba* of the [535] nomads of Rupchu; he was introduced to me by Mangal Chand, alias *amchi* Tashi Dawa, and I received an invitation to go to Korzok.

The next day, we continued to Patseo or Dozam (*rDo-Zam*) as it is called in Tibetan, and camped with Tsewang Norbu, chief of the Gyakar Kham-pa, and his people for a few days until we received the pack ponies and men which I had ordered from him.

This gave us the opportunity to attend the local fair and annual market here and to see for ourselves in what manner goods from the nomads further north were bought or exchanged for other products by the sedentary Lahulis. We also attended a local show given by travelling enter- [536] tainers from Spiti, in which they performed the ancient ceremony of breaking a large stone on the chest of a man.

The climb up over the Baralatcha pass (16,147 ft.) was strenuous, but we were soon over it, and travelling on the flat Lingti plain, along the banks of the Yunan river. We reached the Ser chu and then the Tsarab chu, which we forded to reach Spiti. A short distance further on, we crossed the south-eastern boundary of Kashmir, and continued our progress now through that State.

A few days later, we turned in a south-easterly direction so as to reach the shores of the lake called Tso (*mTs'ho*) Morari (this is the name on the map, but I heard locally that it should be more correctly *Moriri*), where the *goba* resided.

We arrived at our destination towards the beginning of August, not without difficulty because we had had to cross some very high passes, one of them the Lagnyal-la (20,600 ft.). Our caravan, both men and horses, suffered from the unusual altitude and, for some days, were quite unable to go on. But finally, we descended to relatively more reasonable heights and were received, some distance away from where we were going to stay, by the *goba* and his nephew. They were both relatives of the Karpa house in Lahul.

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We were taken to a camp two miles further on where we found some black, yak-hair, Tibetan tents, standing, as they do, like spiders because of their strange construction. There were flocks of sheep about, as well as a few yaks (*gYag*), animals from which our present hosts, the nomads, made their living. A tent, larger than the others, proved to be that of the *goba*, and we were taken close to it and invited to put up our own tents nearby. 114

Very soon after our arrival, we attended a masked dance at the monastery, and the abbot himself acted the Black Hat dancer which is the principal role. There were many spectators present, all the nomads of Rupchu taking a particular and obvious pleasure in what they saw. Another day, we witnessed a ceremony called *zor* (*Zor*) in which a *torma*, made of the head, backbone and entrails of a goat, standing on the animal's skin, was destroyed by lamas armed with great knives, as a way of exorcising devils and evil spirits. [792] [796] [535] [796] [789]

Then came a reception in the *goba's* tent, a festive function at which there were many guests. We were entertained with *chang*, dried meat, *tsampa*, turnips and buttered tea, and the party was a very gay one in which most of the guests, the *goba* and the abbot included, got roaring drunk. [574]

At another reception to which we were invited at the monastery before leaving and in which all our caravaneers received coloured bits of rag as talismans from the hands of the *tulku*, I was able to inform myself about the marital customs of the nomads.

The day after the reception at the *gompa*, we left for Leh, capital of Ladak (7th August, 1938). It was a cold journey as there was frost already on the high passes, and we had three to cross before we reached lower ground near Tso Kar (*mTs'ho dKar*), "the White Lake". From here, we continued down the Gya valley, where we encountered the first houses and fields again and received our first letter in many weeks, addressed to us by the Superintendent of the Moravian Mission in Ley, the Reverend Walter Asboe. A few stages further on, we crossed the Indus near Upshi, and followed its right bank past Himis and Tikse *gompas* to Sheh, one stage before our destination.

On the 22nd August, 1938, we came to Leh in the early afternoon and were received at the entrance of the town by the Moravian Missionary, the local authorities and a crowd of Ladakis, men, women and children. We were taken past the mile long *mani* walls to the Residency in the south-westerly quarter, where we had been authorized to stay during the period of our visit to Ladak. Very soon, we met those who

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114 were to act as interpreters and informants and a useful period of study opened up, destined to last until the 24th of September, 1938.

At that date, we left Leh on our way to the vale of Kashmir, and our first halt was at Spituk Gompa, in the Indus valley, only a few miles from the Ladaki capital. I did not meet Skushog Bakula, the chief lama of Ladak, at his seat in Spituk, because he was away in Central Tibet for his education. But I had a meeting with the acting head of the monastery, from whom I gathered interesting information concerning polyandry in U-Tsang (where he had been for his studies).

Six days later, near Ri-dzong, we met the bandit, Norgyäs (*Nor-rGyas*), from Tibet proper, who had taken refuge in Kashmir to escape from the Tibetan Government. He told us hair-raising tales of his experiences (which, however interesting, it would be irrelevant to narrate here) and begged for my intercession with the Maharaja of Kashmir, so that he, Norgyäs, should not be handed back to Tibet, but allowed asylum in India.

I took advantage of the appearance of this man to question him about polyandry in his country. He was most willing to speak and was informative, believing, no doubt, that if he rendered me this service, I might be better disposed in return to grant him the favour that he had requested of me.

Proceeding along the Treaty Road to Srinagar from Leh, I had occasion to find further polyandrous households, so long as we were in the areas of Buddhist, Tibetan culture, that is as far as Mulbek. On arrival in Kalatse, where we crossed the Indus on a wooden suspension bridge, we camped, and the following day stayed on in order to make some investigations. It was here that I heard, incidentally, about Herodotus' gold-digging ants and had the ancient tale confirmed by the local people (see Bibliography, *A History of Western Tibet* by the Rev. A. H. Francke).

After Mulbek, we passed out of the regions of Tibetan cultural affinity and entered the purely Kashmiri Moslem area. Beyond Kargil, which we left on the 15th of October, 1938, we met some Dards of Dah on the road, travelling with a caravan to their homes, and I noted now Tibetanized these tall, blond men with blue eyes were in their dress and manner. They, too, it appeared, were polyandrous.

Unfortunately, we no longer had time to pay them a visit. After a talk with them, we pressed on to get over the ill-famed Zoji-la, leading to the lower valleys beyond, before the winter snows set in. A few days later we reached our destination, Srinagar, the captial of Kashmir.

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We were accompanied on the whole journey from Kulu by Dölma, the Gya-kar K'hampa daughter of Tsewang Norbu. With her came two male members of her family, and a former Tibetan monk from the monastery of Tashi Lumpo (*bKra-shis Lhun-po*) in Tsang (*gTsang*), in central Tibet. This man's name was Lobsang (*bLo-bZang*) and he proved as knowledgeable a guide concerning everything Tibetan as I could have wished for. Married since he had left the monastery, he and his wife brought their two boys along with them, the youngest being only just over five years of age. From Leh onwards, we exchanged Dölma's two male relatives for new, Ladaki caravaneers under one Tashi (*bKra-shis*), and it was this man and five of his friends who supplied me with the twenty five pack ponies which we used to carry our belongings from Leh in Ladak to Srinagar. Joseph Gergan accompanied us as far as Kargil.

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From our travelling companions I heard during our journey that there was much to study concerning polyandry in Tibet proper. They advised me to try to reach Lhasa and central Tibet if I could, assuring me that in the heart of the country there existed even stranger polyandrous customs than those we had seen on the fringes. They told me that Kalimpong, in the Darjeeling district of the Indian province of Bengal (then undivided), would be a good starting point. Taking their advice, after returning to Lahore from Srinagar in November, we set off in our car to cross practically the whole of northern India, arriving by road in Kalimpong just before Christmas, 1938.

In this very attractive town, situated at the beginning of the main Trade Route to central Tibet, I was able to gather much information concerning Tibetan customs and ways of life. So rewarding was the search and so pleasant did Kalimpong appear to us, that I resolved there and then to return some day for a longer stay. I also contacted those officials of the Government of India (then British) who were responsible for allowing foreign travellers into Tibet, and made arrangements for it to be possible for us to obtain permission to go to Lhasa when we next visited this part of the world. We then left for south India, to work among the Todas and the inhabitants of Malabar.

TO 114

Our way lay over Calcutta, by train to Nagpur and Bombay, where I purchased a new car, having sold the old one in Calcutta on our way through. We made excursions to Poona, Goa and Hyderabad, and from there went on to Bezwada and Madras. After our visits to Pondicherry and places of archaelogical interest in the Tamil country, we motored up to the Nilgiris, taking a house for the summer of 1939, in Coonoor.

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It was from there that I made my first research work among the Todas and other hill tribes of the district.

In August, we descended to the south-west coast, passing through Mysore and Mercara in Coorg. We arrived in Tellicherry, in Malabar, at the end of the month, when the clouds of war were already gathering fast on the international political horizon. The first days of September found us in this remote part of India, on a visit to the French possession of Mahé. On learning that World War II had started, we immediately packed and left, returning to Madras where we sought a passage home. After waiting some time, we were told that we might embark on a ship of the Danish East Asiatic Company in Colombo. We proceeded there in all haste, but were kept waiting sufficiently long in the Sinhalese capital to be able to visit the place and gather some anthropological information of value. We resolved to return here as soon as the war was over, should we survive it.

I spent the next eight years in the Greek Army. I was demobilized in 1947, and immediately took steps to resume my anthropological work. I was able to do this at the beginning of 1949, when my wife and I arrived back in Ceylon by air in the February of that year. This time I had the leisure and means to study Sinhalese polyandry and, after obtaining the necessary information, as I have said, put up our camp in the interior, in the Kandyan region of Ratnapura.

We remained here until April, and then moved to Cochin in south-west India. A short spell of work in Ernakulam and the surrounding country, including Travancore, yielded interesting data. But very soon, the temperature became excessive, and conditions of work insupportable, so that we drove up to the Nilgiris for the summer, resuming my investigations of Toda polyandry which I had left off ten years before. We stayed in Ootacamund from the beginning of May until the end of September, 1949.

In the autumn, we returned to Malabar, this time to Shoranur, in the Walluvanad taluk of the southern part of the district, as this appeared to be the best area in which to study polyandry in what was soon to become the State of Kerala. We were there until December of the same year, and got to know the people living all around us quite well.

While in Malabar, I did not only visit the polyandrous communities. I was desirous of getting acquainted with the other inhabitants of the country, on the principle that the elements of a society are interrelated and evolve in connection with each other. I also attended a Nambudri Brahmin wedding, visited a Nambudri *mana* (the name by which the

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large domains of the upper caste of Kerala are known), got to know all the dignitaries of the various sects into which the Christian community is split, made the acquaintance of the Jews in Mattancheri, met the Maharaja of Cochin and his court, was received by the Moslem Makhdun Tangal of Ponani, as I have related (see page 168), made excursions to the Western Ghats, at Kalladikkodi where the Malayans have their main shrine, was shown over a rehabilitation centre for Nayadis in Travancore, a blacksmith's village in the same State, and a Parayan colony belonging to the Zamorin at Chunangad in south Malabar, saw Cherumans at work in a large Nayar *Kanamdar's* farm, attended Kathakali dances at night and receptions by prominent Nayar, Ambalavasi and Samantan personalities. Generally speaking, I travelled extensively through the entire area, meeting as many elements of the population as possible, regardless of social status and condition, making it a point, rather, of getting to know them all.

T 114 122

We returned to Kalimpong in 1950. It was February when, eleven years after our first visit, we arrived once again in the little frontier town at the very gate of central Tibet. I immediately set everything in motion to try and enter the forbidden land, my hand strengthened this time by the fact that I had joined and was now a member of the Third Danish Expedition to Central Asia. It was as leader of the latter's second team, that I had come back.

In the intervening years, great changes had, however, taken place. India was now an independent country since August the 15th, 1947, and had, only a few days before, been proclaimed a Republic. Tibet, on her side, was going through a troubled and anxious period of her history. With the fall of the Kuomintang regime in China, her government had asked the Nationalist Chinese Mission in the capital to leave, in the vain hope that its removal would avoid having to receive a Communist delegation in its stead.

During the whole spring and summer of 1950, the threat of a Chinese Communist military invasion of Tibet became more and more acute. It was worrying not only government leaders in the Tibetan capital, but also those now responsible for the destinies of India in New Delhi. The result, as far as we were concerned, was that no one in either of these two centres took kindly to our request for a permit to conduct anthropological research in Tibet, and rather looked upon us as intruders with possibly suspicious ulterior motives.

Neither of the two governments to whom we addressed our demands for permission to cross the frontier apparently wished, however, to give

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Tibet AJ

us a straight refusal. In truly Oriental manner, they abstained from being either affirmative or negative. After considerable "misunderstanding" had arisen between us and the Indian officials, we were advised to address ourselves to the Tibetan authorities. When we did this, the latter asked very courteously but firmly that we "kindly postpone" our journey.

In November, 1950, Communist Chinese forces crossed the border of the eastern frontier of Kham (*K'hams*), and proceeded to march on Lhasa. The Dalai Lama made an abortive attempt to flee to India, and when he was not given express permission to cross into that country, settled down with his court for some months at the border town of Yatung, in the Chumbi valley. He returned to his capital at the beginning of 1951, with the arrival from China, through India, of the commander in chief of the occupation forces, a Chinese general who insisted that the Tibetan God-king should accompany him back to the traditional seat of government.

The outcome of all this was that I failed to enter Tibet. I had to content myself with remaining in Kalimpong, on the border. Nevertheless, circumstances did favour me in the way that the Chinese invasion of the country brought a wave of Tibetan temporary refugees to Kalimpong, people generally of means, who decided to weather the storm on the Indian side of the frontier and wait and see which way events would develop.

From these people, as well as from the community of three thousand five hundred permanent Tibetan residents in Kalimpong, I was able to gather considerable information of the kind which I had come to collect. It was, of course, not the same as studying the people in their own, national environment, but it was the closest I could get, and not unsatisfactory at that. Together with my own research work, I was active in carrying out those tasks which had been assigned to me by the Danish Expedition. I purchased considerable quantities of ethnographical artefacts, anthropometrically measured over five thousand Tibetans, gathered medical and demographical statistics, blood groups and dietary specimens, took great quantities of photographs and considerable lengths of motion picture film, not to mention learning the language as I had planned, and getting to know a large number of Tibetans from every class of the population in their little known country.

With occasional breaks in 1952 and again in 1953–54 and 1955, I remained in Kalimpong until February of 1957. Political tension in the area, far from relaxing after the Chinese Communist military oc-

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Tibet AJI

cupation of Tibet had been completed, was, on the contrary, rather intensified. It has not ceased to grow since then, and today has reached the point where it has become well nigh impossible for a Western anthropologist to carry on with research work among Tibetans. 114

I was, however, not really inconvenienced by this. By the time the situation had deteriorated to this extent, we were on our way back to Europe from India. Since 1957, I have been busy compiling the information which I had gathered, and which is the subject of the present thesis.

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[p. 584]

APPENDIX 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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[122]

In all four fields of my ethnographical research, Ceylon, Kerala, the Nilgiris and the Himalayas, I was obliged to make use of informants and interpreters in order to carry out the work. Only in Kalimpong, when I had set up my headquarters there from 1950 to 1956, did I eventually do without interpreters, having learnt Tibetan sufficiently well towards 1952 to be able to dispense with assistance of this kind. Nevertheless, I remained, of course, dependent on informants.

To all these helpers in the field I am extremely grateful, because without their aid it would have been impossible to carry out the ethnographic study. Except for Kerala, where I have been expressly asked not to make any specific mentions, I would like to thank each and every one personally by name. In the case of the interpreter with whom I worked among the Todas, I would also like to give a short synopsis of his personality and life-history, because it appears to me essential that it is realized fully through what human medium the necessary information was gathered and contact with the tribe established.

TO
124

In Ceylon, concerning Mr. G. H. Ellawala with whom I worked in Ratnapura, I cannot sufficiently express how great is my debt towards him. Not only did he take time off to accompany me to the dwellings of some of his poorest and most humble tenants (and all those of my readers who know the Orient will appreciate what this means), but he also acted as interpreter himself during our visits and supplied me with much honest and outspoken information in explanation of the material that I was gathering. Long after I had left Ceylon, he furthermore very willingly wrote to me additional data of which I was in need, replying promptly and fully to the, sometimes for him, obscure questions which I put to him about marriage rules and the patrilineal and matrilineal descent groups in the Kandyan provinces.

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122

In Kerala, thanks to the kindness and hospitality of the managing director of the Metal Industries Ltd., Shoranur, Sri A. N. Poduval, I

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was able to park my caravan in the compound of the factory, and from there to conduct my work in the surrounding villages, both in the Walluvanad taluk and in north Cochin. I am greatly indebted to the then Collector of Malabar, Sri Prasad, for the assistance rendered to me during my stay in Kerala, for without this help it would not have been possible to gather so much information in so short a time. K 122

Thanks are also due to Dr. A. Aiyappan, Superintendent of the Government Museum, Egmore, Madras, my fellow-student at the London School of Economics where we both attended the seminars and lectures of the late Professor Br. Malinowski. Through Dr. Aiyappan's never failing advice and active interest I saved considerable time and effort in going straight to that part of Kerala most propitious for the study of polyandry.

While working in the Nilgiris, both before and after World War II, it would have been good to have been able to speak Toda. It would have enabled me to gather information direct, which would have been an incomparable asset during my long period of research in that area. From the wider point of view, it did not seem worth while, however, to go to the trouble of learning Toda. It is spoken by only a very small number of individuals who, being themselves illiterate, have no literature at all. It is besides a Dravidian tongue, and therefore difficult for Europeans to master quickly. I felt that I would prefer to concentrate later on acquiring Tibetan, something which would be of far wider use to me in very many fields other than the relatively narrow study of polyandry. TO 122

I therefore turned down the idea of learning the language and, because of this, was obliged to work through an interpreter. In the choice of the latter, I was exceptionally fortunate. Very early, during the first months of my stay in the Nilgiris, in the summer of 1939, thanks to the help of Miss C. F. Ling of the Church of England Zenana Mission, I got to know Kanvarsathi-Sunderdoss, a Christian Toda convert, who had previously served Dr. M. B. Emeneau, of the University of California at Berkeley, in a like capacity, for three years, and who was to prove just as excellent an assistant to me as he had been to this predecessor of mine among the Todas. TO 115 [124]

Kanvarsathi, although belonging to the little colony of Christian Todas described by Emeneau (*The Christian Todas*, see Bibliography), was far from having developed an aversion for his heathen fellows. What was more, he was liked and accepted to a remarkable degree by the latter, a most happy state of affairs when it came to making use of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW1.1 Kerala
Toda AW60

115 him to delve into the intimate details of tribal customs. He was also a very intelligent individual who fully grasped the interest of anthropological research, and was keen to make use of the results in the hope of improving the material condition of the Todas. Without his assistance, it is doubtful whether I would have acquired so penetrating an insight into the Toda way of life, something for which I am extremely grateful to him.

[589] Kanvarsathi's father was a rather notorious character among the Todas called Kiunervan (Table 14 of Rivers' genealogical tables) who had no less than eleven wives, one after the other. Kanvarsathi was the only son of the eleventh wife, and was born in 1905 at the Toda village of Paletkwar (known as Attakoraimand in the language of the Badagas) near Or, on the left-hand side of the Ootacamund-Gudalur road. Two months after his birth, his mother died, and his half-sister, Sinkup, later wife of Ujar (48, Rivers' Ushadz, one of my best informants), a daughter of his father's second wife, took him away with her and very grudgingly looked after him.

Six years later, Kiunervan also died, leaving one boy, Kanvarsathi, and two elder girls. The total number of his father's offspring had not been very great, despite the eleven wives. There were, altogether, only three sons and two daughters, of which two boys died before Kanvarsathi was born, and the two girls after, leaving him the sole survivor. Strictly speaking he became the only heir to his father's estate, which [550] consisted, at the time of death, of sixty buffaloes and some gold ornaments – quite a considerable fortune according to Toda standards. But [429] because he was a minor, his father's brothers' sons – his first cousins on his father's side – took the property into their custody until he should come of age. Being, however, most unscrupulous, and believing that Kanvarsathi would never find out, these cousins gradually disposed of the estate to their own advantage, so that when the time came for them to hand it over, all that he got were six buffaloes and two pairs of ear-rings.

115 691 When he was ten years old, he found out the real state of affairs and how he was being done out of his legitimate inheritance. He appealed against this to the Toda Government Agent, the Monegar, and to the most influential Toda of his day, the famous Kuriolv (52, properly speaking, Kiusharf in Toda, the other name being Badaga), but to no avail. These important people could not be bothered with the complaints of so small a boy, and all he got for his trouble was to be made to look after their buffaloes. This unfairness deeply wounded him, and

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Toda AW60

continued to smoulder in his heart until, in 1917, he decided to take the matter to Court, as a result of which he did receive the remaining property. 115 [691]

Before this episode, however, his half-sister had died leaving him all alone. It was then that Miss C. F. Ling of the Church of England Zenana Mission took an interest in him and removed him to the school which she ran close to his native village at the 8th mile of the Ootacamund-Gudalur road. As a consequence of this, he was eventually converted to Christianity. After he had received the meagre remnants of his father's estate, Miss Ling sent him away to another school at Palamkottah in the Tinnevely district for further studies, and he passed there through the third form. In 1923 she sent him to Assam, to the Welsh Mission, with the idea that he should learn to be a motor mechanic, I do not quite know to which part of that large and distant province he went, as he was rather vague in his description of it, but he did say that it was wild and underdeveloped in the extreme, with no roads at all, let alone motor traffic. So, instead of being trained as a mechanic, he was made to look after the station missionary's horse as a groom, which enraged him since he had just come into what little there was left of his property and had been persuaded to leave the Nilgiris under what were apparently false pretences. [797]

After only a very few months of this most unsatisfactory situation, he ran away and managed somehow to reach Calcutta in search of work. But because of the language, Bengali, which he did not speak, he found this extremely difficult to obtain, and had to content himself with a hand to mouth exsistence. In the end, he got a job as a junior gardener with a kind missionary, the Rev. H. Kehel. He remained a year with the latter, and when he had saved enough money to pay for the railway fare, he took the train and returned to Madras. In that city he joined the large motor transport company, Addison and Co., where after twelve months' apprenticeship, he eventually got his driver's licence and became one of the firm's mechanics, keeping his position until 1928.

At this time his health deteriorated. He underwent a serious operation for a gastric ulcer and had to give up his work. He returned to the Nilgiris the following year, and began to take a lively interest in the well-being and progress of the community from which he sprang, the Todas. He joined the Collector of the Nilgiris' Toda Amelioration Scheme and was trained as an agriculturalist. He thus became an agricultural consultant for the tribe, advising it on such matters, and using his newly acquired knowledge as a means of livelihood. [242]

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TO 115 In 1931, he married a Tamil woman (that is, someone not of his community) and his eldest son was born in 1932. He subsequently had two more children, two daughters, in 1943 and 1936.

It was in 1935 that he began acting as interpreter and "guide", as he termed it, to Dr. M. B. Emeneau, and he continued to do so until 1938. He also served others in the same capacity during this time, and his health, happily, remained good. In 1939, he acted as my interpreter, but in 1942 he became seriously ill again with his old affliction, and, in Travancore, in the American Hospital of Trivandrum, was successfully operated upon for a second time. On his return he became an influential member of the Toda Welfare Committee, a body set up by the Collector of the Nilgiris to assist the community.

Since then, he has been residing at the Toda Christian colony near Fern Hill, Ootacamund, where he has a small plot of land and a vegetable garden, the produce of which he sells in the local market. From the latest news that I have received from him, I understand that he is still carrying on with these same occupations, working hard and with a considerable measure of success to improve the lot of his fellow Todas, to whom he is attached with a devotion amounting nearly to a fanatical "nationalism", for he refuses to let his erstwhile connection with a Christian Mission "detribalize" him in any way.

T WT 124 115 Those who have helped me in the same way as the informants and interpreters mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, have been far greater in number in the areas of Tibetan affinity, in the Himalayas, than in any other of the fields which I visited. In addition to assistants and interpreters of the kind I have already described, they also include Tibetologists and teachers from whom I obtained, not only information about Tibetan polyandry, but also a general knowledge of everything Tibetan which has stood me in good stead.

WT 115 First and foremost among such helpers should be mentioned Dr. George Nikolaivitch Roerich. Initially, we became acquainted in 1938, when he was residing with his father, the late Professor Nicolas Roerich, his mother and his brother, Svetoslav, at Nagar, in the Kulu valley of the Punjab. It was through him that I met the Gya-kar K'ham-pa chieftain, Tsewang Norbu, and the former monk, Lobsang, from Shigatse. Through his intermediary too, my wife and I equipped ourselves properly for the 600 miles trek from Kulu to Kashmir over Lahul, Rupchu and Ladak.

WT [122]

T 115 Our second meeting was in Kalimpong, West Bengal, in 1950. Disturbances resulting from the partition of India into India proper and

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Pakistan had forced his family – minus his father who had died during the war – to move their residence from Kulu, and they had settled down temporarily in this small frontier town at the end of the Trade Route to Lhasa. Dr. Roerich was instrumental in obtaining good Tibetan teachers for me; he greatly assisted me in the task of meeting prominent personalities from Tibet and in obtaining the ethnographical artefacts and books which I had been assigned to purchase for the Third Danish Expedition to Central Asia. A great Tibetan scholar of a quality rarely to be found today, he was unfailing in his willingness to help and gave me great assistance, during the seven years that I was in residence in Kalimpong, in my efforts to learn Tibetan correctly and to gather information about the customs and ways of the people of Tibet. I was indeed fortunate in having made the acquaintance and gained the friendship of so outstanding an authority.

WT 115

During my stay in Lahul in the summer of 1938, I was greatly assisted in the initial research work by the Reverend F. A. Peter of the Moravian Mission in Kyelang. Through him I came into contact with my first polyandrous families, and his knowledge of the region and of its inhabitants freely put at my disposal, was a very great help at a time when I was beginning my exploration of Tibetan culture.

Through the Reverend Peter I got to know the principal chieftain of the valley of Lahul, Wazir Thakur Partap Chand. This man, who spoke perfect English and was unfailing in his desire to be of assistance and to receive me with proper hospitality in his domain, gave me considerable information concerning the polyandry of the valley. Always outspoken and sincere, he made no attempt to disguise the nature of the institution as practised in Lahul, and the data that I gathered through his intermediary is among the best that I have.

WT 124

In Rupchu, I was left more or less to myself and, in the absence even of interpreters, had to make the best of my English-speaking Punjabi bearer and of the Hindusthani which he and Lobsang could speak together.

At Leh, however, in Ladak, during my stay there of over a month, I again found invaluable helpers and interpreters, through whom material of even greater value to my research work was gathered.

WT 115

Thus my thanks are due to the Reverend Walter Asboe, superintendent of the Moravian Mission, who welcomed me on arrival in Leh and never ceased during the whole period of my visit to take an interest in my quest and to put everything he knew of the people and customs at my disposal. A long experience and a sympathetic understanding of

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WT 115 the ways of the Ladakis enabled the Reverend Asboe to enrich greatly my store of knowledge.

WT 115 [122] T 115 Through his intermediary, I made the acquaintance of the late Joseph Gergan (*dGe-rGan*), native minister of the Mission, and of his son-in-law, Nono Tseten P'hüntzok (*Ts'he-brTan P'hun-Ts'hogs*). The first of these two outstanding Christian personalities of Ladak acted as my mentor and teacher in the Tibetan dialect of Ladak; he was also my guide during my leisurely return to Srinagar from Leh. His son-in-law was my interpreter and helper during my interviews with polyandrous households in the country round Leh and, later, even in Kalimpong, he was most helpful in furnishing me with additional material and information as well as in assisting me to give greater accuracy to the data collected.

T 115 At the other end of India, during the years in which I was in residence in Kalimpong after World War II, I made considerable use of the knowledge and good will of Mr. G. Tharchin of the Tibetan "Mirror" Press in that town. I had already met this learned man, proficient in both English and Tibetan, a native of Kunu (*K'hu-nu* (*Kunawar*) or Rampur Bashahar), in the U.P., during my first visit to Kalimpong in 1938–39. He had just returned from Lhasa at the time, after having accompanied there the late Theos Bernard as guide and interpreter. T 115 122 On my return eleven years later, he not only helped me to collect the material that I wanted and to make Tibetan contacts such as I desired, but also gave me lessons in the language and taught me the rudiments of reading and writing Tibetan.

Earlier on, soon after my arrival in Kalimpong in 1950, Dr. George Roerich had found me an excellent first teacher in Tibetan. His name was Champa Sangta (*Pyams-pa gSang-bTag*) and he was a refugee in India. Formerly, he had been jester and handyman to the Regent of T [662] Tibet, Radeng Rimpoche (*Rwa-gDeng Rin-po-ch'he*), assassinated in 1947 in an obscure political intrigue. Reprisals had been taken by the Tibetan Government against the partisans of the murdered leader, and Champ Sangta being one of these, he had escaped over the border to avoid capture. He spoke an excellent Lhasa dialect (the *lingua franca* of the country) and was, besides, well versed in honorific terms, so important for a foreigner to learn if he does not wish to be accused of T [126] speaking "coolie language". He was also one of the three best singers of Tibet and often gave me examples of his art, some of which I sound-T [212] recorded. Unfortunately, he was illiterate, and could neither read nor write. He spoke no other language than his own, and this forced me to

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understand what he said and to learn to express myself in Tibetan much 115
faster than anything else. He was assisted, however, in the beginning 122
by a young Kalimpong-born Tibetan boy, Kesang Tsewang (*bsKal-bZang Ts'hed-dbang*), who had a smattering of English and thus enabled me to get over the first difficulties.

After I had progressed sufficiently in my studies with these teachers, I was fortunate enough to meet Lobsang P'hüntzok (*bLo-bZang P'hun-Ts'hogs*), then Tibetan Government teacher at St. Joseph's College, North Point, Darjeeling. The son of the Tibetan State Oracle at Nechung (*Nai-Ch'hung*) in Lhasa, he was a monk official, *tsetung* (*rTse-Drung*) of the Government, and well versed in all matters both lay and ecclesiastical. His knowledge of the language, forms and manners as well as of the customs and history of Tibet was such that I can easily say that I learned more with this teacher during my sojurn in Kalimpong than with any other. He is today in charge of the Tibetan programme of All India Radio in New Delhi.

Among the members of the Tibetan aristocracy who came to India 115
during the first phase of the Chinese Communist occupation of their country, none was more obliging and helpful in giving me whatever information I needed than "Mary" (really Rinchen Dölma) Tsarong Taring (*Rin-Ch'hen sGrol-ma Ts'ha-ron aP'hreg-Ring*). From her I obtained genealogies and data concerning the great families of the Tibetan capital including that of H.H. the Dalai Lama. She also dictated her entire life story to me, with a view to having it published eventually in the West. But later, changing her mind, under the influence of her husband, I believe, she asked for it back from me and destroyed it prior to returning with her family to Chinese Communist occupied Tibet. In fairness to her, I did not keep a copy, so that this interesting record was entirely lost.

Another member of the aristocracy, but from Tsang this time and not from Lhasa, was Sönam Wangchuk Dele Rabden Sä (*bSod-nam Sdbang-P'hyug bDe-legs Rab-brTan Sras*) with whom I became extremely friendly and who rendered me quite exceptional services. It was he who made it possible for me to study the particular type of polyandry of Central Tibet in which fathers and sons share a common wife, because he himself was married to his father's second spouse. Through his intermediary, I obtained artefacts and books from Tibet which would no doubt have been quite impossible to obtain otherwise. He helped me to practise my Lhasa dialect with him, correcting me in his [122]
very good English when I made mistakes; he gave me invaluable in-

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Tibet AJ1

115 formation about land-tenure and kinship terms in his country, himself
[122] taking a personal interest in my research work and seeming to understand its scientific implications.

Lastly, I should mention the late Reginald Fox and his wife, Nyima (*Nyi-ma*). Fox, a Londoner born in 1900, was for fifteen years in charge of radio communications at the British Residency in Lhasa, and after the independence of India became head of the Tibetan Government's Wireless Service. He had an unrivalled knowledge of Tibetan customs and ways of life. This was partly due to his personal acumen and interest in such matters but also, and to an even greater degree no doubt, to the fact that he had married a native woman (actually a Bhutanese, but resident in Lhasa since early childhood) and had lived the life of the ordinary people of the country. From him, with his European background, I was able to get information based on a knowledge of our own ways and seen from a comparative point of view such as no one else was able to give me. In particular, Fox was most informative concerning the problem of jealousy in Tibetan polyandrous households, and what I learned about this subject, I mainly obtained
[122] from him. His wife, Nyima, was also of considerable assistance, not
[125] only in helping me to practise speaking Tibetan, but also in allowing herself to be subject to psychological tests and in supplementing what her husband had to say about the position of women in her country with what she herself knew of the matter.

To all these people in the field, my grateful thanks are due. Through them I learned everything that I know about the Kandyan Sinhalese, the castes of Kerala, the Todas of the Nilgiris and the Tibetans.

In compiling the data thus gathered and in giving it the suitable theoretical framework, both as far as the background is concerned and in regard to the conclusions reached at the end, I have received very much help and invaluable advice from Professor Raymond Firth, B.A., Professor of Anthropology at the London School of Economics, University of London. For his unwavering support and his infinite patience, I express my deepest thanks to him, the supervisor of this thesis. I have been in close touch with him ever since the early days of my anthropological studies, when as Dr. Raymond Firth, he was Lecturer in Anthropology with Professor Malinowski. The old friendship that links us has been, I know, very greatly instrumental in giving this dissertation the anthropological character which it has, and I am most grateful to him for his guidance.

I wish to thank Mrs. Isabel Muir for reviewing and typing paragraph

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2 of Chapter I, Section II and Chapter 3 of Section II. Finally, I want to express my wholehearted appreciation and gratitude to Miss M. C. A. Guyon de Saint-Prix, M.A. (Oxon), for reading and correcting my drafts and assisting me to present ideas and data in the correct literary form. She has been a most excellent collaborator.

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sambandham - institutionalized form of sexual union between men of a higher caste and women of a lower one.

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[For detailed information (including genealogies) on polyandrous families in the Walluvanad Taluk of South Malabar and in North Cochin see category 116, pp. 175-225.]

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Nayar

CASTES AND TRIBES

OF

SOUTHERN INDIA

BY

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ASSISTED BY

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GOVERNMENT PRESS, MADRAS

1909.

[Title Page]

snake-bite, the Nāyādis wear a brass toe-ring. And, when engaged in catching rats in their holes, they wear round the wrist a snake-shaped metal ring, to render them safe against snakes which may be concealed in the hole.

The Nāyādis who live within the jurisdiction of the Kavalapāra Nāyar near Shoranūr wear the kudumi (front lock of hair), as there are no Māppillas (Muhammadans) to molest them. The Kavalapara Nāyar was at one time an important chief, and directed all Nambutiri jenmis (landlords) who held land within his jurisdiction to bind themselves not to let the land to Māppillas. Nāyādis of other parts are not allowed by the Māppillas to wear the kudumi, and, if they do so, they are taken for Parayans and professional sorcerers, and beaten.

Some Nayādis have become converts to Christianity, others to Muhammadanism, and maintain themselves by begging for alms from Muhammadans. They are called Thoppyitta (cap-wearing) Nāyādis.

The priest of the Nāyādis is called Mūppan. His appointment is hereditary, and he enquires into all matters affecting the community, and can excommunicate a guilty person.*

Average height, 155 cm.; nasal index, 86.

Nāyar.—"The Nāyars," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "are a Dravidian caste, or rather a community, for we find several distinct elements with totally different occupations among the people who call themselves by this title. The original Nāyars were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia, but the present Nāyar caste includes persons who, by hereditary

* This note is based mainly on articles by Mr. S. Appadorai Aiyar and Mr. L. K. Ananta Krishna Aiyar.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

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land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood 173
combined with the physical peculiarities of the country 564
would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars 175
as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that 564
"in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom 701
in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn [868]
the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their [186]
Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And. Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

> 'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
> By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

175
564 went on to observe: 'These lines, and especially the two
701 last, contain a good description of a Nayr, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in
[411] their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders' (Asiatic Re-
726 searches, V. 10, 18). M. Mahé de la Bourdonnais, who
175 had some experience of their fighting qualities in the field,
564 thus described them: 'Les Nairs sont de grands hom-
701 mes basanés, légers, et vigoureux: Ils n'ont pas d'autre profession que celle des armes, et seraient de fort bons soldats, s'ils étiaent disciplinés: mais ils combattent sans ordre, ils prennent la fuite dès qu'on les serre de près avec quelque supèriorité; pourtant, s'ils se voient pressés avec vigueur et qu'ils se croient en danger, ils reviennent à la charge, et ne se rendent jamais' (M. Esquer, Essai sur les Castes dans l'Inde, page 181). Finally, the only British General of any note—Sir Hector Munro—who had ever to face the Nāyars in the field, thus wrote of their modes of fighting:—

'One may as well look for a needle in a Bottle of Hay as any of them in the daytime, they being lurking behind sand banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the Fort, and then they appear like bees out in the month of June.' 'Besides which,' he continued, 'they point their guns well, and fire them well also' (Tellicherry Factory Diary, March, 1761). They were, in short, brave light troops, excellent in skirmishing, but their organization into small bodies with discordant interests unfitted them to repel any serious invasion by an enemy even moderately well organised. Among other strange Malayāli customs, Sheikh

Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, 726
his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in rava- 175
ging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their 564
vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that 701
which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, 643
upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. 796
A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, 762
and some three or four hundred persons came of their 175
own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
184 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for 175
that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their 868
childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction.
. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from 175
other people on their estates which are fenced in. When 564
they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they 683
may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and 175
well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to 564
know how to please men. They have a belief amongst 831
them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise.'

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * 175
that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) 643
to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died 762
before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony 175
I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom 178
is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 643
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* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

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175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat* that the Nāyars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

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to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar. ‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

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collectors of royal taxes, and to have grievously oppressed Xavier's converts among the fishermen of Travancore.* Dr. Caldwell, alluding to Xavier's letters, says † that these Badages were no doubt Vadages or men from the North, and is of opinion that a Jesuit writer of the time who called them Nayars was mistaken, and that they were really Nayakans from Madura. I believe, however, that the Jesuit rightly called them Nayars, for I find that Father Organtino, writing in 1568, speaks of these Badages as people from Narasinga (a kingdom north of Madura, lying close to Bishnaghur).‡ Bishnaghur is, of course, Vijayanagar, and the kingdom of Narasinga was the name frequently given by the Portuguese to Vijayanagar. Almost every page of Mr. Sewell's interesting book on Vijayanagar bears testimony to the close connection between Vijayanagar and the West Coast. Dr. A. C. Burnell tells us that the kings who ruled Vijayanagar during the latter half of the fourteenth century belonged to a low non-Aryan caste, namely, that of Canarese cow-herds.§ They were therefore closely akin to the Nayars, one of the leading Rajas among whom at the present time, although officially described as a Samanta, is in reality of the Eradi, *i.e.*, cow-herd caste.‖ It is remarkable that Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro, in the memorandum written by him in 1802 ¶ on the Poligars of the Ceded Districts,

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* Father Coleridge's Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier.

† History of Tinnevelly. ‡ Coleridge's Xavier.

§ Burnell. Translation of the Daya Vibhaga, Introduction. *Vide* also Elements of South Indian Palæography (2nd ed., p. 109), where Dr Burnell says that it is certain that the Vijayanagar kings were men of low caste.

‖ *Vide* Glossary, Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, p. 2, and Day's Land of the Permauls, p. 44

¶ Fifth Report of the Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, II, 499, 530. Reprint by Higginbotham, Madras.

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when dealing with the cases of a number of Poligars 101
who were direct descendants of men who had been chiefs 174
under the kings of Vijayanagar, calls them throughout his report Naique or Nair, using the two names as if they were identical. Further investigation as to the connection of the Nayars of Malabar with the kingdom of Vijayanagar would, I believe, lead to interesting results." In the Journal of the Hon. John Lindsay (1783) it is recorded * that "we received information that our arms were still successful on the Malabar coast, and that our army was now advancing into the inland country: whilst the Nayars and Polygars that occupy the jungles and mountains near Seringapatam, thinking this a favourable opportunity to regain their former independence, destroyed the open country, and committed as many acts of barbarity as Hyder's army had done in the Carnatic."

"Some," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes in a note 101
on the Nâyars of Travancore, "believe that Nâyar is derived from Nâga (serpents), as the Aryans so termed the earlier settlers of Malabar on account of the special adoration which they paid to snakes. The Travancore Nâyars are popularly known as Malayâla Sûdras—a term which contrasts them sharply with the Pândi or foreign Sûdras, of whom a large number immigrated into Travancore in later times. Another name by which Nâyars are sometimes known is Malayâli, but other castes, which have long inhabited the Malayâlam country, can lay claim to this designation with equal propriety. The most general title of the Nâyars is Pillai (child), which was once added to the names of the Brâhman dwellers in the south. It must, in all probability, have

* Lives of the Lindsays. By Lord Lindsay, 1849.

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101 been after the Brāhmans changed their title to Aiyar (father), by which name the non-Brāhman people invariably referred to them, that Sūdras began to be termed Pillai. We find that the Vellālas of the Tamil country and the Nāyars of Travancore called themselves Pillai from very early times. The formal ceremony of paying down a sum of money, and obtaining a distinction direct from the Sovereign was known as tirumukham pitikkuka, or catching the face of the king, and enabled the recipients to add, besides the honorary suffix Pillai, the distinctive prefix Kanakku, or accountant, to their name. So important were the privileges conferred by it that even Sanku Annavi, a Brāhman Dalava, obtained it at the hand of the reigning Mahārāja, and his posterity at Vempannūr have enjoyed the distinction until the present day. The titles Pillai and Kanakku are never used together. The name of an individual would be, for example, either Krishna Pillai or Kanakku Rāman Krishnan, Rāman being the name of the Karanavan or the maternal uncle. A higher title, Chempakaraman, corresponds to the knighthood of mediæval times, and was first instituted by Maharāja Marthanda Varma in memory, it is said, of his great Prime Minister Rāma Aiyyan Dalawa. The individual, whom it was the king's pleasure to honour, was taken in procession on the back of an elephant through the four main streets of the fort, and received by the Prime Minister, seated by his side, and presented with pān-supāri (betel). Rare as this investiture is in modern times, there are many ancient houses, to which this title of distinction is attached in perpetuity. The title Kanakku is often enjoyed with it, the maternal uncle's name being dropped, *e.g.*, Kanakku Chempakaraman Krishnan. Tambi (younger brother) is another title prevalent in

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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

mentioned in vernacular books, are Kiriyam, Illam, Svarupam, Itacheri or Idacheri, Pallichan, Ashtikkurichchi, Vattakātan, Otatu, Pulikkal, Vyapari, Vilakkitalavan, and Veluthetan. Of these Ashtikkurichchi and Pulikkal are divisions of Mārān, Vyapari is a division of Chettis, and Vilakkitalavan and Veluthetan are barbers and washermen respectively. 564 [463]

"The chief divisions of Nāyars, as now recognised, are as follows:—

1. Kiriyam, a name said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit griha, meaning house. This represents the highest class, the members of which were, in former times, not obliged to serve Brāhmans and Kshatriyas.

2. Illakkar.—The word illam indicates a Nambūtiri Brāhman's house, and tradition has it that every illam family once served an illam. But, in mediæval times, any Nāyar could get himself recognised as belonging to the Illam division, provided that a certain sum of money, called adiyara, was paid to the Government. The Illakkar are prohibited from the use of fish, flesh, and liquor, but the prohibition is not at the present day universally respected. In some parts of Malabar, they have moulded many of their habits in the truly Brāhmanical style. [262] [273] [178]

3. Svarupakkar.—Adherents of the Kshatriya families of Travancore. The members of the highest group, Parūr Svarupam, have their purificatory rites performed by Mārāns. It is stated that they were once the Illakkar servants of one Karuttetathu Nambutiri, who was the feudal lord of Parūr, and afterwards became attached to the royal household which succeeded to that estate, thus becoming Parūr Svarupakkar.

4. Padamangalam and Tamil Padam were not originally Nāyars, but immigrants from the Tamil

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the
[463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation
of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield 564
before them.

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakketam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tāli-kettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, [783] and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water [793] from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution.

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at [765] the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family.

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu (791) recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled.

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

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in the hereditary occupation of oil-pressing, and occupies a lower position in the social scale than the other."

The following list of "clans" among the Nâyars of Malabar whom he examined anthropometrically is given by Mr. F. Fawcett * :—

Kiriyattil.	Vangilôth.
Sudra.	Kitavu.
Kurup.	Pallichan.
Nambiyar.	Muppathinâyiran.
Urâli.	Viyapâri or Ravari.
Nalliôden.	Attikurissi.
Viyyûr.	Manavalan.
Akattu Charna.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Charna.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Amayengolam.

"The Kurup, Nambiyar Viyyûr, Manavâlan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise, or correspond with the group of clans first named from North Malabar. The Akattu Charna clan is divided into two sub-clans, one of which looks to the Zamorin as their lord, and the other owns lordship to minor lordlings, as the Tirumulpâd of Nilambûr. The former are superior, and a woman of the latter may mate with a man of the former, but not *vice versâ*. In the old days, every Nâyar chief had his Charnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Charna are the outside adherents, or fighters and so on, and the Akattu Charna are the inside adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâlis are said to have been masons; the Pallichans manchil

* Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

bearers.* The Sūdra clan supplies female servants in the 564
houses of Nambūdiris. The Vattakkād (or Chakkingal : [258]
chakku, oil press) clan, whose proper *métier* is producing
gingelly or cocoanut oil with tne oil-mill, is the lowest
of all, excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in [353]
North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nāyars of
the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkād
to be Nāyars, and say that they have adopted the
honorary affix Nāyar to their names quite recently."
There is some obscurity as regards the sub-divisions
of the Vattakkād clan. To the north of Calicut, in
Kurumbranād, they are divided into the Undiātuna, or
those who pull (to work the oil-machine by hand), and
the Murivechchu-ātune, or those who tie or fasten
bullocks, to work the oil-machine. Yet further north,
at Tellicherry and thereabouts, there are no known
sub-divisions, while in Ernād, to the eastward, the clan
is divided into the Veluttātu (white) and Karuttātu
(black). The white have nothing to do with the [258]
expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary [264]
occupation of the black. The white may eat with
Nāyars of any clan ; the black can eat with no others
outside their own clan. The black sub-clan is strictly
endogamous ; the other, the superior sub-clan, is not.
Their women may marry men of any other clan, the
Pallichchan excepted. Union by marriage, or whatever
the function may be named, is permissible between most
of the other clans, the rule by which a woman may
never unite herself with her inferior being always
observed. She may unite herself with a man of her
own clan, or with a man of any superior clan, or with
a Nambūtiri, an Embrāntiri, or any other Brāhman,

* A manchil is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, and more like a [493]

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 784 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 562 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776 that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843 Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613 sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644 between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
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841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as mättu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (mättu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by mättu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving mättu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of mättu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that mättu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction
823 has other roots than those involved in mättu. It does
784 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 784 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a 562 chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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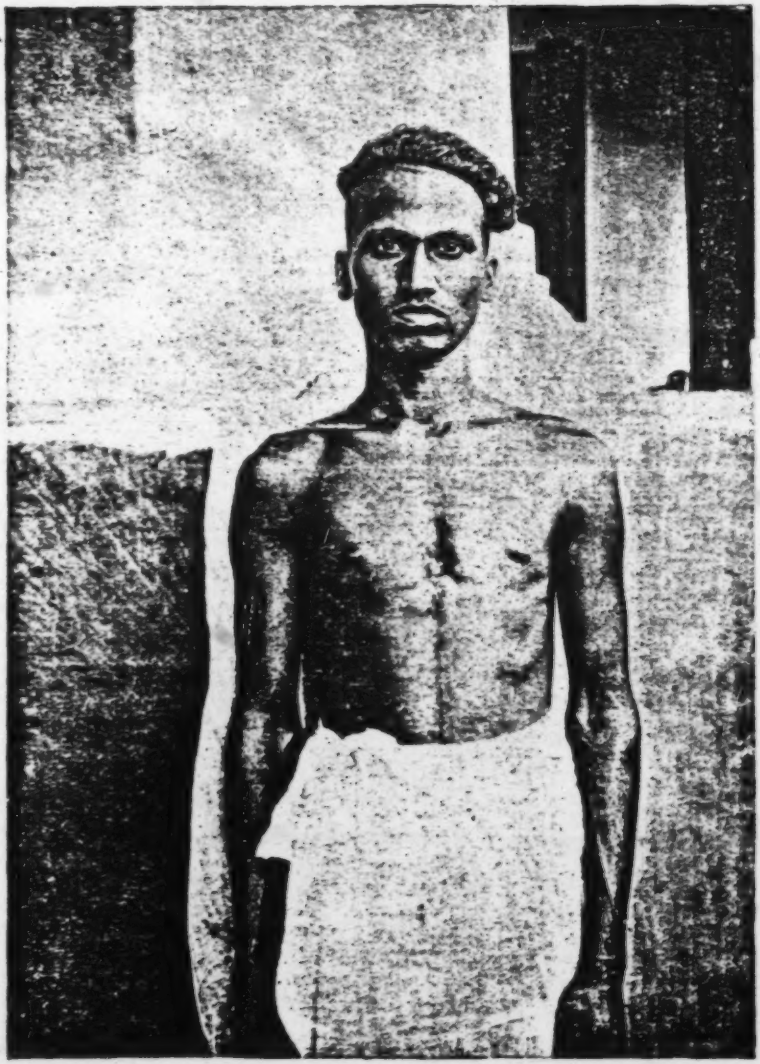

AKATTUCHARNA NĀYAR.

[Facing p. 305]

564 this tract or nād there were originally six stānis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Rāja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nāyars called Kūttams. Each kūttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Viyyūr, Nelliōt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellōli, Nilanchēri, Rendillat, Pulliyāni, Orakātteri, and
[553] Venmēri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyōdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nāyar. Of the six stānis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyōdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stāni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyūr and Nelliōt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyōdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyōdis
783 and Orakātteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattūr, Ara-Eravattūr (or half Eravattūr), and Attikōdan Nāyars, Tonderi Kidāvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mēnōkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchōli to which the remaining three stānis belong, Kōthōli, and Kuruvattān-
[553] chēri. All affix Nāyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvānian Nambiyars, Chellādan Nāyars,
[643] and Vennapālan Nāyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvānian means great or

principal oil-man ; and it is the duty of this caste to present the Kurumbranād Rāja with oil on the occasion of his formal installation. The fifth group consists of the three kulams, Mannangazhi, Paramchela, and Pallikara Nāyars, all observing fifteen days' pollution. A member of the first-named class has to place an āmanapalaga (the traditional seat of Nambūdiris and other high castes) for the Kurumbranād Rāja to sit on at the time of his installation, while a member of the second has to present him with a cloth on the same occasion. The sixth group consists of four kiriyams named Patam, Tulu, Manan, and Ottu respectively, and has the collective name of Rāvāri. The seventh group consists of six kulams, Kandōn, Kannankōdan, Kotta, Karumba, Kundakollavan, and Panakādan Nāyars. All observe fifteen days' pollution, and the women of these six kulams have certain duties to perform in connection with the purification of women of the Vengalat, Pattillat, and Orakatteri kulams. Besides these seven groups, there are a few other classes without internal sub-divisions. One such class is known as Pāppini Nāyar. A woman of this class takes the part of the Brāhmini woman (Nambissan) at the tāli-kettu kalyanam of girls belonging to the kulams included in the third group. Another class called Pālattavan takes the place of the Attikurissi Nāyar at the funeral ceremonies of the same three kulams."

In illustration of the custom of polyandry among the Nāyars of Malabar in by-gone days, the following extracts may be quoted. "On the continent of India," it is recorded in Ellis' edition of the Kural, "polyandry is still said to be practiced in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayālam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely

595 realised, the women among the Nāyars not being
[585] restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Nāyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same
586 time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which from the frailty of nature domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man
581 another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off, and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age."

595 In a note on the Nāyars in the sixteenth century,
20 Cæsar Fredericke writes as follows.* "These Nairi having their wives common amongst themselves, and when any of them goe into the house of any of these women, he leaveth his sworde and target at the door, and the time that he is there, there dare not be any so

* The Voyage and Travell of M. Cæsar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice, into the East Indies and beyond the Indies (1563). Translation. Hakluyt Voyages, V, 394.

hardie as to come into that house. The king's children 595
shall not inherite the kingdom after their father, because [201]
they hold this opinion, that perchance they were not begotten of the king their father, but of some other man, therefore they accept for their king one of the sonnes of the king's sisters, or of some other woman of the blood roiall, for that they be sure that they are of the blood roiall."

In his "New Account of the East Indies, (1727)" 595
Hamilton wrote: "The husbands," of whom, he said, 833
there might be twelve, but no more at one time, "agree very well, for they cohabit with her in their turns, according to their priority of marriage, ten days more or less according as they can fix a term among themselves, and he that cohabits with her maintains her in all things necessary for his time, so that she is plentifully provided for by a constant circulation. When the man that cohabits with her goes into her house he leaves his arms at the door, and none dare remove them or enter the house on pain of death. When she [428]
proves with child, she nominates its father, who takes care of his education after she has suckled it, and brought it to walk or speak, but the children are never heirs to their father's estate, but the father's sister's children are."

Writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, 595
Grose says * that "it is among the Nairs that principally prevails the strange custom of one wife being common to a number; in which point the great power of custom [152]
is seen from its rarely or never producing any jealousies or quarrels among the co-tenants of the same woman. Their number is not so much limited by any specific

* Travels to the East Indies.

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brāhmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. A woman without [851] shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595
without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564
maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nayres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851]
ing that there are always several men attached to one [604]
woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578]
term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tīpū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648]
since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind." †

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

595 As to the present existence or non-existence of polyandry I must call recent writers into the witness-box. The Rev. S. Mateer, Mr. Fawcett writes,* "informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry among the Nāyars of Travancore—that he had 'known an instance of six brothers keeping two women, four husbands to one, and two to the other. In a case where two brothers [797] cohabited with one woman, and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the [177] Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition.' I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nāyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that, if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), it certainly did not long [564] ago." Mr. Gopal Panikkar says † that "to enforce this social edict upon the Nairs, the Brāhmans made use of the powerful weapon of their aristocratic ascendancy in the country, and the Nairs readily submitted to the Brāhman supremacy. Thus it came about that the custom of concubinage, so freely indulged in by the Brāhmans with Nair women, obtained such firm hold upon the country that it has only been strengthened by the lapse of time. At the present day there are families, especially in the interior of the district, who look upon it as an honour to be thus united with Brāhmans. But a [178] reaction has begun to take place against this feeling, and Brāhman alliances are invariably looked down upon in respectable Nair tarwads. This reactionary feeling took shape in the Malabar Marriage Act." Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar says: "There is nothing strange or to be ashamed of in the fact that the Nāyars were originally of a stock that practiced polyandry, nor if the

* Op cit. † Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

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NĀYAR FEMALES.

[facing P. 312]

practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan 595
say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now [851]
be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar [581]
marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli- 588
tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of [184]
this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the [881]
ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

588 invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and, in the presence of friends and castemen, ties a tāli (marriage badge) round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. [587] Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined along with those of her enangan (a recognised member of one's own class) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers is marked out as a fit person to tie the tāli, and a day is fixed for the tāli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Karanavan * (senior male in a tarwad) of the boy's family. The feast is called ayaniūnu, and the boy is thenceforth called Manavālan or Pillai (bridegroom). From the house in which the Manavālan is entertained a procession is formed, preceded by men with swords, and [613] shields shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her tarwad, to meet the other procession, and, after meeting the Manavālan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the booth erected for the purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour, and his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths. The Manavālan is then taken to the centre of the booth, where bamboo mats, carpets and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside the house, and, after going round the booth three times, places her at the left side of the Manavālan. The father of the girl then presents new cloths tied in a kambli (blanket) to the pair, and with this [613] new cloth (called manthravadi) they change their dress. [604] The wife of the Karanavan of the girl's tarwad, if she be

* The rights and obligations of Karanavans are fully dealt with by Moore, Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd edition, 1905.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

consider a coral necklace an essential. In her right hand she holds a vālkannādi (brass hand mirror), and in her left a charakkal (a highly ornate arrow). In front of the girl are placed, in addition to the five-wicked lamp and nirachaveppu, a metal dish or talam of parched rice, and the eight lucky things known as ashtamangalyam. A woman, termed Brahmini or Pushpini, usually of the Nambissan caste, sits facing her on a three-legged stool (pidam), and renders appropriate and lengthy songs, at the close of which she scatters rice over her. About midday there is a feast, and in the evening songs in the macchu are repeated. Next morning, the ceremonial in the macchu is repeated for the third time, after which the paraphernalia are removed to the nearest tank or to the east of the household well, where the Pushpini sings once more, goes through the form of making the girl's toilet, and ties a cocoanut frond round each of her wrists (kappōla). The girl has then to rise and jump over a kindi (vessel) of water with an unhusked cocoanut placed on the top, overturning it the third time. The party then proceed to the pandal, two men holding a scarlet cloth over the girl as a canopy, and a Chāliyan (weaver) brings two cloths (kōdi vastiram), which the girl puts on. In the evening, the previous day's ceremonial is repeated in the macchu. The third day is the most important, and it is then that the central act of the ceremony is performed. For this the girl sits in the inner pandal richly adorned. In some cases she is carried from the house to the pandal by her karnavan or brother, who makes a number of pradakshinams round the pandal (usually 3 or 7) before he places her in her seat. Before the girl are the various objects already specified, and the hymeneal ditties of the Pushpini open the proceedings. At the auspicious moment the

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184 Manavālan arrives in rich attire. He is often preceded by a sort of body guard with sword and shield who utter a curious kind of cry, and is met at the gate of the girl's house by a bevy of matrons with lamps and salvers decorated with flowers and lights, called talams. A man of the girl's family washes his feet, and he takes his seat in the pandal on the girl's right. Sometimes the girl's father at this stage presents new cloths (mantravādi or mantrokôdi) to the pair, who at once don them. The girl's father takes the tāli, a small round plate of gold about the size of a two-anna bit, with a hole at the top, from the goldsmith who is in waiting, pays him for it, [787] and gives it to the Manavālan. The karnavan or father of the girl asks the astrologer thrice if the moment has arrived, and, as he signifies his assent the third time, the Manavālan ties the tāli round the girl's neck amidst the shouts of those present. The Manavālan carries the girl indoors to the macchu, and feasting brings the day to [533] a close. Tom-toming and other music are of course incessant accompaniments throughout as on other festal occasions, and the women in attendance keep up a curious kind of whistling, called kurava, beating their lips with their fingers. On the fourth day, girl and Manavālan go in procession to the temple richly dressed. The boy, carrying some sort of sword and shield, heads [782] the party. If the family be one of position, he and the girl must be mounted on an elephant. Offerings are made to the deity, and presents to the Brāhmans. They then return home, and, as they enter the house, the Manavālan who brings up the rear is pelted by the boys of the party with plantains, which he wards off with his shield. In other cases, he is expected to make a pretence of forcing the door open. These two usages are no doubt to be classed with those marriage ceremonies which take the

form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 538
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavālan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574]
entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nāyar houses will feed 1,000 Brāhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tāli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nāyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801]
represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622]
a Nāyar tāli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

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[787]

astrologer, and those youths in the tarwads who have passed the age of eighteen, and whose horoscopes agree with those of the girls, are declared to be eligible. The ola (palm-leaf) on which the Kaniyan (astrologer) writes his decision is called the muhurta charutu, and the individual who receives it from him is obliged to see that the ceremony is performed on an auspicious day in the near future. The next important item is the fixing of a wooden post in the south-west corner or kannimula of the courtyard. At the construction of the pandal (booth) the Pidakakkar or villagers render substantial aid. The mandapa is decorated with ears of corn, and hence called katirmandapa. It is also called mullapandal. On the
[533] night of the previous day the kalati or Brâhman's song is sung. A sumptuous banquet, called ayaniunnu, is given at the girl's house to the party of the young man. The ceremony commences with the bridegroom washing his feet, and taking his seat within the pandal. The girl meanwhile bathes, worships the household deity, and is dressed in new cloths and adorned with costly ornaments. A Brâhman woman ties a thread round the girl's left wrist, and sings a song called Subhadraveli, which deals with the marriage by capture of Subhadra by Arjuna. Then, on the invitation of the girl's mother, who throws a garland round his neck, the bridegroom goes in procession, riding on an elephant, or on foot. The girl's brother is waiting to receive him at the pandal. A leading villager is presented with some money, as if to recompense him for the permission granted by him to commence the ceremony. The girl sits within the mandapa, facing the east, with her eyes closed. The bridegroom, on his arrival, sits on her right. He then receives the minnu (ornament) from the Ilayatu priest, and ties it round the girl's neck. A song is sung called

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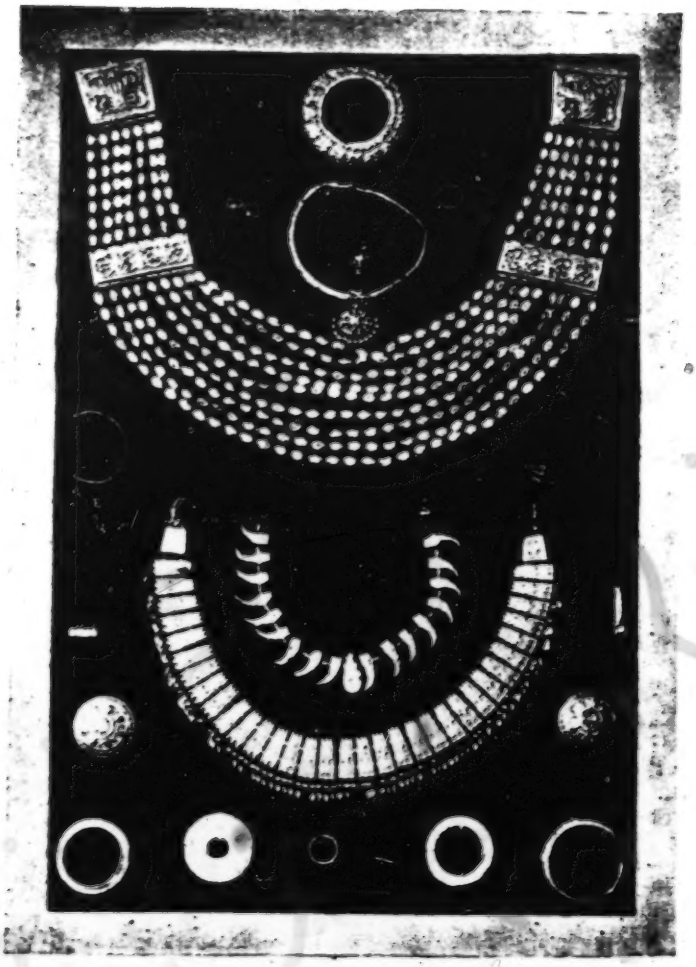

NÂYAR JEWELRY.

[Facing p. 320]

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A song is sung called ammachampattu, or the song of the maternal uncle. If there are several brides, they sit in a row, each holding in her hand an arrow and a looking-glass, and the ornaments are tied on their necks in the order of their ages. Unless enangans are employed, there is usually only one tāli-tier, whatever may be the number of girls. In cases where, owing to poverty, the expenses of the ceremony cannot be borne, it is simply performed in front of a Brāhman temple, or in the pandaramatam, or house of the village chieftain. In many North Travancore taluks the girl removes her tali as soon as she hears of the tali-tier's death." It is noted by the Rev. S. Mateer * that " a Nair girl of Travancore must get married with the tāli before the age of eleven to avoid reproach from friends and neighbours. In case of need a sword may even be made to represent a bridegroom." Sometimes, when a family is poor, the girl's mother makes an idol of clay, adorns it with flowers, and invests her daughter with the tāli in the presence of the idol.

In an account of the tali-kettu ceremony, in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, it is stated that " the celebration of the ceremony is costly, and advantage is therefore taken of a single occasion in the course of ten or twelve years, at which all girls in a family, irrespective of their ages, and, when parties agree, all girls belonging to families that observe death pollution between one another go through the ceremony. The ceremony opens with the fixing of a post for the construction of a pandal or shed, which is beautifully decorated with cloth, pictures and festoons. The male members of the village are invited, and treated to a feast followed by the distribution

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., XII, 1883.

588
184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is
[574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by
[424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain
[643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is
[782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

stool in the pandal. A male member of the family, 588 generally a brother or maternal uncle of the girl, washes 184 the feet of the bridegroom. The girls are covered with new cloths of cotton or silk, and brought into the pandal, and seated screened off from one another. After the [431] distribution of money presents to the Brāhmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the tāli, or thin plate of gold shaped like the leaf of aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), and tacked on to a string, to the Tirumulpād, who ties it round the neck of the girl. A single Tirumulpād often ties the tāli round the neck of two, three, or four girls. He is given one to eight rupees per girl for so doing. Sometimes the tāli is tied by the mother of the girl. The retention of the tāli is not at all obligatory, nay it is seldom worn or taken care of after the ceremony. These circumstances clearly show the purely ceremonial character of this form of marriage. The Karamel Asan, or headman of the village, is an important factor on this occasion. In a conspicuous part of the marriage pandal [622] he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which a grass mat, a black blanket, and white cloth are spread one over the other. Before the tāli is tied, his permission is solicited for the performance of the ceremony. He is paid 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 puthans (a puthan = 10 pies) per girl, according to the means of the family. He is also given rice, curry stuff, and pān-supāri. Rose-water is sprinkled at intervals on the males and females assembled on the occasion. With the distribution of 574 pān-supāri, scented sandal paste and jasmine flowers to 588 the females of the village and wives of relatives and 184 friends, who are invited for the occasion, these guests return to their homes. The male members, one or two from each family in the village, are then treated to a sumptuous feast. In some places, where the Enangu

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
[574] day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During
[536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

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beg some of their relations and friends to marry these daughters, and they do so. It must be said that they have some gold jewel made, which will contain half a ducat of gold, a little shorter than the tag of lace, with a hole in the middle passing through it, and they string it on a thread of white silk; and the mother of the girl stands with her daughter very much dressed out, and entertaining her with music and singing, and a number of people. And this relation or friend of hers comes with much earnestness, and there performs the ceremony of marriage, as though he married her, and they throw a gold chain round the necks of both of them together, and he puts the above mentioned jewel round her neck, which she always has to wear as a sign that she may now do what she pleases. And the bridegroom leaves her and goes away without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation; and, if he is not so, he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it. And from that time forward the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women." 588 184 [833]

The tāli-kettu ceremony is referred to by Kerr, who, in his translation of Castaneda, states that "these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nāyar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel round her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life, as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives." 588

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The opinion was expressed by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Winterbotham, one of the Malabar Marriage Commissioners, that the Brahman tāli-tier was a relic of the time when the Nambūtiris were entitled to the first fruits, and it was considered the high privilege of every Nāyar maid to be introduced by them to womanhood. In this connection, reference may be made to Hamilton's 'New Account of the East Indies', where it is stated that [793] "when the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambūdri, or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and he, if he pleases, may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships. And some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the clergy the same tribute, but the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the priests' places themselves."

588 Of those who gave evidence before the Malabar Commission, some thought the tāli-kettu was a marriage, some not. Others called it a mock marriage, a formal marriage, a sham marriage, a fictitious marriage, a marriage sacrament, the preliminary part of marriage, a meaningless ceremony, an empty form, a ridiculous farce, an incongruous custom, a waste of money, and a device for becoming involved in debt. "While," the report states, "a small minority of strict conservatives still maintain that the tāli-kettu is a real marriage intended to confer on the bridegroom a right to cohabit with the bride, an immense majority describe it as a fictitious marriage, the origin of which they are at a loss to explain. And another large section tender the explanation accepted by our President (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) that, in some way or other, it is an essential caste observance preliminary to the forming of sexual relations."

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes* :588 "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, [648] when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . 796 . This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal 588 of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted [779] under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. 588 L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reason- 178 able doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, 174 and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

588 178 174 [585] [613] Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 [174] ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for [184] husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

sambandham ceremony all over Kēralam are in the main 585
the same. As there are different local names denoting 184
marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examina- [787]
tion, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically; the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony; the usual hour at which the ceremony takes place; the presentation [431]
of dānam (gifts) to Brāhmans; sumptuous banquet; the [574]
meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted sambandhams in all parts of Kēralam alike. But here I would state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all sambandhams among respectable Nāyars; and I would further state that they ought to be gone through at every sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the pudamuri or vastradānam as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of sambandham, I consider the pudamuri the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The prelimi- [787]
nary ceremony in every pudamuri is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom [574] distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

cloths are placed in the western room of the house (padinhatta), in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and ashtamangalyam, which consists of eight articles symbolical of mangalyam or marriage. These are rice, paddy (unhusked rice), the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round box called cheppu. These will be found placed on the floor of the room as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groomsman enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloths and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east, with the ashtamangalyam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groomsman then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride sprinkles rice over the lamps and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom, who immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. Next morning, the vettilakettu or salkāram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is feasting in honour of the occasion. Uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral is a peculiar form

575 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the
184 description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale.
574 There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett
582 states that "my informant says in the first place that the
179 man should not enter into sambandham with a woman
181 until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar,
583 which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
(613) husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 585
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. 574
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day [787]
he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

A sambandham ceremony at
585 Calicut is recorded by Mr. Fawcett, at which there were
[574] cake and wine for the guests, and a ring for the bride.

[184] In connection with sambandham, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes from Travancore that "it is known in different localities as gunadosham (union through good or evil), vastradānam or putavakota (giving of cloth), and uzhamporukkal (waiting one's turn). It may be performed without any formal ceremony whatever, and is actually a private transaction confidentially gone through in some families. The bridegroom and his friends assemble at the house of the bride on the appointed night, and, before the assembled guests, the bridegroom presents the bride with a few unbleached cloths. Custom enjoins that four pieces of cloth should be presented, and the occasion is availed of to present cloths to the relatives and servants of the bride also. The girl asks permission of her mother and maternal
[431] uncle, before she receives the cloths. After supper, and the distribution of pān-supāri, the party disperses. Another day is fixed for the consummation ceremony.
[574] On that day the bridegroom, accompanied by a few friends, goes to the bride's house with betel leaves and nuts. After a feast, the friends retire."

It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that one name for the sambandham rite is kitakkora, meaning
881 bed-chamber ceremony. In the same report, the following account of a puberty ceremony is given. "The tirandukuli ceremony is practically a public declaration that a girl has reached the age of maturity. When a girl attains puberty, she is seated in a separate room, where a lamp is lit, and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass called vālkannādi, literally a looking-glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by korava

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 881
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 585
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
656

585 217 656 therein laid down, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father, respectively, and to succeed to half his self-acquired [586] property, if he dies intestate; while the parties to such a sambandham cannot register a second sambandham during its continuance, that is, until it is terminated by death or by a formal application for divorce in the Civil 585 Courts. The total number of sambandhams registered 187 under the Act has, however, been infinitesimal, and the 656 reason for this is, admittedly, the reluctance of the men to fetter their liberty to terminate sambandham at will by such restrictions as the necessity for formal divorce, or to undertake the burdensome responsibility of a legal obligation to maintain their wife and offspring. If, as the evidence recorded by the Malabar Marriage Commission tended to show, 'a marriage law in North Malabar, and throughout the greater part of South Malabar, would merely legalise what is the prevailing custom,' it is hard to see why there has been such a disinclination to lend to that custom the dignity of legal sanction." * The following applications to register sambandhams under the Act were received from 1897 to 1904:—

—	Nāyars.	Tiyans.	Others.	Total.
1897	28	6	2	36
1898	8	2	4	14
1899	8	2	4	14
1900	8	..	9	17
1901	3	...	1	4
1902	...	...	...	...
1903	2	...	...	2
Total ...	57	10	20	87

* Gazetteer of Malabar.

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his 593

843
593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife [602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. 843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in [574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring. [593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the [604] pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed [843] during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778] pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793] exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789] called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534] which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782] concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787] auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824] of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415] woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi [354] (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti * carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

184
on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782] juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824] waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564] of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764] lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825] woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824] Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828] superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613] pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852 approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853 puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613] chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782] is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553] giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852 hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846 Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564 Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386] are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824] the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

852
846 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a
564 characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or
[844] may not be Mannāns. On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance.
[626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kērala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.
852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend.
[591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband,
[564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

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613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his
[576] right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of
thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a
bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett.
"When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and
all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little
water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two
of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in
the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being
that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth
of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one
can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are
closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is
placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor;
and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād
holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the
same way; and here the neighbours come to take a
farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon
as possible after death is conducive to the happiness
of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting
about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
[782] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghī (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravād. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the taravād, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

764 613 [824] [782] [823] [561]

* The eldest male member of the taravād is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravād.

764 importance that the whole pyre burns at once. The
613 greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's taravād who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or grounds round every Nāyar's house). The eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation.
[763] It should be said that, on the news of a death, the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the taravād go and bathe, they remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead body has been placed. A small image representing the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done, the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses. When the
764 cremation has been done by night, the duty of sēshakriya
782 (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun
795 the next day between 10 and 11 A.M., and is done on
613 seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11, and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the taravād younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

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They kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandal paste, and leaves of the cherūla, the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making the offerings. The half boiled rice is made into balls (pindam), and each one present takes one of these in his right hand, and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and leaf is gently tapped with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed, and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing. The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and the piece of iron in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with
613 them small presents in money or kind to help the
574 Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral
[783] rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day
764 comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the cal-
613 cined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male
[415] members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return
[184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected
[778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there
764 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or
769 ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there
613 deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the 613
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [769]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [775]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, [787]
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

The spirits of those who have committed suicide, or met death by any violent 766 means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome 775 to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they [782] are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman priests are called in, and appease them by means of tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it."

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting 764 features in the death ceremonies as performed by the 184 Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre 613 are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each [564] carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round. They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all, and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre."

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted 763 in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 184

763 184 [778] moments of a dying person are really very trying. All members (male and female), junior to the dying person, pour into his or her mouth drops of Ganges or other holy water or conjee (rice) water in token of their last tribute of regard. Before the person breathes his last, he or she is removed to the bare floor, as it is considered sacrilegious to allow the last breath to escape while lying on the bed, and in a room with a ceiling, which last is supposed to obstruct the free passage of the breath. The names of gods, or sacred texts are loudly dinned into his or her ears, so that the person may quit this world with the recollections of God serving as a passport to heaven. The forehead, breast, and the joints especially are besmeared with holy ashes, so as to prevent the messengers of death from tightly tying those parts when they carry away the person. Soon 764 184 after the last breath, the dead body is removed to some open place in the house, covered from top to toe with a washed cloth, and deposited on the bare floor with the head towards the south, the region of the God of death. A lighted lamp is placed near the head, and other lights are placed all round the corpse. A mango tree is cut, or other firewood is collected, and a funeral pyre is constructed in the south-eastern corner of a compound or garden known as the corner of Agni, which is always reserved as a cemetery for the burning or burial of the dead. All male members, generally junior, bathe, and, without wiping their head or body, they remove the corpse to the yard in front of the house, and place it on a plantain leaf. It is nominally anointed with oil, and bathed in water. Ashes and sandal are again smeared on the forehead and joints. The old cloth is removed, and the body is covered with a new unwashed cloth or a piece of silk. A little gold or silver, or small coins are put into the

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

NÂYAR HOUSE.

342
516
351
312

[facing P. 361]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

342 west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east.
[823] Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing
351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this;
[184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the
342 Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlapura or four-
556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

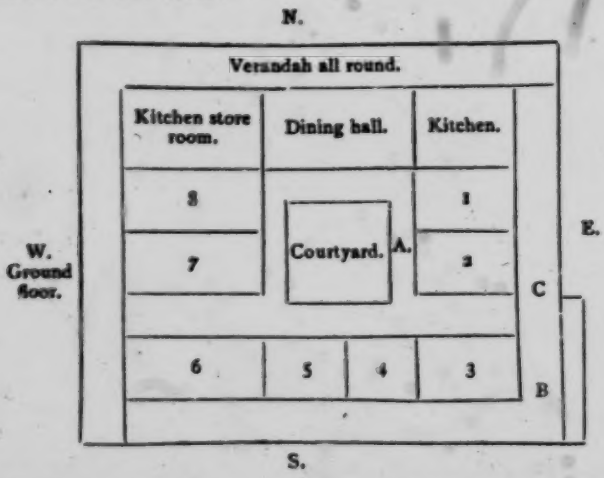

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for
[532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of
[613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver,
[735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

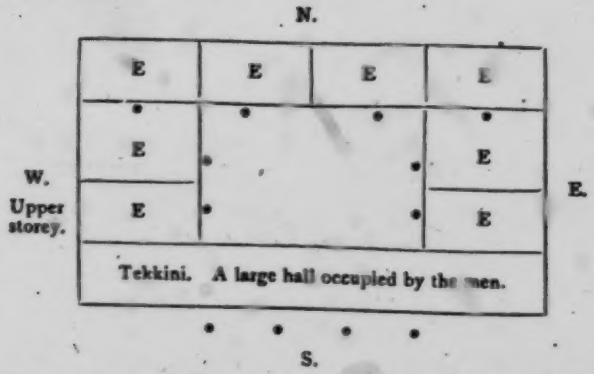

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile [532] to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow-dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

241 [177] [564] [564] [184] [576] [643]

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous disorders are never observed except among slaves and
[302] the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

chelakkamotiram, amatāli, arumpumani, and kumilatāli are fast vanishing. The kuttu-minnu is worn on the neck for the first time by a girl when her tāli-kettu is celebrated. This ornament is also called gnali. Prior to the tāli-kettu ceremony, the girls wear a kāsu or sovereign. The inseparable neck ornament of a Nāyar woman in modern days is the addiyal, to which a patakkam is attached. The only ornament for the ears is the takka or toda. After the lobes have been dilated at the karnavedha ceremony, and dilated, a big leaden ring is inserted in them. The nose ornament of women is called mukkuthi, from which is suspended a gold wire called gnattu. No ornament is worn in the right nostril. The wearing of gold bangles on the wrists has been long the fashion among South Indian Hindu females of almost all high castes. Round the waist Nāyar women wear chains of gold and silver, and, by the wealthy, gold belts called kachchapuram are worn. Anklets were not worn in former times, but at the present day the kolusu and padasaram of the Tamilians have been adopted. So, too, the time-honoured toda is sometimes set aside in favour of the Tamil kammal, an ornament of much smaller size. Canter Visscher (who was Chaplain at Cochin in the eighteenth century) must have been much struck by the expenditure of the Nāyar women on their dress, for he wrote* 'there is not one of any fortune who does not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of robes made of silver and other valuable materials, for it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same dress two or three days in succession'."

It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way to Malabar in the days

* Letters from Malabar.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged." 301 789

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year. 304 [177] [564]

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th 776 [532] [778] [775] [766] [791] [789] [782]

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nâyars, and an even number of Brâhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [827].
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nâyars is Ônam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

796 eighteenth century, observes that about the tenth of September the rain ceases in Malabar. All nature seems then as if renovated; the flowers again shoot up, and the trees bloom. In a word, this season is the same as that which Europeans call spring. The Ōnam festival is said, therefore, to have been instituted for the purpose of soliciting from the gods a happy and fruitful [237] year. It continues for eight days, and during that time the Indians are accustomed to adorn their houses with [825] flowers, and to daub them over with cow-dung, because the cow is a sacred animal, dedicated to the Goddess Lakshmi, the Ceres of India. On this occasion they also put on new clothes, throw away all their old earthenware, and replace it by new. Ōnam is, according to some, the annual celebration of the Malabar new year, which first began with Cheraman Perumal's departure for Mecca. But, with the majority of orthodox Hindus, it is the day of the annual visit of Mahabali to his country, which he used to govern so wisely and well before his overthrow. There is also a belief that it is Maha-Vishnu who, on Ōnam day, pays a visit to this mundane universe, for the just and proper maintenance of which he is specially responsible. In some North Malabar title-deeds and horoscopes, Mr. Logan says, the year is taken as ending with the day previous to Ōnam. This fact, he notes, is quite reconcileable with the other explanation, which alleges that the commencement of the era coincides with Perumal's departure for Arabia, if it is assumed, as is not improbable, that the day on which he sailed was Thiruvōnam day, on which acknowledgment of fealty should have been made. Ōnam, it may be observed, is a contraction of Thiruvōnam which is the asterism [824] of the second day of the festival. Throughout the festival, boys from five to fifteen years of age go out

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early in the morning to gather flowers, of which the kadali is the most important. On their return, they sit in front of the tulasi (sacred basil) mandapam, make a carpet-like bed of the blossoms which they have collected, and place a clay image of Ganapati in the centre. A writer in the Calcutta Review * describes how having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M., and then the daily decoration begins. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers, and one or two varieties of foliage of different tints, are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art, accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal (booth), hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork."

"Various field sports, of which foot-ball is the chief, are indulged in during the Ònam festival. To quote Paulinus once more, the men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into parties, and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted, but exceedingly strong, and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans."

* January, 1899.

526 In connection with bows and arrows, Mr. Fawcett writes that "I once witnessed a very interesting game called ĕitū (ĕiththu), played by the Nāyars in the southern portion of Kurumbranād during the ten days preceding Ōnam. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to sides. Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo, about 18 inches in length, and arrows, or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the cheppu, as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight, and stick in readily) carries off all the arrows lying on the ground. Each side strives to secure all the arrows, and to deprive the other side of theirs—a sort of 'beggar my neighbour.' He who hits the mark last takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit first was running the 25 yards to touch the cheppu. Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it, and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much

shouting, gesticulation and laughter. Those returning, 526
after securing a large number of arrows, turned somersaults, and expressed their joy in saltatory motions." In a note on this game with bows and arrows in Kurumbranad, Mr. E. F. Thomas writes that "the players form themselves into two sides, which shoot alternately at the mark. Beside the mark stand representatives of the two sides. When the mark is hit by a member of either side, on his representative shouting 'Run, man,' he runs up the lists. His object is to seize the mark before it is hit by any one belonging to the other side. If he can do this, his side takes all the arrows which have been shot, and are sticking in the stop-butt. If, on the other hand, the mark is hit by the other side before he reaches it, he may not seize the mark. A member of the other side runs up in his turn to seize the mark if possible before it is hit again by the first side. If he can do this, he takes out, not all the arrows, but only the two which are sticking in the mark. If, while number two is running, the mark is hit a third time, a member of the first side runs up, to seize the mark if possible. The rule is that one or three hits take all the arrows in the stop-butt, two or four only the arrows sticking in the mark. Great excitement is shown by all who take part in the game, which attracts a number of spectators. The game is played every fortnight by Nāyars, Tiyans, Māppillas, and others. I am told that it is a very old one, and is dying [178]
out. I saw it at Naduvanūr."

The Ōnam games in the south-east of Malabar, in 796
the neighbourhood of Palghat, are said by Mr. Fawcett 526
to be of a rough character, "the tenants of certain jenmis 184
(landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights, in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing, which

796
526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman
[184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the
[175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them
[431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a
[174] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic
[178] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu-
[776] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The
[773] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogde of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

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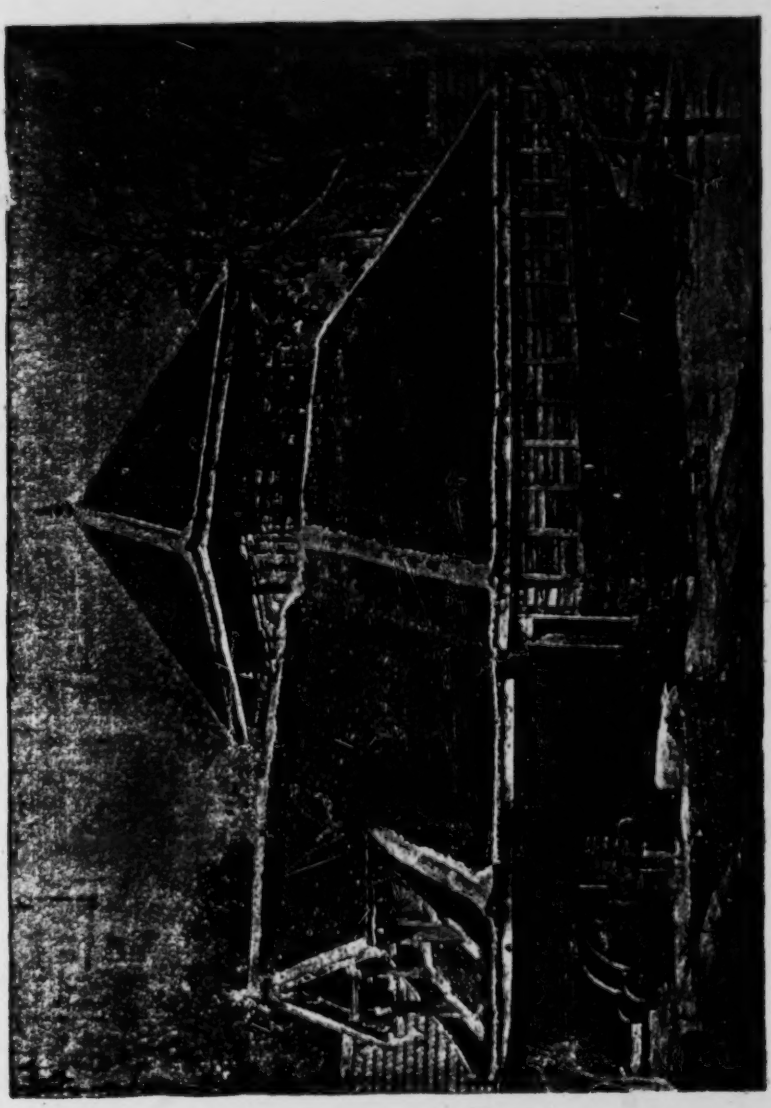

BHAGAVATI TEMPLE, PANDALŪR.

[facing p. 376]

796 [776] [773]

was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed to have only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive among us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about four in the morning, every young female of Nair families with pretensions to decency gets out of bed, and takes her bath in a tank. Usually a fairly large number of these young ladies collect at the tank for the purpose. Then all, or almost all of them, plunge in the water, and begin to take part in the singing that is presently to follow. One of them then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song, chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed, and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction, and struck against its surface, so that the water is completely ruffled, and is splashed in all directions, producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged, together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound, and then the leader stops awhile for the others to follow in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza with another, at the same time beating on the water, and so on until the conclusion of the song. All of them make a long pause, and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn, when they rub themselves dry, and come home to dress

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire.
[302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of
[276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips.
[526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made
[262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and
[593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on
[586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa-
[132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

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on this particular morning. According to Nair, and even general Hindu mythology, there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance, ashes, firewood, oil, and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones, which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold, and such like, on the morning of the next new year. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand, who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sightworthy objects on the new year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known as a kani. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken, and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed cloth, some 'unprofitably gay' flowers of the konna tree (*Cassia Fistula*), a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel, and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps, filled with cocoanut oil clear as diamond sparks, are kept burning, and a small plank of wood, or some other seat, is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day, some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house, and takes them blindfolded, so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the kani. The members are seated, one after another, in the seat, and

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are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [772] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [41] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

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he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

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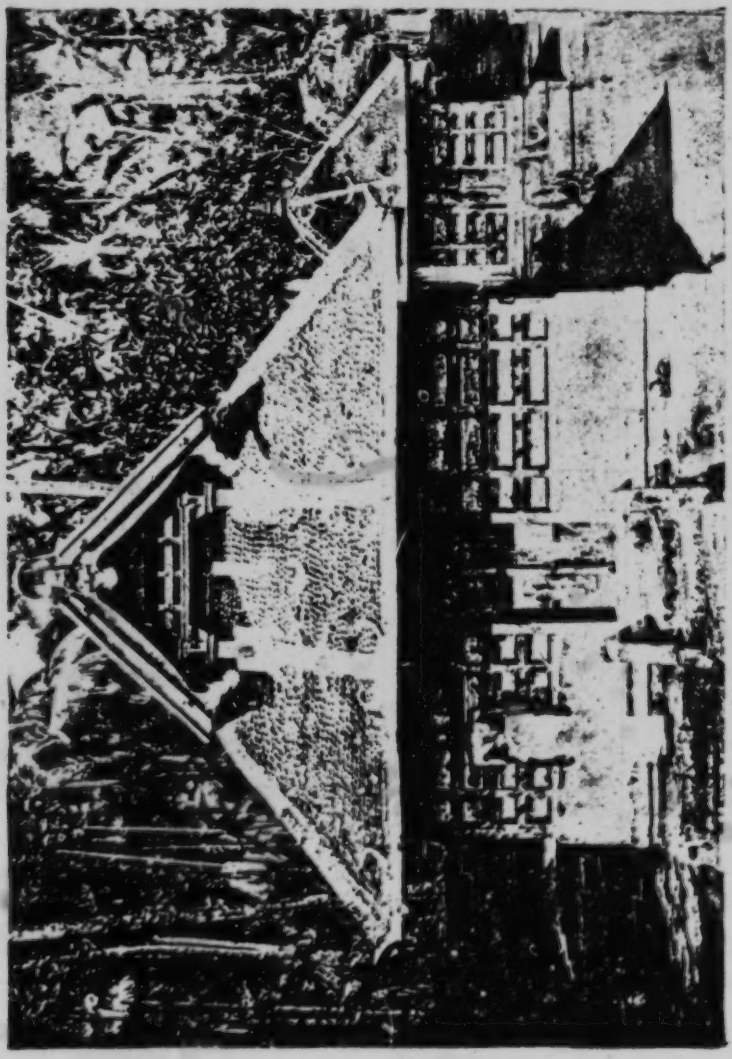

AIYAPPAN TEMPLE.

[Facing p. 385]

534 796 [538] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [422] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

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man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

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788
demons dance before her. Gulikan is represented by 796
the Vannān and Kuttichchāttan by the Manūtan who 776
have been already mentioned, and who are under like
restrictions with the nine Tiyans. I saw poor Gulikan 796
being made up, the operation occupying five or six 776
hours or more before his appearance. I asked who 536
he was, and was told he was a devil. He looked mild 788
enough, but then his make-up had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the north-east entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, the hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; and his head and neck were swathed and decorated. A wooden platform arrangement, from which hung a red ornamented skirt, was fastened to his hips. There was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales' feathers arrangement, the top of which reached five feet above his head, and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchāttan was treated in much the same manner. As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple, where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his dance was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he could move at all, let alone dance. The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchāttan gives his

796 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving
788 the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under
776 which is a high raised platform built up with earth
536 and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of
796 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste men-
564 tioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a
788 crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following,
[782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings
[755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

796 564 788 [804] [778] 796 787

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

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is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

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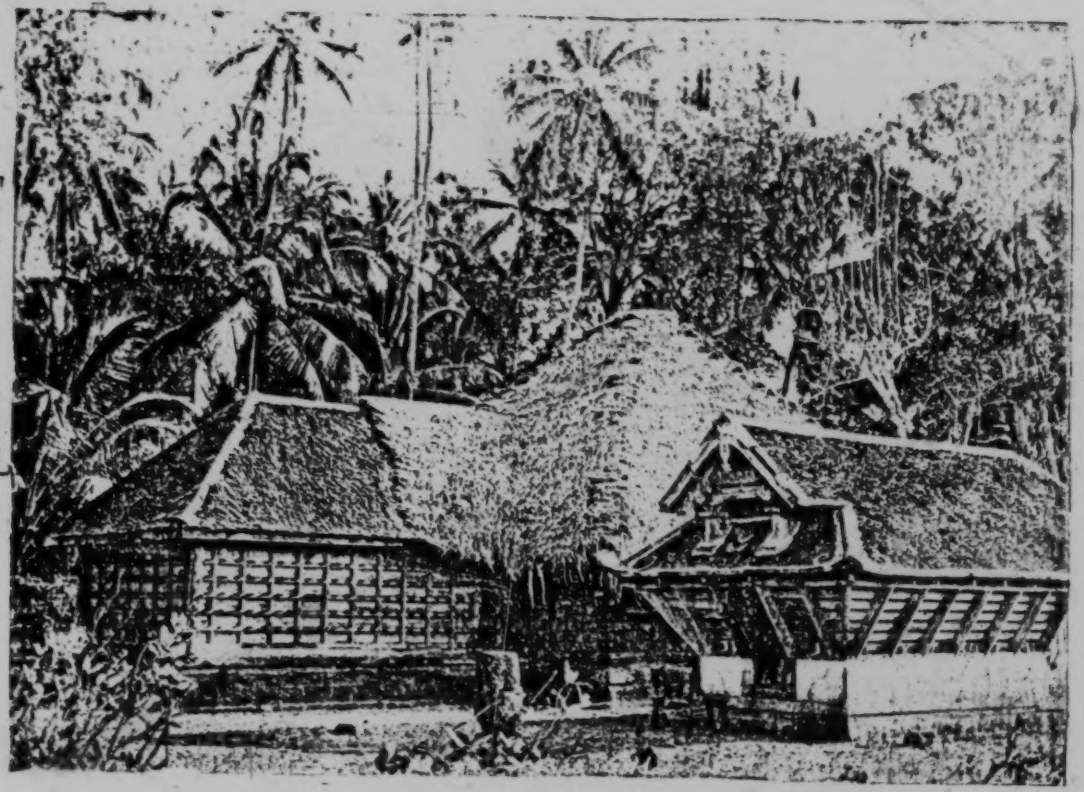

AIYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALICUT.

[Facing p. 393]

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796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 The importance attached to the various offices of those 793 who are attached to the temple by however slender 572 a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [178]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

796 778 however, no objection to myself and my companions visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not acompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Danté about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged [792] during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival [792] carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

796 Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is 798 given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri [793] priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but [778] the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is

inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796
Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 788
Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564]
by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785]
and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783]
as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [195]
ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782]
assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

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PALNI PILGRIM AND KAVADI.

[facing p.397]

796
788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guru- 796
vayūr in November, 1895. On a high raised platform 789
under a peepul tree were a number of people under 782
vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed on his behalf that, if he were cured, he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck, and a like string on his right arm. These were in some way connected with the vow. His head was bent, and he sat motionless under his kāvadi, leaning on the bar, which, when he carried it, rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.), and milk—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and was about to start. Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of 796
silver over the lower portion of the forehead, almost 788
covering his eyes; his tongue protruding beyond the 785
teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. He had been fasting for two years. He was much under the influence of his god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. Several of the pilgrims had a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One [782]
poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock—a wide silver band over the mouth, and a skewer piercing both cheeks. He sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about three feet high. People fed him with milk, etc., and he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nāyars when they assume the pilgrim's robes and set out for Palni;

796 788 and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-
[785] locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

796 "Brief mention must be made of the festival held
788 at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost
184 corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan's Manual of Malabar. 'It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts "Nada-a Nada-a" of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of "Nada-a Nada-a" (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled
[195] at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[782] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
782 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this
[481] bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

in equally loud and profuse strains. This is continued 788
right up till the beginning of their homeward journey. 796
Nobody whom they come across on the way can successfully escape the coarse Billingsgate of these religious zealots. Even women are not spared. Perhaps it is in their case that the pilgrims wax all the more eloquently vulgar. A number of cock's feathers are stuck or tied upon the tip of a stick, and with this as a wand they begin to dance and pipe in a set style, which is extremely revolting to every sense of decency. Some of the pilgrims walk all the distance to the temple, while others go by boat or other conveyance; but in neither case do they spare any passer-by. Hundreds of gallons of arrack and [273]
toddy are consumed during the festival. The pilgrims reach the temple in their dirty attire. The temple premises are crowded to overflowing. The worship of 788
the goddess is then commenced. The offerings consist 796
of the sacrifice of cocks at the temple altar, turmeric 782
powder, but principally of pepper, as also some other objects of lesser importance. A particular spot inside the temple is set apart for the distribution of what is called manjal prasadam (turmeric powder on which divine blessings have been invoked). The work of doling it out is done by young maidens, who are during the process subjected to ceaseless volleys of vile and vulgar abuse. Now, leaving out of account the minor ceremonies, we come to the principal one, viz., the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea is that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed, the greater is the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence men vie with one another in the number of cocks that they carry on the journey. The sacrifice is begun, and then there takes place a regular scramble for the sanctified spot reserved for this butchering ceremony. One man holds a cock by the

788 trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in
796 the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a shar-
782 pened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion
796 all the more revolting. One other higher and more
788 acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing
755 mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious
782 disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in
788 the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the
796 homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani
[776] day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respective homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, "when the Malayâlis say the body is cool, is the time when, according to custom, the Nâyar youths practice physical exercises. At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

526 a short stick; and a stick like a quarter-staff called a sariravadi, or stick the length of one's body. The watta is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way, turn over an opponent. The total length of the watta is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends, and is but a short staff. It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sariravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands. The distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one, now by another end by either hand, as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the watta and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship, when the Nâyars were the military element in Malabar. The opponents, who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter-staff, stood thirty feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with out-stretched arms, came down slowly on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over, and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and, after some preliminary pirouetting, went for each other tooth and nail. The sword play, which one sees during festive ceremonies, such as a marriage or the like, is done by the hereditary retainers, who fight imaginary foes, and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, and always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by

way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by 526
squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nâyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nâyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, 631
"have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the dêsam, presided over by a Dâsavazhi. A number of dêsams adjoining one another constituted a nâdu, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the Nâduvazhi. Above the Nâduvazhis was the Râjah, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each nâdu split itself up into a certain number of taras, over the affairs of which a Karanavan, or elder, presided. An assembly of these Karanavans [613]
constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military [623]
organisation of the Nâyars in mediæval times. These 631
six hundred are referred to in two places in the second 175
Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 623
A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371 M.E., the same organisation is referred to as Venattarunuru, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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631 [175] [623] working of temples and charitable institutions connected therewith. As Venad was divided into eighteen districts in ancient days, there might have been altogether eighteen six hundred in the country. The Nāduvazhis possessed considerable authority in all social matters, and possessed enough lands to be cultivated by their Kudiyans. A feudal basis was laid for the whole organisation. Large numbers served as soldiers in times of war, and cultivated their lands when the country was quiet. In modern times, none of them take to military service in Travancore, except those employed as sepoys in the Nāyar Brigade."

[901] Concerning the organisation of the Nāyars, Mr. Logan writes that they were, "until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district (Malabar). This name implies that they were the 'leaders' of the people. Originally they seem to have been organised into six hundreds, and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nād or country. The nād was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil teru, in Telugu teruvu, and in Canarese and Tulu teravu. The tara was the Nāyar territorial unit of organisation for civil purposes, and was governed by representatives of the caste, who were styled Kāranavar or elders. The six hundred was probably composed exclusively of those Karanavar or elders, who were in some parts called Mukhyastans (chief men) or Madhyastans (mediators), or Pramānis (chief men), and there seem to have been four families of them to each tara, so that the nād must have originally consisted of one hundred and fifty taras. This tara organisation of the protector caste played a most important

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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part in the political history of the country, for it was 631
the great bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of the Rājas. The evidence of the Honourable East India Company's linguist (interpreter, agent) at Calicut, which appears in the diary of the Tellicherry Factory under date 28th May, 1746, deserves to be here reproduced. He wrote as follows: 'These Nāyars, being heads of the Calicut people, resemble the parliament, and do not obey the king's dictates in all things, but chastise his ministers when they do unwarrantable acts.' The parliament referred to must have been the kūttam (assembly) of the nād. The kūttam answered many purposes when combined action on the part of the community was necessary. The Nāyars assembled in [623]
their kūttams whenever hunting, or war, or arbitration, or what not was in hand, and this organisation does not seem to have been confined to Malabar, for the koot organisation of the people of South Canara gave the British officers much trouble in 1832–33. In so far as 631
Malabar was concerned, the system seems to have 643
remained in an efficient state down to the time of the British occupation, and the power of the Rājas was strictly limited. Mr. Murdoch Brown, of Anjarakandi, who knew the country well, thus wrote to Mr. Francis Buchanan in the earliest years of the present (nineteenth) century regarding the despotic action of the Rājas when constituted, after the Mysorean conquest, the revenue agents of the Government of Haidar Ali. 'By this new order of things, these latter (the Rājas) were vested with despotic authority over the other inhabitants, instead of the very limited prerogatives that they had enjoyed by the feudal system, under which they could neither exact revenue from the lands of their vassals, nor exercise any, direct authority in their districts.' And

631 again, 'The Rāja was no longer what he had been,
643 the head of a feudal aristocracy with limited authority, but the all-powerful deputy of a despotic prince, whose military force was always at his command to curb or chastise any of the chieftains who were inclined to dispute or disobey his mandates.'* From the earliest times, therefore, down to the end of the eighteenth century, the Nāyar tara and nād organization kept the country from oppression and tyranny on the part of the rulers, and to this fact more than to any other is due the comparative prosperity, which the Malayāli country so long enjoyed, and which made Calicut at one time the great emporium of trade between the East and the West. But, besides protection, the Nāyars had
631 originally another most important function in the body politic. Besides being protectors, they were also supervisors or overseers, a duty which, as a very ancient deed testifies, was styled kānam—a Dravidian word derived from the verb kānuka (to see, etc.). Parasu Rāman (so the tradition preserved in the Kēralolpatti runs) separated the Nāyars into taras, and ordered that to them belonged the duty of supervision (*lit.* kan = the eye), the executive power (*lit.* kei = the hand, as the emblem of power), and the giving of orders (*lit.* kalpana, order, command), so as to prevent the rights from being curtailed, or suffered to fall into disuse. The Nāyars were originally the overseers or supervisors of the nād, and they seem to have been employed in this capacity as the collectors of the share of produce of the land originally reserved for Government purposes. As remuneration for this service, and for their other function as protectors, another share of the produce of the soil

* Buchanan, Mysore, Canara and Malabar.

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavalçasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy
[357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so
[178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing
872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of
[212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female
875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of
873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent
[658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the
181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of
[464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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has supplied many of the leading members of the learned professions."

Nāy (Jog).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

Nāyinar.—Nāyinar, Nāyanar, or Nainar, has been recorded as a section of Vellālas, who are thought to be descended from Jains who were converted to Hinduism, and as a title of Jains, Kaikōlans, Pallis, and Udaiyāns. Nāyanikulam occurs as a synonym of Bōya. The word Nāyinar is the same as Nāyaka, meaning lord or master, and the Saivite saints, being religious teachers, are so called, *e.g.*, Sundara Mūrti Nāyanar.

Nāyinda.—Recorded, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, as the name of a caste, which follows the hereditary occupation of barber, and also of agriculture. "They are," it is there said, "members of the village hierarchy. They are paid, like the Agasa (washerman), in kind for their services. They are also fiddlers, and have the exclusive right of wind instruments. They are known as Kēlasiga or Hajām. They are both Saivites and Vaishnavites. A section of them wear the lingam, and follow Lingayetism. They are known as Silavanta. These people are largely in requisition at feasts, marriages, etc., when they form the music band." Kelasi is the name of a Canarese barber caste, and Hajām is a Hindustani word for barber.

Nedungādi.—This name, denoting a settlement in Nedunganād in the Walluvanād taluk of Malabar, has been returned as a sub-caste of Nāyars and Sāmantas.

Nekkāra.—A small class of washermen in South Canara. The women only are said to do the washing, while the men are employed as devil-dancers.

Nellika (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).—An illam of Tiyan.

Nellu (paddy, unhusked rice).—A gōtra of Kurni.

amsham---a local area; a small county
anandravan---the eldest male member of the taravād is called Karanavan. All male members who are junior to him are called anandravan.
kaniyan--astrologer
karakkars--villagers
karanavan--senior male of the women's taravad
kāvadi--food offerings (milk or fish)
kulams--exogamous subdivisions of the castes
kuttams--Nayar assemblies (political)
mach champikkar--the masters of ceremonies at a Nayar Tali-kettu (in Travancore)
manavalan (pillai)--bridegroom
mantrams--magical verses
mattu (change)--a rite or service performed following childbirth for purification purposes (by members of the mannan castes for Nayars).
nambudri--chief priests (Brahman)
sambandham--an alliance between a man and woman by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to do so as man and wife.

sanchayanam--the disposal of the cremated remains of a dead person on the 14th day after the initial funeral

sēshakriya--offerings made to the spirit of a dead person

stānis--chieftains of the Nad

tarwād (taravād)--a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor

vitu--a Nayar house (including grounds)

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former kingdoms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and part of Kurumbranad. The central area comprises the modern South Malabar District and Cochin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall differences of custom and social structure were connected with major political boundaries in the period of native rule. Though divisible into separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the whole of North Malabar District was temporarily overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and 17th centuries. The central area at one period or another was all conquered by the Zamorins and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while the whole southern area eventually became subject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these three major areas, a somewhat different political system operated, [10] and in accordance with this the higher castes, especially the Nayars, were differently divided into subcastes with separate administrative functions: each of these subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship because of failure to differentiate between the three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas they in fact had three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1958.

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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

564 tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in
[361] a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title
●121 today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes.
564 Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name
[703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their
162 personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a sepa-
621 rate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [175] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other [858] kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early [863] childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, [869] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961-AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1768 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[114] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized as a legal, economic or residential unit.

[133] In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[8] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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[P. iii]

PREFATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of those who have not seen the first article of this series of notes on some of the people of Malabar, I wish to repeat that it is an "attempt to describe the people as they actually are, and not as they are supposed to be in the books on Hinduism, which, for the most part, tell us of *Hinduism as it is not* in Southern India. Books have not been consulted or used anywhere, except where the fact has been notified." It is a product of original work during three years and a half spent in Malabar. My thanks are offered to the many gentlemen, natives of Malabar, who have in the kindest manner helped me—Mr. M. Krishnan (Malayalam Translator to Government), Messrs. O. Vasava Menon, C. P. Raman Menon, U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, M. Raman Menon, T. K. Gopal Panniker, T. Kannan, Achutan Nâyar, and many others. Also I have to thank Mr. Badcock of Tellicherry for assistance. The proofs have been through the hands of several Nâyars, and every precaution has been taken to ensure accuracy of facts.

[1901.] F. FAWCETT.

*291 *564 caste, is not supposed to wear his cloth below his knees. Now-a-days, when there is a general levelling up, the inferior races occupying a position they never held before, when people speak of caste as if it were a fanciful arrangement of the social fabric which it would be an excellent thing to destroy, forgetting that, fundamentally, it rests on racial differentiation, we see those of castes inferior to the Nâyar wearing their cloths to the ground—in the towns that is, where the sway of modern officialdom and education is felt. But, were a man of inferior caste to wear his cloth to the ground, away out in the district where the old order has not changed much, he would soon be made to repent having done what is believed to be an infringement of the privileges of the Nâyar. He would probably be well beaten, and might have his house burnt. The single cloth (mundu) constitutes the ordinary dress. No turban is worn. It is wrong for a [293] Nâyar to cover his head. But he may use an umbrella, and invariably does so when walking in the sun, for he is very susceptible to its rays. The cloth must be fastened at the waist in a certain way. Those of every caste tie or fasten their cloth round the loins in a certain way; people of no two castes tie the cloth alike.

Women.—A short cloth is worn somewhat tight round the loins, and over it is worn another cloth from the waist to below the knee. Nothing is worn above waist. When one sees women of the Nâyar caste on the roads (they are *never* to be seen in the towns), or at the festivals or other large gatherings, they are wearing a cloth loosely covering the upper portion of the body. In Malabar, where there is prevalent the idea that no respectable woman covers her breast, there has crept in lately, chiefly amongst those who have travelled, a feeling of shame in respect of this custom of dress. Dress is, of course, a conventional affair, and it will be matter for regret should false ideas of shame supplant those of natural dignity such as one sees expressed in the carriage and bearing of the well-bred Nâyar lady.

121 It will be most convenient to deal with the Nâyars as a body under such heads as marriage, customs, etc. Here we are concerned mainly with physical measures and general appearance, under which come dress and orna- [291] ment. What has been said about dress may be taken as *[564] descriptive of all the clans. Before leaving the Kiriattil [115] Nâyars it will be well to note the names of some of those actually measured.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. 593
They seem to be more than commonly natural. The most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than elsewhere. [421] The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be [127]
attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tālikettukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1943; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore–Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
564 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar
635 Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvaris*) of districts (*nāds*). These
175 owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
564 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavaris*) of villages (*desams*).
631 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars
613 were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvari* or *desavari* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tāli*s were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

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SOME ASPECTS OF NĀYAR LIFE.

By K. M. Panikkar.

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121 Note.—I have not attempted here to write anything like a detailed study of the Social Life and Customs of the Nāyars. My purpose in this Essay has been mainly to put together a few facts which do not seem to have been sufficiently dealt with by previous writers. It is therefore offered rather as supplementary notes than as an original contribution.

128 I have everywhere depended upon my own observations as to matters of detail.
127 Wherever I have ventured either to suggest new interpretations or to question old theories my authorities generally are eighteenth-century Malayalam poets, who describe the Nāyar Society of the time with great accuracy and detail. My debt to various anthropological classics is evident, and I have acknowledged it everywhere in footnotes.

I.—Introductory.

13 The Nāyar country extends traditionally from Gokarnam to Cape Camorin along the littoral of the Arabian Sea. The geographical position of the country is very important. The Western Ghats, which extend from near Bombay down to Cape Camorin, attain near the Malabar country the character of a mountain range studded

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 [874] bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 701 874 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 874 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*, [346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 541 701 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained, even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 794 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community. [346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these [631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine [121] myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

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ars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife."[1] 595 562

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs. 562

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*. 12 [114]

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *Sangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time. 588

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale. [881] [558]

291
184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood
302 paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made
412 of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this
326 does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge
178 into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny
611 undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste
564 war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

In this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 [591] [593] [429]

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 [564] [491]

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. [114] [122]

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Mairabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. [113]

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
[656] the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad* occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1. A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

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except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad*; and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the ...

[text continues on p. 21]

Preface

THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC Survey of Kerala, conducted at the request of the State Government of Kerala, is one of the last few in the series of Techno-Economic Surveys of the various States of India undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research. For some time past this small State has been attracting increasing attention of the public. Although Kerala has come into limelight on account of its political turmoils, the basic problems which the State faces are primarily economic in nature. The acute intensity of its unemployment aggravated by increased population pressure, the relatively lower per capita income of the people of the State, and highly limited scope for extension of cultivable area, pose a challenging task for the economic planners.

The main objective of the Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala, as in the case of similar surveys for other States, has been to assess technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade. The first step towards this objective was to prepare an outline of the present structure of the economy and make an assessment of the existing physical and human resources of the State. A team of economists and technical experts was constituted for this purpose. The preliminary work on the project was started early in 1960. Relevant data were collected and the members of the survey team discussed the problems and potentialities in different fields, with a number of knowledgeable persons in the State. A number of working papers dealing with problems and potentialities in respect of various aspects of the economy were also prepared. Technical Appraisal Reports analysing growth potential in different sectors were then prepared by the technical members of the team.

The Preliminary Economic Report was ready by September 1961 and it was sent to the State Government for comments. The final report as printed here brings together the material contained in the working papers and the Appraisal Reports. The Appraisal Reports contain a detailed technical analysis of each of the major fields of development, e.g., Industry, Power, Transport, etc. The Economic Report, on the other hand, aims at presenting a broad and coordinated picture of the outline of the probable growth of the State Economy. It indicates the main lines along which future development of the State should proceed and highlights the strategy required for achieving a rapid growth of the State economy.

The economy of Kerala is marked by a number of distinctive features. It is the most thickly populated State in India with an average density per square mile being over three times the all-India average. In addition, the rate of growth of population has been noticeably higher in Kerala than in the other parts of India. A high density of population combined with a fast growth of population has been responsible

To 162 this case. But as Rivers has very well pointed out—"which comes first?" It is the old problem of the egg and the hen. Do they kill off their little girls because they wish to remain polyandrous, or are they polyandrous because they have more men than women owing to the practice of female infanticide? If the latter, the fact that they can steal one another's women would be another solution to the problem, so that again the demographic reasons seem to be insufficient.

To 121 Ti 121 K 121 Being unsatisfied with these explanations of polyandry given by various authors, I decided to find out from the people themselves why they are polyandrous. I do not think this has been done before. Most people find out about polyandry and then they try to think up some explanation for it, but no one has gone and asked the people themselves. Of course, when I checked the scientific explanations against their ideas, I got various answers.

To 595 829 Ti 595 829 There was no other answer from the Todas about the Mahabarata than that which I have already discussed. As far as the economic reasons are concerned, the Tibetans did say yes, they lived in poor surroundings and that is why they are polyandrous. Demographic reasons (that there are more men than women) were never mentioned, while sociological reasons such as frequent traveling (one brother having to remain at home with the wife) were mentioned often. But I was struck by the fact that, of the 100 answers I got, at least 95 were quite different from all the scientific explanatio

To 829 595 121 Ti 829 595 121 The usual answer I got was, "We are polyandrous so that our wives will not quarrel." The Todas even said that they are polyandrous because they do not want the *brothers* to quarrel with one another. And I must say that I found this explanation by the people themselves much more convincing, from a psychological point of view, than the academic explanations of certain authors. Basing my own view on the answers of the people themselves, I

To would give the following interpretation
829 of the polyandrous systems found: It
595 seems to me that polyandry is "not neces-
121 sarily a primitive institutional form of
182 marriage, but that it is due to the psycho-
T logical reaction of individuals living in
829 communities subject to environmentally
595 poor and insecure economic conditions,
121 persisting, in the case of the Tibetans,
182 through isolation from other communities,
K or, in the case of the Todas, as a type of
[121] defense mechanism against invasion by
other cultures." I have not included the
Tiyas in this definition because I do not
know them sufficiently and would like to
go more thoroughly into their polyandry
before giving an interpretation of it.

Ti Now, if I take this definition, instance
595 by instance, I shall be able to interpret
114 exactly what I mean by it. When I first
212 say that polyandry is "not necessarily a
primitive institutional form of marriage,"
I mean that, for instance, the Tibetans
are all literate and educated people, with
whom you can speak quite freely, who have
a very pronounced sense of reality and do
not in any way seem like a primitive
people. It thus looks as if polyandry were
a system entirely outside of the usual
evolutionary stages of marriage, in which
anthropology puts the matriarchal before
the patriarchal system.

To Next, I say that polyandry is "due to
595 the psychological reaction of individuals
114 living in communities subject to environ-
[182] mentally poor and economically insecure
[593] conditions," by which I mean, living in a
physical environment which leads to a
miserable economy. This economy makes
Ti them very interdependent, within each
595 family, upon the help of each other, and
114 this interdependence, in turn, which is
[182] stressed very highly in these families be-
[593] cause of the necessity of sticking together
under the difficult physical conditions,
calls for less aggression among the mem-
bers of the family itself and among groups
of them. It seems to me that this stress
on the condemnation of aggression is such
that even something approaching incest

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the group with B; they are the claims A has upon *a* and her children being expressed by A's children. It is these claims of the brothers and sisters upon each other which are the fundamental principle Dumont has detected as the common background in South Indian kinship. I am concerned neither with debunking the role of the "alliance" nor with defending the "principle of the unity of siblings," but merely with examining this idea of the "transfer of affinity" from generation to generation. Notice, however, that this formulation permits us to understand the formal customary background of a sister's daughter marriage mentioned in connection with the Brahman. That type of marriage is simply a tightening of the claims in accordance with the emphasis on endogamy and hypergamy in the Brahman caste. A description of the claims between brothers and sisters explains what appears to be a curious phenomenon much more adequately than Dumont's recourse to the "inheritance" of affinity.

To return to general issues: Dumont must be given credit for having detected the uniformity in some fundamental features of South Indian kinship systems, but he has expressed the matter still in lineal terms as an opposition between "kin" and "affines." I suggest that uniformity is better explained in terms of kin categories and the fundamental claims of the brothers and sisters upon each other. This is the reason why we find a centripetal tendency so clearly at work in South India. Smaller and smaller circles of endogamy form purer and purer circles of kin who may be permitted to claim—at least in their own minds—higher ritual status. This also explains the curious aversion, even among the humblest caste, against "mixtures" in their pedigrees.

Our formulation of South Indian kinship draws attention to the shifting character of descent. On the basis of a very similar kin structure, different groups operate various descent preferences: even within the same caste we find some who choose patrilineal descent and some who choose matrilineal descent as distinctive characteristics. It should be clear that the important kin groups are the circles—*curru*—noted by Karve, Banks ("sondakara castes"), and others. Descent is sometimes so secondary that, as Dumont observes, succession and inheritance run counter to descent ideas in numerous castes (1957*b*, p. 20). I would suggest that we have in these low castes a Kandyan preference based on endogamy and bilateral kinship. We shall see, when we turn toward the Malabar coast, that with the development of matrilineal descent, hypergamy again makes its unmistakable appearance.

THE MALABAR COAST

In our consideration of South Indian kinship systems we have been concerned, first, to detect an underlying pattern for the bewilderingly

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complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many authors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hypergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by contrast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy. Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region exhibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from structural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people. Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad*, used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan*.[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava*, "to do" in Sinhalese.

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terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbidden as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

The categories of the terminology are widely extended and relations with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance, must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is duplicated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as to where we are. However, we are not given much information regarding endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

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here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general structures as elsewhere.

We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary relations between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

I have no information about the terminology of reference or address, though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

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claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61). 121 602

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough. 602 613 114

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin." 602 614 114 [582]

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific. 602 611 [582]

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy. 121 564 582 613

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

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121 but *B* will from *A*; furthermore, *A* will not 'give' women to *B*, but
564 will 'take' women from *B*." The second method (hypergamy), though
582 only a logical development of the first, and a very precise way of
613 manifesting superior status, has complex implications. In effect, a progressive distinction of status is made between the children of the sister (superior) and the children of the brother (inferior). Hence not merely the caste but the entire network of kinship is placed on a gradient of ritual status. Furthermore, if hypergamy is to be combined with lineages, it should be clear that, although the matter can be harmoniously combined with matrilineages (i.e., the brother partaking of the superior ritual connections of his sister), the patrilineal principles raise difficult problems, since the sister is given "away" to a superior group and the brothers can partake in the increase in ritual status only by reason of their claims on her children or in some other indirect fashion. Also, since the position of the woman affects the status of her children in both matrilineal and patrilineal contexts, it appears difficult to combine intracaste hypergamy with patrilineal descent at least in South India. Thus we get ZD marriage (i.e., symmetrical exchange) coupled with Brahman caste endogamy in Tanjore, but an entire scale of hypergamous matrilineages all the way from Kshatriya to Sudra status in Malabar. A similar feature was observed in eastern Ceylon.

The first method (endogamy) permits the ethnographer to make simple statements about discrete categories of people; the second (hypergamy) is more complex, since the status-bearing unit can be a single lineage with hypergamous connections and it may be difficult in the continuous descending steps of status to say exactly where one "caste" category ends and the next begins (see fig. 37).

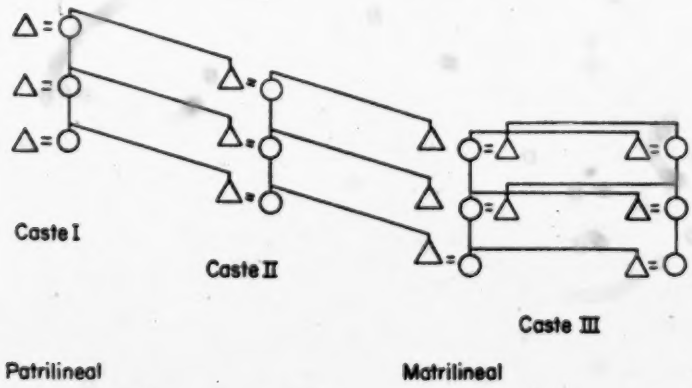

Figure 37. Patrilineal and matrilineal hypergamy.

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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

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121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

121 We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
114 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
613 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
184 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
[605] opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

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(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613 [114] [84]

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent.

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

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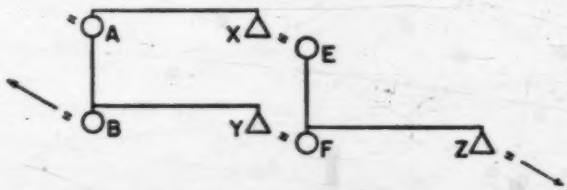

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

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121 564 611 [171] scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 564 613 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 114 564 613 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hypergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] [554] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

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perior but politically inferior to the royal lineages. This would indicate that the arguments emanating from the power structure are of limited value. Nor does the psychoanalytic argument carry conviction (see Yalman, 1963). 121 114 564 613

Dumont further suggests that the Nayar position has significant cultural affinities to certain practices of the Basavi. Among the Basavi, a girl is given in marriage to a god. She may then be approached by all kinds of men, and the children she may bear belong to her own family. Thus by virtue of her marriage to a god, her children are freed from the constraints of the rule of patrilineal descent and follow matrilineal descent. In the same fashion, Dumont thinks the girls of aristocratic matrilineages are married to Nambudiri Brahman, who are referred to as "Gods of the Earth."

Dumont's point is worth making, for it shows the element of piety involved in these customs which have been severely misunderstood in India and elsewhere. The man of the matrilineage sacrifices his own children (who belong to others) in order to give his sister to a god and keep her children.

This may indeed be one of the cultural dimensions of hypergamy in this region, but the system is so clearly and effectively associated with the fundamental structural principles of matrilineal descent groups in a caste context that the specific cultural features (piety, etc.) do not need to be treated as a necessary part of the picture. A similar set of structural circumstances gives rise to an essentially similar picture in Ceylon. 121 564 613 [171]

The general principles of status differentiation in Cochin have been subsumed under the following ideal formula by Karve (1953, p. 269):

						[851]
Nambudiri m.	marries	Nambudiri f.	Children	become	Nambudiri	
Nambudiri m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	Kshatriya	
Ksatriya m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	non-Kshatriya [*sic.*]	
Nambudiri m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 1	
Ksatriya m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 2	
Nayar m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 3	

It is quite clear that we find the matrilineal *taravad* in its most impressive development as a corporation precisely at the highest levels of society. At the other end of the scale we have only the desire for prestige:

The Tharvad is always named after an ancestress and referred to as the Tharvad of so and so (woman). If a man does not belong to a Tharvad he is not respected and I was told by an officer in a mill that though he was well educated and a salaried man he had not the requisite social position as

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 they were landless orphans. If he bought land, built a house and settled there
564 with his sister, bringing up her children, he would gain social status. He said
613 he knew of many a poor labourer serving in the mill, saving money to establish a Tharvad in his sister's name and become "somebody" in his caste. (Karve, 1953, p. 267)

The problem of finding suitable husbands for the women of aristocratic matrilineal Tharvads has been solved by the Nambudiri Brahman connection in Cochin. The situation is not very different with North Malabar aristocrats. We are told that the Kolattiri lineage had difficulty in getting accepted as of high status among the ancient "Kshatriya" lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad, so the Kolattiri Rajas brought a caste called Koil Tamburan from Travancore. "Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambudiri men and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 56).

Karve with her usual insight and evocative examples puts the issue simply (1953, pp. 258–259): "The Kshatriyas claim descent from the sun-family of the ancient Hindu Kshatriyas of the north—the house of Rama. All the sons born in Kshatriya families, i.e., ruling houses of Travancore and Cochin have Sanskrit names of the Sun-god with the suffix varmā . . . We have already seen that in olden times as a rule and even now generally the Kshatriya women have Nambudiri Brahmins as husbands. . . . There is a village near Cochin belonging to a rich Nayar Thārvad . . . which is called the 'village of evening visits of the Nambudris.'" And this accurate and colorful picture is rounded up with the direct statement, "Among poorer Nayars cross-cousin marriage is favoured."

Other Evidence from Malabar

121 We have considered the evidence from Malabar from the point of
611 view of other South Indian systems and have, I believe, been able to establish both the principles of the general structure and the association of systems of hypergamy with unilineal descent. A further point to note is that systems of descent, at least in this region, could be considered as a secondary feature to a large extent independent of the specific forms of kinship and marriage. Very similar groups appear to follow different forms of descent in various regions. We should
[171] recall that even the Sinhalese, who are regarded as being "patrilineal" by many authors today, followed "matrilineal" descent at least among the royal family in the seventeenth century. And conversely one author has noted that in some parts of Kerala "the Nairs also follow the father right social system" (D'Souza, 1959, p. 493).

[564] There is a vast body of literature, especially in connection with

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 551 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 171 In view of the great number of communities that have remained untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman, 121 593 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated [604] [764] at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con- 121 593 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com- 764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar [604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. [171] 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

121 There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil- 593 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa- 605 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the 121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of 602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea- 171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy: 812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, 771 Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.

[601] Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 171 the dialects of a common language. It is curious that principles of social organization should take us back to systems of communication.

I do not wish to reify the principles of South Indian kinship into something distinct from certain categories of thought and certain patterns of behavior. In all our work there is always this curious dialectic between the fact and the idea, between action and thought, between constructs of the mind and the activities of men. But both sides of the dialectic can be regarded as emanating from the same traditional "structure" behind both the thought and the act. It is noteworthy to observe how the form of the "structure" varies in a given region like the dialects of a language. Yet the variations appear as logical permutations of a limited set of principles. Again like language, the principles are clearly not embedded in the utilitarian particularities of specific social systems. They appear to be certain fundamental principles of organization which are behind the various manifestations of specific social patterns. In this sense what we call "social structure" corresponds to a grammar which relates the activities of individuals to one another and makes communication and order possible in social life.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1958.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

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UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tāliketthukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar system see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout. [101]

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite. [114]

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. [122]

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

CHIE NAKANE

University of Tokyo, Japan

Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 591 593 429

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 564 471

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. 114 122

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Mairabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. 113

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough.

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff.

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

July 1962

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
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[p. 584]

APPENDIX 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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In all four fields of my ethnographical research, Ceylon, Kerala, the Nilgiris and the Himalayas, I was obliged to make use of informants and interpreters in order to carry out the work. Only in Kalimpong, when I had set up my headquarters there from 1950 to 1956, did I eventually do without interpreters, having learnt Tibetan sufficiently well towards 1952 to be able to dispense with assistance of this kind. Nevertheless, I remained, of course, dependent on informants.

To all these helpers in the field I am extremely grateful, because without their aid it would have been impossible to carry out the ethnographic study. Except for Kerala, where I have been expressly asked not to make any specific mentions, I would like to thank each and every one personally by name. In the case of the interpreter with whom I worked among the Todas, I would also like to give a short synopsis of his personality and life-history, because it appears to me essential that it is realized fully through what human medium the necessary information was gathered and contact with the tribe established.

TO
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OOD
In Ceylon, concerning Mr. G. H. Ellawala with whom I worked in Ratnapura, I cannot sufficiently express how great is my debt towards him. Not only did he take time off to accompany me to the dwellings of some of his poorest and most humble tenants (and all those of my readers who know the Orient will appreciate what this means), but he also acted as interpreter himself during our visits and supplied me with much honest and outspoken information in explanation of the material that I was gathering. Long after I had left Ceylon, he furthermore very willingly wrote to me additional data of which I was in need, replying promptly and fully to the, sometimes for him, obscure questions which I put to him about marriage rules and the patrilineal and matrilineal descent groups in the Kandyan provinces.

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In Kerala, thanks to the kindness and hospitality of the managing director of the Metal Industries Ltd., Shoranur, Sri A. N. Poduval, I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Toda AW60

was able to park my caravan in the compound of the factory, and from there to conduct my work in the surrounding villages, both in the Walluvanad taluk and in north Cochin. I am greatly indebted to the then Collector of Malabar, Sri Prasad, for the assistance rendered to me during my stay in Kerala, for without this help it would not have been possible to gather so much information in so short a time. K 122

Thanks are also due to Dr. A. Aiyappan, Superintendent of the Government Museum, Egmore, Madras, my fellow-student at the London School of Economics where we both attended the seminars and lectures of the late Professor Br. Malinowski. Through Dr. Aiyappan's never failing advice and active interest I saved considerable time and effort in going straight to that part of Kerala most propitious for the study of polyandry.

While working in the Nilgiris, both before and after World War II, it would have been good to have been able to speak Toda. It would have enabled me to gather information direct, which would have been an incomparable asset during my long period of research in that area. From the wider point of view, it did not seem worth while, however, to go to the trouble of learning Toda. It is spoken by only a very small number of individuals who, being themselves illiterate, have no literature at all. It is besides a Dravidian tongue, and therefore difficult for Europeans to master quickly. I felt that I would prefer to concentrate later on acquiring Tibetan, something which would be of far wider use to me in very many fields other than the relatively narrow study of polyandry. TO 122

I therefore turned down the idea of learning the language and, because of this, was obliged to work through an interpreter. In the choice of the latter, I was exceptionally fortunate. Very early, during the first months of my stay in the Nilgiris, in the summer of 1939, thanks to the help of Miss C. F. Ling of the Church of England Zenana Mission, I got to know Kanvarsathi-Sunderdoss, a Christian Toda convert, who had previously served Dr. M. B. Emeneau, of the University of California at Berkeley, in a like capacity, for three years, and who was to prove just as excellent an assistant to me as he had been to this predecessor of mine among the Todas. TO 115 [124]

Kanvarsathi, although belonging to the little colony of Christian Todas described by Emenean (*The Christian Todas*, see Bibliography), was far from having developed an aversion for his heathen fellows. What was more, he was liked and accepted to a remarkable degree by the latter, a most happy state of affairs when it came to making use of

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[789] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
● 123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
484 journey :
777
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Muppōram
Trikēta iru āzhu Naal
Vitakkil vilayā Bhōmi
Pōkunakil aran varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, "a vast oral tradition of leading cases" connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same "rationale": that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified: for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

771 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

The informant, Velu, with whom we spoke, kept us outside the house on some chairs in the drive leading up to the property. He did not seem inclined to let us come in. 595* [123]

I made the accompanying genealogy with Velu. It is rather an extensive one since the family was large, and therefore I have laid it out in two Tables (4 & 5), separating the two lots of polyandrous families in which the older generation was divided. As regards the name, the informant told me that the *tarawad* contained five households, of which this was one; they had appellations principally of the four cardinal points, the name of his household meaning "eastern". 595* 601

Velu and his two younger brothers were married polyandrously to Kalyany, who had become their wife after her elder sister, Amalu, had died. This appeared to be somewhat reminiscent of sororate, but I understand that it was not so, the brothers simply having taken their sister-in-law in marriage because they liked her and thought it a good idea. The two elder brothers who were now dead, Pangan and Karapan, had also been married polyandrously to Mogami, who was still alive; she was sixty five at the time of my research work. They had had her all to themselves, because the three younger men had not wanted her. although for what reason it was impossible to make Velu say. All that he would impart to us was that they did not want her, and brought in Amalu as their wife, and kept her in the same house with the others. Even today, he said, they all lived together, without the property having been divided up between them.

Mogami had had eighteen children of whom thirteen were still alive. I had an opportunity to meet this remarkable woman some weeks later, and I found her a lively and intelligent person, who did not appear to be the slightest bit worn out by her two husbands and many children. She was thin and rather small with flashing eyes and a very sharp brain. She told me many anecdotes of her former married life, with great relish and obvious pleasure, as if she had been extremely happy in it. She was quite unashamedly proud of her achievements and her present widowed life was kept interesting by the memories for which she lived. 595*

Two of her eldest daughters, Lakshmi and Kuniyukuti, had been married polyandrously, and still lived under that arrangement, although Chankuni, the elder husband of Kuniyukuti, was rarely at home; he was employed as a peon in Ceylon, and only paid brief visits to Kerala. This brought the total number of polyandrous families in the Kereghetil household to four. [164] [167]

It should be noted, however, that only the men and their families as [591]

[Text continues on p. 183]

K 131 595 596 428 591 Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas, living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

Ti 123 To 123 K 123 *General Conclusions.* I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

Ti 155 To 155 K 155 As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182 As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

124 *564 However alert one's discrimination may be, one may fall into possible error as I did here. "What caste do you belong to?" "I am a Nâyar." "What kind of Nâyar?" "I am a Nâyar." It may take some time to let in comprehension that the name of his clan is wanted, then the answer is "I am a good Nâyar" (one of a good or superior clan). At last he will say he is a Sûdra Nâyar, a Kiriyattil or whatever he may be. Again, many claim the Kiriyattil as their clan when they really have no right to do so, being inferior to it.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 62.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	178·6	154·3	167·0	...
Height, sitting	92·0	78·7	84·6	50·6
Do. kneeling	131·3	112·4	122·9	73·6
Span	190·0	164·7	177·8	106·5
Chest	95·8	70·6	81·3	48·7
Shoulders	42·8	36·9	40·3	24·1
Left cubit	51·4	44·3	46·9	28·1
Left hand, length	20·5	17·0	18·7	11·2
Do. width	8·9	7·6	8·2	...
Do. middle finger	12·6	10·4	11·9	...
Hips	27·8	23·6	26·3	15·7
Left foot length	28·1	23·6	25·7	15·4
Do. width	9·8	7·9	8·9	...
Cephalic length	20·1	18·2	19·2	11·5
Do. width	15·0	13·2	14·2	...
Do. index	79·0	68·0	74·0	...
Bigoniac	11·2	9·7	10·5	...
Bizygomatic	14·0	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	84·4	77·0	80·1	...
Nasal height	5·3	4·0	4·9	2·93
Do. width	3·9	3·0	3·5	...
Do. index	87·5	61·2	73·1	...
Vertex to tragus	13·9	12·3	13·1	7·8
Do. to chin	21·5	17·3	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	14·5	1·8	9·4	5·62

The individual, whose mid finger when standing at "attention" to the top of his patella gives the maximum measure, had a span which was 23·4 more than his height. In seven, the length of the left foot was greater than the breadth of the hips across the crests of the ilium. In ten, the nasal length was 5 cm. and over.

The statures of the first ten measured averaged 168·2 and the nasal index 76·6; otherwise the correspondence between the averages of 10 and of 25 is complete. Perhaps mixture of subjects belonging to the two sections

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *tharavad*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *kuravari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

community. It was confirmed that this name, meaning "headman", is really a title (like so many others in Kerala – Nayar, Panikkar, Kurup, Menon, etc.) by which the Tiyas of south Malabar are known. He also answered questions about *tarawad* and *kiriyam*, marriage rites and cross-cousin preference, the prevalence of polyandry in the community and the changing times, points which have all been accounted for in the first part of this chapter. 595* 551 115 124

On the second day, I made out the family's genealogy, which is given in the accompanying Table 3. A few words of comment are no doubt needed here. I had three informants in all, since two others were added, later, to the first. I have marked them as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The generation to which the first informant belonged had originally consisted of nine children, from Kunji, the eldest, to Narayana, the youngest. Their *tarawad* was patrilineal and exogamous, as was also their matrilineal *kiriyam* in principle, but the rules of the latter were not observed very much any more beyond their immediate acquaintances. Kunji, now sixty two, was married at twenty; Kali, married when she was sixteen, divorced a year later and lived with her brothers; she was now sixty. All five brothers, when they were young, had been married polyandrously to Devaki, the eldest, Mayadi, now deceased, being sixteen at the time. Nani and Raman were issued from that marriage, and the young Raman and his family lived here, with his elder namesake in the same house. Devaki died when she was twenty nine, and the brothers were then all remarried, again polyandrously by their parents, to Kuniyama. Mayadi, then aged thirty, died the following year, and Raman senior became the *karanavan*. 595* 601 614

Sankara then suddenly said that he was displeased with the common wife. He expressed a desire to break away, and asked his father and maternal uncle to find him another wife. There was considerable opposition to begin with, but, eventually, they gave in, and Kodamah was found for Sankara, who, however, did not move out and put up another household, but stayed in the family mansion with Raman. The latter retained Kuniyama as his wife and had four children by her – Krishna, Janeki, Kerthiyani, and Madivi. Sankara and Kodamah, now forty five and thirty five respectively, had one daughter, Devaki, whom they married off three years ago when she was sixteen.

The breaking away of their elder brother, Sankara, seems to have given Panju and Narayana ideas of liberty as well. Kuniyama was apparently not a very popular common spouse, or else Raman monopolized her too much – it was difficult to find out which, for all that I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

It would appear, therefore, that, far from there being an excess of men, it is the other way round: there is a shortage of them. What happens then to the unmarried women? It was even more difficult to answer that question, as only a painstaking and lengthy investigation could do this. I enquired from my guides and interpreters, from those I interviewed, from officials and from fellow anthropologists, and the consensus of opinion, which I also share, is that the spinsters stay at home – with their parents, as long as they live, and with their brothers when the parents have died. The genealogies given above somewhat confirm this view, although perhaps not as decisively as one would like. 589 [162]

C. POLYANDRY IN A THANDAN FAMILY OF THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR

While engaged in a general survey of polyandry in Kerala, in the course of which I came into contact with people of all sorts and conditions, in this complex State, it was not possible for me simultaneously to make a more special study of the distinctive features of the custom. At first, I really only obtained a superficial impression which, with time, I came to look upon as insufficient for me to speak with any authority on the polyandry practised by some of the distinctive castes and sub-castes of this south-west part of India. 595* 114 124

Because I wanted to deepen my research and also out of a feeling that the opportunity to gather everything that I could while I was there should not be missed, I decided to choose one family from among those that I had already visited with my guides and interpreters, to put it under scrutiny and study its structure and activity in greater detail. Actually, I would have liked to have chosen one family in each caste or even sub-caste, but I soon realised that this meant work over a period of time far greater than I could possibly hope to have at my disposal in Kerala. So I resigned myself to enquiring where it was thought that I stood the best chance of making such a special study. I was advised to return to the Thandan family which I had first visited on the 25th and 26th of October, immediately after I had started to work in 1949. This family, it will be remembered, was called Appayl Wattakkeh, its *tarawad* had the same name, Appayl, and it was located about two miles outside the village of Ottappalam in the Walluvanad taluk of south Malabar.

The advantages of studying these people were numerous. They were close to where I lived, and to the residence of my interpreters. We had

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Thandans

*595 already been to see them twice, and I had become quite well acquainted
119 with them. I had found the two younger men, Panju and Narayana,
124 especially pleasant to talk to and, as they lived in polyandry whereas the rest of the family had given it up, it seemed most appropriate to get to know them better still. Appayl Wattakkeh too, appeared to be one of the few larger and well-to-do Thandan households in the neighbourhood willing to talk about polyandry. I began the special study of this family on the 11th of November, 1949, and went back repeatedly to visit them until my stay in Kerala came to an end in December of the same year.

*595 I have explained earlier (p. 179) how all five brothers of the older generation had been married polyandrously to Devaki; then, when she died, how they had taken Kuniyama to be their new common wife, until Mayadi, the eldest husband, died, Raman became *karanavan* and Shankara broke loose to marry Kodamah, whom his father and mother's brother had found for him. This had seemed to give ideas to the two younger men, Panju and Narayana. Very soon, they too, requested that [584] their maternal uncle provide them with a wife of their own, and they obtained her in the form of Nani, the present thirty five year old mother of their four boys, all born in polyandry.

The interesting thing about these two men was that, although they had not accepted the common wife whom they had previously shared with their elders, they had apparently no objection to polyandry as such, and were quite willing to remain wedded in this way, provided it was limited to them, and to a woman who pleased them both. I was natu- [115] rally intrigued by this, and did not fail to ask Panju, who became my principal informant (No. 2 in the genealogy, Table 3, facing p. 179), what were his reasons for it. It took a long time to get from him that he was fond of his younger brother and that he had for the latter none of the feelings which he nursed against his elder brothers. Narayana, too, seemed happy with Panju, but there was perhaps more passivity in his case towards his partner than there was in the elder of the two men vis à vis his junior. Why had Nani had accepted the situation was more understandable: born and bred to expect that form of matrimony, she had raised no objection when it had been decided to marry her to the two younger members of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. She was the mistress of her home, too, since her husbands had put themselves up in a smaller house, separate from the rest of the family. She had thus no sister-in-law or mother-in-law to cope with, and seemed very pleased with the arrangement.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

Panju and Narayana had taken their share of the two fifths of the common *tarawad* property undivided, as I have explained earlier, and this gave them a relatively more prosperous household in which to live and bring up their children. They were landowners in their own right, and not tenants like most of the Thandans in the area. This enabled them to work in their paddy fields for themselves, and in those of their brothers of the bigger house, and saved them from paying rent or giving part of the crop away to the *janmi* as others had to do. 595*

Accompanied by my interpreters, I spent many hours in the courtyard of the Appayl Wattakkeh farmhouse, watching the work of the men, the domestic chores of the women, and the games of the children. I was obliged occasionally to question them and to press them for answers about situations which I did not have time to watch develop, although I would naturally have much preferred to remain simply a silent onlooker. By preference, I used to go them rather than get them to come to me, for I believed that if I saw them in their own setting, I got to know them better. 124

It appeared that each time the men of Appayl Wattakkeh had been married (three times in the case of Panju and Narayana, to Devaki, Kuniyama and Nani), there had been the customary arrangement between the two families and a public wedding ceremony. Money had been given to the fathers of the bride by the boy's father and maternal uncle, and cloth to her mother. For Nani, their mother's brother had given her eldest father (she had three) twenty eight *fanans* (or sixteen rupees, fifteen annas), and a piece of cotton material to her mother. In exchange, she had brought with her a dowry which consisted of two hundred rupees worth of jewelry, household brass vessels and two gold sovereigns. This was quite exceptionally good for the Thandan caste, I was told. 583 [584]

In all three marriages, the husbands had lined up with their common bride and drunk coconut milk with her, in the presence of the respective families and their guests. The ceremony had always taken place at the woman's house, and it was only after a few days that she had gone to live with her husbands. This period varied considerably, I heard; in some cases weeks and even months went by without the partners having any sort of marital relations. People were not in a hurry to consumate marriage in Kerala, it seemed. 595* 585

I had read in Aiyappan's *Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 101, that when one husband was with the common wife, it used to be the custom that he leave his knife etc. on the door frame of the bedroom to signal 595* 114

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

Feeling That
124 I would obtain more detailed information concerning the children from Nani than from Panju or his brother, Narayana, I proposed one day to interrogate her rather than her husbands. After some initial difficulties, the principal one being that men did not like to let her out of their sight, I did, nevertheless, manage to interview her in the yard of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. Even then, I could see that Panju was uneasy about it. I noticed that all the time he was apparently playing with his favourite son, Kumaran, he cast suspicious and displeased glances in our direction, and attempted to overhear what one of the intrepreters was saying. The other volunteered to help, and took to talking with Panju during these interviews, in order to entertain him and keep him occupied elsewhere. But this was never entirely successful and it was obvious that Panju fundamentally disapproved of my speaking to his wife directly instead of through his or Narayana's intermediary.

I have already remarked how much more pleasant and rewarding I had found it to question the women of Kerala rather than their menfolk. Nani was no exception, and she proved to be much more intelligent and willing in her answers than Panju ever was. Perhaps an explanation of her husband's distaste for my speaking directly to her is to be found in this: he vaguely feared that she would tell me things which she "ought not to", and which he confusedly thought wrong to let me have. Narayana was the same, and although he, too, pretended to play with young Sridaran, it was only an excuse, I think, to remain in the courtyard, to watch us and try and overhear what was being said.

862 Nani was still suckling the two year old Raghavan, her last child. I asked her when and how she would wean it, and she answered that she would do so when she would be two months pregnant again. She [298] would then apply *nux vomica* to her breast nipples and the bitter taste would make the child stop wanting her milk. She said that she obtained the product in the bazaar as a pharmaceutical drug, not as a natural product of the country. Some children were not put off by this method, she added, and for Kumaran she had had to put chicken dung on her nipples and tell him what it was that he was about to eat. In other cases, some mothers beat their children till they stop suckling, but Nani did not like to do this, although she knew that others did.

291 Loin cloths were not put on children until they were in their third [855] year. Before that they were allowed to run about naked. In Nani's opinion, they began to realise that there was a difference of sex only [864] when they were five. (This appeared to me to be somewhat in contradiction with the fact that children received their first clothes two years

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 124 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Toda AW60
Tibet AJ1
West Tibetans AJ4

[p. 584]

APPENDIX 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I TO WT K 124 I [122]

In all four fields of my ethnographical research, Ceylon, Kerala, the Nilgiris and the Himalayas, I was obliged to make use of informants and interpreters in order to carry out the work. Only in Kalimpong, when I had set up my headquarters there from 1950 to 1956, did I eventually do without interpreters, having learnt Tibetan sufficiently well towards 1952 to be able to dispense with assistance of this kind. Nevertheless, I remained, of course, dependent on informants.

To all these helpers in the field I am extremely grateful, because without their aid it would have been impossible to carry out the ethnographic study. Except for Kerala, where I have been expressly asked not to make any specific mentions, I would like to thank each and every one personally by name. In the case of the interpreter with whom I worked among the Todas, I would also like to give a short synopsis of his personality and life-history, because it appears to me essential that it is realized fully through what human medium the necessary information was gathered and contact with the tribe established.

TO 124

In Ceylon, concerning Mr. G. H. Ellawala with whom I worked in Ratnapura, I cannot sufficiently express how great is my debt towards him. Not only did he take time off to accompany me to the dwellings of some of his poorest and most humble tenants (and all those of my readers who know the Orient will appreciate what this means), but he also acted as interpreter himself during our visits and supplied me with much honest and outspoken information in explanation of the material that I was gathering. Long after I had left Ceylon, he furthermore very willingly wrote to me additional data of which I was in need, replying promptly and fully to the, sometimes for him, obscure questions which I put to him about marriage rules and the patrilineal and matrilineal descent groups in the Kandyan provinces.

K 122

In Kerala, thanks to the kindness and hospitality of the managing director of the Metal Industries Ltd., Shoranur, Sri A. N. Poduval, I

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca.1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

796 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate im-
114 portance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 An important local festival is that held near Palghat,
184 in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti
782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the
[346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others
[126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of
[532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver
[326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kolla-Kurups

614 564 The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in [423] the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

*595 60 I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing ●[126] at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

*595 427 465 The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year [868] old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her [126] breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the vil-
614 lage. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance
[428] was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house
*595 was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve
[929] annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway
564 station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our
759 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of berbalists and *nag* snake
791 worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

[Text Continues on P. 214]

796 564 garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below [793] must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 The importance attached to the various offices of those 793 who are attached to the temple by however slender 572 a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

174 take us back to before 1498, when Basco da Gama
631 first reached Calicut. From the mid-fifteenth century until the present, there is a fairly continuous series of records, by Arab, Portuguese, Dutch and later East India Company traders, and finally by British government officials and by Malayalis themselves. We may conveniently refer to the period before 1792, when the East India Company assumed government, as the period of the traditional political and economic organization, in contrast to the period between 1792 and 1947, which is the period of British rule. My picture of the traditional social structure is a composite reconstruction from literature and from the reports of my informants. It is not possible in the limits of this paper to give the derivation of each statement, but a bibliography appears at the end.

[127]

It seems clear from the literature that from the breakdown of the ancient kingdom of Kerala (c. 7th century?) until about the 14th century, the coast was divided into many small independent chiefdoms (nads.) Each nad was headed by a petty military chief of the Nayar caste. Sometime in the 9th century, the area was revisited by Arab traders after a long absence, who began to trade with the coastal chiefdoms in pepper and coconuts. Sometime between the 11th and 13th centuries, gunpowder was introduced by the Arabs, and it appears to have been from this date that some of the chiefs began to conquer neighbouring chiefdoms and to organize small kingdoms. By the early 15th century, the chief of these kingdoms were, from north to south,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1958.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P. iii]

PREFATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of those who have not seen the first article of this series of notes on some of the people of Malabar, I wish to repeat that it is an "attempt to describe the people as they actually are, and not as they are supposed to be in the books on Hinduism, which, for the most part, tell us of *Hinduism as it is not* in Southern India. Books have not been consulted or used anywhere, except where the fact has been notified." It is a product of original work during three years and a half spent in Malabar. My thanks are offered to the many gentlemen, natives of Malabar, who have in the kindest manner helped me—Mr. M. Krishnan (Malayalam Translator to Government), Messrs. O. Vasava Menon, C. P. Raman Menon, U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, M. Raman Menon, T. K. Gopal Panniker, T. Kannan, Achutan Nâyar, and many others. Also I have to thank Mr. Badcock of Tellicherry for assistance. The proofs have been through the hands of several Nâyars, and every precaution has been taken to ensure accuracy of facts.

[1901.] F. FAWCETT.

The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

As the subject of serpent-worship is one of fascinating interest, I will add to the preceding extract, which is as interesting as it is accurate, an excerpt from the "Report of the Census of Travancore" for 1891 (the Malayalam year 1066), a book which is perhaps not accessible to many. The shrine which is described therein is in the neighbouring Native State of Travancore, but it is equally representative of one in Malabar :— 776 778 [127]

"A serpent-kavoo in Travancore. Many places of Hindu worship exist in Travancore under groves locally known as kavoos. There are thousands of these in the country. Lieutenants Ward and Conner estimated their number at 15,000 seventy years ago. This number has, I think, increased since then. These kavoos are all dedicated to minor divinities such as Nàgathans, Nàgarajas, Yekshis, Gandharvas, and Sàstas. Some are of great age and repute and own enormous properties for their maintenance. One of these a well-known sarpa-kavoo in a village 70 miles north of Travancore will be here described. Mythological origin for these sarpa-kavoos is thus stated in the Kéralòlpatti. When Parasuràma's first colonists found Kérala uninhabitable and unimprovable, they abandoned it and returned to their old country. During the time of their absence the Nàgas (serpents) of the lower world, called in popular language Nàgalòkam or Pàtàla, took possession of the newly-reclaimed land and settled there. The colonists returning found that the serpents had usurped their lands, upon which a fight ensued, and Parasuràma arbitrated between his colonists and the Nàgas, wih the result that these latter were to be given a corner of every occupied compound. Thus arose the sarpa kavoos of Malabar which, as I have already described in a previous chapter, is generally at the south-west corner of every Tarvâd garden. And Parasuràma further ordained that the places allotted to the Nàgas were to be left untouched by the knife or the spade, thus enabling the underwood trees and creepers to grow luxuriantly therein. It is to such places that the name of kavoo (or grove) is given. In the kavoo are generally planted several idols of serpents on a stone basement called chittrakoodam, and sometimes a low wall is thrown round to prevent cattle or children trespassing into that space. The propitiation of the serpents is deemed essential for the well-being and prosperity of the householder. Offerings of noorum palum (dough and milk) of cooked rice, lights and songs are [782]

635 occasionally adopted this mode of escape from the cha-
527 grin of not being re-elected by their adherents." He goes on to say what Mr. Jonathan Duncan wrote about this festival, of which his account appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

635 The festival was held last in 1743.

527 "Those who acknowledged the Zamorin's suzerainty sent
175 flags in token of fealty; and the places where these flags used to be hoisted at festival times are still pointed out. The Valluvanād Raja, who is still represented in the management of the Tirunāvāyi temple by one of the four Brahman *Kārālars*, instead of sending a flag used to send men called *Chāvers* (men who have elected to die) whose office it was to endeavour to cut their way through the Zamorin's guards to his throne in a manner presently to be described. If they had succeeded in killing him—as on the occasion cited by Hamilton, whose statement except as to date, is moreover corroborated by tradition—it is uncertain what would have happened; but probably if a capable Raja had been ruling in Valluvanād at such a time, popular opinion would have endowed him with suzerainty, for the Nāyar militia were very fickle, and flocked to the standard of the man who was fittest to command and who treated them the most considerately.

[127] "With the kind assistance of the present Zamorin, Maharaja Bahadur, the records of his family have been examined and a complete account obtained of the events attending the festival held in 1683 A.D., the festival next preceding that alluded to by Hamilton.

[821] "The festival used to continue for twenty-eight days every twelfth year when the planet Jupiter was in retrograde motion in the sign of *Karkadagam* or Cancer or the Crab, and at the time of the eighth lunar asterism in the month of Makaram the festival used to culminate.

"On the occasion in question the Zamorin some months beforehand sent orders for the preparation of the necessary timber and bamboos for the temporary buildings required at *Tirunāvāyi* and the materials were floated down stream from the Aliparamba Chirakkal lands.

"Then exactly two months before the opening day he sent out a circular to his followers worded as follows:—

'Royal writing to the *Akampati Janam* (body-guards).

'On the 5th Makaram 858 is *Mahāmakha Talpuyam* (time of the eighth lunar asterism in the festival season), and the *Lōkars* (chief people of each locality) are required to attend at Tirunāvāyi as in olden times.

'Mangātt Raman and Tinayancheri are sent to collect and bring you in regular order for the Mahāmakham.'

"The Zamorin timed himself to arrive at Tirunāvāyi on the day after that appointed for the arrival of his followers, and the

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

APPENDIX B.

648

[127] At the last moment I have received from Dr. E. Hultzsch, Ph.D., the Government Epigraphist, the following excerpt from the number of the *Epigraphia Indica* which is now under publication, and which with his permission I add to this monograph. It is interesting evidence of the old martial spirit of the Nayars :—

"According to an inscription of the 14th year of his reign (=A.D. 1083–84) the Chola King Kulôttuṅga I. 'conquered Kuḍamalai-nâḍu, *i.e.*, the Western hill country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the Nayars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.'—*South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 130.

TRANSLATION OF AN INSCRIPTION OF THE 14TH YEAR OF KULÔTTUNGA I. AT TIRUKKAḶUKKUṆṆAM.

Line 27.—'While all the heroes[1] in the Western hill-country (Kuḍamalai-nâḍu) ascended voluntarily to heaven,' etc.—*South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 147.

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[192] 1 In Malayâlam *châvêr* (Tamil *sâveru*) means 'one who has elected to die, *moriturus*.'

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

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UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tāliketukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

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[175]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

[127]
[114]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. - ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[101]

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[114]

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

[122]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysis put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore–Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvaris*) of districts (*nādi*). These
175 owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
564 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavaris*) of villages (*desams*).
631 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal
613 family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvari* or *desavari* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 20 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

SOME ASPECTS OF NĀYAR LIFE.

By K. M. Panikkar.

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121 Note.—I have not attempted here to write anything like a detailed study of the Social Life and Customs of the Nāyars. My purpose in this Essay has been mainly to put together a few facts which do not seem to have been sufficiently dealt with by previous writers. It is therefore offered rather as supplementary notes than as an original contribution.

128 I have everywhere depended upon my own observations as to matters of detail. Wherever I have ventured either to suggest new interpretations or to question 127 old theories my authorities generally are eighteenth-century Malayalam poets, who describe the Nāyar Society of the time with great accuracy and detail. My debt to various anthropological classics is evident, and I have acknowledged it everywhere in footnotes.

I.—Introductory.

13 The Nāyar country extends traditionally from Gokarnam to Cape Camorin along the littoral of the Arabian Sea. The geographical position of the country is very important. The Western Ghats, which extend from near Bombay down to Cape Camorin, attain near the Malabar country the character of a mountain range studded

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

564 the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

175 As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since
564 Marco Polo travelled in Asia.
701 "In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po! po! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

175 Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material
439 which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

● 129 But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer
114 examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

113 [1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampūdiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 182 [127] 656 [121] 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and *the Malabar Marumakkatharam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad* occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 182 591 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually. The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 182 [611] At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan* [578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] [594] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

838 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[119] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully.

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change.

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State.

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people;

175
to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

●128, 113

[For information pertaining to literary devices and conventions, abbreviations and explanations of numerations used by the author, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. xxi-xxiii, and xxv.]

F. Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900) 1915
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Nayar

PREFATORY NOTE.

For the benefit of those who have not seen the first article of this series of notes on some of the people of Malabar, I wish to repeat that it is an "attempt to describe the people as they actually are, and not as they are supposed to be in the books on Hinduism, which, for the most part, tell us of *Hinduism as it is not* in Southern India. Books have not been consulted or used anywhere, except where the fact has been notified." It is a product of original work during three years and a half spent in Malabar. My thanks are offered to the many gentlemen, natives of Malabar, who have in the kindest manner helped me—Mr. M. Krishnan (Malayalam Translator to Government), Messrs. O. Vasava Menon, C. P. Raman Menon, U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, M. Raman Menon, T. K. Gopal Panniker, T. Kannan, Achutan Nâyar, and many others. Also I have to thank Mr. Badcock of Tellicherry for assistance. The proofs have been through the hands of several Nâyars, and every precaution has been taken to ensure accuracy of facts.

[1901.] F. FAWCETT.

from those of the average Nâyar; also how the averages compare with the Nambûtiri.

But, before doing this, we will exclude the endogamous clans—the Ùrâli (wholly endogamous) and the Vattakkâd (partly endogamous), and take the averages of all the others. It will be observed that exclusion of these two, who are each units apart from each other, and the first from all the others here dealt with, leaves the averages of all those who intermingle much the same as before, when the Ùrâli and Vattakkâd were included. It cannot be said that exclusion of these two bring the measures of the others any nearer to those of the Nambûtiri, whose blood is in constant process of mixture with the others, but not at all with the Úrâli and not much with the Vattakkâd. It must, however, be remembered that there are about 39 Nâyars to every Nambûtiri in Malabar, and that the latter does not waive his opportunities to disperse his favours amongst the Nâyar ladies.

The Úrâli and the Vattakkâd are not the only clans wholly or partly endogamous, but they are the only clans wholly or partly endogamous which have been examined thoroughly by me. The Attikkurissi clan is also endogamous, and there may be others.

Note.—Individuals in the constabulary are excluded from all the tables, their measures being as a matter of course above the averages for their caste or clan.

	Averages of 136 Nâyars, Vattakkâd and Úrâli excluded.
Stature	165·7
Height, sitting	85·1
Do. kneeling	122·7
Span	175·3
Chest	80·4
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·6
Do. width	8·0
Left middle finger...	10·9
Hips	25·9
Left foot, length	25·5
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·3
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	72·9

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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VATTAKKÂD NÂYARS.

There is some obscurity in the sub-divisions of this clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranâd, they are divided into the Undiâtuna, or "those who pull" (to work the oil machine by hand) and the "Muri-Vechchu-âtune," or "those who tie or fasten bullocks" (to work the oil machine by means of bullocks and not by hand); yet farther north, Tellicherry and thereabouts there are no known sub-divisions; while in Ernâd, to the eastward, these names are quite unknown, and the clan is divided into the "Veluttâtu," the White, and the "Karuttâtu," the Black. It has been remarked already (page 82) that the Vattakkâd (those who turn round) are not always admitted to be true Nâyars. In the extreme north of Malabar they are called Vaniyan—oil monger. The "White" have nothing to do with expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary occupation of the Black. The "White" may eat with Nâyars of any clan; the Black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The Black sub-clan is strictly endogamous. The other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their woman may marry with men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. But not *vice versâ*. The men must marry within their own sub-clan. I think, but am not sure a man of this clan may marry a woman of the Pallichchan clan; but even if such an alliance is permissible anywhere, I do not think it ever takes place. It may be taken as accurate that men of the clan always marry within their own sub-clan, and that women of the superior sub-clan very often mate with Nâyars of superior clans. 564* [264]

In taking the measures I made no distinction between the sub-clans; it was only just before completion that the existence of the sub-clans was discovered. Had the important fact been discovered earlier, the sub-clans would have been separated. Though scarcely enough for scientific accuracy, it is tolerably certain that most, if not all, of those examined were of the superior sub-clan, which is exogamous as regards the women. The inferior section of the clan—the Black—is not to be found north of the Korapuzha river in North Malabar. One quarter of my subjects were measured in North Malabar—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Badagara; and for the rest, in some cases it is noted that the individuals are of the superior section. This accounts pretty correctly for rather more than half. I am tolerably certain that the other half also belonged to it. 128 141 564*

8:Panikkar T.-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

SOME ASPECTS OF NĀYAR LIFE.

By K. M. Panikkar.

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Note.—I have not attempted here to write anything like a detailed study of the Social Life and Customs of the Nāyars. My purpose in this Essay has been mainly to put together a few facts which do not seem to have been sufficiently dealt with by previous writers. It is therefore offered rather as supplementary notes than as an original contribution.

I have everywhere depended upon my own observations as to matters of detail. Wherever I have ventured either to suggest new interpretations or to question old theories my authorities generally are eighteenth-century Malayalam poets, who describe the Nāyar Society of the time with great accuracy and detail. My debt to various anthropological classics is evident, and I have acknowledged it everywhere in footnotes.

I.—Introductory.

The Nāyar country extends traditionally from Gokarnam to Cape Camorin along the littoral of the Arabian Sea. The geographical position of the country is very important. The Western Ghats, which extend from near Bombay down to Cape Camorin, attain near the Malabar country the character of a mountain range studded

Preface

THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC Survey of Kerala, conducted at the request of the State Government of Kerala, is one of the last few in the series of Techno-Economic Surveys of the various States of India undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research. For some time past this small State has been attracting increasing attention of the public. Although Kerala has come into limelight on account of its political turmoils, the basic problems which the State faces are primarily economic in nature. The acute intensity of its unemployment aggravated by increased population pressure, the relatively lower per capita income of the people of the State, and highly limited scope for extension of cultivable area, pose a challenging task for the economic planners. /114 /21

The main objective of the Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala, as in the case of similar surveys for other States, has been to assess technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade. The first step towards this objective was to prepare an outline of the present structure of the economy and make an assessment of the existing physical and human resources of the State. A team of economists and technical experts was constituted for this purpose. The preliminary work on the project was started early in 1960. Relevant data were collected and the members of the survey team discussed the problems and potentialities in different fields, with a number of knowledgeable persons in the State. A number of working papers dealing with problems and potentialities in respect of various aspects of the economy were also prepared. Technical Appraisal Reports analysing growth potential in different sectors were then prepared by the technical members of the team. /114 /128

The Preliminary Economic Report was ready by September 1961 and it was sent to the State Government for comments. The final report as printed here brings together the material contained in the working papers and the Appraisal Reports. The Appraisal Reports contain a detailed technical analysis of each of the major fields of development, e.g., Industry, Power, Transport, etc. The Economic Report, on the other hand, aims at presenting a broad and coordinated picture of the outline of the probable growth of the State Economy. It indicates the main lines along which future development of the State should proceed and highlights the strategy required for achieving a rapid growth of the State economy.

The economy of Kerala is marked by a number of distinctive features. It is the most thickly populated State in India with an average density per square mile being over three times the all-India average. In addition, the rate of growth of population has been noticeably higher in Kerala than in the other parts of India. A high density of population combined with a fast growth of population has been responsible /161 [464].

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 181

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head ; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

capacity increased from 89.6 MW to only 100 MW during the Second Plan period. 433* Total availability of electrical energy increased from 347.1 million kWh (1955-56) [377] to 515 million kWh (1958-59) mainly through an increase in the load factor.

1.66 Tertiary incomes generally grow at about the same pace as the commodity 433* output, that is, output of the primary and secondary sector combined. Tertiary 434 income is assumed to have risen at 13.7 per cent, the same as the State Income. On these premises projections for sectoral increase in the State Income (at 1955-56 prices) of Kerala have been given in table under paragraph 1.62. State income is expected to have increased by 13.7 per cent but most of this rise has been absorbed by the increase of population. Consequently the per capita income at constant prices is likely to have arisen from Rs. 234.4 (1955-56 prices) to only Rs. 240.7 in 1960-61.

1.67 This has been rather a slow rate of development. Obviously Kerala needs 433* a higher rate of growth, much bigger plans that would generate it, and a strategy of development that would ensure it These aspects are considered and discussed in the chapters that follow. The picture which emerges out of the aggregation of [128] sectoral plans is discussed in Chapter 12 dealing with the pattern of growth.

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951–59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).[2] The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951–59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [439] [257]

2 [see p. 277, category 116 -- Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

MINERAL RESOURCES: SIZE OF DEPOSITS AND EXTRACTION COST

6.5 In the following pages the importance of the mineral resources, the size of the deposits, costs of extraction—and allied factors, as they affect the industrialization programmes for Kerala, are discussed at some length. 128

Ilmenite

6.6 Foremost among the mineral resources of the State are the beach sand deposits in Quilon district which contain large concentrations of heavy minerals like ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite and zircon. Some of the ilmenite is of inferior quality due to leucoxenization, particularly along the Neendakara—Azhiyikkal bar. 317 [438]

6.7 The heavy mineral occurrences are of three types:

(*i*) Back beach sand dunes, which form a wasting asset.
(*ii*) Beach washings, which are renewed seasonally during the monsoons.
(*iii*) Sand bar.

In general, the beach washings have a higher content of ilmenite and other heavy minerals than the dunes and the sand bar. The extent of the variations in this respect may be seen in the table below:

	Beach washing (Per cent)	*Dunes (Per cent)*	*Sand Bar (Per cent)*
Ilmenite	75/78	60/70	40
Other heavy minerals	15/20	10/25	—
Quartz	around 50	10/15	60

6.8 Of these, the dune deposits are rapidly being used up; and as for the washings, it is not possible to predict the quantities that are likely to be available from time to time. The main reliance for ilmenite has, therefore, to be placed on the sand bar, the total reserves from which are estimated at 34.08 million metric tons.[1] Another estimate places the reserves at 50 million tons. In addition, there are a few minor occurrences in the lake deposits, and in the interior of the country beyond 500 feet of the shoreline. 433* 317

6.9 At present, however, nearly half the requirements of raw sand come from the washings and the other half from the dunes. The collection of raw sand is done through contractors who supply the sand to the mineral companies. The dune sand is worked manually with a wooden scraper and the pools are very often not back-filled. Beach washings are merely scraped off the beach wherever they accumulate. The cost of the raw sand from these sources works out to nearly Rs. 8 a ton.[2] [435]

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, Geneva, 1958, p. 106. [113]
[2] *Quartz sand at Pallipuram*—pits mouth value Rs. 1.50 a ton.

Chapter 11

Manpower and Employment

PART I: MANPOWER

464 128 ONE OF THE chief problems of Kerala today is the vast unemployed section of its manpower. An appraisal of the analysis of employment prospects, therefore, becomes very important. The extent of urbanization, sex distribution, the size of the labour force, its rate of participation, and occupational distribution—all these are, therefore, studied in detail in what follows.

162 161 *Urbanization*

11.2 Progress in urbanization in Kerala is less as compared to the country as a whole. Of the total population of Kerala, 13.5 per cent live in urban areas against 17.38 per cent for the whole of India according to the Census of 1951. The degree of urbanization has been progressively increasing over the past few decades. This is shown by the table below which gives the relative rates of growth of the urban and rural population during the period 1921–51. As may be seen, urban population has been growing at a faster rate than the rural population.

MEAN DECENNIAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION

(Per Cent)

	1921–30	*1931–40*	*1941–50*
Urban	27.18	23.26	29.38
Rural	22.85	16.53	20.12
TOTAL	23.31	17.27	21.88

N.B.: It may be noted that these figures pertain only to the old Travancore-Cochin State.

[10] SOURCE: *Census of India*, Volume XIII, Travancore-Cochin (Part I, Subsidiary Table).

11.3 During the last decade, that is, 1951–61, urbanization seems to have increased at a somewhat faster rate than in the whole of India. The proportion of population living in urban areas of Kerala grew from 13.05 per cent in 1951 to 15.03 per cent in 1961, whereas in the case of all-India the proportion registered an increase from 17.38 per cent to only 17.84 per cent.[1] In view of the plans for a faster growth of industries,

[1] As pointed out in Chapter 1, too much reliance should not be placed on a comparison of urbanization between 1951 and 1961 since the definition of urban areas during the two Census operations has not been the same.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 128 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 659 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemployment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

162 464 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column I of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference betweent labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [871] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 30.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter I.

[see p. 311, category 116 - Analyst]

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TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-56)

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	Working force			*Net value added per worker (Rs.)*	
	Kerala		*India*	*Kerala*	*India*
	*Lakhs**	*Per cent*	*Per cent*		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	...	415	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	*50.3*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*851.00*

* Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Intergrated Sample Survey. According to this, estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Intergrated Sample Survey are given below:

659
128
162
464
433

	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	*21.5*
2. Secondary Sector	*9.6*
(a) Mining	0.3
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	*12.4*
TOTAL	*43.5*

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I have everywhere depended upon my own observations as to matters of detail. Wherever I have ventured either to suggest new interpretations or to question old theories my authorities generally are eighteenth-century Malayalam poets, who describe the Nāyar Society of the time with great accuracy and detail. My debt to various anthropological classics is evident, and I have acknowledged it everywhere in footnotes.

I.—INTRODUCTORY.

THE Nāyar country extends traditionally from Gokarnam to Cape Camorin along the littoral of the Arabian Sea. The geographical position of the country is very important. The Western Ghats, which extend from near Bombay down to Cape Camorin, attain near the Malabar country the character of a mountain range studded

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breaths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note I.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely 133 aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region 288 —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section 182 of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence [469] of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala 133 would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have 487 also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the 509 coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

13 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed [234] available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. [312] Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse [339] repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 8]

131, 101 Kerala AW11

[Information on the regional divisions of the Indian sub-continent will be found in Chapter XIII, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular *lineages*, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,988 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1958.

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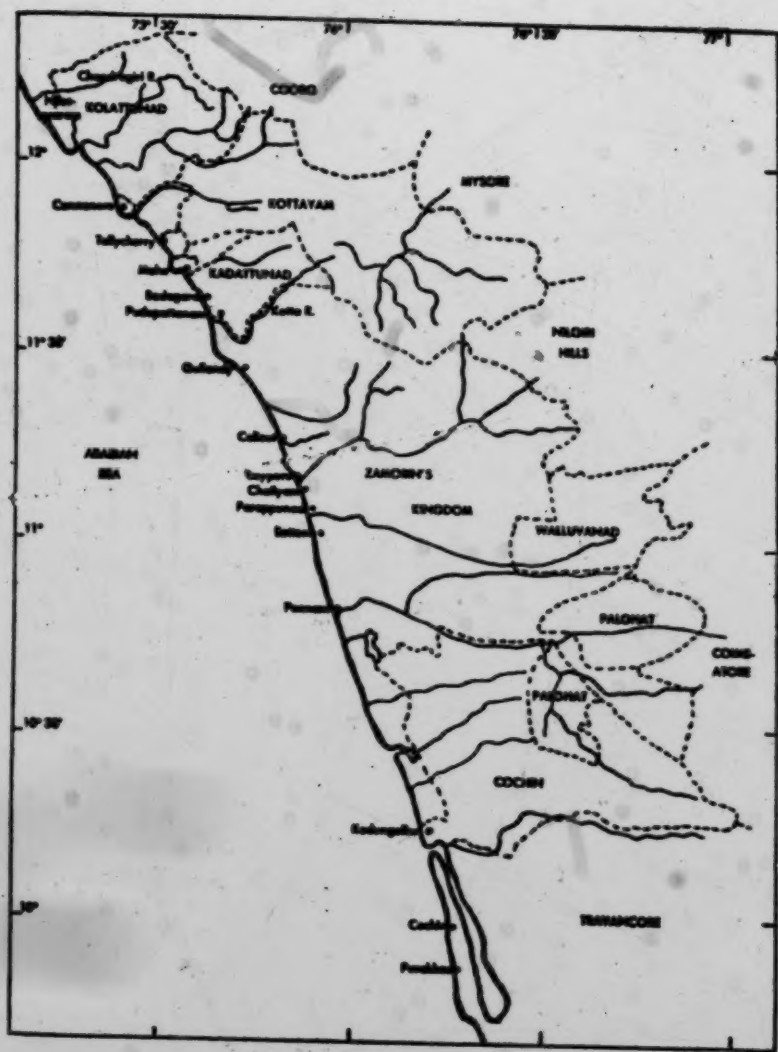

Fig. 6-1. Rough boundaries of the Kingdoms of Central and North Kerala in the mid-eighteenth century. (Adapted from C. A. Innes, 1908: 44–45.)

[p. 301]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1768 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

796 114 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate importance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 184 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti 782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the [346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others [126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of [532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver [326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysis put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore–Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvāris*) of districts (*nādu*). These
175 owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
564 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*deśavāris*) of villages (*deśams*).
63 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars
613 were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvāri* or *deśavāri* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tavazhi* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

586 Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
595 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
684 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP I

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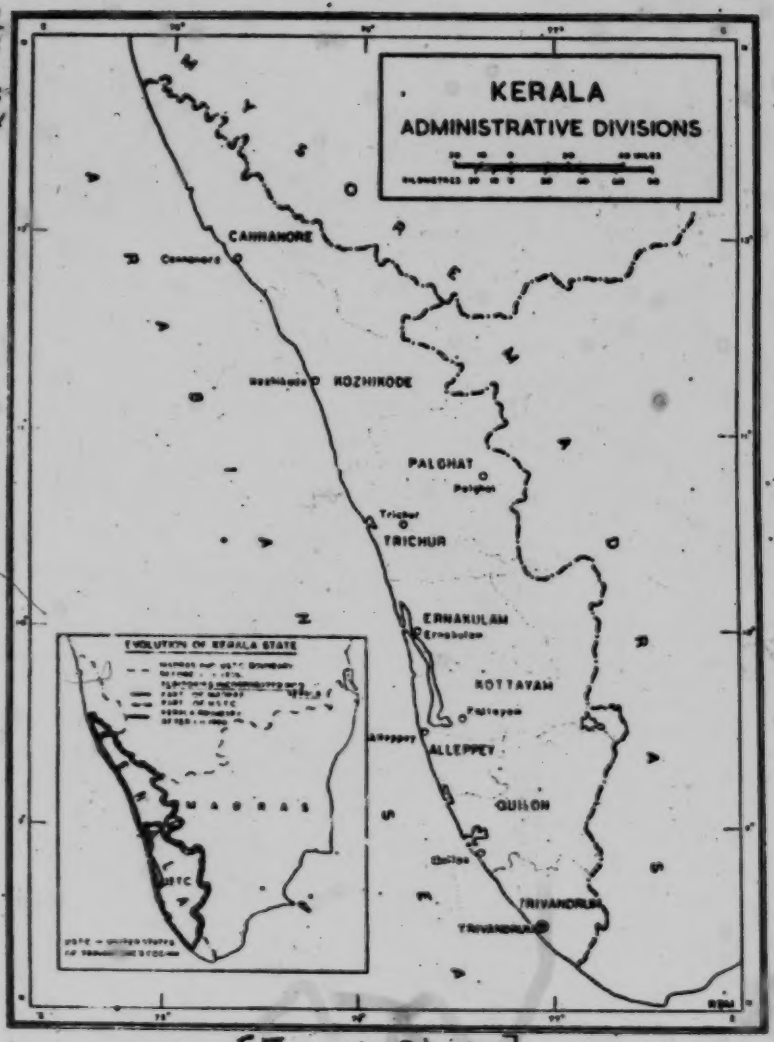

[Frontis Piece]
[facing p. 1]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15' and 12°45'N latitude and 74°50' and 77°30'E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

[P. 23]

MAP 5

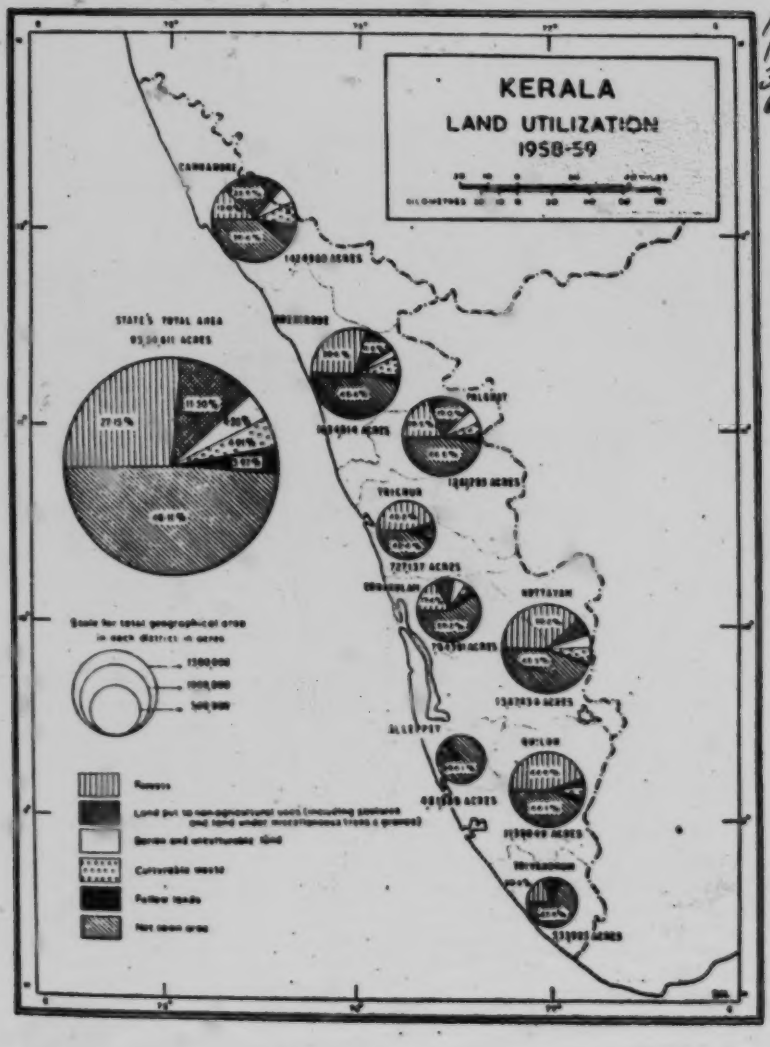

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[PP. 1-158 not Processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. 114
Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely 184
complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south.

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical 114
all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon [132]
from June to October. The record density of the population makes for [161]
poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, [484]
the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows.

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara 131
in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which [133]
are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 The importance attached to the various offices of those 793 who are attached to the temple by however slender 577 a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

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K 131 595 596 428 591 Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas, living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

Ti 123 To 123 K 123 *General Conclusions.* I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

Ti 155 To 155 K 155 As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182 As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

VATANAMKURUSSI VILLAGE (WALLUVANAD TALUK).

[*By N. Sundara Aiyar, Presidency College, Madras.*]

361 *Preliminary.*—The village lies in the interior of the district, thirty miles west of the municipal town of Palghat on the high road 489 that passes from Palghat to Ponnani. It is to the north of the railway line passing from Calicut to Palghat, and about equidistant from the two railway stations of Shoranur and Pattambi on that line (South Indian Railway). It is fifty-four miles south-east (by railway) of the port of Calicut, the capital of the district.

The village is more or less surrounded by low hills on all sides, 361 and there is a small forest to the east of it. A portion of the village 131 has for its southern boundary the Bharata Puzha (called the Ponnani river, because it joins the sea at Ponnani). The river is of little use for navigation, since it is in flood during the rains and almost dry in summer. The railway passes through the village, for about a mile, though the nearest railway station is 4½ miles distant. The trunk road from Palghat also passes through the middle of the village. The village is roughly in the shape of a triangle with its apex to the north and the base on the south. Being in the midst of hilly country, dry soil abounds in the village, though the few wet acres are comparatively good.

162 *Population.*—The total population of the village in Census years was as follows :—

Year.	Occupied houses.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.
1891 ...	322	1,055	1,134	2,189	2,116	73
1901 ...	369	1,130	1,187	2,317	2,226	91
1911 ...	398	1,210	1,270	2,480	2,373	107

The figures include those of an adjacent small village, of which the total population in 1911 was 124, all Hindus.

564 There are Brahmans and Sudras, the latter split up into a large number of sub-castes and sects like the Nayars, Nambiyars, Menons, Chettis, etc., and the lower classes like the Thiyyas, or Ezhuvans, and the depressed classes of Cherumas, Pariahs and Nayadis. Nayars predominate in the village. There are a few Muhammadans, but no Christians at all.

Of Brahmans there are ten families comprising 60 individuals resident in the village. There are two families of Nambudiri Brahmans with some 30 members.

162 The great majority are Nayars, of whom there are about 150 families with nearly 1,500 individuals. Cherumas may number between 300 and 400, the Thiyyas or Ezhuvans about 500. The chief minor sub-castes in the village are Chettis (34), Kunparars (Potters, about 50), Asaris (Carpenters, 28), Karuvans (blacksmiths, 21), Thattars (goldsmiths, 19), Panans (makers of bamboo and palm leaf umbrellas, 29), Masons (13), Pariahs (42), and five families of Mannans, washermen of the lower classes, who also make mud walls, engage themselves as herdsmen and act as Pujaris, i.e.,

241 Large plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and
313 cinnamon have been developed, chiefly by British, in the highlands in the past hundred years, and in the forests teak provides a basic industry

132 The rainfall is very heavy, especially in the north where the mountains encroach nearer to the sea. Through most of the area it varies between 75" and 170"; in the extreme south it drops to 32". Most of the rain comes with the southwest monsoon between May and September; lighter rains occur with the northeast monsoon in late November and December. Humidity is
[243] always very high. In most areas two wet paddy crops are taken in a year, in February and September. The temperature varies from 70° to 90°, and is hottest in April just before the monsoon breaks.

[4] (2) Political Divisions

631 From the establishment of British supremacy in 1792, until July 1949, the Malabar Coast was divided into three political areas. In the north is the Malabar District of Madras State, in area 5,790 square miles. It is governed in internal affairs by the legislative assembly of Madras, and is under a Collector (of land revenue) who lives in Calicut, the capital of the district. The port of Cochin is also administered as part of Malabar District. In the centre was Cochin State, in area 1,493 square miles. It was governed internally by the Maharaja of Cochin, assisted by the Cochin legislative assembly, whose headquarters was in Ernakulam, the capital. In the south was Travancore State with an area of 7,625 square miles, under the Maharaja

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 328). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with garden crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultivation of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great kingdoms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, centrally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial conquest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or carried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles sometimes rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The difficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were traditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly district. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire. The offering is never an adjunct of the prayers; it is always something done for benefit received. The thing to be noted is that a vow is *always* fulfilled; fulfilled as well as the vower can possibly fulfil it; it is never forgotten or overlooked.

> " When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be
> " When the devil was well the devil a saint was he "

is a couplet inapplicable to the Nâyar, or, indeed, to any people in Southern India, where vows, of objects to be given or animals to be sacrified, are treated always with the utmost sacredness even by people who perhaps in no relation of life behave for an hour with common honesty.

A true Malayali festival is that held at Kottiôr, in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynâd hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. The average rainfall at Kottiôr in July is probably 60 inches at least, so the devotees generally get a good ducking. Though it is a festival for high and low these do not mix at Kottiôr. The Nâyars go first, and after a few days, the Nâyars having done, the Tîyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march; and not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exhuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs.

I have not been able to ascertain with that definiteness which would enable me to offer more than an opinion, the connection between this violence of language and physical force against innocent people who are met *en route*, and the object of worship at Kottiôr, so will leave that part of the subject alone. The other day I visited the Gangamma festival at sacred Tirupati in North Arcot, and observed, together with conduct the most truly religious vows being carried out with the strongest disregard to personal comfort, the use of language truly filthy and obscene *towards the goddess herself!* "Gangamma! You have a—— (using a filthy word for the vagina) as big as a basket." "She is a whore" said another; and each one in the little crowd of votaries, evidently from the same village, as they approached the shrine, tried to out-do the other in insult and vituperation of the goddess to whom they had

796 festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy is [132] harvested. As a rule the Ônam season is one of bright sunshine following the almost continuous rain of June, July and August.

526 I once witnessed a very interesting game called êitû 796 (êiththu), played by the Nâyars in the Southern portion [184] of Kurumbranâd during the ten days preceding Ônam. Curiously, the locality and the period are, so to speak, fixed. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to "sides." Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo about 18 inches in length, and arrows or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the leaf at one end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the "cheppu" as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight and stick in readily) carries of all the arrows lying on the ground. Each "side" strives to secure all the arrows and to deprive the other side of theirs. A sort of "beggar my neighbour." He who hits the mark *last* takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit it first was running the 25 yards to touch the "cheppu." Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it; and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much shouting, gesticulation, and laughter. Those returning after securing a large number of arrows turned somersaults, and in saltatory motions expressed their joy.

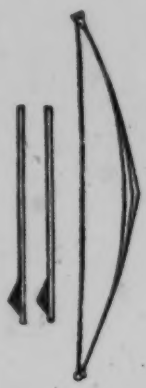

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
264 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which
262 being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound
[586] to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

776 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men
821 do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal
[184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three
241 days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar,
[243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one
[132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there
[776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom;
241 rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food
252 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their
262 own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake—the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these
262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance
466 or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if
241 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 is the undulating terrain of the midland with laterite soil. This middle region is [24] rich in agricultural produce ; paddy, tapioca, spices and cashewnut being some of the main crops of this area.

Climate and Rainfall

132 1.5 The same diversity which characterizes the physical features of the State, also occurs in case of the climatic conditions. Whereas the highland has a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, the plains are hot and humid. However, the range of variation in temperature is very narrow, the normal limits being 80°–90°F.

1.6 The average level of annual rainfall is quite high being in the neighbourhood of 96 inches. In fact only Konkan and Malabar–South Konkan region with 109 inches and 121 inches surpass Kerala in the annual volume of rainfall. Since Kerala is fortunate in getting precipitation both from the south-west and the north-east monsoons, the rainfall is fairly spread out over the year. January to April are practically the only months which are completely dry. Moreover, annual variations in rainfall are also comparatively low. The co-efficient of mean deviation of annual rainfall is only 6.5 which is lower than that of all the other States, except Assam (Table 1).[1] Draughts are, naturally, rare.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

133 1.7 The influence of geological formation and geographical features on the economic structure and the growth possibilities varies from region to region. However, some of these stand out distinctly in the case of Kerala. The high mountainous wall of the Western Ghats and its close proximity to the sea is responsile for the heavy and regular rainfall which this State receives. The high characteristic rainfall, in turn, is responsible for a number of features of this State. The large number of high value yielding plantation crops and the rich forest growth owe their existence to the rainfall and the suitable climatic conditions found in the Western Ghats. The abundant rainfall has also provided Kerala with a large number of rivers. These are the storehouse of water resources—one of the chief assets of Kerala. There are 44 rivers in addition to a much larger number of small rivulets and streams. Forty-one of these rivers are west flowing and yield a total run off of 2,500 T.M.C. ft.[2] This is as high as 5 per cent of India's total water potential, whereas the total area of Kerala is only about 1.2 per cent of the area of India.

1.8 Since the Western Ghats are in close proximity of the sea coast, most of the rivers are also very short, the average length being only 40 miles. Only four rivers, viz., Beypore, Bharatapuzha, Periyar and Pamba are more than 100 miles in length. Although the rivers are small, they carry sizable flows and these provide the State with rich irrigation potential.

[Text continues on p. 4]

[1] Table 1 refers to the States as they existed before the reorganization. The conclusions, strictly speaking, refer to only Travancore-Cochin. However, they are broadly true of Kerala as a whole also.

[2] T.M.C. ft.—Thousand Million Cubic Feet.

[N3] SOURCE: *Water Resources of Kerala*, PWD, Government of Kerala.

*[Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

[P. 3]

MAP 2

102
132

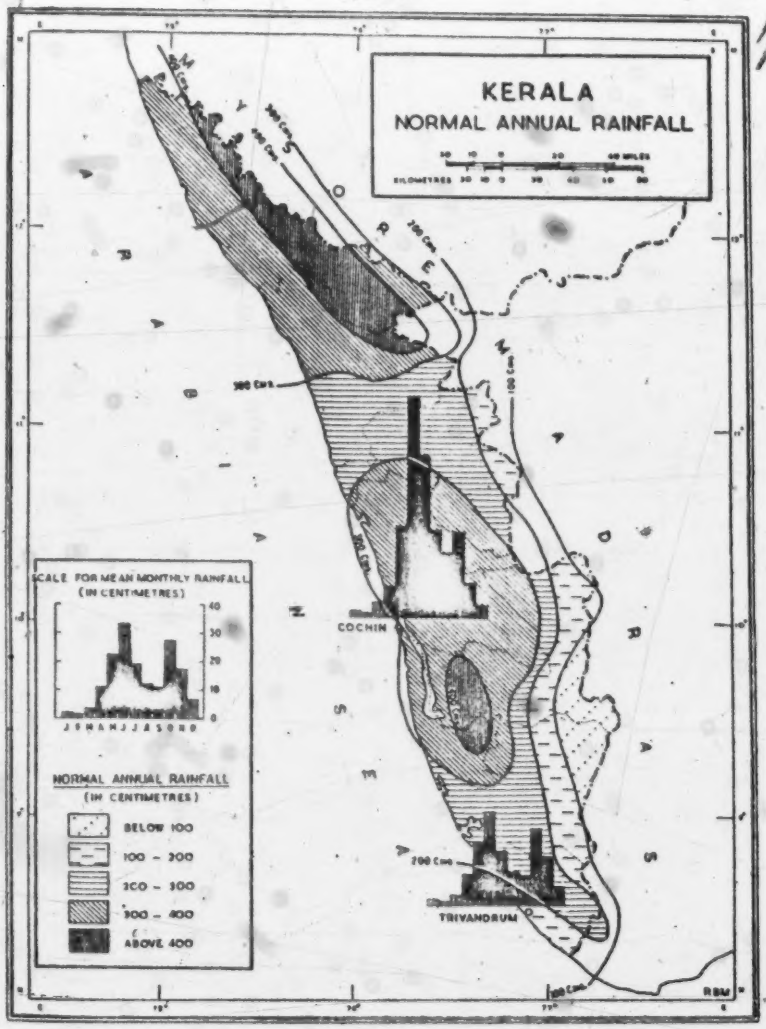

crops is about 8 per cent of the gross cropped area. A direct consequence of this type of cropping pattern is the high degree of commercialization which has been attained in the agricultural sector. This has important implications for the State economy. The State exports its commercial crops, and imports its foodgrain requirements. In this exchange the State stands to gain since cash crops yield far higher return per unit of area than the food crops. Secondly, quite a few of the commercial crops grown in the State are of a perennial nature and require large investments. This has led to the establishment of numerous large scale organized plantations and farms, although small farms also play an important role. 433* 241

2.6 A chronic food deficit is the third important feature of the agricultural sector, mentioned above (para 2.1). The current production of foodgrains is roughly 967,000 tons. Current requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs.[1] of foodgrains per day per adult (unit) work out to a figure of 24 lakh tons. The gap between food requirements and the current level of production thus works out to over 50 per cent of total requirements. This is higher than in any other State. However, this need not cause excessive anxiety. It is not necessary for every State in the Union to try and achieve self-sufficiency in food at the cost of other more valuable commercial crops. From the long run point of view, the aim should be to strike a balance between supply and demand for foodgrains at the national, rather than, strictly, at the level of the State. The psychological desire to attain a balance between local supply and demand for foodgrains in the State is a legacy of the lean period of 1940–50 when the State was hard hit by the severe food shortage prevailing in the country. 433* 241 262

Climate and Geographical Factors

2.7 The climate and rainfall in Kerala are excellently suited to the prevailing cropping pattern. The climate is cool and humid in the high ranges while it is humid and warm in the plains. The range of temperature variations during the year is very small, the maximum never going beyond 90°F and minimum rarely below 75°F. The humidity, however, is very high in the rainy season—about 90 per cent. The State is fortunate in respect of rainfall. The normal annual rainfall is 95 inches a year ; it may be as high as 150 inches in the high ranges, but nowhere it is less than 65 inches. Most of the precipitation occurs during May to September when the State receives the south-west monsoon. Taking the State as a whole, it may be said that it is one of the most wet areas in the country (Table 1).[2] Assam has about the same normal rainfall as Kerala. Only the Konkan coast (Bombay) and South Kanara (Mysore) exceed it. The annual deviation in rainfall is also comparatively low with the co-efficient of mean deviation at 6.5 per cent for Travancore-Cochin and 9.2 per cent for Malabar (Table 1). On the whole rains are more reliable in Kerala than in most other States. 132

2.8 Kerala has two distinct geographical divisions, namely, the Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar area. The soils of Travancore-Cochin area are generally 134

[1] The Nutritional Advisory Committee to the Government of India recommended 18 ozs. of foodgrains per adult unit per day as the desirable norm. We have used a slightly smaller figure (17 ozs. per day) in our calculations. [146]

[2] [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed – Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Tea

*433 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees. The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution. The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government. [427]

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 total area under cardamom in the State during 1957-58 was 69,658 acres, i.e., 245 about 54 per cent of total acreage under the crop in India. It is grown in high ranges at altitudes varying from 2,000 to 5,000 feet under the shade of trees as an understorey. The crop requires more or less the same natural conditions for growth as pepper or tea.

2.129 Production of cardamom in the State during 1957-58 (1,242 tons of dry pods), however, was about 65 per cent of the total output of the country, which shows a higher per acre yield in Kerala than in the rest of India. Even within Kerala, [438] cultivation of cardamom is highly localized, Kottayam accounting for over 80 per cent of the area under cardamom in the State. The major cardamom growing areas in the State are: the *Cardamom Hills*, Nelliampathi, Wynad, and Vembanad.

2.130 There has been a noticeable increase in the rate of yield in Kerala during the last decade. It rose from 30 lbs. per acre in 1952 to 40 lbs. per acre in 1958. This increase has been largely due to better cultivation practices and manuring.

2.131 There was no plan for cardamom development prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan period research and development schemes for improvement of cardamom were initiated. It was proposed to evolve high yielding varieties and also to devise ways and means of controlling and eradicating pests and diseases which do harm to the crop. These are comparatively long term measures. To help further intensification of work on cardamom development, it is suggested that 10 additional nurseries should be established for raising and distribution of disease-free plants as well as for studying the local problems. Five to eight of these nurseries may be established in Kottayam and the rest in other cardamom growing areas. Cardamom yields could be raised by at least 100 per cent during the coming decade, provided the crop is adequately manured and reasonably protected against diseases and pests. There is a disease locally known as *Kattee* which does great damage to the crop. More vigorous steps should be taken to control and prevent this disease through intensification of efforts as well as through widening the scale of operations.

2.132 There is scope for extending the area under cardamom within the existing rubber and tea plantations, since some parts of unoccupied area in these plantations are suitable for cardamom. There are also some lands suitable for cultivation of cardamom under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, mostly in the Silent Valley. It is suggested that the State should start cardamom plantations in such lands and, 20,000 acres may be put as the target for the area to be covered during the Third and Fourth Plans. At the rate of Rs. 200 per acre, the total investment for covering 20,000 acres with cardamom would be Rs. 40 lakhs.

Coffee

2.133 Kerala is the third largest coffee producing area in the country. With 41,123 acres and 3,000 tons of output per annum in 1957-58 it accounted for about 15 per cent of the area and 17 per cent of coffee production in the country. Coffee thrives in the tropical belt lying between 25°S and 30°N of equator. It requires a [132] rainfall of 60 to 90 inches per annum with a distinct rainy and dry season and an average temperature of 70°F. The conditions required for coffee growth are present

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%).

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth.

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging.

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

137 distributed over the year. The high degree of rainfall, old geological formation and 132 maritime climate have largely been responsible for the luxuriant forest growth in Kerala. Trees get the full benefit of moisture, depth of soil and protection from frost and drought. For these reasons, forests in Kerala also possess the advantage of a long growing season.

137 4.5 Most of the forest area lies in the high ranges on the eastern border of the 311 State and in the area adjacent to these. Only a few strips are found in the coastal plain. The forest area is, however, distributed over all the districts of the State. Since the forests run across the whole of eastern border while the districts in the State occur almost longitudinally, all districts, except Alleppey have a good proportion of their area under forests. The districts of Quilon and Trichur have as high as 45.2 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively of their area under forests. (Table 23) 2

137 4.6 The wide variations in climatic and topographical conditions in the State have resulted in a large variety of forests. With the exception of the desert, the truly temperate and the alpine types, all classes of forests are found in Kerala. In addition to the natural forests, Kerala has also got artificial plantations of valuable species. The State has been a pioneer in this sphere.

4.7 Among the natural forests, deciduous forests comprise 80 per cent of the growth. The rest is of the evergreen type. The evergreens are found mostly in the higher ranges above a height of 2,500 feet since they require a cool climate for their growth. The various types of forests found in the State are given below:

(1) *Evergreen Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet evergreen forests,
(*b*) Southern tropical semi-evergreen forests,
(*c*) Mountain wet sub-tropical evergreen forests, and
(*d*) The temperate Shola-Grasslands.

(2) *Deciduous Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet Deciduous forests and
(*b*) Tropical dry Deciduous Forests.

3/3 4.8 Among the evergreen types, most of the species are utilized in the manufacture [322] of plywood and packing cases, which is a flourishing industry in the State. Pali Kulamavn and Vellapine are some of the well known plywood species. Anjali, which is used for boat-building and mahagony utilized for furniture, are two other important economic species found among the evergreens. Of late, a number of other evergreen species have sprung into prominence and are now finding economic uses. Since markets for these are growing, it is planned to extract these newer species also on a commercial scale.

4.9 Teak and rosewood are the most important species found among the deciduous forests. Vanteak, Rosewood, Poola and Charopine are some of the other important species belonging to this category. These species are chiefly useful in making furniture and in building and construction work. A detailed list of the trees and other major produce found in Kerala along with their present uses is given in Appendix 5. 2 A list of minor produce is given in Appendix 6. 3

2 [Table 23, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed--An.]
2, 3 [See pp. 329-333, category 11b --Analyst]

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) [435]

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 [439]

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 [464]

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31. 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon,

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

* [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35 presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[1] *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.

[Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed -- Ankalyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWII Kerala AWII

[p 159]
[PP. 1-158 not Processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. 114
Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely 184
complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south.

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical 114
all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon [132]
from June to October. The record density of the population makes for [161]
poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, [484]
the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows.

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara 131
in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is
bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which [133]
are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

131 Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand
[133] feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the
[631] reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

133 All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

133 Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed
134 by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

134 The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper
241 and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant
●132 throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

137 In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among
[361] these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in
[351] villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Literary and place-name evidence points to continuing growth of the land within proto-historic or even historic times. It seems likely that there were at least two phases of relative upward movement, represented by erosion surfaces in the laterite at around 250 and 600 ft, while the last stage—that reflected in legend and literature—added the eight miles or so between the existing shore and a line of villages of whose names 'sea' or 'island' is a component; some places mentioned by Ptolemy as sea-ports now lie at a similar distance inland. But all these are near the great Cochin backwater, which suggests—as do the large-scale maps—that normal prograding on a low shoreline of emergence is responsible for this accretion, rather than an actual change of levels. Probably associated with this are the Malabar mudbanks, which lie off all the river mouths. They are up to eight miles long, and their extremely finely comminuted lateritic mud forms as it were an emollient which deadens the ocean swell; in their lee are safe roadsteads for the small ports of the coast. 133

The general tripartite longitudinal division is found: alluvial coastland, low lateritic plateaus and foothills, gneissic highlands. The division is indeed rather more clear cut than in the more complex Nn lowlands, but each zone has certain peculiarities. In the alluvium is the great development of lagoons and backwaters, saline or fresh, which, with some artificial cuts, form splendid waterways for some 150 miles from the Ponnani mouth to Trivandrum. The largest of these, behind Cochin, widens out Swds into Vembanad Lake. The laterites (including the ?Pliocene Warkalais) form plateaus at 200–600 ft, with much grass and scrub; into them project spurs of the Anaimalai-Cardamom Hills which, S of Palghat, have a very strong SE–NW trend, shown by the Periyar Valley. The hills themselves, rain-swept and forested, will be treated in the next chapter, but it may be noted here that the plantation agriculture of Kerala is confined to them, and the development of hydro-electricity from Pallivasal is of great importance to the agriculture and industry of the lowland. [433] [377]

The Ponnani, the headwaters of which rise on the Nn slopes of the Anaimalais, leads up to the Palghat Gap, nearly 20 miles wide and not much over 1100 ft on its broad sill, which lies beyond the regional limits. Farther S the higher (nearly 1500 ft) and much narrower Shencottah Gap gives access to the extreme S of Madras. It is noteworthy that in both these gaps there were exclaves of Cochin and Travancore territory, extending well E of the watershed in the latter; these, with the ancient walls across the Comorin lowland, emphasise the importance of these sole easy points of contact between Kerala and Tamilnad.

Climate and Agriculture

The climate represents the nearest approach in India to equatorial conditions. Maximum temperatures rarely exceed 90° F., minima rarely fall 132

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

below 70°, the annual range at Cochin is only 6° and the diurnal is about 10°. Apart from the high falls (180 ins. plus) in the hills, rainfall decreases from N to S (Calicut 119, Trivandrum 64 ins.) and the extreme S, around Comorin, falls below 40: here alone are there major irrigation works. But this decrease is balanced by a better seasonal distribution in the S: Trivandrum has 24·85 ins. in June–August, 21·32 in September–November, and 18·23 in December–May—28% in what is an almost completely dry season in nearly all the rest of the sub-continent. 132

Kerala as a whole (including the hills) has an area of about 15,500 sq mls, of which some 20% (mainly on the Travancore hills and foothills) is forested and 45% NSA. The TSA is about 15–20% greater than NSA in Cochin and Malabar. The question of 'culturable waste' is, as usual, difficult; but it seems that in the alluvial and lateritic zones respectively about 75–80 and 65–70% of the total area, or 90 and 80% of the 'cultivable', are in fact cultivated.[44] It is clear that what is left will be marginal and that there is very little room for expansion. 311

Rice is dominant, occupying about 260,000 out of a TSA of 550,000 cropped ac. in Cochin, 860,000 out of 1,790,000 in Malabar, but only 655,000 out of 2,200,000 in Travancore. The area under rubber, tea, and pepper in the Travancore hills accounts for this in part; but in Cochin and Malabar a good deal of rice is grown on the lateritic hills after burning the jungle; the heavier rainfall has probably a bearing on this. The local variations in cropping, analysed in detail in Kuriyan's 1942 paper, deserve summarising: 311 241

(i) In the extreme S rice is grown by canal- and in Shencottah taluk (E of the hills and really outside the region) by tank-irrigation. With intensive watering and careful transplanting crops can be obtained both in September–October and in February–March. In Chittur taluk—the Cochin outlier in Palghat—there is also a little irrigation by *anicuts* or weirs feeding canals, and here cotton and groundnuts are grown. These three areas are strongly influenced by Tamil methods. 311 312

(ii) Along the backwaters (*punja* and *cole* areas) the problem is not to get water on the land but to get it off. These areas are divided into blocks of up to 50 (exceptionally 100) ac., bounded by double dykes enclosing a channel. From July to September–October the ground is submerged, sometimes to a depth of several feet; after the rains the water is lifted into the bounding channels by Persian wheels; latterly oil-driven and still more recently electric pumps powered from Pallivasal have been introduced. The land lies three or four feet below the water-level in the channels, and sluices regulate various inundations during the growing season. Should the bunds be burst the half-drowned crop may be reaped from boats by cutting off the heads.

(iii) Along the backwaters on the Cochin-Malabar boundary the soil on areas liable to salt-water inundation is heaped up into mounds about one foot

[44] Kuriyan (1938), 133; (1942).

132, 113 Kerala AW11

[For a description of climate regions of the Indian sub-continent and its general effects on agriculture and health, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 40-62.]

● 133, 113 Kerala AW11

[For a regional division of the Indian sub-continent see Chapter XIII, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

133, 113 Kerala AW11

[For a description and discussion of the structure and relief of the entire Indian sub-continent, see 6: Spate, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 3-36.]

● 133, 113 Kerala AW11

[For general information on the distribution of various types of flora and its relation to climate and soil, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 63-92.]

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
241 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

● 133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 328). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

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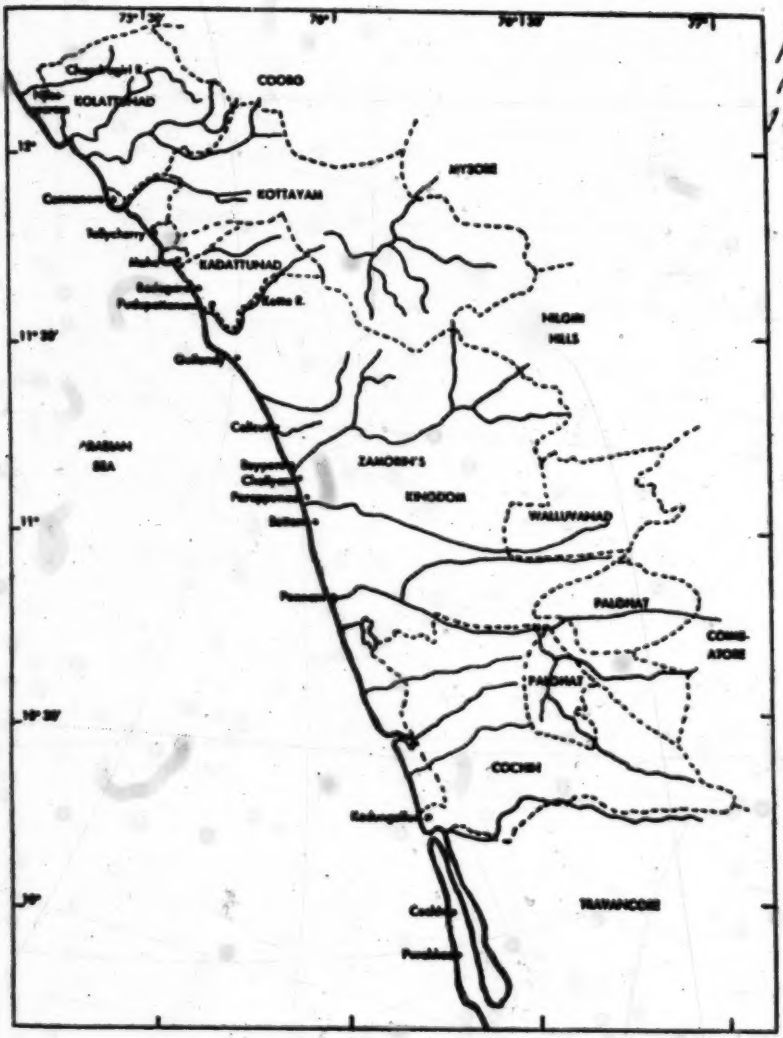

Fig. 6-1. Rough boundaries of the Kingdoms of Central and North Kerala in the mid-eighteenth century. (Adapted from C. A. Innes, 1908: 44–45.)

[p. 301]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great kingdoms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, centrally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial conquest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or carried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles sometimes rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The difficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were traditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly district. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[59] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank.

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction.

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand.

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp.

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
631 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
423 appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
[614] Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

586 Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
595 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
684 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 1

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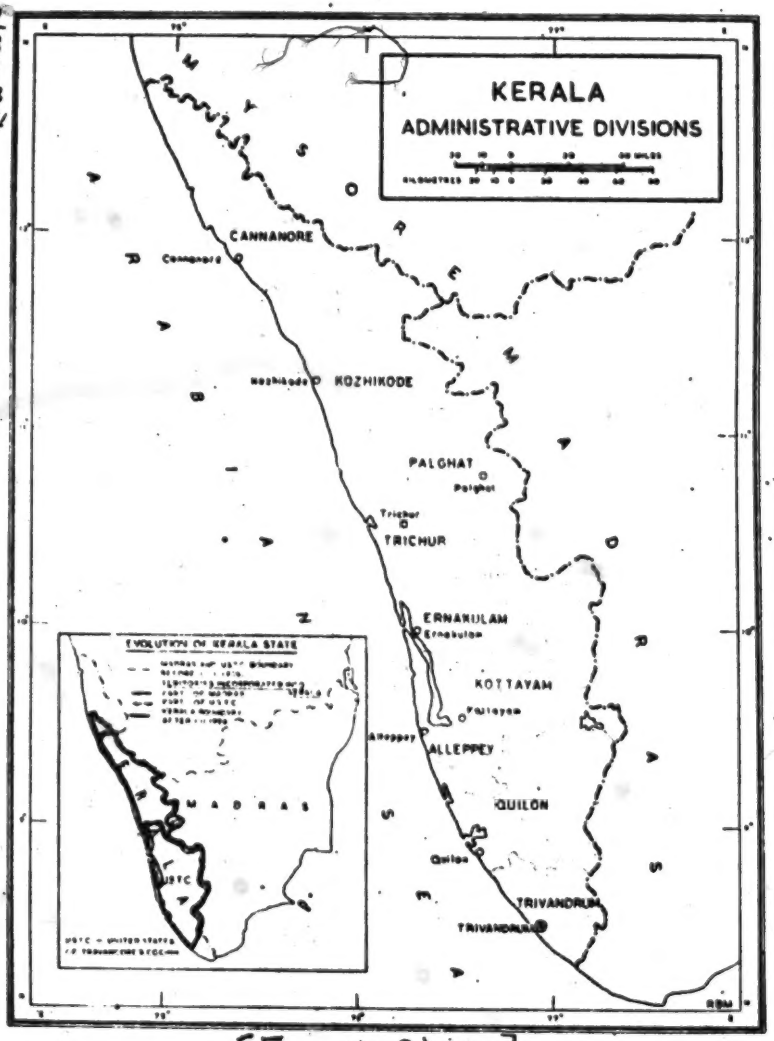

[Frontis Piece]
[facing p. 1]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 is the undulating terrain of the midland with laterite soil. This middle region is [241] rich in agricultural produce ; paddy, tapioca, spices and cashewnut being some of the main crops of this area.

Climate and Rainfall

132 1.5 The same diversity which characterizes the physical features of the State, also occurs in case of the climatic conditions. Whereas the highland has a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, the plains are hot and humid. However, the range of variation in temperature is very narrow, the normal limits being 80°–90°F.

1.6 The average level of annual rainfall is quite high being in the neighbourhood of 96 inches. In fact only Konkan and Malabar–South Konkan region with 109 inches and 121 inches surpass Kerala in the annual volume of rainfall. Since Kerala is fortunate in getting precipitation both from the south-west and the north-east monsoons, the rainfall is fairly spread out over the year. January to April are practically the only months which are completely dry. Moreover, annual variations in rainfall are also comparatively low. The co-efficient of mean deviation of annual rainfall is only 6.5 which is lower than that of all the other States, except Assam (Table 1).[1] Draughts are, naturally, rare.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

133 1.7 The influence of geological formation and geographical features on the economic structure and the growth possibilities varies from region to region. However, some of these stand out distinctly in the case of Kerala. The high mountainous wall of the Western Ghats and its close proximity to the sea is responsile for the heavy and regular rainfall which this State receives. The high characteristic rainfall, in turn, is responsible for a number of features of this State. The large number of high value yielding plantation crops and the rich forest growth owe their existence to the rainfall and the suitable climatic conditions found in the Western Ghats. The abundant rainfall has also provided Kerala with a large number of rivers. These are the storehouse of water resources—one of the chief assets of Kerala. There are 44 rivers in addition to a much larger number of small rivulets and streams. Forty-one of these rivers are west flowing and yield a total run off of 2,500 T.M.C. ft.[2] This is as high as 5 per cent of India's total water potential, whereas the total area of Kerala is only about 1.2 per cent of the area of India.

1.8 Since the Western Ghats are in close proximity of the sea coast, most of the rivers are also very short, the average length being only 40 miles. Only four rivers, viz., Beypore, Bharatapuzha, Periyar and Pamba are more than 100 miles in length. Although the rivers are small, they carry sizable flows and these provide the State with rich irrigation potential.

[text continues on p. 4]

[1] Table 1 refers to the States as they existed before the reorganization. The conclusions, strictly speaking, refer to only Travancore-Cochin. However, they are broadly true of Kerala as a whole also.

[2] T.M.C. ft.—Thousand Million Cubic Feet.

Source: *Water Resources of Kerala*, PWD, Government of Kerala.

[113] * [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely 133 aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region 208 —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section 182 of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence [469] of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala 133 would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have 487 also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the 509 coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

3 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed [23.1] available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. [312] Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse [339] repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 6]

II: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P 5]

MAP 3

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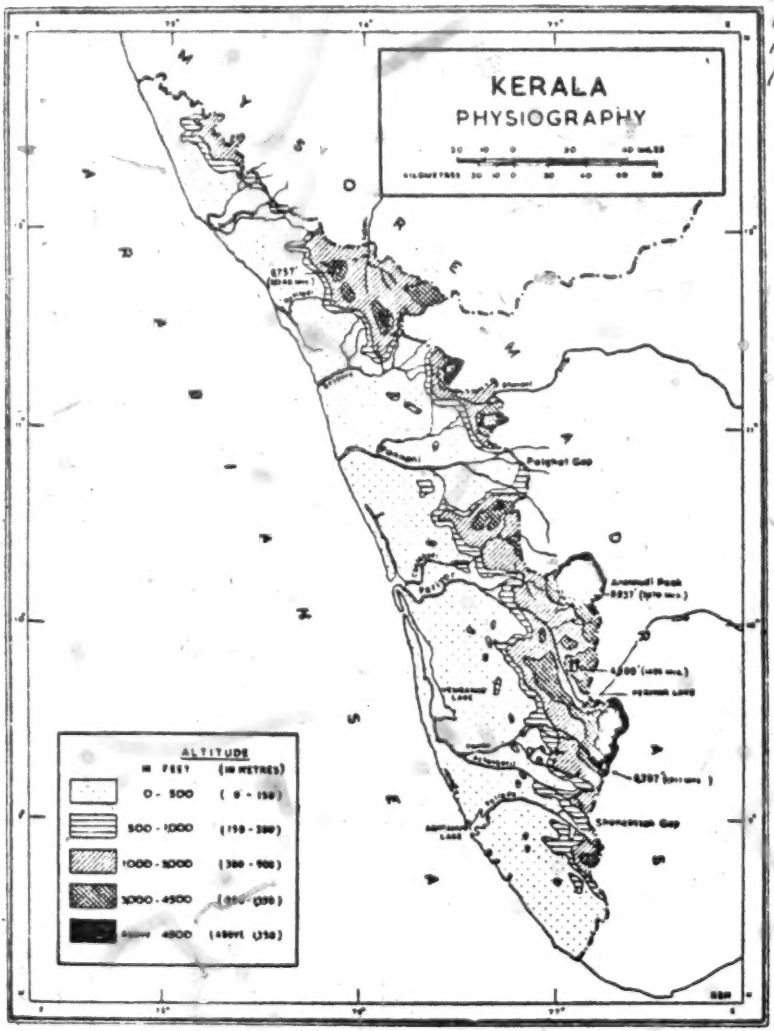

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

per acre, while the same for paddy is only 40 :40 :30. It is very low for leguminous crops—at 0 :20 :20 for pulses and 20 : 20 : 20 for groundnuts.[1] These dosages are not the optimum. These are just the average that may be considered adequate during a period of shortage of fertilizers. There are many farmers who apply as much as 80 lbs. of nitrogen per acre to rice while there are others who, on account of shortage of fertilizers apply only 15 lbs. per acre. Since fertilizer allocations are not made for individual crops, a dosage ratio of NPK 40 : 40 : 30 per acre may be considered as an average requirement for the State in the future. But in view of shortages in the country for phosphatic and potassic fertilizers, the dosage may be put at 40 : 20 : 15. The total annual requirements of crop fields on this basis would be 35,700 tons of nitrogen, 17,700 tons of P_2O_5 and 13,400 tons of K_2O.

2.47 In view of the peculiar soil conditions and reaction, attention will have to be paid to the correct choice of fertilizers. At present fertilizers are being used indiscriminately. For example, ammonium sulphate, the most popular fertilizer in the State, is being used even on high acidity soils. Such applications may do damage to the soil by increasing further the soil acidity. The selection of various types of fertilizers in the future should, therefore, be on rational and scientific basis, so that the fertilizers also help in correcting the soil deficiencies. Urea is, perhaps, eminently suited for Kerala. It is, however, not possible to make any specific suggestion on the requisite type of fertilizers for the State as adequate data on the performance of various types of fertilizers are not available. It is, therefore, suggested that a large number of trials should be conducted all over the State with a view to choosing the right type of fertilizer and dosages for various crops in different regions. The result of such trials should be made known to users through the extension machinery.

2.48 It is not possible to give a precise estimate of the increase in agricultural production from the proposed fertilizer consumption programme owing to difficulties in estimating the share of fertilizers for different crops. Knowledge about the rates of return from fertilizers for various crops, is also inadequate. Assuming, however, that roughly three-fourths of the proposed quantity is used for rice and other foodgrains, the additional production of cereals and pulses on the basis of available yardsticks may be expected to be 387,000 tons by 1970-71.

Irrigation

2.49 *Existing Position*: Irrigation resources of Kerala are very rich. In all, there are 44 rivers in the State. The run off of water from the west-flowing rivers is estimated to be of the order of 2,560,800 million cubic feet per annum, while that of east-flowing rivers is 196,000 million cubic feet.

2.50 The first irrigation project to be taken up in the State was the Kodayar Extension Scheme which was completed by 1947. At the beginning of the First Plan

[1] Dosage for NPK (ratio in lbs. per acre for other crops) is

Tapioca	80 :80 :160	Ginger	50 :50 :100
Oilseeds	10 :20 : 20	Sugarcane	100 :80 :100
Cotton	50 :30 : 50	Fruits/ Vegetables	50 :50 :100

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Tea

*433 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees. The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution. The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad; all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them. 227 [651]

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26. 433* 228 [312] [221]

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon. [439]

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species. 433* 226 [133]

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries. [523]

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture. 433* 228

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 9

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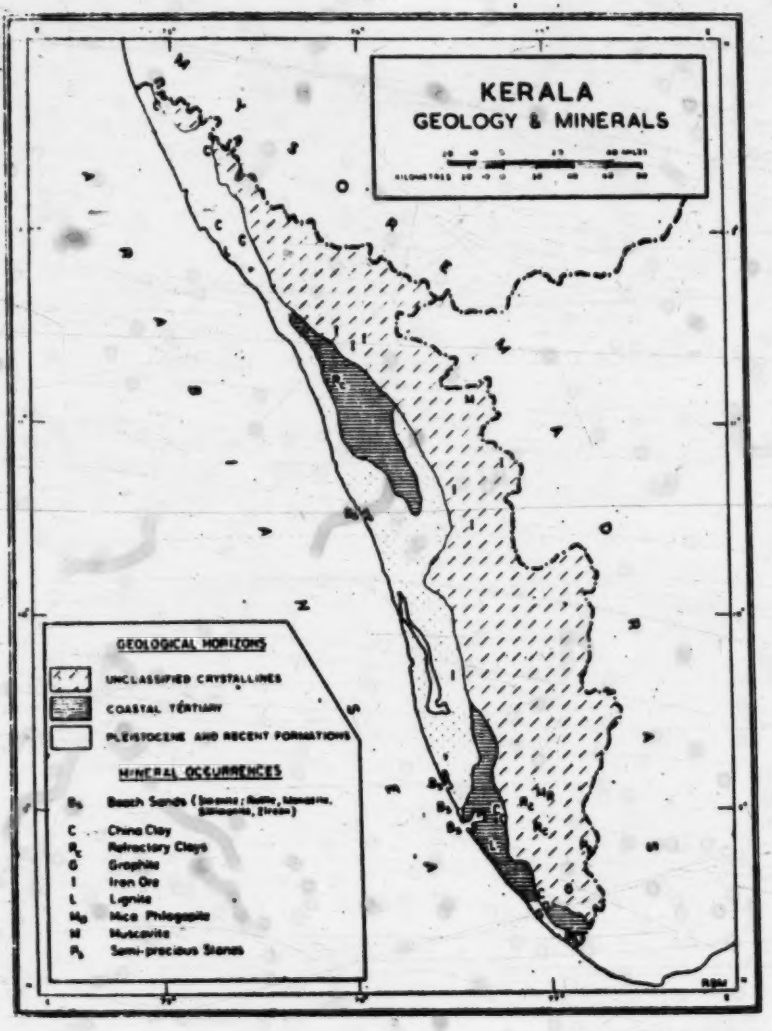

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Chapter 7

Power

KERALA HAS IMMENSE potentiality for the generation of hydro-electric power. The State does not possess any resource of coal or oil (within its own boundary) for generation of power but there are 44 rivers which constitute a storehouse of hydel power. This favourable factor compensates for the absence of any fossil fuels. Investigations so far have led to an estimate of this potential to be roughly of the order of 1,539 MW.[1]

7.2 One of the basic problems of Kerala's economy is posed by the situation of acute unemployment prevailing in the State. A long run solution to this lies in an intensive programme of industrialization only. An accelerated pace of industrial development, in turn, requires an ensured supply of adequate power. One possible way of looking at power development activities is to consider power as a complementary factor in the programme of industrialization of the State. Targets for power generation capacity in such cases should be fixed slightly higher than what the demand is expected to be.

7.3 The alternative approach, which is the more feasible one for Kerala, is to consider power, generation itself as an industry and to develop the State's abundant hydro-power resources to the maximum extent possible. The surplus of electricity generated over local requirements could be exported to the neighbouring State of Madras, which is not so well placed in respect of its power resources as Kerala. The electricity exported would provide a means of earning revenue, which is turn could be utilized for capital formation within the State. Moreover, a surplus in power generation capacity is desirable in itself since for a State like Kerala, where some factors deterrent to industrialization have been operating in the past, a regular supply of adequate power should be made to act as an incentive for setting up new industries. Planning for a power surplus and export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States should, therefore, form the keynote of the future power development policy in the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

7.4 The process of power development in the State is already well set. What is now required is to harness the huge energy potential of the State and convert it

[1] By the Central Water and Power Commission.

[Text continues on p. 112]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 10

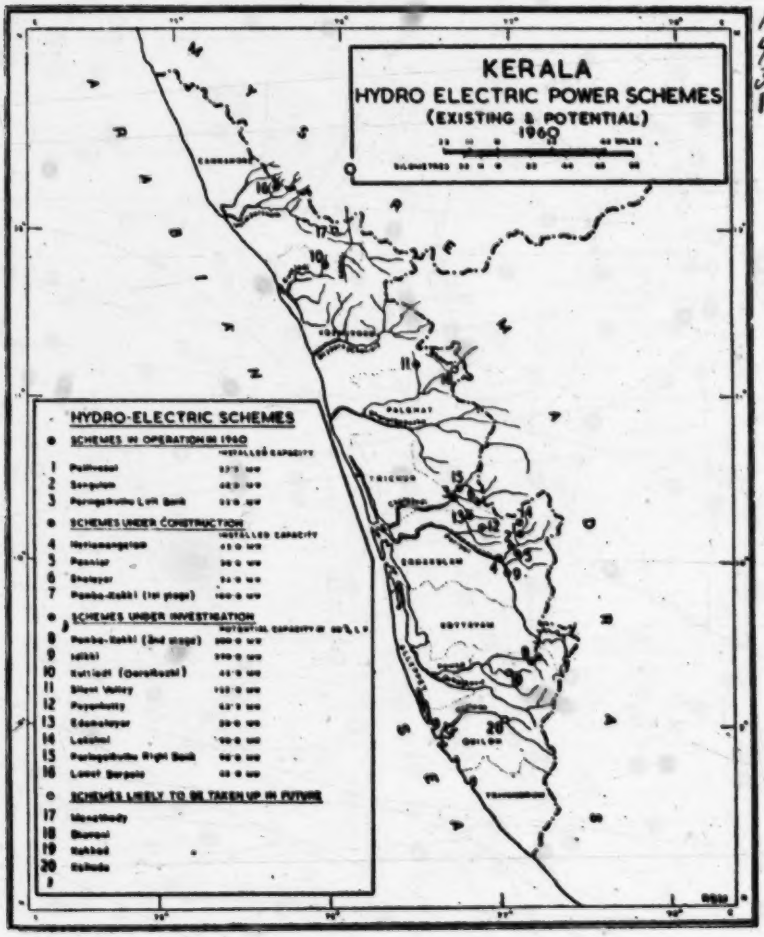

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

p 159
[pp. 1 - 158 not processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south. 114 184

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon from June to October. The record density of the population makes for poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows. 114 [132] [161] [484]

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western 131 [133]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

131 Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand
[133] feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the
[631] reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

133 All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

133 Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed
134 by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

134 The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper
241 and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant
132 throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

137 In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among
[361] these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in
[351] villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

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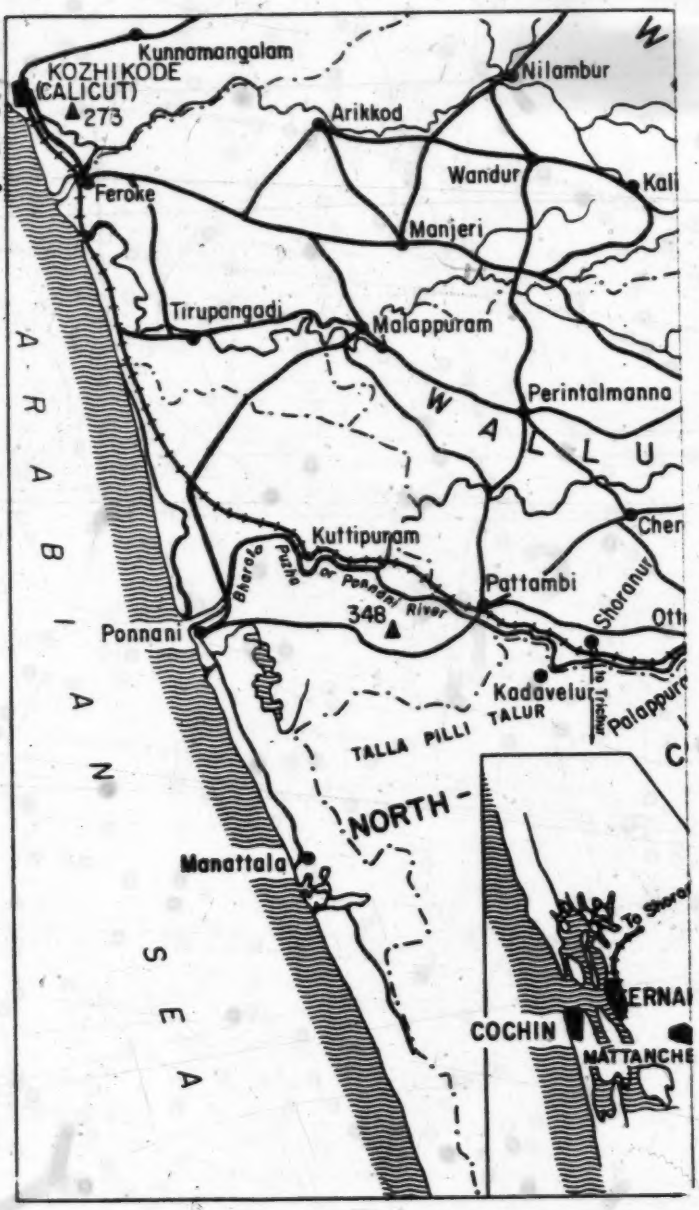

Map II. Map of South Malabar and North Cochin in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

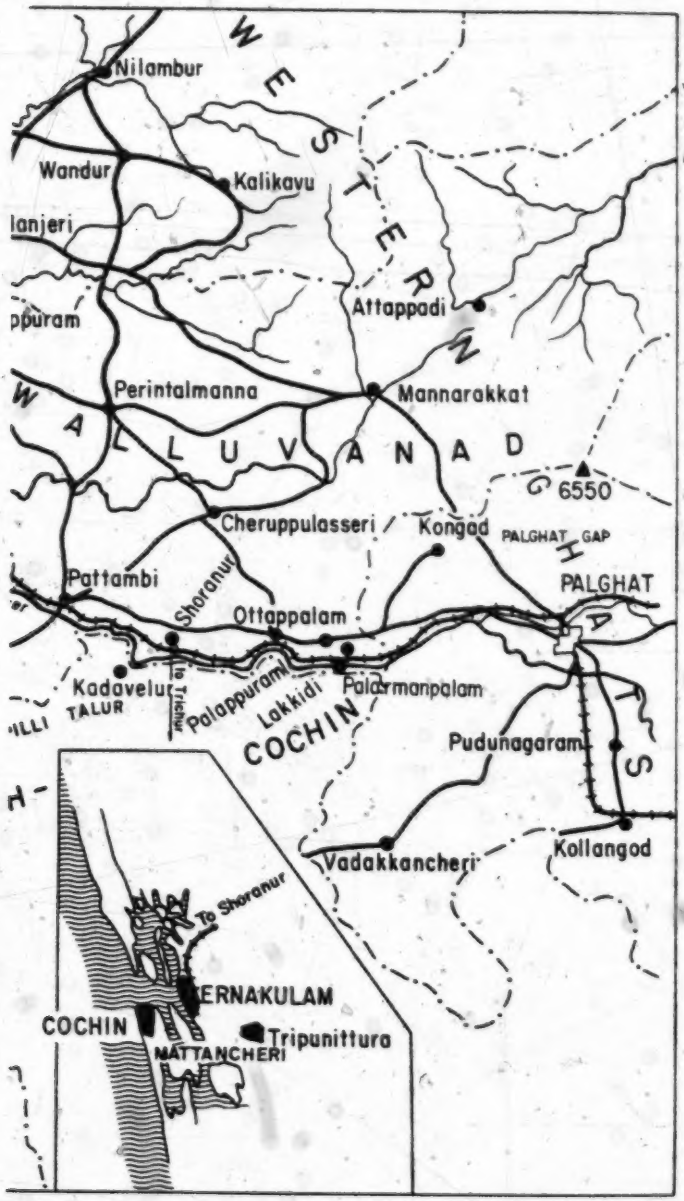

in in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

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Fig. 5. A typical Kerala landscape: the red laterite dust road passes between green paddy fields; the blue sky is reflected in the water of the irrigation channel by the side of the road.

[178]

Fig. 6. A Christian shrine at a crossroads in Cochin.

[P.238 – A]

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kanada AW10
Kerala AW11

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with an output of 5–600 m. tiles a year; local sailing coasters supply markets from Karachi to Colombo, and there is some export via Bombay to E Africa, Persia, and Malaya. But competition from Malabar and, much more serious from cement and asbestos roofing is adversely affecting the industry, which appears to be declining.[40] Other industries are of little importance: iron-founding (ancillary to the tile factories), and soap, based on local and imported copra; Mangalore is the main port for the Laccadive islanders. A feature of some interest is the prominence of Portuguese names among the larger concerns, both in coffee-curing and in tile-making.

Kerala

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Both physically and culturally Kerala is one of the most distinctive regions of India.[41] Historically it has been somewhat isolated from the rest of the Peninsula, but accessible to maritime influences. Homogeneous in speech, it is probably more caste-divided than any other area, and it is here that 'untouchability' developed the more fantastic extremes of 'unapproachability' and even 'unseeability', while the Nairs who form the bulk of the minor gentry preserve a matrilinear organisation in which both polygamy and polyandry play a part.[42] Perhaps by reaction against caste, the region has the highest percentage of Christians in all India—28·8 in Cochin and 32·3 in Travancore. This element long antedates the vigorous Portuguese missions, which succeeded in bringing into the Roman fold most of the 'Syrian' (i.e. Nestorian) Christians, whose traditions go back to St Thomas the Apostle; there were Christian communities 1500 years ago. The 'White Jews' of Cochin are another ancient fossil kith; their number is only a few hundreds, but their origin is claimed to be from a Solomonic colony and is undoubtedly very ancient. But there is no end to the ethnographical fascinations of Kerala.

Ke 133

The Physical Setting

Tokens of uplift are numerous and decisive, including the existence of coral reefs below the alluvium some miles from the present coast.[43]

[40] U. Hammaba, *ibid.*, 291–99.

[41] Based mainly on a series of papers by G. Kuriyan in *JMGA* and *IGJ*: "The Industrial Crops of Kerala" (XI (1937), 283–90 and XII (1937), 1–8); "Population and its Distribution in K." (XIII (1938), 125–46); "The Geographic Basis of the Legendary Origin of K." (XVI (1941), 340–54); "Some Aspects of the Regional Geography of K." (XVII (1942), 1–41). On Cochin I am indebted for first-hand information to Sir Robert Bristow, CIE, to whom the development of the modern port is largely due.

[42] The best easily accessible account for geographers is in C. D. Forde, *Habitat, Economy and Society* (1934 and later eds.), Ch. XIII. See also G. Slater, *Southern India* (1936), Chs. XVI–XVII.

[43] Legend ascribes the formation of Kerala to the impatience of a local saint ("during the thousandth year after the [biblical] flood") with the unspecified improprieties of his aged mother. He threw an axe from Gokarna (near Goa) over the sea; it flew to Cape Comorin and the sea retreated beneath its flight. This does correspond with the actual area of emergence.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Literary and place-name evidence points to continuing growth of the land within proto-historic or even historic times. It seems likely that there were at least two phases of relative upward movement, represented by erosion surfaces in the laterite at around 250 and 600 ft, while the last stage—that reflected in legend and literature—added the eight miles or so between the existing shore and a line of villages of whose names 'sea' or 'island' is a component; some places mentioned by Ptolemy as sea-ports now lie at a similar distance inland. But all these are near the great Cochin backwater, which suggests—as do the large-scale maps—that normal prograding on a low shoreline of emergence is responsible for this accretion, rather than an actual change of levels. Probably associated with this are the Malabar mudbanks, which lie off all the river mouths. They are up to eight miles long, and their extremely finely comminuted lateritic mud forms as it were an emollient which deadens the ocean swell; in their lee are safe roadsteads for the small ports of the coast. 133

The general tripartite longitudinal division is found: alluvial coastland, low lateritic plateaus and foothills, gneissic highlands. The division is indeed rather more clear cut than in the more complex Nn lowlands, but each zone has certain peculiarities. In the alluvium is the great development of lagoons and backwaters, saline or fresh, which, with some artificial cuts, form splendid waterways for some 150 miles from the Ponnani mouth to Trivandrum. The largest of these, behind Cochin, widens out Swds into Vembanad Lake. The laterites (including the ?Pliocene Warkalais) form plateaus at 200–600 ft, with much grass and scrub; into them project spurs of the Anaimalai-Cardamom Hills which, S of Palghat, have a very strong SE–NW trend, shown by the Periyar Valley. The hills themselves, rain-swept and forested, will be treated in the next chapter, but it may be noted here that the plantation agriculture of Kerala is confined to them, and the development of hydro-electricity from Pallivasal is of great importance to the agriculture and industry of the lowland. [433] [377]

The Ponnani, the headwaters of which rise on the Nn slopes of the Anaimalais, leads up to the Palghat Gap, nearly 20 miles wide and not much over 1100 ft on its broad sill, which lies beyond the regional limits. Farther S the higher (nearly 1500 ft) and much narrower Shencottah Gap gives access to the extreme S of Madras. It is noteworthy that in both these gaps there were exclaves of Cochin and Travancore territory, extending well E of the watershed in the latter; these, with the ancient walls across the Comorin lowland, emphasise the importance of these sole easy points of contact between Kerala and Tamilnad.

Climate and Agriculture

The climate represents the nearest approach in India to equatorial conditions. Maximum temperatures rarely exceed 90° F., minima rarely fall 132

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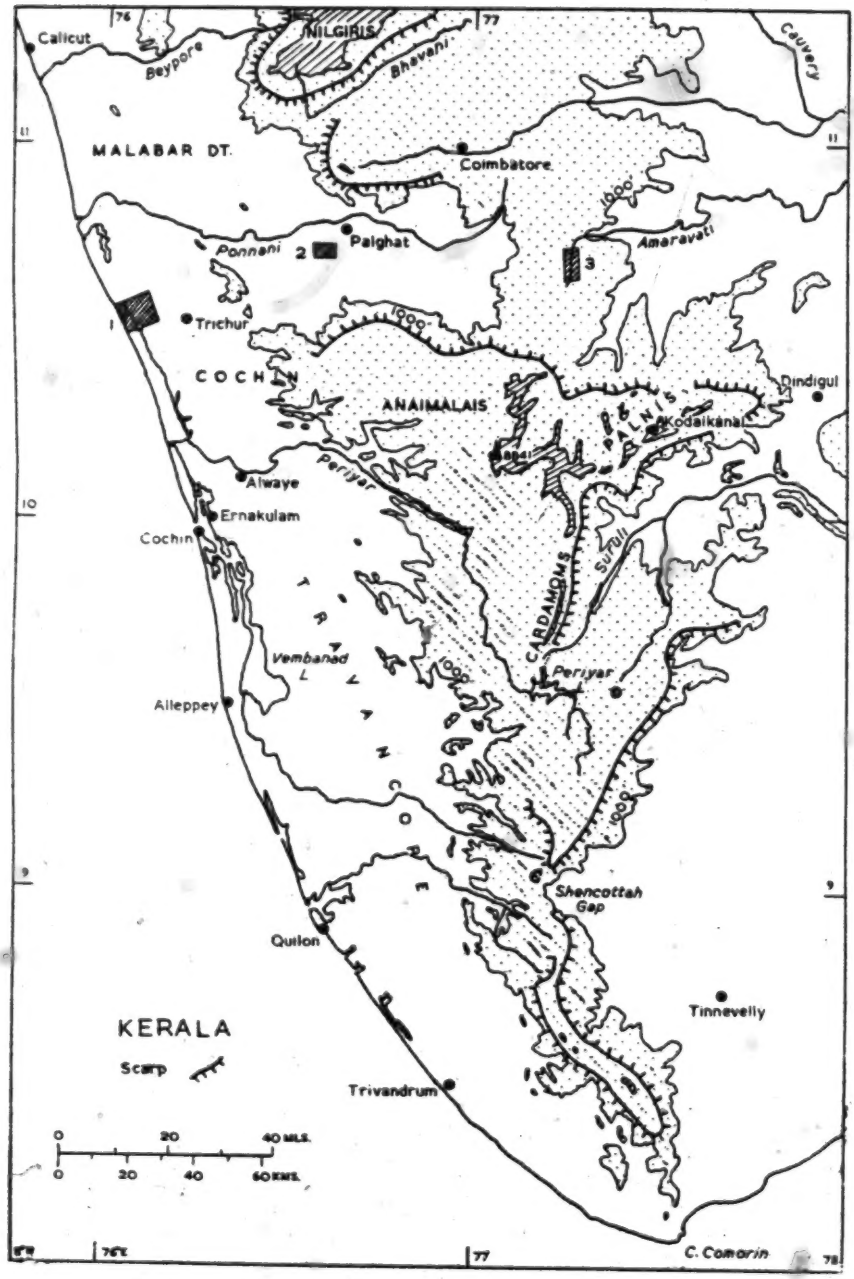

Fig. 121.—KERALA. 1, area of Fig. 122; 2, of Fig. 123; 3, of Fig. 146. 1000–6000 ft stippled, over 6000 ft shaded.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
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Kerala AW11

atypical. Much of it indeed revolves around the hill-station of Ootacamund, lying under the highest point of the plateau, Dodabetta (8760 ft). 'Ooty' and its satellites Wellington and Coonor have the usual hills layout of straggling bungalows; they are reached by a metre-gauge rack-railway with gradients of 1 in 12½. There is a little local industry of the kind associated with resort functions: breweries (now presumably under a cloud), sodawater factories, and so on; tea, quinine, and eucalyptus oil are processed, and at Wellington the Government cordite factory had one of the earliest hydro-electric installations in India. Of much greater importance is the power station at Pykara Falls, with an installed capacity of 38,750 kW; large extensions are planned, and in addition the utilisation of the Pykara tail-water over a 1200-ft drop in the Moyar Valley, to produce another 36,000 kW, forming a new link with Mettur. This is in the future; but already the leisure resort of S India has become one of the most vital nodes in its workaday life.

(b) *The Anaimalais, Palnis, and Cardamoms*

This remarkable group of hills (Figs. 121, 150) is more complex than the Nilgiris, and in Anaimudi itself they have the highest peak of the Peninsula, 8841 ft. The front to the Palghat Gap is remarkably steep and in the E remarkably straight; the SE flanks of the Palnis, overlooking the upper Vaigai re-entrant, are also remarkably abrupt, as are the Cardamoms and their protrusions (Varushanad Hills) S of the Vaigai. But to the NW the hills fray out into long SE–NW ridges; and indeed over much of the area this trend is most marked, the rivers (e.g. the Periyar) having longitudinal stretches of such straightness as to suggest control by faults, with transverse gorges producing a perfect trellis-pattern. Between 10° N and the Shencottah Gap the active streams of the exposed Arabian Sea front have pushed the watershed back to within 4 or 5 miles of the En edge of the hills: here the change from jungle-clad mountains to the tank-pitted Tamilnad Plain is very sudden (Fig. 150).

Again, apart from the shifting cultivation of tribes some of whom (e.g. Cochin Kadars) are hardly more than hunters and gatherers, the economy is atypical: forests, plantations, hydro-electricity. The most exploited forests, served by special light railways, are in the NW, the Cochin slopes of the Anaimalais. As for plantations, these are not confined to the Wn flanks but are more numerous there, where there is a broader plateau development than on the E. A little coffee and tea are grown in Cochin and in Madura Dt (Madras), but the major share of the plantations (78,000 ac. tea, *c.* 6000 coffee) is in Travancore, which is also by far the most important rubber-producing area of India, with nearly 100,000 ac. bearing against 13,000 in Malabar and 10,000 in Cochin (1945). It is grown on the lower slopes generally below 1000 and never above 2000 ft, with 80–120 ins.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

MALABAR DISTRICT.

GURUVAYUR (PONNANI TALUK)

[*By V. Lakshmana Aiyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—Guruvayur is situated in the southern part of the Ponnani taluk, and is only 2 miles distant from the Arabian Sea. It is close to the backwater which extends from the northern point of the taluk to Cochin and Travancore. To the east it is only 3 miles distant from the State of Cochin. It is 14 miles away from the capital town of the taluk through which flows the chief river of Malabar. No forests can be seen throughout the whole taluk. The whole taluk is one red sandy mass with no waste lands, no mountains or hills. The chief crop of the village and perhaps of the whole taluk is coconut.

Malabar land tenure.—The system of land tenure that obtains in Malabar is entirely different from that of other districts. No doubt the theory that the Government is the legitimate owner of all the land in India and the people hold the land from the Government to which they pay a rent or tax, obtains its full significance here also. But there is an intermediary landlord, between the Government and the actual occupier of the land. How this intermediary landlord arose requires some explanation.

The origin of Malabar according to tradition is that a demi-god Parasurama reclaimed from the sea the portion of land extending from Gokarnam (Bombay) to Cape Comorin and from the Western Ghats to the sea. This demi-god having killed 21 times all the Kshatriyas, and having surrendered to Rama all his possessions after trial of battle, wanted a place to live in. He ordered the sea to recede and thus formed these lands. Malabar is a portion of that land. What historical facts are concealed in this tradition it is not easy to know but it may be guessed that in the general organizing of the Deccan, a certain number of Aryans * crossed the Western Ghats and reclaimed the lands from forest and wild beasts and made it habitable for civilized men. They may have dominated the original inhabitants by their superior civilization and Parasurama may have been the leader of that little band of Aryans. The tradition says that the demi-god gave all the lands he created to 64 Brahmans who became the leaders of the 64 villages into which the whole of the land was divided. These 64 Brahmans formed the original Malabar Brahmans or Nambudris, and they formed an assembly and decided matters of common concern. Individual villages decided their own matters and in every discussion of their affairs the Brahmana was the president and his opinion had perhaps the force of law. The whole village belonged to him and he was the Uralla or the chief man of the village. As time went on the one important family extended its branches and each branch had an equal voice in the affairs of the village. The one became many. I shall refer later to the remnants of this constitution of the village.

* [This hypothesis is ingenious, but not, in my opinion, probable.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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KOTHACHIRA DESAM (PONNANI TALUK).

[*By A. Krishna Wariyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—This desam is situated about 13 miles south-east of Ponnani, a small thriving town at the mouth of the river of the same name, a Muhammadan centre and the headquarters of the taluk. The visitor to Kothachira leaves the train at Pattambi, the nearest railway station and after a six miles walk along the Pattambi-Chowghat road turns to the left and by a footpath over a rising eminence descends into the paddy fields. A two miles walk southwards through these fields will bring him to the borders of the Kothachira desam. 361

This desam is a completely rural area and there is nothing of interest in the place. The shortest distance from the nearest river (river Ponnani) is 5 miles. Hills and forests are not rare since the desam enjoys proximity to the Akalanum (east) and the Mattur (north) hills. [133]

The term 'desam' literally means a piece of territory. The desam is the political and social unit in Malabar, and is the nearest equivalent to the villages of the east. The chief differences, however, are—(1) the village organization, in its entirety, is not found here; (2) the village has no particular site. The population is distributed throughout the desam area, each individual landholder having his home and family compound often in the midst of his lands and gardens and separated far from his neighbours. 621

Population.—The population of this desam according to the censuses of 1891 and 1901 was as follows:— 162

Year of census.	Number of inhabited houses.	Total population.			Religion.			Occupation.				Population per 100 acres of occupied land.
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Others.	Landholders.	Labourers.	Weavers.	Others.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1891 ...	295	898	985	1,883	1,678	204	1	767	563	...	553	221
1901 ...	312	961	1,047	2,008	1,808	200	...	559	378	...	1,071	236

The report of the last census (that of 1911) is not obtainable. My enquiry gives the following results:—

Number of houses 333.

Males ...	1,216	Hindus ...	1,990	Landholders ...	442
Females ...	1,107	Muhammadans.	327	Labourers ...	518
		Others ...	6	Weavers ...	...
				Others * ...	1,363
Total ...	2,323		2,323		2,323

* Including all who have no regular occupation, children, women of higher castes, old men, and even a good many young men belonging to joint families.

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[For general information on the distribution of soil types in India see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 80-92.]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

crops is about 8 per cent of the gross cropped area. A direct consequence of this type of cropping pattern is the high degree of commercialization which has been attained in the agricultural sector. This has important implications for the State economy. The State exports its commercial crops, and imports its foodgrain requirements. In this exchange the State stands to gain since cash crops yield far higher return per unit of area than the food crops. Secondly, quite a few of the commercial crops grown in the State are of a perennial nature and require large investments. This has led to the establishment of numerous large scale organized plantations and farms, although small farms also play an important role. 433* 241

2.6 A chronic food deficit is the third important feature of the agricultural sector, mentioned above (para 2.1). The current production of foodgrains is roughly 967,000 tons. Current requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs.[1] of foodgrains per day per adult (unit) work out to a figure of 24 lakh tons. The gap between food requirements and the current level of production thus works out to over 50 per cent of total requirements. This is higher than in any other State. However, this need not cause excessive anxiety. It is not necessary for every State in the Union to try and achieve self-sufficiency in food at the cost of other more valuable commercial crops. From the long run point of view, the aim should be to strike a balance between supply and demand for foodgrains at the national, rather than, strictly, at the level of the State. The psychological desire to attain a balance between local supply and demand for foodgrains in the State is a legacy of the lean period of 1940–50 when the State was hard hit by the severe food shortage prevailing in the country. 433* 241 242

Climate and Geographical Factors

2.7 The climate and rainfall in Kerala are excellently suited to the prevailing cropping pattern. The climate is cool and humid in the high ranges while it is humid and warm in the plains. The range of temperature variations during the year is very small, the maximum never going beyond 90°F and minimum rarely below 75°F. The humidity, however, is very high in the rainy season—about 90 per cent. The State is fortunate in respect of rainfall. The normal annual rainfall is 95 inches a year ; it may be as high as 150 inches in the high ranges, but nowhere it is less than 65 inches. Most of the precipitation occurs during May to September when the State receives the south-west monsoon. Taking the State as a whole, it may be said that it is one of the most wet areas in the country (Table 1).* Assam has about the same normal rainfall as Kerala. Only the Konkan coast (Bombay) and South Kanara (Mysore) exceed it. The annual deviation in rainfall is also comparatively low with the co-efficient of mean deviation at 6.5 per cent for Travancore-Cochin and 9.2 per cent for Malabar (Table 1). On the whole rains are more reliable in Kerala than in most other States. 132

2.8 Kerala has two distinct geographical divisions, namely, the Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar area. The soils of Travancore-Cochin area are generally 134

[1] The Nutritional Advisory Committee to the Government of India recommended 18 ozs. of foodgrains per adult unit per day as the desirable norm. We have used a slightly smaller figure (17 ozs. per day) in our calculations. [146]

* [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed – Analyst]

134 formed of gneissic debris by sub-aerial decomposition. The formation of coastal areas consists mostly of sands deposited by the sea. The soils are generally of poor fertility status. Some peculiar formations are found in the taluks of Ambalapuzha, [135] Kuttanad, Vaikom and Shertallai and go by the name *peaty* or Kari soils. These are black and heavy and contain plenty of potash and 10 to 30 per cent organic matter. However, the soils are highly acidic due to the decomposition of organic matter under anaerobic conditions, presence of iron and aluminium salts and absence of [242] nitrification. Attempts to reclaim the soils by liming and improvement of drainage have so far proved unsuccessful. In Trichur and Mukundapuram taluks there is yet another category known as *Kole* soils. These are fertile alluvial soils. The soils of Malabar area are quite different. They are mostly red soils formed *in situ* from the micaccons or granitic rocks below under the influence of weather and climatic conditions. The fertility of the red soil is poor. They contain very low proportions of organic matter and nitrogen. But these soils contain ferrous and aluminium ions in fairly large proportions and in the absence of humous this situation results in reversion of phosphate—a state where phosphorous when applied in the form of fertilizers, does not become readily assimilable by the plants.

Land Utilization

311 2.9 The fact that Kerala has drawn upon the margin of cultivable land much more than in the rest of India is borne out clearly by Table 8.[2] The net sown area in the State during 1956-57 was 4,525,000 acres, that is 47.16 per cent of the total area. This is about 8 per cent more than corresponding all-India proportion (39.1%). The proportion of fallow lands in Kerala is also very low. (Kerala 4.4% : all-India 7.5%). A higher proportion of total area devoted to cultivation becomes all the more significant in view of the fact that forests cover about 26 per cent of the total area of the State compared to the all-India average of 17.44 per cent.

2.10 During the period 1951–57, there has been an overall improvement in the pattern of land utilization in the State. There have been significant increases in the area under forests (15.8%), permanent pastures (19.8%), land under tree crops (18.1%), net area sown (29.8%), and the area sown more than once (24.9%). These increases were mostly at the expense of cultivable waste, which declined by about 40 per cent during the period. The next important decline (16.7%) was in the barren and uncultivable lands. The area sown more than once rose by about 25 per cent, but this was partly offset by an increase of 35 per cent in the area under current fallows. (Table 8)[2]

2.11 Another notable feature of the agricultural sector in Kerala is the high intensity of cropping.[1] During 1956-57, the gross sown area was 5.6 million acres and the net sown area was 4.7 million acres. This works out to a crop intensity of 119 per cent (all-India 113%; Punjab 130%; Maharashtra 120%). However, if the field crops alone are taken into account, crop intensity works out to as high a figure as 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which gives a more accurate idea of the

[text continues on p. 25]

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped and net cropped area.

[2] [see p. 274, category 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

improved seeds would, therefore, be much larger in Kerala than elsewhere in the country. For full coverage of the area by improved seeds, it is estimated that by 1971, 120 new farms would have to be organized. Investment on each of these farms, including a seed store, would be about Rs. 75,000. Total investment on additional seed farms would, therefore, amount to about Rs. 90 lakhs. Assuming an increase of 10 per cent in yield, additional production due to full coverage from improved seeds by the end of the Fourth Plan would be about 75,000 tons of foodgrains alone. Similar increases may be achieved for other agricultural commodities also. 433* 242

Manures and Fertilizers

2.42 The soils of Kerala are not fertile. Being of lateritic origin they are highly porous. More than 50 per cent of the cultivated soils contain less than 15 per cent of clay complex. Continuous cropping accompanied by heavy leaching (a direct consequence of heavy rainfall) has made the soils extremely deficient in phosphates, nitrogen and potash, and also in calcium, magnesium and other minor elements. 134

2.43 Inspite of the poor fertility of soils, the crop yields are good. This is primarily due to the application of a large amount of organic manures to the fields. In addition to organic manures, the farmers also use fertilizers. Farmers of Kerala were among the first to realize benefits of fertilizers and put them to use. But the quantity used is small owing to inadequate supplies. Even a modest consumption target of 14,200 tons of fertilizers[1] per annum for the Second Plan had to be revised to 5,800 tons on account of this shortage. During 1958-59, the State consumed 5,000 tons of nitrogenous ferilizers mostly in the form of ammonium sulphate and potassic fertilizers. This works out to roughly 1.2 lbs. per acre of nitrogen and less than 0.1 lb. per acre of phosphate and potash. 433* 241

2.44 In future, the emphasis should be placed both on manures and on fertilizers. Organic manures, in addition to providing the plant nutrition, help in conditioning the soil, whereas fertilizers are necessary for supplementing nutritional needs which the organic manures are not able to provide fully. A joint and balanced application of organic manures and fertilizers is, therefore, necessary for getting the desired results.

2.45 All possible sources in the State should be fully exploited for increasing the supply of organic manures. There is scope for greater utilization of urban wastes and green leaves. There is also scope for fuller utilization of the existing production of press mud and for increasing the supply of green matter by raising green manure plants on the borders of fields and banks of river streams. The supply of organic manures may be further augmented by fuller utilization of fish waste and inedible or spoilt fish. Such possibilities should be investigated.

2.46 As emphasized above, a desired level of crop nutrition will not be possible unless manures are adequately supplemented by fertilizers. The supplementary dosage of fertilizers differs from crop to crop depending upon the nature of the crop, length of the growing period and the yield rates. The dosage is the highest for banana, with NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potash) ratio at 150 : 150 : 300 lbs.

[1] 9,680 tons of N, 3,720 tons of P_2O_5 and 840 tons of K.

of paddy. This would not only give additional production of pulses which are deficit in the State, but also enrich the soil by leaving a nitrogen residue, and thereby constitute a better rotation. It may be possible to develop pulse crops on 250,000 acres. Assuming an yield of a quarter ton per acre, the additional production of pulses by crop intensification, as suggested here, would be roughly 62,500 tons per year. 433* 242

2.74 Better plant protection is another measure for getting a substantial increase in yields. It is estimated that yields increase approximately by about 10 per cent through this method. The Department of Agriculture should tackle this problem more effectively. This would only be possible by strengthening the Plant Protection Wing of the Department of Agriculture. [642]

Implements

2.75 Agricultural implements in use in the State are antiquated and inefficient. The wooden plough continues to be the master implement and is used for tillage operations of almost all the crops. Iron ploughs and other tillage implements are not popular. In fact the number of iron ploughs decreased by 22 per cent during 1951–56 and at present stands at 10,225. Tractors during the same period, however, increased from 59 to 187. Irrigation pumps too have shown an increase of 116 per cent. 407

2.76 The slow adoption of improved implements is mostly due to non-availability of implements and machinery suited to local conditions as well as due to their high cost. The topographical conditions and techniques of cultivation are unique in Kerala and there are no implements designed and developed to suit such conditions. There is, therefore, need for developing efficient implements for rice cultivation, plantation crops, soil conservation work and also for specialized implements such as ridgers and earthers for ginger and tapioca. It would be necessary to have a well equipped and adequately staffed agricultural engineering station to undertake the type of work suggested here. The proposed station may also do some work in designing of irrigation aids and may advise farmers on the selection of pumping sets and cane crushers. 433* 407

Soil Erosion

2.77 Soil erosion is a serious problem in Kerala. Conditions prevalent in the State such as lateritic soils, undulating to steep topography, the system of farming followed and heavy cloud burst—all these constitute towards excessive soil erosion. There is no reliable estimate regarding the extent of area affected or vulnerable to soil erosion, but it is estimated that about one-third of the cultivated area—approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres—is affected by it. It should be possible to protect at least one million acres through soil conservation measures by 1971. 134 185

2.78 Soil conservation work as carried out by the Department of Agriculture has become very popular with the farmers. The Department gives technical advice on soil conservation matters and undertakes operations in specified areas in water-shed units. [647]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be
[464] Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conservation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
449 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In
[656] this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon. 231 170 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too. 433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output. 231 [137]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them. 231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry 433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

131 Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand
[133] feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the
[631] reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

133 All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed
133 by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by
● 134 Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

134 The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper
241 and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant
132 throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

137 In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among
[361] these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in
[351] villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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241 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agricul-
463 turists.

The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. The
651 assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira was Rs. 6,519-2-4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228-7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of the chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy and arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garden. The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Every household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of an antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They are kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are planted and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plants Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have to be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance from one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are at first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung and ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days in the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselves. When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and a shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of water. These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, small channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root of every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begun. This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are given a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of average showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for similar weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, they have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and third month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted in plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fifth and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is a second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediately after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop, the ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two months of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle of January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period of two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under single
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessments on each. (The information is taken from the village accounts.)
311 The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settlement.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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Classification and Assessment.

Description of soil.	Wet.						Garden.					Occupied dry.				
	Taram.	Whether single or double crop.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.	Taram.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.	Taram.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.	
Red loam, VII-1 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	6 0	1 49	8 15	...	2	1 8	1 10	1 11	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	5 0	4 24	21 3	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-2 ...	2	1	5 0	8 97	44 14	..	3	5 0	0 75	3 12	...	3	1 0	52 46	52 10	...
	...	2	6 4	205 46	1,284 2	...	4	4 0	24 95	99 13	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	.	...	5	3 0	33 18	99 8	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2 0	73 71	147 5	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1 0	13 75	13 12	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-3 ...	3	1	4 0	33 76	135 1	...	5	3 0	15 67	46 14	...	4	0 12	11 394	85 7	...
	...	2	5 0	95 82	479 3	...	6	2 0	18 28	36 9	...	...	...	...	..	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1 0	21 56	21 9	..	...	...	...	...	...
VII-4 ...	4	1	3 0	50 60	151 15	...	6	2 0	0 60	1 6	...	5	0 10	89 50	12 3	...
	...	2	3 12	10 57	39 10	...	7	1 0	0 80	0 13	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-5 ...	5	1	2 0	33 29	66 12	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	0 8	2 62	1 5	...
	...	2	2 8	0 59	1 8	..	...	..	...	.	...	...	...	...		...
Red sand, VIII-3	4	2	3 12	6 21	23 4	...	7	1 0	0 55	0 9	...	5	0 10	6 28	4 0	...
VIII-4	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	..	...	...	...	6	0 8	1 26	0 10	...
Total ...	...	...	...	445 27	2,226 5	..	...	...	209 43	502 0	...	...	...	197 16	157 14	...

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there
* 433 been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades. In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial
49 sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them. 226 226 433* [511] [464]

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish. 433* 262 226

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance. 317 135

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries. 433* 433* 464

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized. 288 464 438 [258]

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

formed of gneissic debris by sub-aerial decomposition. The formation of coastal areas consists mostly of sands deposited by the sea. The soils are generally of poor fertility status. Some peculiar formations are found in the taluks of Ambalapuzha, Kuttanad, Vaikom and Shertallai and go by the name *peaty* or Kari soils. These are black and heavy and contain plenty of potash and 10 to 30 per cent organic matter. However, the soils are highly acidic due to the decomposition of organic matter under anaerobic conditions, presence of iron and aluminium salts and absence of nitrification. Attempts to reclaim the soils by liming and improvement of drainage have so far proved unsuccessful. In Trichur and Mukundapuram taluks there is yet another category known as *Kole* soils. These are fertile alluvial soils. The soils of Malabar area are quite different. They are mostly red soils formed *in situ* from the micaccons or granitic rocks below under the influence of weather and climatic conditions. The fertility of the red soil is poor. They contain very low proportions of organic matter and nitrogen. But these soils contain ferrous and aluminium ions in fairly large proportions and in the absence of humous this situation results in reversion of phosphate—a state where phosphorous when applied in the form of fertilizers, does not become readily assimilable by the plants.

Land Utilization

2.9 The fact that Kerala has drawn upon the margin of cultivable land much more than in the rest of India is borne out clearly by Table 8. The net sown area in the State during 1956-57 was 4,525,000 acres, that is 47.16 per cent of the total area. This is about 8 per cent more than corresponding all-India proportion (39.1%). The proportion of fallow lands in Kerala is also very low. (Kerala 4.4% : all-India 7.5%). A higher proportion of total area devoted to cultivation becomes all the more significant in view of the fact that forests cover about 26 per cent of the total area of the State compared to the all-India average of 17.44 per cent.

2.10 During the period 1951–57, there has been an overall improvement in the pattern of land utilization in the State. There have been significant increases in the area under forests (15.8%), permanent pastures (19.8%), land under tree crops (18.1%), net area sown (29.8%), and the area sown more than once (24.9%). These increases were mostly at the expense of cultivable waste, which declined by about 40 per cent during the period. The next important decline (16.7%) was in the barren and uncultivable lands. The area sown more than once rose by about 25 per cent, but this was partly offset by an increase of 35 per cent in the area under current fallows. (Table 8)

2.11 Another notable feature of the agricultural sector in Kerala is the high intensity of cropping.[1] During 1956-57, the gross sown area was 5.6 million acres and the net sown area was 4.7 million acres. This works out to a crop intensity of 119 per cent (all-India 113%; Punjab 130%; Maharashtra 120%). However, if the field crops alone are taken into account, crop intensity works out to as high a figure as 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which gives a more accurate idea of the

[text continues on p. 25]

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped and net cropped area.

[see p. 274, category 116 -- Analysis]

Chapter 6

Minerals

FROM THE POINT of view of its industrial development, Kerala's mineral resources are a weak link in the State's economy. With a share of only 1.7 per cent in the all-India production of the minerals, Kerala lags behind most other States in the output of minerals. During 1955-56, the net value contributed by the minerals (Rs. 1.95 crores) was 0.6 per cent of the State income against one per cent of country's income. 433* 135 [434]

6.2 The important minerals of the State are beach sands comprising ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, zircon, china-clay and tile-clay. Among these ilmenite and china-clay are the most prominent. The reserves of these minerals are adequate to last more than 20 years and may, therefore, be classified as "minerals with adequate reserves". Graphite, iron ore and mica are also found, though only in very small quantities. The deposits of limeshells occur in lakes and along the coast, but are rather modest in content. The metallic minerals and fossil fuels, however, are almost completely absent. It is the deficiency of these minerals which presents an obstacle to the growth of large scale industries.

6.3 Apart from beach sand collection and limeshell winning from the lakes and estuaries, there are eleven workings, all open cast. These do not include tile-clay working about which no data is available. The number of persons engaged in all these 11 mining enterprises (inclusive of beneficiation) is roughly 6,900. However, according to 1951 Census, the number of persons employed in mining as well as in stone-quarrying is about 18,000, i.e., 0.3 per cent of total working force (all-India 0.4%). 316 317 464

6.4 Table 28[1] gives the output of minerals from the various workings and their value. In 1955, the value of minerals production was Rs. 1.35 crores. Next year, the value of production went upto Rs. 1.95 crores, representing an increase of approximately 37 per cent. This steep rise was mainly due to the increase in ilmenite production, which went upto 314,348 tons in 1956 from 231,585 tons in 1955. Production registered a further increase of about Rs. 20 lakhs during the next year, (that is, 1957), reaching a level of Rs. 2.1 crores. This was maintained during the next two years, that is, 1958 and 1959. In 1960, however, there was a setback as one of the mineral sand companies had since closed down; and it is likely that the value of the output might not have exceeded Rs. 1.3 crores. 433* 316 317

[Text continues on p. 97]

[1] [Table 28 appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 9

102
133
135

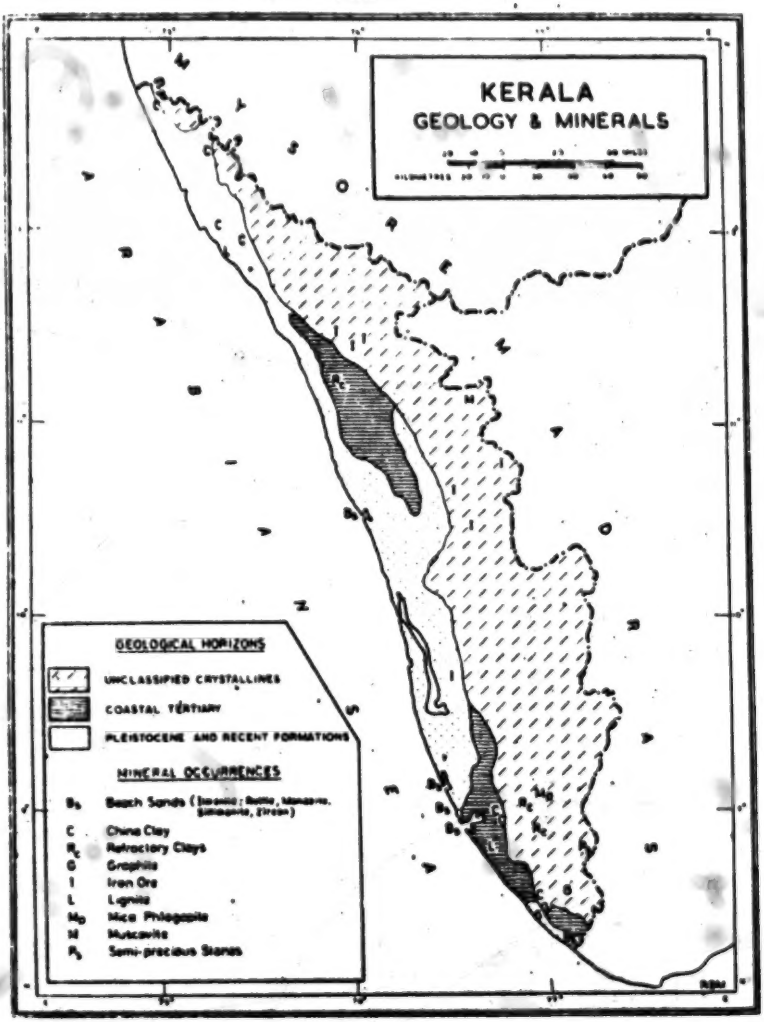

rest of the production is exported to various countries, the bulk of it going to the USA and the UK. Export figures are given in Table 29 for the period 1956–59.

6.17 Irregular supplies made through the Koilthottam port, mainly due to labour difficulties, have resulted in the loss of contracts with importers in the USA. Export possibilities of ilmenite are now limited only to two contracts to UK totalling 1,50,000 tons per year. This setback has occurred in spite of the fact that the Chavara ilmenite has a high TiO_2 content (55-60%) and is cheaper when compared to Malayan ilmenite (about 45% TiO_2) which, however, finds a ready export market.

6.18 India, which at one time used to hold almost a monopolistic position in the export of ilmenite has now to face competition. Side by side with the expansion of titanium industry, other world sources for supply of ilmenite have come into operation as in Norway, Canada, Malaya, Australia, South Africa, etc. Whereas in 1940 India used to contribute 90 per cent to world production of ilmenite, now its share is only 25 per cent.

6.19 In view of the rapid expansion of India's steel industry, the consumption of TiO_2 pigment is itself expected to go up. The total requirements of ilmenite by 1965-66 would be 150,000 tons a year for export and 36,000 tons a year for the manufacture of TiO_2 pigment, on the basis of proposal for expansion of Titanium Dioxide plant at Trivandrum incorporated in this report. Table 30 gives demand for Titanium Dioxide pigment from steel industry and various other sources. The two existing companies can produce about 160,000 tons a year. Extra capacity of 30,000 tons a year will have to be installed, and this along with certain improvements suggested earlier may require an investment of Rs. 20 lakhs. Very little increase in labour force is envisaged. The existing labour force itself appears to be excessive, since the output per man per shift works out to a low level of 0.4 tons.

6.20 During the Fourth Plan period, steel production is expected to double itself. Therefore, by 1970-71, the demand for Titanium Dioxide may also be expected to be roughly double of the demand in 1965-66. This would necessitate another 30,000 tons of ilmenite per annum. Total requirement of ilmenite by 1970-71 would thus be 220,000 tons a year, comprising of 150,000 tons for export and 60,000 tons for the manufacture of Titanium Dioxide. This would involve further additional outlay of Rs. 10 lakhs. Even this order of expansion can be achieved with the existing labour at an output of one ton per man per shift which would measure a fairly reasonable level of productivity.

Monazite

6.21 Monazite is a phosphate of thorium and cerium with rare earth elements and small quantities of Uranium Oxide. It constitutes a source of the radio-active element, thorium being used for atomic energy purposes. Monazite was first discovered in India, by C.W. Von Sohomberg, a German citizen, in 1909 along the beach at Manavalakkurichi.

6.22 Monazite occurs along with other heavy minerals in the beach sands. Reserves of the order of 6.7 million tons are estimated to be present in the bar between Neendakara and Kayarkulam. There is, however, no production of monazite

[Table 30, appearing on p. 290 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

concentrates from Chavara, the Manavalakkurichi (in Madras State) material being preferred because of its higher thorium content.

6.23 A rare earth factory is located in the State at Alwaye, which processes 1,500 tons of monazite a year ; but it obtains its requirements from Manavalakkurichi in the Madras State. This factory produces Thorium Oxide, rare earth salts and Trisodium Phosphate. The Chavara Monazite may be considered for use in the rare earth factory instead of the monazite from Manavalakkurichi in Madras State, particularly in view of the fact that monazite would be a byproduct of ilmenite which is won in larger quantities in Kerala and may, therefore, prove cheaper.

Rutile

6.24 Rutile is another titanium mineral occurring in smaller quantities in the beach sands. The beach washings contain, on an average, about 4 per cent of rutile. A portion of the sand bar at Neendakara is estimated to contain 740,125 tons of the mineral.[1] Kerala is the only State in India producing rutile.

6.25 At present only one of the mineral sand factory units produces this mineral. Electro-static separators are used in concentrating rutile from the non-magnetic tailings after the extraction of ilmenite. Recovery is one-fifth of the rutile content of raw sand and the rest is allowed to go into the tailings for lack of equipment.

6.26 Only small quantities of rutile are produced. During 1959, 482 tons valued at Rs. 4.75 lakhs were beneficiated. The current price is Rs. 1,000 a ton. The mineral is not utilized in the State, but is sent to Bombay and Calcutta for the manufacture of welding rods. During 1957, 155 tons of rutile were imported to meet the requirements of this industry. Future requirements of welding rods within India is estimated to go up from 417 m. ft. in 1960-61 to 2,022 m. ft. in 1970-71.[2] To meet this rise in demand, output of rutile would have to be stepped upto 6,750 tons by 1970-71. An expansion in capacity of this order would require an investment of the order of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Sillimanite and Zircon

6.27 Sillimanite as well as zircon occur in small amounts in beach sands in association with ilmenite and other heavy minerals. They average 5.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively of the beach washings. In addition, 1,916,260 tons of sillimanite and 799,350 tons of zircon are estimated to form a part of the Neendakara bar.[3] Only experimental production of either of these minerals has been taken up so far.

6.28 Sillimanite is mainly used in refractories, but the internal requirement of sillimanite refractories is very small. Moreover, the material from Assam which is of a massive variety can be shaped into blocks and used directly. Export possibilities are also dim and due to the development of artificial mulite bricks from domestic kyanite in the USA. Exports have dropped from 20,000 tons to 6,000 tons in 1957.

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, P. 102.
[2] NCAER estimates.
[3] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Op. Cit, p. 102.

investment for this will be about Rs. 5 lakhs and additional employment for 350 persons. 433* 317

Graphite

6.40 This mineral occurs in the form of disseminated grains, stringers and thin veins in surface laterites and the crystalline rocks underneath, mainly charnockitic and associated types. While the disseminated grains occur in charnockitic rocks, the worthwhile occurrences appear to be confined to the area of leptynites.[1] 135

6.41 Surface occurrences of graphite are known to occur in Kerala at a number of places, viz., Plachikuzhi, Nellimood, Narical, Ozhupara, Karipur, Perumpallimuzhi and Vellanad in Nedumangad taluk, Puliyarakonam and Chenagalloor in Neyyattinkara taluk and in various other isolated localities in Trivandrum district. The occurrences are being investigated geo-physically using electrical methods without appreciable success. This is probably due to the electrical anomalies being marked by the laterite host rock. Perhaps geo-chemical methods may prove more fruitful. 316

6.42 This mineral was mined in Kerala between 1898 and 1911 by the Morgan Crucible Company, altogether 35,000 tons of material being won. Consequent upon the discovery of graphite in Madagascar, operations ceased in Kerala. The most productive mine was at Vellanad. Recently operations were started at Aukulam on a small scale, but were suspended shortly thereafter. The production has been negligible. The prime need in the near future will be to have a more detailed prospecting on the lines suggested. 433* 316

Iron Ore

6.43 Quartz-magnetite bodies are reported from various localities. In all these cases, the top of these bodies is laterized and often very rich in iron. However, within a few feet the iron content decreases very appreciably. 135

6.44 The Nanminda occurrence (Pookunnu Hill) is probably the largest one. It would be necessary to explore this area in detail, possibly with core drills before any reasonable conclusion can be drawn. The ore body is steep dipping and will have to be won by underground mining, and further, magnetite concentrate obtained. All this would make the prospect very dear when compared to other iron ore occurrences elsewhere in the country being currently exploited. Further, the possibility of establishing a pig iron plant based either on low-shaft furnaces or electrical furnace techniques, is fraught with difficulties because of the non-availability of coke or lignite and fluxing material within the State. 433* 135

Limeshell Deposits

6.45 Even though no important horizon of limestone is found in the State, limeshell is found to occur in the various backwaters and also in the estuaries of some 135

[1] I.C. Chacko: *A Sketch of the Geology of Travancore.*

[113]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

135 of the rivers. The best known among these is that of Vembanad lake ; other less important occurrences are in the estuaries of the Kadalundi and Korapuzha rivers, Kozhikode district and Cranganore lake. Only a few of these tracts have been prospected so far. A systematic exploration programme should, therefore, be initiated in all the backwater and estuarine tracts.

317 6.46 The deposits in Vembanad lake were surveyed by the Travancore Cement Company in 1946. There was no layer of limeshell as such, but it occurred amidst sands and clays, the total thickness of the mixed deposits varying from 1-7 feet. Reserves as estimated then were 3 million tons.

6.47 In addition, in the estuary of the Kadalundi river 400,000 to 500,000 tons of limeshell are estimated to be available in an area of 300 acres.[1] About 100,000 tons of material is also likely to be available from the lower reaches of the rivers Pullut and Thathapally which drain into the Cranganore lake.[2]

6.48 These limeshell deposits provide a raw material of very high purity and which is eminently suitable for use in the chemical industry and in the manufacture of white cement.

*433 6.49 The present production is mainly from Kottayam and Alleppey districts, 317 where the Vembanad lake deposits are exploited. Small quantities are also won from the Kadalundi and Korapuzha estuaries. Details of production available for 1959 are given below:

District	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
Alleppey	9,098	76,542
Kottayam	86,509	696,333
Kozhikode	500 to 1,000	N.A.

*433 6.50 Excepting small quantities sent to the adjoining States from Kozhikode dis- 317 trict, the State's output is consumed within the State. The cement company con- 339 semus 70,000 tons of shells a year for producing 50,000 to 60,000 tons of grey cement. About 26,000 tons a year are used in lime-burning of which 25,000 tons come from the Vembanad lake.

6.51 Other limeshell utilizing industries which are under active consideration are a sand-lime brick factory at Pallathara with a capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and a calcium carbide factory at Chingavanam with a capacity of 10,000 tons a year. Both these would use shells from Vembanad lake and their annual requirements would be 8,500 tons and 10,000 tons respectively.

6.52 The total annual requirement during 1961–66 would thus be 108,500 tons of shells from the Vembanad lake. In view of the fact that the cement factory has been in existence for the last 11 years and has already consumed about a third of the original reserve of 3 million tons, proposals for new limeshell-based industries in the same area introduce problems regarding assured reserves of raw materials and their conservation.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Geological Department*, Government of Kerala, 1958-59, pp. 3-4.
[2] Ibid pp. 3-4.

6.53 First, possibilities of an alternative source, e.g., shells from the sea, should be assessed quantitatively, which could possibly meet requirements of the local lime-burning units. This would relieve the pressure on the lake and estuarine deposits, which could then be conserved for larger industrial units. 433* 317 339

6.54 Secondly, new industries could perhaps be located near other known shell deposits. A case in point here is the Calcium Carbide Factory requiring about 10,000 tons annually, which could be located in the Kadalundi area where reserves of the order of 400,000 to 500,000 tons are available. In this location the unit would be assured of its shell requirements for the next 40 to 50 years on the basis of an average annual requirement of 10,000 tons, whereas in the Vembanad lake location, reserves would last only for 15 to 20 years.

6.55 The requirements of the sand-lime brick factory, however, are only about 3,500 tons a year and it should be possible to accommodate this requirement from the present consumption of 25,000 tons by the lime-burning industry.

6.66 In this context, it would be relevant to mention that in absolute terms, the accretion of shells is rather small; and in terms of the proposed rate of exploitation this accretion is even negligible. Further, the proposal to construct a bar across the mouth of the Vembanad lake would change the salinity of the water and would very likely put an end even to this small accretion. As to whether the shell organism could be simulated to thrive on a large scale is a problem for long term research. 433* 317

6.57 In the meantime, in view of the rapid depletion of reserves in the Vembanad lake, strict control should be exercised over the exploitation of this deposit with periodical inspection to check unauthorized collection. The rate of exploitation may be kept at the present level but should not be allowed to rise.

Mica

6.58 Two varieties of mica, muscovite and phlogopite are known to occur in the State. Muscovite is reported from Kulikhoor, and Sholayaramson from Palghat district and phlogopite from Punalur in Quilon district. However data relating to reserves are not available for any of these deposits. 135

6.59 At Kulikoor in Palghat district, a few prospecting pits have been put down which exposed a small vein of ruby mica with very little strains. The presence of ruby mica on a fairly large scale along the same belt in the adjoining State may be taken as a favourable indication. Further prospecting should be undertaken in the area. 316

6.60 Production from the only mine in the State at Punalur has been intermittent. Figures for production since 1957 when mining activity was revived are given below: 433* 316

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1957	72	40,000
1958	72	40,000
1959	46	23,000

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 316 6.61 Formerly mica used to be exported from this mine, but now because of its inferior grade and development of cheaper substitutes, the market has ceased to exist. Production has been giving demand and the mine is again on the verge of closing down.

Quartz-Sand

135 6.62 An extensive deposit of quartz-sand occurs along the Shertallai-Pattanakad-Pallipuram-Panavally area. Reserves of the order of 80 million tons are said to exist here. However, all the sand is not glass grade, being gritty in large portions.

317 6.63 There are two workings in Shertallai taluk, one at Pallipuram and the other at Panavally. Mining is selective in that only such areas which contain finer material are worked. The workings are not mechanized. The raw sand is sieved and winnowed at the workings. Further sieving is done at the glass factory, the final recovery standing at 50 per cent of the original, and represents the portion between 30 and 80 mesh screens.

433 317 323 6.64 About 3,000 tons sand is produced annually with a pits-mouth-value of Rs. 1.50 a ton. A major portion of the output is consumed by the glass factory at Alwaye, while the rest is supplied to silicate factories in the State and consumers outside the State.

6.65 A sand-lime brick factory is coming up at Pallathara in the public sector with an installed capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and it will be a major consumer of quartz-sand. Its sand requirements would be 33,750 tons a year. The total raw sand requirements by 1965-66 would be 46,000 tons a year. Exploitation at this rate would require an investment of Rs. 2 lakhs. By 1970-71, the sand requirements would further increase to 90,000 tons a year requiring an additional investment of Rs. 15 lakhs. At the same time, an integrated scheme to work the sands systematically and utilize both the coarse and finer grades should be undertaken, rather than leaving the sand collection to contractors.

Salt

6.66 Salt, besides being an essential ingredient of food, also serves as a basic raw material for the manufacture of alkalies. It is commonly extracted from sea water by solar evaporation. Production of salt in Kerala during the last few years has been as follows :

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1955	56,094	1,180,000
1956	783	10,000
1957	336	5,000
1958	708	10,000
1959	1,007	13,000

*433 formation of a large number of companies which together won 600 ozs. of metal.
316 During the last war, operations were again commenced but mainly for pyrite, which were also given up.

6.76 It is obvious that all surface occurrences have been worked out. However, prospecting for hidden lodes could still be carried out. A preliminary survey by panning up the stream to the heads of the tributaries in search of mother lodes is indicated.

135 6.77 *Lignite*: A lignite occurrence two feet to eight feet thick exposed on the beach at Varkalai had been reported, but it has proved to be abortive on drilling.

6.78 *Semi-Precious Stones*: The presence of semi-precious stones like cats' eye, amethyst, and iolite are reported from various places in Nedumangad taluk, Thiruvalla and Kollengode, but none has proved worthwhile. Recently beryl has also been reported from mica bearing area at Kulikkoor in Palghat district.

6.79 *Kankar*: In the black cotton soil tracts of Kozhinjampara and Chittur firkas in Palghat district kankar limestone is met with and is used locally in lime burning.

6.80 *Gypsum* : It is known to occur in similar soils in the Coimbatore district of Madras State. An intensive search may, therefore, be made in these black cotton soil areas for this mineral.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 6.81 Mineral resources play a vital role in the economic development of any
135 region. The process of industrial development generally involves a shift from industries based on primary raw materials like agricultural or forest produce to more technologically advanced industries using a higher content of metallic minerals. Kerala is unfortunately placed in this respect as its mineral resources are marked by absence of any of these basic minerals, namely, coal, iron and copper.

*433 6.82 Some of Kerala's industries, however, do have good prospects. Beach sands,
317 the chief mineral assets of Kerala, are the source of titanium bearing ilmenite. Although possibilities of increase in export of this sand are not bright, internal demand for ilmenite from the Titanium Dioxide industry is expected to rise substantially. Similarly, extensive deposits of quartz sand and fine quality china-clay occur in the State. This report envisages a considerable expansion in demand for both of these from existing industries as well as from new factories suggested for production of high tension insulators, sand-lime bricks, etc. In contrast to these three, the other minerals have only limited potentials of development. Thus monazite which contains the radioactive element thorium is available in quantity but has a restricted demand at present. On the other hand, the known reserves of limeshell are in short supply and do not offer scope for expansion of the cement industry based on it.

[135] 6.83 Among the rest, iron ores are not capable of being developed for lack of coal while mica and graphite would depend entirely on future discoveries.

6.84 On the whole, an increase in mineral production from a value of Rs. 130 lakhs in 1961 to Rs. 197 lakhs by 1965-66 and Rs. 250 lakhs by 1970-71 is envisaged here. Between 1956 and 1961 there was, however, a fall in the value of output from

Chapter 7

Power

KERALA HAS IMMENSE potentiality for the generation of hydro-electric power. The State does not possess any resource of coal or oil (within its own boundary) for generation of power but there are 44 rivers which constitute a storehouse of hydel power. This favourable factor compensates for the absence of any fossil fuels. Investigations so far have led to an estimate of this potential to be roughly of the order of 1,539 MW.[1]

7.2 One of the basic problems of Kerala's economy is posed by the situation of acute unemployment prevailing in the State. A long run solution to this lies in an intensive programme of industrialization only. An accelerated pace of industrial development, in turn, requires an ensured supply of adequate power. One possible way of looking at power development activities is to consider power as a complementary factor in the programme of industrialization of the State. Targets for power generation capacity in such cases should be fixed slightly higher than what the demand is expected to be.

7.3 The alternative approach, which is the more feasible one for Kerala, is to consider power, generation itself as an industry and to develop the State's abundant hydro-power resources to the maximum extent possible. The surplus of electricity generated over local requirements could be exported to the neighbouring State of Madras, which is not so well placed in respect of its power resources as Kerala. The electricity exported would provide a means of earning revenue, which is turn could be utilized for capital formation within the State. Moreover, a surplus in power generation capacity is desirable in itself since for a State like Kerala, where some factors deterrent to industrialization have been operating in the past, a regular supply of adequate power should be made to act as an incentive for setting up new industries. Planning for a power surplus and export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States should, therefore, form the keynote of the future power development policy in the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

7.4 The process of power development in the State is already well set. What is now required is to harness the huge energy potential of the State and convert it

[1] By the Central Water and Power Commission.

[text continues on p. 112]

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks, [46] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the 312
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[46] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 269.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

sitional areas—Comorin, Shencottah, Palghat, parts of Malabar. The 361
importance of food-producing trees (coconut, areca, plantain, jackfruit) fits [245]
in with this: they are grown in the house compounds, so that the actual
dwelling-space subtracts hardly anything from the cultivation-space, while

361
135

Fig. 122.—KERALA: COASTAL SETTLEMENT. 40 mls N of Cochin town. Dots, habitations; shaded, paddy. Note contrast between linear settlement on beach-ridges (under coconut) in W and ring settlement around lateritic rises in E. SOI 58 B/2; courtesy SOI.

at the same time the compounds ensure that the 'village' is loosely built, 361
and may indeed spill all over the village lands. (Fig. 122.)[50]

Along the coast there is a marked linear tendency, houses and coconuts 361
on the sandy ridges with their fresh ground-water, paddy in the lows. 311
Inland the lateritic topography exercises a marked effect, settlement being strung out along valley-flanks or interfluves or forming a complete ring around the rises. (Fig. 123.)

[50] The 14th and the 20th centuries tell the same tale. "Mulaybar, which is the pepper country, extends for two months' journey along the coast. . . . there is not a foot of ground but what is cultivated. Every man has his own orchard, with his house in the middle and a wooden palisade all round it." (Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (1929), 231–32). Along the 40 miles from Quilon to Trivandrum one is never out of sight of habitations or foot-travellers; G. Slater, *op. cit.*, 172.

406 The mhote too is seldom seen in these parts. The more common sorts of water-lifters are (1) an oval shaped bamboo-basket (costing about As. 2); (2) a wooden groove provided with a handle, costing about Re. 1; (3) and a frame-work consisting of two long bamboos, one small and another big in size balanced on a horizontal beam which is supported by two vertical poles; a picottah is attached to the small-sized bamboo and is drawn up and brought down by one or two persons standing opposite each other on two planks thrown across the middle of the well. The whole frame together with the picottah costs about Rs. 2. The oval shaped basket and the wooden groove are used to spread water from water courses and not from wells. Two persons, generally women, stand opposite each other on the side of a watercourse and pull the basket towards themselves by means of ropes tied round its 'ears' after filling it up with water; the extreme ease and facility with which they carry on the operations, often to the accompaniment of a snatch of song, is wonderful. The wooden groove is allowed to swing on a string and is moved to and fro by a person holding the handle.

651 The classes into which wet and dry lands are divided, the extent of each and the amount of assessment are subjoined.

Classes.	Wet lands.				Dry lands.	
	Single crop.		Double crop.		Single crop.	
	Area.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.
	ACS. C.	RS. A. P.	ACS. C.	RS. A. P.	ACS. C.	RS. A. P.
I ..	35 65	116 7 9	320 74	1,527 5 5	301 48	261 11 3
II ...	4 56	15 10 9	59 72	210 6 3	12 69	3 12 8
III ...	16 0	36 0 7	39 73	114 6 0	212 60	77 5 7
IV ...	21 37	39 9 8	15 51	34 11 2	68 39	17 10 3
V ...	109 59	147 9 11	11 5	17 12 11	207 53	44 6 8
VI ...	18 6	34 10 10	1 24	3 2 5	56 49	3 13 8
VII ...	...	...	...	...	78 3	37 0 3

125 The selling prices of cultivable wet land in the village are approximately Class I Rs. 1,500, Class II Rs. 1,000, Class III Rs. 800 Class IV Rs. 500—600, Class V Rs. 500.

311 The land is classified according to tenure as follows:—

423

I. 'Pandaravaka Verumpattam' (Sirkar) non-favourable tenure.	Nilams (wet land) (A. 86·73).	109 pattadars.
	Parambas (dry land) (A. 210·88).	
II. 'Pandaravaka Kanam' (Sirkar) favourable tenure.	Nilams (A. 2·19) ...	4 pattadars.
	Parambas (7 cents) ...	
III. 'Puravaka' (outside Sirkar).	Nilams (A. 563·61) ...	54 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 711·80)...	
IV. Inams (gift tenure).	Nilams (71 cents) ...	6 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 14·47) ...	

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
241 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

There is hardly any public tank. One stream (channel) flows along the northern boundary of the desam during rainy seasons when the fields become flooded. But its utility is limited since with the summer the whole channel is dried up. There are private wells in all gardens and sometimes in the fields of corn. But they are shallow for the most part and the water-supply is inadequate. The ryots who are wretchedly poor cannot afford to utilise modern progress in the field of well-boring, nor are they conversant with such developments. 312

There are woods and forests near the desam as we have before mentioned, but they are of no practical use to the people. The forest, which is outside the boundary limit of this desam, is under Government supervision and people are not allowed to cut trees. Other resources of the forest, moreover, are hardly taken advantage of, partly by the general apathy of the cultivator for improvement and partly by its being situated sufficiently far to dissuade them from incurring the necessary loss involved. At the same time it is in a way an influence to the ryots' detriment, for tigers, boars, etc., which the Akalanum and Mattur hills breed occasionally, make nocturnal depredations on the ryots' stock and corn fields. The peasantry are helpless against these enemies. 137 136

Occupation of land.—The private jenmam ryotwari holdings during the year of settlement (fasli 1313) are classified as follows :— 423 427 [651]

Pattadars paying	Number.			Extent.		Assessment.	
	Single	Joint.	Total.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.
Re. 1 and less	2	...	2	...	50	1	8
Rs. 10 and less but over Re. 1	7	2	9	7	71	33	14
" 30 " " " 10 ...	3	2	5	18	21	96	7
" 50 " " " 30 ...	1	...	1	7	8	37	5
" 100 " " " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 250 " " " 100 ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 500 " " " 250 ...	1	...	1	99	56	401	13
" 1,000 " " " 500 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1,000 ...	1	...	1	718	80	2,315	4
Total ...	15	4	19	851	86	2,886	3

Out of 851·86 acres no less than 818·36 belong to the two jenmi landlords. There are no occupants of Government jenmam ryotwari land in the same year.

Almost all kanomdars are themselves cultivators. The two jenmis, who are Brahmans by caste, and nearly 10 other families

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

AYYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALICUT.

346
187

[Facing P. 202]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

346
137

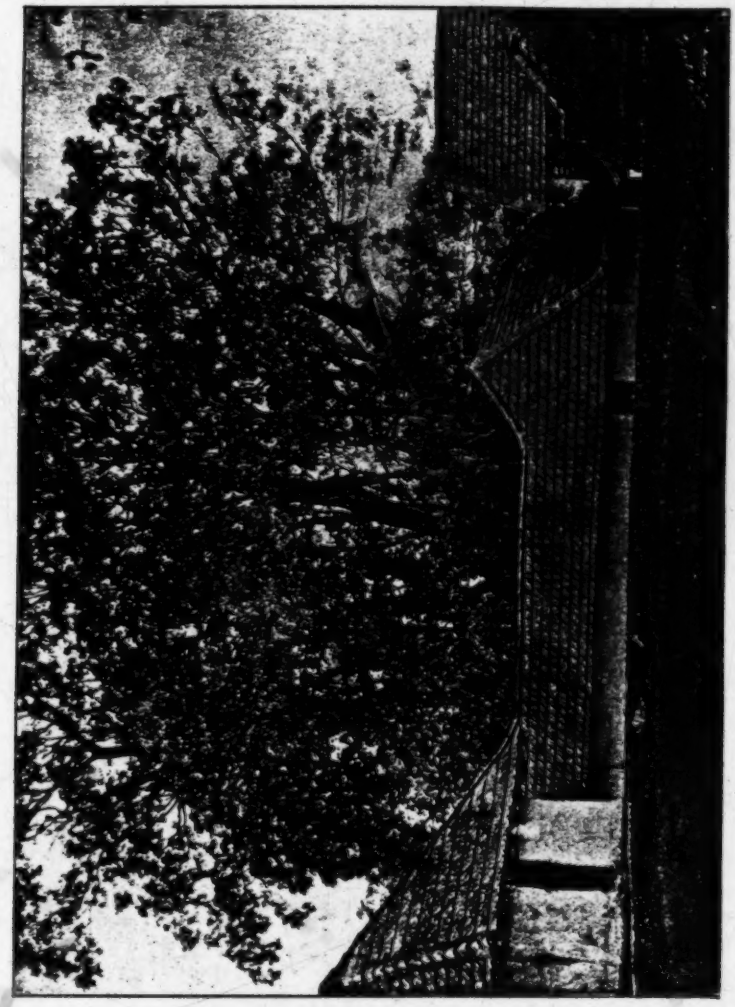

A TYPICAL KAVU.

[Facing p. 83]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

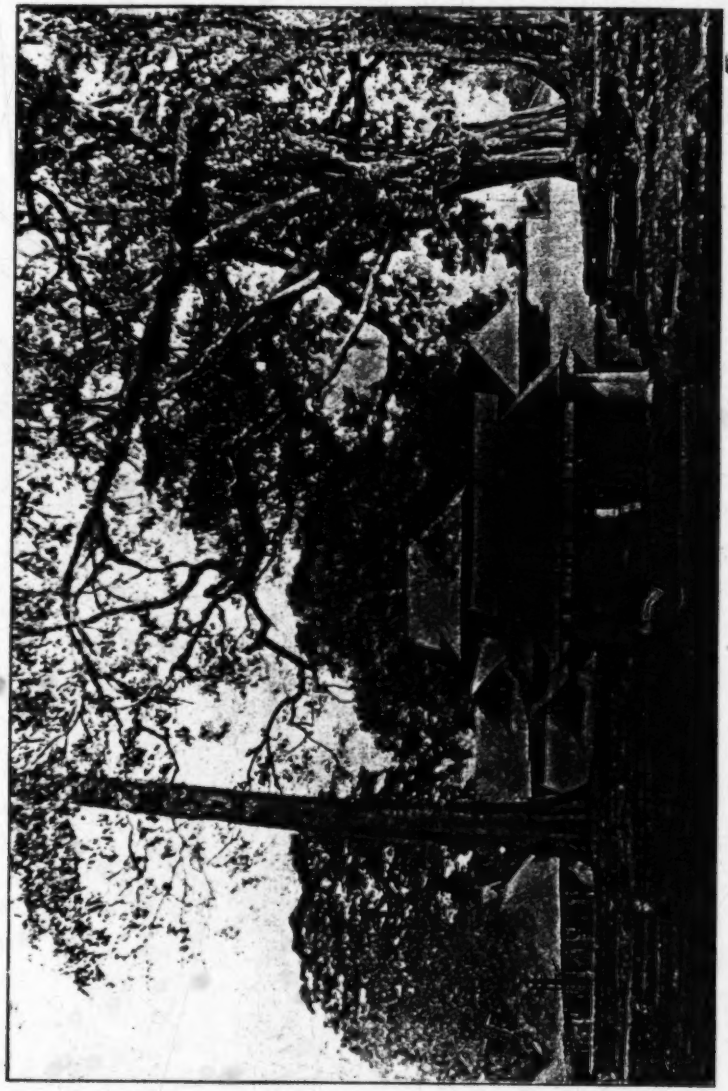

CRANGANORE BHAGAVATHI TEMPLE.

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776
137

[facing p. 86]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

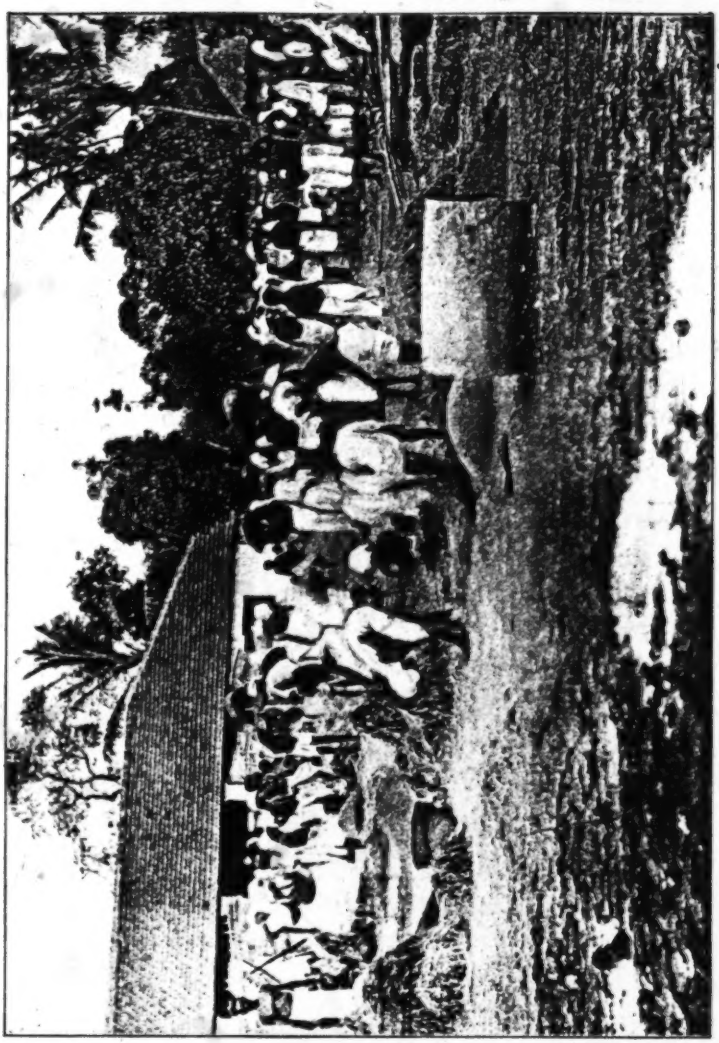

NAYAR WOMEN THRESHING CORN.

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576
291
342
137

[facing p. 98]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

[P. 66]

MAP 8

102
103
137
491

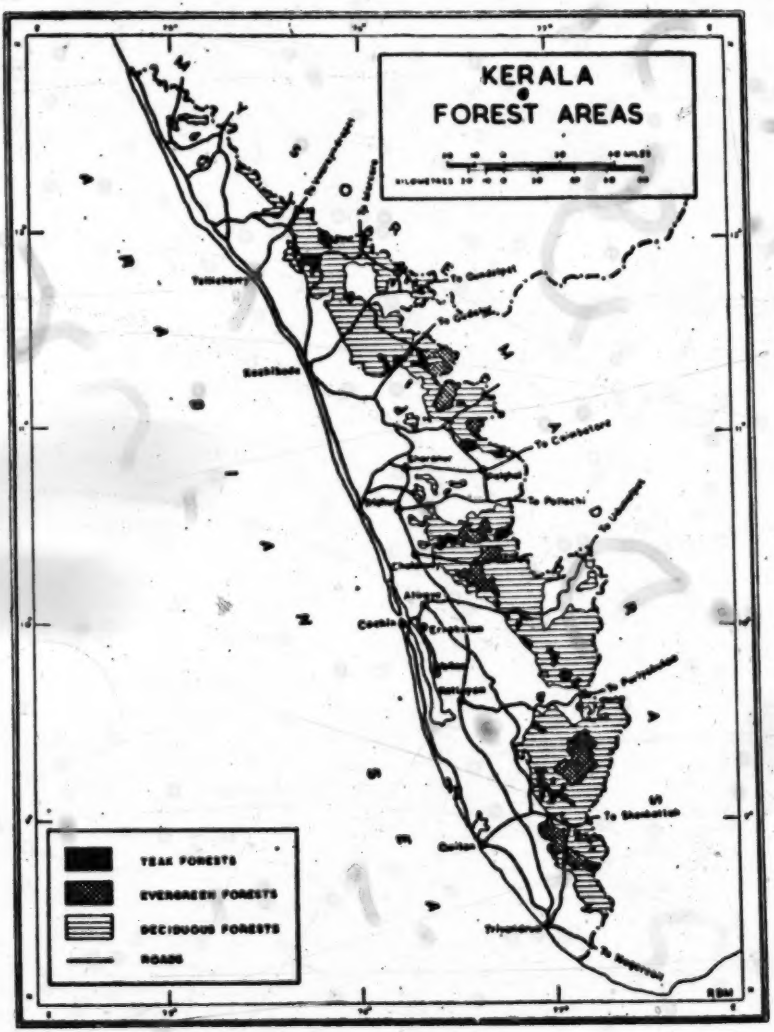

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%).

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth.

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging.

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

137 distributed over the year. The high degree of rainfall, old geological formation and
132 maritime climate have largely been responsible for the luxuriant forest growth in Kerala. Trees get the full benefit of moisture, depth of soil and protection from frost and drought. For these reasons, forests in Kerala also possess the advantage of a long growing season.

137 4.5 Most of the forest area lies in the high ranges on the eastern border of the
311 State and in the area adjacent to these. Only a few strips are found in the coastal plain. The forest area is, however, distributed over all the districts of the State. Since the forests run across the whole of eastern border while the districts in the State occur almost longitudinally, all districts, except Alleppey have a good proportion of their area under forests. The districts of Quilon and Trichur have as high as 45.2 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively of their area under forests. (Table 23) 2

137 4.6 The wide variations in climatic and topographical conditions in the State have resulted in a large variety of forests. With the exception of the desert, the truly temperate and the alpine types, all classes of forests are found in Kerala. In addition to the natural forests, Kerala has also got artificial plantations of valuable species. The State has been a pioneer in this sphere.

4.7 Among the natural forests, deciduous forests comprise 80 per cent of the growth. The rest is of the evergreen type. The evergreens are found mostly in the higher ranges above a height of 2,500 feet since they require a cool climate for their growth. The various types of forests found in the State are given below:

(1) *Evergreen Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet evergreen forests,
(*b*) Southern tropical semi-evergreen forests,
(*c*) Mountain wet sub-tropical evergreen forests, and
(*d*) The temperate Shola-Grasslands.

(2) *Deciduous Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet Deciduous forests and
(*b*) Tropical dry Deciduous Forests.

3/3 4.8 Among the evergreen types, most of the species are utilized in the manufacture
[322] of plywood and packing cases, which is a flourishing industry in the State. Pali Kulamavn and Vellapine are some of the well known plywood species. Anjali, which is used for boat-building and mahagony utilized for furniture, are two other important economic species found among the evergreens. Of late, a number of other evergreen species have sprung into prominence and are now finding economic uses. Since markets for these are growing, it is planned to extract these newer species also on a commercial scale.

4.9 Teak and rosewood are the most important species found among the deciduous forests. Vanteak, Rosewood, Poola and Charopine are some of the other important species belonging to this category. These species are chiefly useful in making furniture and in building and construction work. A detailed list of the trees and other major produce found in Kerala along with their present uses is given in Appendix 5.2 A list of minor produce is given in Appendix 6.3

2 [Table 23, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been preserved--Ana]
2, 3 [See pp. 329-333, category 116 --Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

SOME FORESTRY PROBLEMS

Acquisition of Private Forests

4.20 It has been mentioned that forests of Kerala are one of the best managed ones. But this is true only of the reserved forests under Government jurisdiction. In the Malabar area there are about 5 lakh acres of private forests which are maintained very unsatisfactorily. Unlike the reserved forests, there is no adequate protective staff for the care of these forests and no attention is paid to their regeneration or management on scientific lines. This has naturally resulted in an unwarranted depletion of forest wealth in the private forest areas. In the interests of adequate preservation of forest wealth, immediate steps are necessary to acquire the private forests and bring them within unified forest management under the control of the Forest Department. A provision for acquiring the private forests was made during the Second Plan but their acquisition could not be carried out. This must be effected during the Third Plan period. 313 [423]

The Problem of Encroachment

4.21 There is one other disquitening feature about forests in Kerala. Such is the pressure of population in the State that inroads are being made into the forest areas, especially where forests occur in the midland region. This has taken the form of Government deforestation of forest areas in the interests of Grow More Food Campaign. In addition, there have also been illicit encroachments and these areas are still under cultivation, although the State Government have declared them to be revertible. The extent of these areas is not very large compared to the total area under forests. About 9,750 acres fall within the former category and 16,500 acres belong to the category of revertible areas. The gravity of the encroachment situation arises from the fact that in case a lenient view is taken, these will prove a serious menace to proper maintenance of forest potential in the long run. 137 311

Regeneration of Evergreen Forests

4.22 The problems referred to above were of an administrative nature; but forestry in Kerala is faced with one or two urgent technical problems as well. One of these is to find out some way of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen species. 313

4.23 Of late a number of evergreen species have found new uses in the manufacture of plywood logs, railway sleepers, telegraph poles, etc., and these species have all come into prominence. Full potential of the existing evergreen forests cannot, however, be tapped since their natural regeneration takes time. The forest department has, therefore, got to keep control over the working of these forests.

4.24 In case of some species because of difficulties connected with regeneration, there has been a shortage of supply. The problem of regeneration of these forests is intimately connected with the problem of light. Regeneration requires light to

313 be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means [654] of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

137 4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious [654] menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilizers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

*433 162 462 4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of [245] population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

*433 313 654 4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. A amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

[Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 184 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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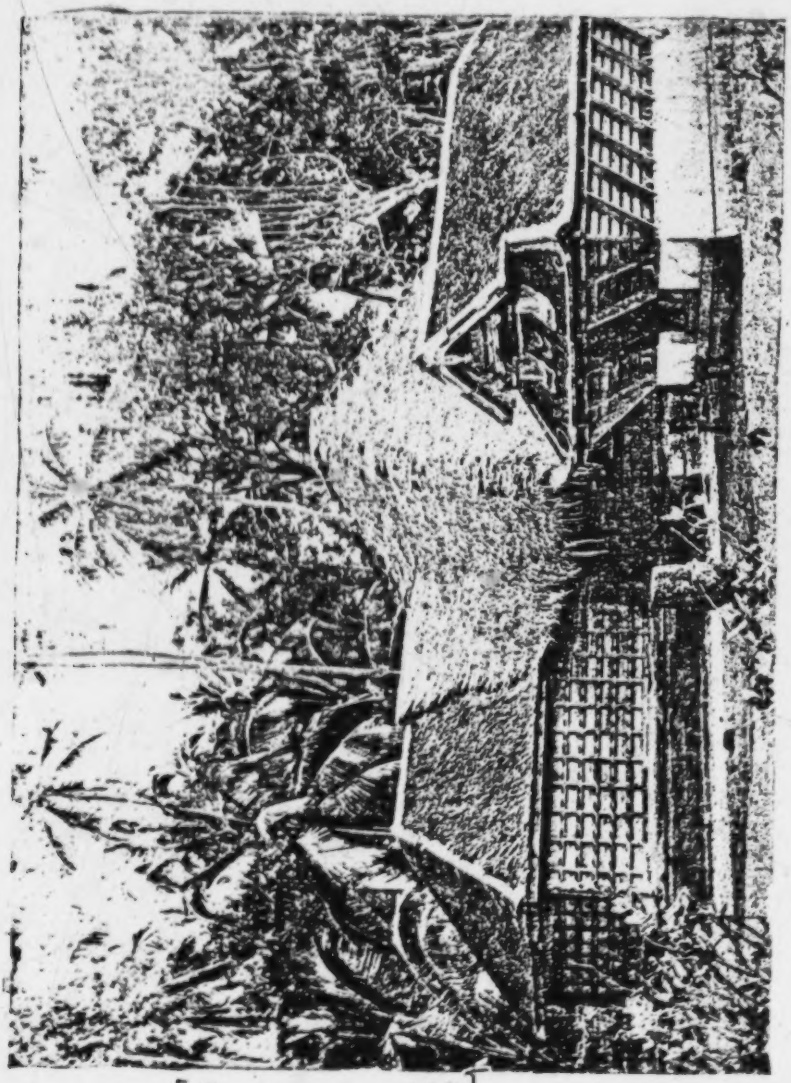

AIYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALICUT.

[Facing p. 393]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

There is hardly any public tank. One stream (channel) flows along the northern boundary of the desam during rainy seasons when the fields become flooded. But its utility is limited since with the summer the whole channel is dried up. There are private wells in all gardens and sometimes in the fields of corn. But they are shallow for the most part and the water-supply is inadequate. The ryots who are wretchedly poor cannot afford to utilise modern progress in the field of well-boring, nor are they conversant with such developments. 312

There are woods and forests near the desam as we have before mentioned, but they are of no practical use to the people. The forest, which is outside the boundary limit of this desam, is under Government supervision and people are not allowed to cut trees. Other resources of the forest, moreover, are hardly taken advantage of, partly by the general apathy of the cultivator for improvement and partly by its being situated sufficiently far to dissuade them from incurring the necessary loss involved. At the same time it is in a way an influence to the ryots' detriment, for tigers, boars, etc., which the Akalanum and Mattur hills breed occasionally, make nocturnal depredations on the ryots' stock and corn fields. The peasantry are helpless against these enemies. 137 136

Occupation of land.—The private jenmam ryotwari holdings during the year of settlement (fasli 1313) are classified as follows :— 423 427 [651]

Pattadars paying	Number.			Extent.		Assessment.	
	Single	Joint.	Total.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.
Re. 1 and less	2	...	2	...	50	1	8
Rs. 10 and less but over Re. 1	7	2	9	7	71	33	14
" 30 " " " 10 ...	3	2	5	18	21	96	7
" 50 " " " 30 ...	1	...	1	7	8	37	5
" 100 " " " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 250 " " " 100 ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 500 " " " 250 ...	1	...	1	99	56	401	13
" 1,000 " " " 500 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1,000 ...	1	...	1	718	80	2,315	4
Total ...	15	4	19	851	86	2,886	3

Out of 851·86 acres no less than 818·36 belong to the two jenmi landlords. There are no occupants of Government jenmam ryotwari land in the same year.

Almost all kanomdars are themselves cultivators. The two jenmis, who are Brahmans by caste, and nearly 10 other families

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

311 *Land.*—

	ACS.
Wet land	681·07
Occupied dry land	231·12
Unoccupied dry land	1,221·92
Garden land	109·59

137 Woodlands cover an area of about 150 acres. Shrubs and thickets, as well as rank undergrowth are found almost everywhere. Big trees, scattered and in groves, are also abundant.

Fruit trees and scattered shade trees are abundant. Among the former may be mentioned the mango, jack, coconut and areca-nut palms, the palmyra palm (yielding toddy), etc. There are numerous kinds of shade trees, many of which can be used as timber. Among timber trees specially may be noted the teak and the jack-tree.

312 Tanks and wells are very numerous. Wells indeed are too numerous to be enumerated. Every house has one or more and there are several in the fields, about one in an acre. There are more than 50 tanks, though some of them are mere ponds, dry in most months. A few tanks yield water unfailingly for irrigation on a small rate. They may be 6 to 20 feet deep and of varying lengths, from, say 10 to 100 feet. Some are of irregular shape. The wells are either circular or rectangular and from 10 to 40 feet deep--often deeper still. If circular their diameter measures from 5 to 10 feet and if rectangular they are from 6 to 10 feet broad and 8 to 16 feet long. A few are dry in summer, but many wells yield an abundant and unfailing supply of water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

There is a small channel passing through the village which is full during the rains, but mostly dry in the hot months. A dam is however put across it in some places and the scanty water stored up for future use. But there is not any very considerable quantity.

427 *Occupation of land.*—Most of the cultivated area is sublet to tenants. This is characteristic of Malabar, where most of the landlords do not themselves cultivate the land, but let it to others on short leases of 12 years called *kanom* leases. The kanom lease-holders in turn sublet the land, though a few of them actually cultivate it.

There are nominally 50 patta-holders and all of them come under the head of non-cultivating landowners. The richest have no particular occupation. Many are Nambudiri Brahmans not resident in the village, and they have comfortable positions as priests, preceptors, etc. The biggest landowners, who almost monopolise the land, are two or three in number and they live in ease on the revenues of their lands.

The great body of tenants own no land; they simply rent it on kanom lease or are tenants at will. There may be one or two among the landowners who are also the kanom tenants of some other landlord. But as a rule the kanom tenant owns no land.

There is a growing body of landless agricultural labourers.

By the census of 1901 there were 383 landholders (tenants) in that year. This number declined to 258 in 1917, paying land-revenue as stated below (note that the superior occupier contracts with his tenants that the latter pay the kist).

564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with [851] others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [613] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493]

* A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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The Sûdra clan, one of the best, supplies the women servants in the Nambûtiris' houses. 564* [357]

We will now pass to a consideration of the physical measures of some of the clans—men, not women unfortunately. It was impossible to measure the women. 141 564* [114]

Here are given the averages of the various measures of 186 Nâyars—

25 Kiriattil.	25 Vattakkâd.
25 Úrâli.	25 Purattu Chârna.
8 Kurup.	25 Akattu Chârna.
22 Nambiyâr.	25 Sûdra.

Note.—Group A, a non-descript group of a few individuals of eight different clans (see "Nambûtiris"—Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, page 10) is not included here for obvious reasons.

Each index given is the mean of the indices—

	Average of 186 Nâyars.
Stature	165·6
Height, sitting	84·9
Do. kneeling	122·4
Span	175·1
Chest	80·6
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·5
Do. width	8·3
Left middle finger	11·0
Hips	26·0
Left foot, length	25·4
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·2
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	73·1
Bigoniac	10·4
Bizygomatic	13·1
Maxillo-zygomatic index	80·1
Nasal height	4·8
Do. width	3·6
Do. index	76·8
Vertex to tragus	13·1
Do. to chin	19·7
Middle finger to patella	10·1

The physical characteristics of each clan separately will be given first. This table will enable us to see at a glance how the measures of any particular clan differ

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*564 from those of the average Nâyar; also how the averages compare with the Nambûtiri.

But, before doing this, we will exclude the endogamous
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*564 clans—the Ùrâli (wholly endogamous) and the Vattakkâd (partly endogamous), and take the averages of all the
128 others. It will be observed that exclusion of these two, who are each units apart from each other, and the first from all the others here dealt with, leaves the averages of all those who intermingle much the same as before, when the Ùrâli and Vattakkâd were included. It cannot be said that exclusion of these two bring the measures of the others any nearer to those of the Nambûtiri, whose blood is in constant process of mixture with the others, but not at all with the Úrâli and not much with the Vattakkâd. It must, however, be remembered that there are about 39 Nâyars to every Nambûtiri in Malabar, and that the latter does not waive his opportunities to disperse his favours amongst the Nâyar ladies.

141 The Úrâli and the Vattakkâd are not the only clans
*564 wholly or partly endogamous, but they are the only clans wholly or partly endogamous which have been examined thoroughly by me. The Attikkurissi clan is also endogamous, and there may be others.

[625] *Note.*—Individuals in the constabulary are excluded from all the tables, their measures being as a matter of course above the averages for their caste or clan.

	Averages of 136 Nâyars, Vattakkâd and Úrâli excluded.
Stature	165·7
Height, sitting	85·1
Do. kneeling	122·7
Span	175·3
Chest	80·4
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·6
Do. width	8·0
Left middle finger...	10·9
Hips	25·9
Left foot, length	25·5
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·3
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	72·9

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	Average of 136 Nâyars, Vattakkâd and Urâli excluded.
Bigoniac	10·4
Bizygomatic	13·0
Maxillo-zygomatic index	80·0
Nasal height	4·8
Do. width	3·7
Do. index	77·6
Vertex to tragus	13·1
Do. to chin	19·7
Middle finger to patella	10·0

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KIRIATTIL NÂYARS.

Ages ranging between 22 and 52.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Average of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks.
Stature, height ...	175·2	155 1	165·3	...	
Height, sitting ...	89·7	80·4	84·3	51·0	
Do. kneeling ...	129·5	113·8	122·0	73·8	
Span	186·0	160·4	174·3	105·4	
Chest	87·6	75·0	78·2	47·3	
Shoulders	42·8	37·7	39·4	23·8	
Left cubit	47·8	42·7	45·9	27·8	
Left hand, length ...	19·5	16·6	18·3	11·1	
Do. width ...	8·6	7·6	8·2	44·3	To left hand, length = 100.
Left middle finger ...	11·5	9·1	10·7	57·8	To left hand, length = 100.
Hips	27·9	24·4	26·0	15·7	
Left foot, length ...	26·8	23·2	25·3	15·3	
Do. width ...	9·8	8·0	8·8	13·9	
Cephalic length ...	20·1	17·5	19·0	11·5	
Do. width ...	14·6	13·3	13·9	...	
Do. index ...	80·0	69·0	73·1	...	
Bigoniac	11·3	9·1	10·4	...	
Bizygomatic ...	14·1	12·2	13·0	...	
Maxillo-zygomatic index.	84·8	73·4	80·1	...	
Nasal height ...	5·1	4·2	4·7	...	There are 8 whose nasal height is 5 and over.
Do. width	4·4	3·2	3·7	...	
Do. index	102·3	66·7	78·8	...	
Vertex to tragus ...	14·4	12·0	12·9	7·8	
Do. to chin ...	20·8	17·5	19·2	11·6	
Middle finger to patella.	14·7	5·5	9·7	5·86	

141 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of
*564 one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so.

In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

142 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains; the rest of the head, the face and body are always
302 shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are
*564 always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

142 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.
*564 A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body
[827] and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

*[564] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval
[302] patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest,
[305] abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

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* During the rains.

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[553]

Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan ...	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi ...	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvittil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Rámuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Rámuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Rârappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak. 553 552

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd. 613 552

URÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

141 ●
564*

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	* 120·8	74·0	* 120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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ÚRÂLI NÂYARS—*cont.*

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Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks.
Chest	88·0	77·4	81·2	49·8	
Shoulders	43·7	36·8	39·7	24·3	
Left cubit	51·4	41·6	45·2	27·7	
Left hand length ...	20·5	17·0	17·8	10·9	
Do. width	8·8	7·5	7.9	...	
Left middle finger ...	12·2	9·6	10·7	...	
Hips	29·6	23·7	26·0	15·9	
Left foot length	28·3	23·7	24·7	15·1	
Do. width	9·8	8·2	8·7	...	
Cephalic length	20·4	17·5	19·2	11·8	
Do. width	15·0	13·4	14·0	..	
Do. index	79·0	68·2	72·9	...	
Bigoniac	11·1	10·0	10·5	...	
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·2	13·2	...	
Maxillo-zygomatic index.	84·8	74·1	80·6	...	
Nasal height ...	* 5·3	4·1	4·8	2·94	*There were 6 of 5·0 and over.
Do. width	4·0	3·2	3·6	...	
Do. index	84·4	65·4	75·5	...	
Vertex to tragus	14·2	11·9	12·9	7·9	
Do. to chin	21·2	18·4	19·9	12·2	
Middle finger to patella...	18·7	7·1	11·5	7·05	

Face.—Among the descriptive notes of individuals made when measuring them are these :—

(1) Supraciliary arches, slight. Nasal notch. Chin recedes slightly. Chin square with slight hollow in front.

(2) Nasal bone slightly raised. Nasal notch moderate. Supraciliary arches ditto. Chin pointed.

(3) Head pyramidal. Thick flabby nose. Nasal bone slightly raised.

(4) Forehead moderately high and straight. Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight ; very slight prognathism. Chin recedes.

(5) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches marked. Lips thick. Nasal notch. Nasal bone slightly raised. Ears small.

(6) Protuberance over the right ear. Forehead markedly prominent. No nasal notch.

As a rule the nose is straight, or the nasal bone is slightly raised. In some cases the nasal notch is deep.

In one individual the broadest part of the head was just *above* the ear.

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In another, the alæ of the nose appear to have become enlarged through taking snuff.

In another, the point of the ear (noticed by Darwin) in the helix $\frac{1}{3}$ from the top, was very marked.

One individual of 29 looked at least 40. He had [145] suffered severely from small-pox.

Figure.—The average is slight to medium. One is noted as stout, and another as very strongly built.

Hair.—It has been noticed already (see Nambûtiris. 142
Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I) that the growth of hair on the 564*
cheeks is a racial characteristic. In some of the lower races it is entirely absent, while in the Nambûtiris it is constant. About half the Urâli Nâyars examined had a regular growth of hair on the cheeks.

On the head.—In all but one the hair on the head, invariably black and glossy, was thick and wavy; in a few, it was very thick or fairly so; and, in the case of three individuals, it was noted as curly. A few grey hairs were noticed in four individuals aged respectively 25, 29, 30, 45; and one young fellow of 20 had a small patch of white hair over the right eyebrow.

Hair on the chest was slight to moderate as a rule, but in 4 individuals it was thick.

Hair on the arms was observed to be slight in 13, and moderate or thick in 12.

In all, the hair on the legs varied between moderate and thick, excepting that in 2 the growth was very thick. One man had shaved his feet, and another had shaved the backs of his hand and his wrists. In a few there was a tolerably thick growth of hair in the small of the back. This is common to all the Nâyars.

Colour of the skin.—In 22 cases in which this was recorded the darkest was No. 43 (Broca's colour types) and the fairest No. 40. Twelve individuals were of No. 29 or fairer, and this (a little fairer than 29) seems to be about the average. A little darker than the Kiriattil.

Colour of the eyes.—8 individuals were of No. 2 (Broca); 6 individuals were of No. 1; 6 individuals between 1 and 2.

Ornaments.—A few of those examined said that men 301
of the clan never wore earrings, though their ears were 564*
pierced. There may be some section of the clan who do not; but, as a rule, earrings are worn by those who can afford them. One man indeed said he never wore them, fearing thieves might steal them. Another wore

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301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami- *564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

● 141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613 *564 Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Pâyarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

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VATTAKKÂD NÂYARS.

There is some obscurity in the sub-divisions of this clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranâd, they are divided into the Undiâtuna, or "those who pull" (to work the oil machine by hand) and the "Muri-Vechchu-âtune," or "those who tie or fasten bullocks" (to work the oil machine by means of bullocks and not by hand); yet farther north, Tellicherry and thereabouts there are no known sub-divisions; while in Ernâd, to the eastward, these names are quite unknown, and the clan is divided into the "Veluttâtu," the White, and the "Karuttâtu," the Black. It has been remarked already (page 82) that the Vattakkâd (those who turn round) are not always admitted to be true Nâyars. In the extreme north of Malabar they are called Vaniyan—oil monger. The "White" have nothing to do with expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary occupation of the Black. The "White" may eat with Nâyars of any clan; the Black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The Black sub-clan is strictly endogamous. The other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their woman may marry with men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. But not *vice versâ*. The men must marry within their own sub-clan. I think, but am not sure a man of this clan may marry a woman of the Pallichchan clan; but even if such an alliance is permissible anywhere, I do not think it ever takes place. It may be taken as accurate that men of the clan always marry within their own sub-clan, and that women of the superior sub-clan very often mate with Nâyars of superior clans.

In taking the measures I made no distinction between the sub-clans; it was only just before completion that the existence of the sub-clans was discovered. Had the important fact been discovered earlier, the sub-clans would have been separated. Though scarcely enough for scientific accuracy, it is tolerably certain that most, if not all, of those examined were of the superior sub-clan, which is exogamous as regards the women. The inferior section of the clan—the Black—is not to be found north of the Korapuzha river in North Malabar. One quarter of my subjects were measured in North Malabar—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Badagara; and for the rest, in some cases it is noted that the individuals are of the superior section. This accounts pretty correctly for rather more than half. I am tolerably certain that the other half also belonged to it.

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124 *564 However alert one's discrimination may be, one may fall into possible error as I did here. "What caste do you belong to?" "I am a Nâyar." "What kind of Nâyar?" "I am a Nâyar." It may take some time to let in comprehension that the name of his clan is wanted, then the answer is "I am a good Nâyar" (one of a good or superior clan). At last he will say he is a Sûdra Nâyar, a Kiriyattil or whatever he may be. Again, many claim the Kiriyattil as their clan when they really have no right to do so, being inferior to it.

● 141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 62.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	178·6	154·3	167·0	...
Height, sitting	92·0	78·7	84·6	50·6
Do. kneeling	131·3	112·4	122·9	73·6
Span	190·0	164·7	177·8	106·5
Chest	95·8	70·6	81·3	48·7
Shoulders	42·8	36·9	40·3	24·1
Left cubit	51·4	44·3	46·9	28·1
Left hand, length	20·5	17·0	18·7	11·2
Do. width	8·9	7·6	8·2	...
Do. middle finger	12·6	10·4	11·9	...
Hips	27·8	23·6	26·3	15·7
Left foot length	28·1	23·6	25·7	15·4
Do. width	9·8	7·9	8·9	...
Cephalic length	20·1	18·2	19·2	11·5
Do. width	15·0	13·2	14·2	...
Do. index	79·0	68·0	74·0	...
Bigoniac	11·2	9·7	10·5	...
Bizygomatic	14·0	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	84·4	77·0	80·1	...
Nasal height	5·3	4·0	4·9	2·93
Do. width	3·9	3·0	3·5	...
Do. index	87·5	61·2	73·1	...
Vertex to tragus	13·9	12·3	13·1	7·8
Do. to chin	21·5	17·3	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	14·5	1·8	9·4	5·62

The individual, whose mid finger when standing at "attention" to the top of his patella gives the maximum measure, had a span which was 23·4 more than his height. In seven, the length of the left foot was greater than the breadth of the hips across the crests of the ilium. In ten, the nasal length was 5 cm. and over.

The statures of the first ten measured averaged 168·2 and the nasal index 76·6; otherwise the correspondence between the averages of 10 and of 25 is complete. Perhaps mixture of subjects belonging to the two sections

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of the clan is responsible for the rather important differences noted. 141 564 *

Face.—Nasal notch is noted as deep in 3 and moderate in 1; in the others it was slight or not apparent. The nasal bone was raised above the line of the nose in 5, and depressed in 2. The following are brief notes of individuals:—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Forehead high. Supraciliary arches very slight. Chin long.

(2) Forehead high. Nasal point slightly raised. Nasal notch moderate.

(3) Nasal point depressed so that the nose has as it were a knob at the tip.

(4) Supraciliary arches not apparent to the touch. Slightly rounded nostrils. Teeth project forwards.

(5) Deep nasal notch. Supraciliary arches marked.

The posterior portion of the head of the individual whose nasal index was the minimum seemed to project uncommonly; but his cephalic length was no more than 19·4 or a little above the average.

Figure.—Two-thirds are noted as "slight," nearly one-third as "medium," and two (individuals) as stout. One was very lean.

Hair.—In rather more than half the number of subjects the hair on the head was noted as *thick* and *wavy*. In most of the others it was *moderately thick*. In two only it was thin. In two it was *curly*. A man aged 27 had very slight growth of hair on the face (none on the cheeks), but had a fairly strong growth in the small of the back. Individuals of 40, 42 and 62 were a little grey, while one of 45 was almost bald, and what hair he had was white. Very few had hair on the cheeks, or anything like a full growth thereof. It was observed in but two instances, and in a third as slight. But it is proper to remark that, in the earlier period of my investigations, I did not make special notes about whiskers. 142 564 *

Hair on the chest is, as usual, not easy to gauge when there obtains the custom of shaving it periodically, every fortnight or every month. In about a quarter of the subjects the growth is noted as moderate, and in a sixth as thick; in the rest as slight or very slight. In the case of a man aged 45 the hair was white as well as thick.

Hair on the arms was moderate to thick in 13, slight to very slight in 11, and absent in 1.

Hair on the legs was, in every case but one, moderate or thick; in the case of one, very thick. The exception was in the case of a man sick and ill developed.

*142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] [789] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

● 141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119¼ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

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SÛDRA NÂYARS.

We now come to the Sûdra Nâyars, men and women of which clan supply the house servants in the Nambûtiri Brâhmans' houses. It is only a few who are occupied in this way, however, and of all those examined only one is noted as a servant. The subjects were found in various parts of South Malabar, a few from the neighbouring Cochin Native State. 564* [357]

Ages ranging between 22 and 52.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	173·3	151·1	165·9	...
Height, sitting	90·8	78·8	85·8	51·7
Do. kneeling	128·3	110·1	122·9	74·1
Span	186·0	158·3	174·3	105·1
Chest	89·0	76·0	81·1	48·7
Shoulders	43·4	37·4	40·2	24·2
Left cubit	48·6	41·4	46·1	27·3
Left hand, length	20·8	16·8	18·7	11·3
Do. width	8·6	7·3	8·1	...
Left middle finger	12·1	9·9	11·1	...
Hips	27·9	24·0	26·0	15·7
Left foot, length	27·0	23·1	25·3	15·3
Do. width	10·3	7·8	8·9	...
Cephalic length	20·2	17·7	19·2	11·6
Do. width	15·3	13·0	14·1	...
Do. index	86·4	65·0	73·8	...
Bigoniac	11·4	9·4	10·5	...
Bizygomatic	14·1	11·9	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	85·7	76·6	80·3	..
Nasal height	5·4	4·0	4·7	2·83
Do. width	4·2	3·3	3·7	...
Do. index	89·1	67·9	79·4	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·5	13·3	8·0
Do. to chin	21·3	17·7	19·6	11·8
Middle finger to patella	15·7	7·0	9·9	5·97

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Note.—The individual whose cephalic index is the maximum was measured in Palghat, where there are many Pattar (East Coast) Brâhmans; his father was, in all probability, one of them. The index of no other equalled 79·0. One broad headed man, whose father was known to have been a Pattar Brâhman, was excluded from the averages.

There were but three subjects whose nasal height was 5 cm. and over.

Face.—Slight prognathism was noticed in one. In another the posterior portion of the parietal was curiously flat.

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141 Some individuals were described in my notes—
*564 (1) Nasal bones wide and thick. Teeth project.

(2) Lips thick and somewhat projecting. Chin receding. The flesh on the chin is thick, giving it a rounded lump like appearance. Inion appears to be in a projecting ridge round the back of the head. (Cephalic length 19·7.)

(3) Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight. Lips slightly everted. Teeth in upper jaw project forwards. Eyes deep set. Inner corner of eyes a trifle oblique.

The last two specimens are uncommon; not typical. The thick lips and projecting teeth are not usually noticeable as in their case. The long oval face is the common type. The fashion of wearing no hair on the face, [302] shaving the head at the back and at the sides and a little [291] over the forehead, leaving but the oval patch on the vertex, no head covering being worn, gives the face an appearance of length. But while the average of the measure vertex to chin, for all the Nâyars,* reduced to stature equals 100, is 11·9, the same for 21 of the 30 different castes † examined in Malabar is greater. The Mukkuvan is as high as 13·4, while on the other hand the Nambûtiri is less, being but 11·7.

Figure.—One out of 25 is recorded as "stout." One-third were "slight." Nearly two-thirds were medium or thereabouts; and this seems to represent the average.

142 *Hair.*—More than half are noted as having whiskers,
*564 that is, growth of hair on the cheeks. In two-thirds of the subjects the hair on the head was thick and wavy; in a few cases it was very thick. Individuals aged respectively 25, 32, and 52 were noted as being a little grey. In one-quarter of the total number the hair was thin to moderately thick. One individual of this clan is marked as having hair a little grey.

Hair on the chest.—Rather more than a quarter of the whole had thick to moderately thick hair. In the case of one man hair was thick all over the body, even on the back: everywhere except over the ribs, the front of the upper arm and shoulder. In another the hair on the small of the back was *thick*. In the greater number of individuals it was marked slight, and moderate, and in a few it was absent.

* Group A included.
† Counting each clan of the Nâyars separately.

*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil	Krishnan	Cultivator	52
Paritbil	Achutan	Do.	27
613 Malabîtil	Sivarâman	Do.	22
Cholale	Râman	Do.	20
551 Muthîra	Narrâyanan	Teacher	26
463 Kanakath	Kunhi Krishnan * ...	Unemployed ...	22
Mannareth	Shangaran	Trader	30
Kûmbiyal	Kannan	Peon	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan	Do.	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

*553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

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Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

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NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS—*cont.*

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Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Left hand length	20·0	17·7	18·4	...
Do. width	8·5	7·3	7·8	...
Do. middle finger ...	12·5	10·3	10·9	...
Hips	26·7	24·4	25·4	15·4
Left foot length	27·2	23·6	25·2	15·3
Do. width	9·2	8·0	8·6	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·3	19·2	11·6
Do. width	15·4	13·2	14·1	...
Do. index	79·3	69·4	73·7	...
Bigoniac	11·5	9·1	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·5	11·9	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	87·1	73·8	79·2	...
Nasal height	5·5	4·2	4·8	...
Do. width	4·3	3·2	3·7	...
Do. index	92·9	62·7	77·3	...
Vertex to tragus	13·9	12·2	13·0	7·9
Do. to chin	21·4	18·2	19·7	11·9
Mid finger to patella	15·7	6·5	10·4	4·73

Note.—Although the number of subjects is limited to 22, the averages may be accepted as correct. The averages for 10 and for 25 are, as a rule, identical; in a few there is a trifling difference, but nowhere is the difference more than trifling.

In eight individuals the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. This is about 36 per cent.

In four the nasal index was 90 or over, and in four it was less than 70.

Face.—Observation was recorded in but nine instances.

The reason for this which seems to give examination of subjects a somewhat casual character, is that during the early part of my investigations my notes as to physical characteristics, shape of the nose, etc., were less complete than they were later on. Very seldom, in fact only in the case of the Irulans, was one caste examined completely at a time. It was impossible to work on the people caste by caste. Official duties rendered it impossible to regulate one's peregrinations so as to do so. Subjects were taken where and when they could be got hold of anywhere in the district.

In two cases only the supraciliary arches were rather prominent; in the others, slight or absent.

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*141 *564 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated. Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 *564 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspicuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one [293] starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees [177] replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman 292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater, 751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 301 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [789]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

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*115 564 613 463 551 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below:—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pathushêri	Kanâran	Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
Mâvila	Kumâran	Cultivator	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu	.....	22
Puthiotil	Râman	Servant	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan	Cultivator	25
Ramath	Kunhi Râman ...	Landlord	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni	Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi	Paidal	Cultivator	25

*564 553

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

●14 564

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width	15·5	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

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length was 5 cm. or over. In one individual the iliac 141
bone was much higher at the right side than on the left. 564*

Face.—A few individuals were noted thus—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Nasal point slightly elevated. Helix of ear very thin; the Darwin's point in the centre of the curve on the left and high up on the right.

(2) Deep nasal notch. Chin receding. Lips thick.

(3) Slight nasal notch. Supraciliary arches developed at outer edges. Chin recedes.

(4) Supraciliary arches and glabella in one marked ridge. Nasal point somewhat raised. Nasal notch.

(5) Very deep nasal notch. Very wide and thick eyebrows.

Figure.—More than half are marked as slight—a few of them "very slight"; the rest "medium." None "stout."

Hair.—As a rule, to which exceptions are very few, 142
hair on the head is thick and wavy: curly in the case of 564*
one individual. The hair of a man of 70 was noted as "very thin and grey." A man of 31 also had hair which was "thin and grey," but he was exceptional. The growth of hair on the cheeks—whiskers—was observed in almost every subject.

Hair on the chest.—The average is "moderate."

On the arms.—The growth of hair in half of the subjects was "slight to very slight"; in the other half, "moderate to thick."

On the legs.—It was noted as "moderate" to "thick" in more than three-fourths of those examined; in a few, "slight."

The growth of hair of a few individuals is here specified—

(1) Aged 54. Hair on the head moderately thick and grey. Hair on the face white. Growth of hair on the cheeks. Hair all over chest grey. Very long thick hair on the back. Hair on the legs and arms thick.

(2) Aged 36. Hair on the head moderately thick and wavy. Glossy black. On chest and middle line of abdomen, moderate. On the arms and legs moderately [302]
thick. Shaves the head (except the crown), face, chest, abdomen, wrists and hands, about every 15 days.

(3) Aged 28. Hair on the head thick and wavy. Growth of hair on cheeks; on the chin it is very thick. On the chest, moderate; on the arms, very slight; on the legs, thick. Does not shave his chest, as doing so [302]
would make him weak; on the other hand, if he does [753]
not shave his head and face, he will become sick. [826]

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AKATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

*564 This is one of the relatively inferior clans. It is not one of the fighting clans, as the Purattu Chârna. The clan is divided into two sub-clans, one of which looks to the Zamorin as their lord, and the other owns lordship to minor lordlings, as the Tirumulpâd of Nilambûr. The former are superior; and a woman of the latter may mate with a man of the former, but not *vice versâ*. The men, but not the women of the two sub-clans, may eat together. There is no distinctive name for the sub-clans. As mentioned already, women of this clan are under no restriction as to residence or travel as are those of the superior clans; hence, of late, officials in North Malabar, officials or vakils residing in Madras, have been wiving with these women. The women may mate with men of their own or of any other clan or with a Nambûtiri. Not so the men, who can marry women of their own clan only.

*141 564

Ages ranging from 20 to 44.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks.
Stature ...	179·4	154·7	165·0	...	
Height, sitting ..	92·0	79·7	85·5	51·8	
Do. kneeling ...	132·6	113·8	122·3	72·1	
Span ...	190·4	161·9	175·2	106·2	
Chest ...	89 0	76·6	81·0	49·0	
Shoulders ...	42·5	37·4	40·1	24·3	
Left cubit ...	51·1	42·4	45·9	27·8	
Left hand length ..	21·2	16·9	18·4	*11·1	*11·15
Do. width ...	8·8	7·3	8·0	..	
Left middle finger ...	12·7	10·1	10·9	6·6	
Do. hips Do. ...	28·4	24·1	25·9	15.7	
Left foot length ...	28·7	22·3	†25·1	15·2	† 25·15. In one subject greatest length was measured to the second toe.
Do. width ...	9·8	7·9	8·8	...	
Cephalic length ...	20·4	17·0	19·1	11·6	
Do. width ...	15·5	13·0	13·9	...	
Do. index ...	80·6	67·2	72·8	...	
Bigoniac ...	11·2	9·8	10·5	...	
Bizygomatic ...	14·2	11·8	13·0	...	
Maxillo-zygomatic index.	85·4	78·5	81·2	...	
Nasal height ...	5·4	4 0	4·7	2·84	
Do. width ...	4·1	3·1	3·6	...	
Do. index ...	90·9	63·0	77·0		
Vertex to tragus ...	13·9	11·8	13·9	7·9	
Do. to chin ...	20·9	17·9	19·6	11·9	
Middle finger to patella.	13·5	3·3	9·9	5·97	

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In three the cephalic length was 20 cm. or over. In nine the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on a few individuals will be set down here. In most cases the supraciliary arches were well marked, and the nasal notch was deep. Nose generally straight, or nasal point slightly raised. Prognathism rare. Lips, especially the lower lip, often very thick.

(1) Very well bred looking. Eyebrows fleshy and thickly marked. Supraciliary arches very slight. Deep nasal notch. Nose straight; nasal point raised very slightly—and very well shaped. In the left ear a very small hole above the usual one in the lobe; I have not noted why it was made.

(2) Supraciliary arches rather prominent. Upper portion of forehead somewhat protuberant. Deep nasal notch. Nasal point raised. Lower lip thick. This man's father was a Nambûtiri. He appears in the plate.

(3) Forehead high. Deep nasal notch. Slight prognathism. Lower lip very thick.

(4) Supraciliary arches not marked. Nasal notch moderate. Lips thin.

Two out of the twenty-five were deeply pitted with small-pox, the Malabar goddess of small-pox, Bhânnâramûrti, having hurt them. In one man the broadest part of the head was above the ears, a little in front. [164] [776]

Figure.—The number of those put down as slight and those put down as medium are about equal.

Hair.—Worn in the usual Malayali fashion which has been described already and, as a rule, plentiful and wavy; treated with gingelly oil, which is sometimes perfumed. The number of individuals whose hair (on the head) was noted as "very thick and wavy" is abnormally large. A young man aged 24 had some white hairs here and there on his head; a man of 35 was a little grey; a man of 39 also; and one of 44 was quite grey. Whiskers or growth of hair on the cheeks were observed in more than half the number of subjects. In several there was hair, fairly thick in some, in the small of the back, and one man had thick hair all over the back. 142 564* [302]

Hair on the chest was "moderate" or "thick" in more than half.

Hair on the arms was "moderate to thick" in about half; in the other half "slight."

Hair on the legs was, as a rule, thick: rarely less than moderately thick. The legs of one man were like those of a bear.

*142 564 The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

[302] [613] The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.			1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
"	"	"	1 to 2	"	6	"
"	"	"	2	"	7	"
"	"	"	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

*141 564 *Weight* of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb.

163 564 *Prolificness.*—In the 8 recorded instances the average number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

301 *564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears are always pierced, and the usual Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

(1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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KURUP NÂYARS.

The number examined, 8, is not, of course, enough on which to base dependable averages. The men of this clan are—judging by the average such as it is—the tallest of all those examined. Tall, straight, well-bred looking men they are, carrying with them an air of independence and self-respect as one of the old fighting clans. It will be observed that the cephalic length is greater than the average for all the Nâyars, while the cephalic index is less, showing that they are longer headed, and more dolichocephalic than the average Nâyar. Again, the measure of vertex to chin is much greater than in any other clan; and their faces are narrower. The index $\frac{\text{Bizygomatic} \times 100}{\text{Vertex to chin}}$ gives the Nambûtiri one of 69.5, all the Nâyars excluding the Kurups 66.2, and the Kurups 64.5.

The men are called by their clan name, Râma Kurup, Krishna Kurup, Gôvinda Kurup. The name Rama seems to be a favourite one, as four out of eight were so called.

Ages ranging between 20 and 72 *.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 8.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·9	163·4	167·1	...
Height, sitting	88·8	82·9	85·7	51 3
Do. kneeling	130·3	120·2	124·1	74·3
Span	184·8	173·0	178·6	106·8
Chest	89·4	78·3	82·4	49·3
Shoulders	42·2	38·8	40·4	24·2
Left cubit	51·0	45·1	47·5	28·4
Left hand length	20·8	18·2	19·3	11·5
Do. width	8·8	7·7	8·2	..
Left middle finger	12·3	10·9	11·5	6·9
Hips	28·4	24·5	26·4	15·2
Left foot length	28·0	24·9	26·4	15·2
Do. width	9·5	8·0	8·8	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·9	19·5	11·7
Do. width	14·6	13·4	14·0	...
Do. index	74·6	68·9	72·0	..
Bigoniac	10·9	9·6	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	83·5	76·7	79·6	...
Nasal length	5·3	4·4	4·8	2·87
Do. width	3·9	3·4	3·7	...
Do. index	84·1	64·2	76·2	...
Vertex to tragus	14·3	12·3	13·2	7·9
Do. to chin	21·8	19·0	23·3	12·1
Middle finger to patella	13·0	3·6	9·2	5·51

* The man who said he was by his horoscope 72 was put down by me as looking 58.

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In two individuals (out of 8) the cephalic length was over 20 cm. In three the nasal height was 5 cm. and over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on two subjects are—

(1) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches distinctly developed. Very deep nasal notch. Nasal point elevated above the line of the nose.

(2) Supraciliary arches not apparent. Nasal point slightly elevated.

Figure.—The greater number are noted as slight; about one-third as medium to stoutly built.

Hair.—Much as those of the other clans. The man who said he was 72, but who looked 58, showed no sign of baldness; his hair was but moderately grey. Another, aged 36, a very strongly-built man, was becoming bald. Baldness at his age is, I should say, rare. 142 564*

Colour of the skin.—The average is a trifle darker than 29 (Broca). The fairest was fairer than 29, and the darkest was No. 43.

Colour of the eyes.—The average colour of those examined is between 1 and 2 (Broca).

Ornaments call for no remark; they are much as those worn by other Nâyars. Ears are always pierced and earrings worn. 301 564* 304

It would be profitless to deal separately with the measures of the individuals comprising the group A in the same way as the others which are more or less complete, with the exception of the Kurup clan. As said already in the group A consists of— 141 564*

2	of the	Nelliôden clan.	3	of the	Pallichan clan.
2	„	Viyyûr clan.	1	„	Muppattinâyiran clan.
1	„	Vangilôth clan.	2	„	Vyâpâri clan.
1	„	Kitâvu clan.	1	„	Attikkurissi clan.

and their measures taken collectively have been quoted. The Attikkurissi are endogamous, and the Kitâvu do not wear earrings. [301]

At page 60, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where, speaking of the Nambûtiri Brâhmans, it was said that possibly it may be found that marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son may be found to produce the finest issue; to be the best for preservation of the race. This kind of marriage of first cousins, but never of progeny of sisters or of brothers, is in a general way the rule throughout Southern India, and it obtains amongst the 582 [564]*

141 *564 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so.

In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

● 142 302 *564 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains; the rest of the head, the face and body are always shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

142 *564 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.

A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head [827] profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

*[564] [302] [305] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest, abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

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* During the rains.

502
Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They 564*
shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a [412]
couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. [177]
In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the [305]
eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never.

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The 142
darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. 564*
Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome.

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One 301
or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a 564*
rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some [304]
of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍinâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly.

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam [789]
of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, [515]
on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to

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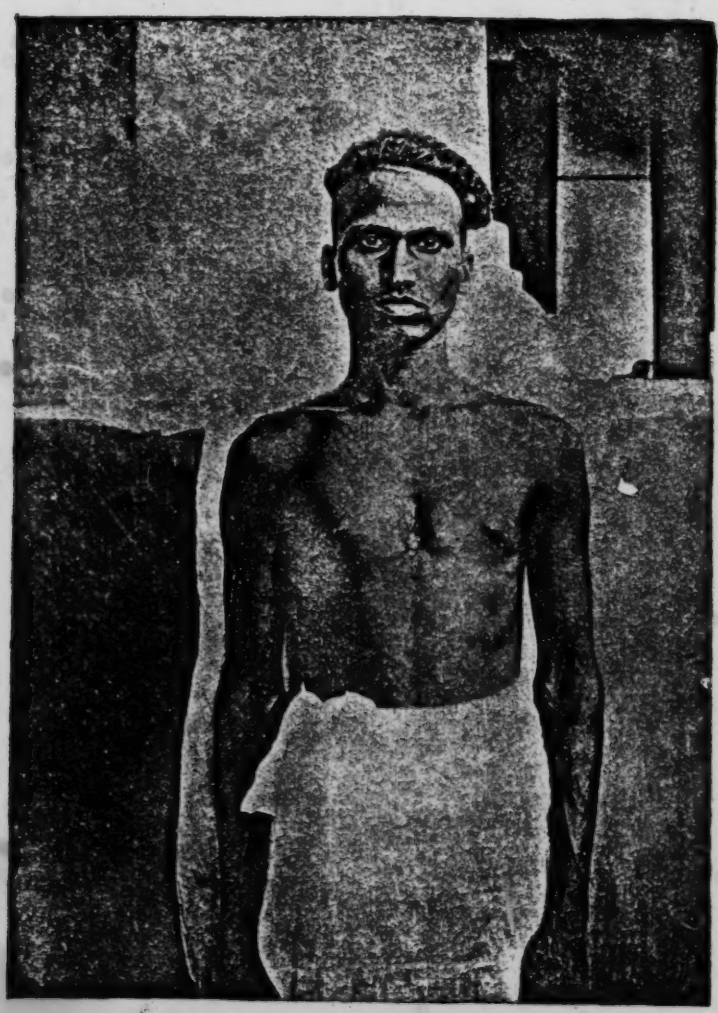

AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 196]

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PL. VIII.

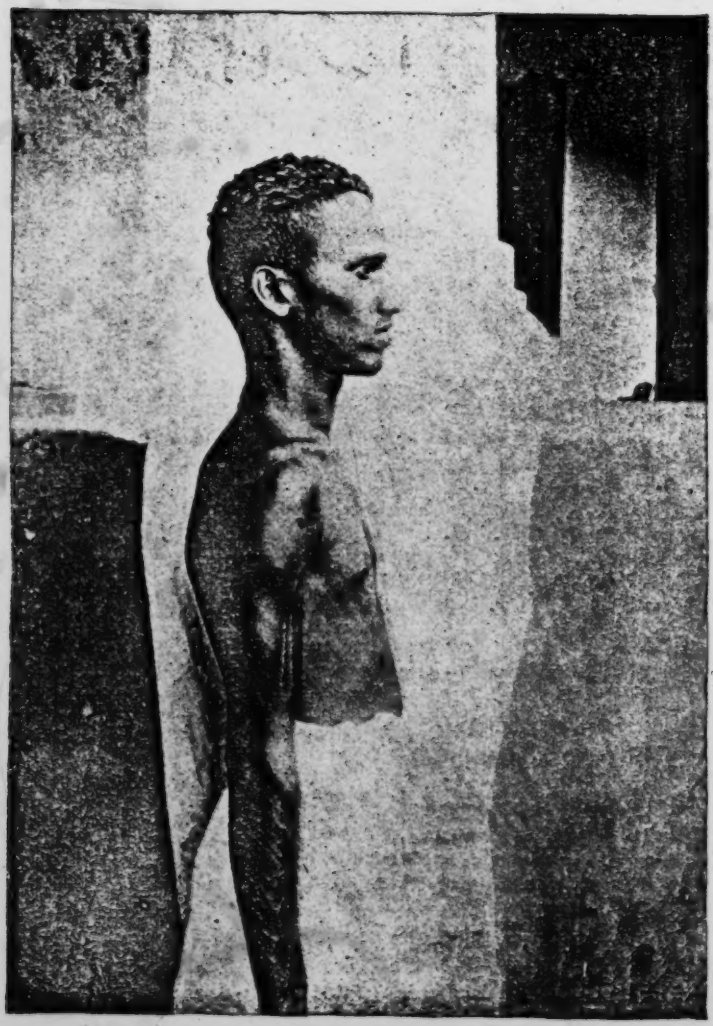

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 198]

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In another, the alæ of the nose appear to have become enlarged through taking snuff. 141 564*

In another, the point of the ear (noticed by Darwin) in the helix $\frac{1}{3}$ from the top, was very marked.

One individual of 29 looked at least 40. He had suffered severely from small-pox. [145]

Figure.—The average is slight to medium. One is noted as stout, and another as very strongly built.

Hair.—It has been noticed already (see Nambûtiris. Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I) that the growth of hair on the cheeks is a racial characteristic. In some of the lower races it is entirely absent, while in the Nambûtiris it is constant. About half the Urâli Nâyars examined had a regular growth of hair on the cheeks. 142 564*

On the head.—In all but one the hair on the head, invariably black and glossy, was thick and wavy; in a few, it was very thick or fairly so; and, in the case of three individuals, it was noted as curly. A few grey hairs were noticed in four individuals aged respectively 25, 29, 30, 45; and one young fellow of 20 had a small patch of white hair over the right eyebrow.

Hair on the chest was slight to moderate as a rule, but in 4 individuals it was thick.

Hair on the arms was observed to be slight in 13, and moderate or thick in 12.

In all, the hair on the legs varied between moderate and thick, excepting that in 2 the growth was very thick. One man had shaved his feet, and another had shaved the backs of his hand and his wrists. In a few there was a tolerably thick growth of hair in the small of the back. This is common to all the Nâyars.

Colour of the skin.—In 22 cases in which this was recorded the darkest was No. 43 (Broca's colour types) and the fairest No. 40. Twelve individuals were of No. 29 or fairer, and this (a little fairer than 29) seems to be about the average. A little darker than the Kiriattil.

Colour of the eyes.—8 individuals were of No. 2 (Broca); 6 individuals were of No. 1; 6 individuals between 1 and 2.

Ornaments.—A few of those examined said that men of the clan never wore earrings, though their ears were pierced. There may be some section of the clan who do not; but, as a rule, earrings are worn by those who can afford them. One man indeed said he never wore them, fearing thieves might steal them. Another wore 301 564*

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of the clan is responsible for the rather important differences noted. 141 564*

Face.—Nasal notch is noted as deep in 3 and moderate in 1; in the others it was slight or not apparent. The nasal bone was raised above the line of the nose in 5, and depressed in 2. The following are brief notes of individuals:—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Forehead high. Supraciliary arches very slight. Chin long.

(2) Forehead high. Nasal point slightly raised. Nasal notch moderate.

(3) Nasal point depressed so that the nose has as it were a knob at the tip.

(4) Supraciliary arches not apparent to the touch. Slightly rounded nostrils. Teeth project forwards.

(5) Deep nasal notch. Supraciliary arches marked.

The posterior portion of the head of the individual whose nasal index was the minimum seemed to project uncommonly; but his cephalic length was no more than 19·4 or a little above the average.

Figure.—Two-thirds are noted as "slight," nearly one-third as "medium," and two (individuals) as stout. One was very lean.

Hair.—In rather more than half the number of subjects the hair on the head was noted as *thick* and *wavy*. In most of the others it was *moderately thick*. In two only it was thin. In two it was *curly*. A man aged 27 had very slight growth of hair on the face (none on the cheeks), but had a fairly strong growth in the small of the back. Individuals of 40, 42 and 62 were a little grey, while one of 45 was almost bald, and what hair he had was white. Very few had hair on the cheeks, or anything like a full growth thereof. It was observed in but two instances, and in a third as slight. But it is proper to remark that, in the earlier period of my investigations, I did not make special notes about whiskers. 142 564*

Hair on the chest is, as usual, not easy to gauge when there obtains the custom of shaving it periodically, every fortnight or every month. In about a quarter of the subjects the growth is noted as moderate, and in a sixth as thick; in the rest as slight or very slight. In the case of a man aged 45 the hair was white as well as thick.

Hair on the arms was moderate to thick in 13, slight to very slight in 11, and absent in 1.

Hair on the legs was, in every case but one, moderate or thick; in the case of one, very thick. The exception was in the case of a man sick and ill developed.

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142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] [789] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
015 551 *564 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

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141 Some individuals were described in my notes—
*564 (1) Nasal bones wide and thick. Teeth project.

(2) Lips thick and somewhat projecting. Chin receding. The flesh on the chin is thick, giving it a rounded lump like appearance. Inion appears to be in a projecting ridge round the back of the head. (Cephalic length 19·7.)

(3) Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight. Lips slightly everted. Teeth in upper jaw project forwards. Eyes deep set. Inner corner of eyes a trifle oblique.

The last two specimens are uncommon; not typical. The thick lips and projecting teeth are not usually noticeable as in their case. The long oval face is the common type. The fashion of wearing no hair on the face, shaving the head at the back and at the sides and a little over the forehead, leaving but the oval patch on the vertex, no head covering being worn, gives the face an appearance of length. But while the average of the measure vertex to chin, for all the Nâyars,* reduced to stature equals 100, is 11·9, the same for 21 of the 30 different castes † examined in Malabar is greater. The Mukkuvan is as high as 13·4, while on the other hand the Nambûtiri is less, being but 11·7.

[302] [291]

Figure.—One out of 25 is recorded as "stout." One-third were "slight." Nearly two-thirds were medium or thereabouts; and this seems to represent the average.

142 *Hair.*—More than half are noted as having whiskers,
*564 that is, growth of hair on the cheeks. In two-thirds of the subjects the hair on the head was thick and wavy; in a few cases it was very thick. Individuals aged respectively 25, 32, and 52 were noted as being a little grey. In one-quarter of the total number the hair was thin to moderately thick. One individual of this clan is marked as having hair a little grey.

Hair on the chest.—Rather more than a quarter of the whole had thick to moderately thick hair. In the case of one man hair was thick all over the body, even on the back: everywhere except over the ribs, the front of the upper arm and shoulder. In another the hair on the small of the back was *thick*. In the greater number of individuals it was marked slight, and moderate, and in a few it was absent.

* Group A included.
† Counting each clan of the Nâyars separately.

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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [770] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [789]

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PL. IX.

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NAYAR WOMEN (SOUTH MALABAR), AGED 20 AND 17.

[Facing P. 210]

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*141 *564 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated. Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 *564 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspicuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one (293) starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees (177) replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman 292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater, 751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

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from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 301 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [189]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

length was 5 cm. or over. In one individual the iliac bone was much higher at the right side than on the left. 141 564*

Face.—A few individuals were noted thus—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Nasal point slightly elevated. Helix of ear very thin; the Darwin's point in the centre of the curve on the left and high up on the right.

(2) Deep nasal notch. Chin receding. Lips thick.

(3) Slight nasal notch. Supraciliary arches developed at outer edges. Chin recedes.

(4) Supraciliary arches and glabella in one marked ridge. Nasal point somewhat raised. Nasal notch.

(5) Very deep nasal notch. Very wide and thick eyebrows.

Figure.—More than half are marked as slight—a few of them "very slight"; the rest "medium." None "stout."

Hair.—As a rule, to which exceptions are very few, hair on the head is thick and wavy: curly in the case of one individual. The hair of a man of 70 was noted as "very thin and grey." A man of 31 also had hair which was "thin and grey," but he was exceptional. The growth of hair on the cheeks—whiskers—was observed in almost every subject. 142 564*

Hair on the chest.—The average is "moderate."

On the arms.—The growth of hair in half of the subjects was "slight to very slight"; in the other half, "moderate to thick."

On the legs.—It was noted as "moderate" to "thick" in more than three-fourths of those examined; in a few, "slight."

The growth of hair of a few individuals is here specified—

(1) Aged 54. Hair on the head moderately thick and grey. Hair on the face white. Growth of hair on the cheeks. Hair all over chest grey. Very long thick hair on the back. Hair on the legs and arms thick.

(2) Aged 36. Hair on the head moderately thick and wavy. Glossy black. On chest and middle line of abdomen, moderate. On the arms and legs moderately thick. Shaves the head (except the crown), face, chest, abdomen, wrists and hands, about every 15 days. [302]

(3) Aged 28. Hair on the head thick and wavy. Growth of hair on cheeks; on the chin it is very thick. On the chest, moderate; on the arms, very slight; on the legs, thick. Does not shave his chest, as doing so would make him ~~weak; on~~ the other hand, if he does not shave his head and face, he will become sick. [302] [753] [826]

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

142 *564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [384] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the [789] other of silver and iron. The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of [237] the right hand. An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my [789] collection) on a string round the waist. The amulet [776] contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

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In three the cephalic length was 20 cm. or over. In nine the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on a few individuals will be set down here. In most cases the supraciliary arches were well marked, and the nasal notch was deep. Nose generally straight, or nasal point slightly raised. Prognathism rare. Lips, especially the lower lip, often very thick.

(1) Very well bred looking. Eyebrows fleshy and thickly marked. Supraciliary arches very slight. Deep nasal notch. Nose straight; nasal point raised very slightly—and very well shaped. In the left ear a very small hole above the usual one in the lobe; I have not noted why it was made.

(2) Supraciliary arches rather prominent. Upper portion of forehead somewhat protuberant. Deep nasal notch. Nasal point raised. Lower lip thick. This man's father was a Nambûtiri. He appears in the plate.

(3) Forehead high. Deep nasal notch. Slight prognathism. Lower lip very thick.

(4) Supraciliary arches not marked. Nasal notch moderate. Lips thin.

Two out of the twenty-five were deeply pitted with small-pox, the Malabar goddess of small-pox, Bhânnâramûrti, having hurt them. In one man the broadest part of the head was above the ears, a little in front. [164] [776]

Figure.—The number of those put down as slight and those put down as medium are about equal.

Hair.—Worn in the usual Malayali fashion which has been described already and, as a rule, plentiful and wavy; treated with gingelly oil, which is sometimes perfumed. The number of individuals whose hair (on the head) was noted as "very thick and wavy" is abnormally large. A young man aged 24 had some white hairs here and there on his head; a man of 35 was a little grey; a man of 39 also; and one of 44 was quite grey. Whiskers or growth of hair on the cheeks were observed in more than half the number of subjects. In several there was hair, fairly thick in some, in the small of the back, and one man had thick hair all over the back. 142 564* [302]

Hair on the chest was "moderate" or "thick" in more than half.

Hair on the arms was "moderate to thick" in about half; in the other half "slight."

Hair on the legs was, as a rule, thick: rarely less than moderately thick. The legs of one man were like those of a bear.

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The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.	1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
" " "	1 to 2	"	6	"
" " "	2	"	7	"
" " "	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

Weight of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb.

Prolificness.—In the 8 recorded instances the average number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

Ornaments.—Ears are always pierced, and the usual Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

(1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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In two individuals (out of 8) the cephalic length was over 20 cm. In three the nasal height was 5 cm. and over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on two subjects are—

(1) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches distinctly developed. Very deep nasal notch. Nasal point elevated above the line of the nose.

(2) Supraciliary arches not apparent. Nasal point slightly elevated.

Figure.—The greater number are noted as slight; about one-third as medium to stoutly built.

Hair.—Much as those of the other clans. The man who said he was 72, but who looked 58, showed no sign of baldness; his hair was but moderately grey. Another, aged 36, a very strongly-built man, was becoming bald. Baldness at his age is, I should say, rare. 142 564*

Colour of the skin.—The average is a trifle darker than 29 (Broca). The fairest was fairer than 29, and the darkest was No. 43.

Colour of the eyes.—The average colour of those examined is between 1 and 2 (Broca).

Ornaments call for no remark; they are much as those worn by other Nâyars. Ears are always pierced and earrings worn. 301 564* 304

It would be profitless to deal separately with the measures of the individuals comprising the group A in the same way as the others which are more or less complete, with the exception of the Kurup clan. As said already in the group A consists of— 141 564*

2 of the Nelliôden clan.		3 of the Pallichan clan.	
2 „ Viyyûr clan.		1 „ Muppattinâyiran clan.	
1 „ Vangilôth clan.		2 „ Vyâpâri clan.	
1 „ Kitâvu clan.		1 „ Attikkurissi clan.	

and their measures taken collectively have been quoted. The Attikkurissi are endogamous, and the Kitâvu do not wear earrings. [301]

At page 60, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where, speaking of the Nambûtiri Brâhmans, it was said that possibly it may be found that marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son may be found to produce the finest issue; to be the best for preservation of the race. This kind of marriage of first cousins, but never of progeny of sisters or of brothers, is in a general way the rule throughout Southern India, and it obtains amongst the 582 [564]*

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PL. XII.

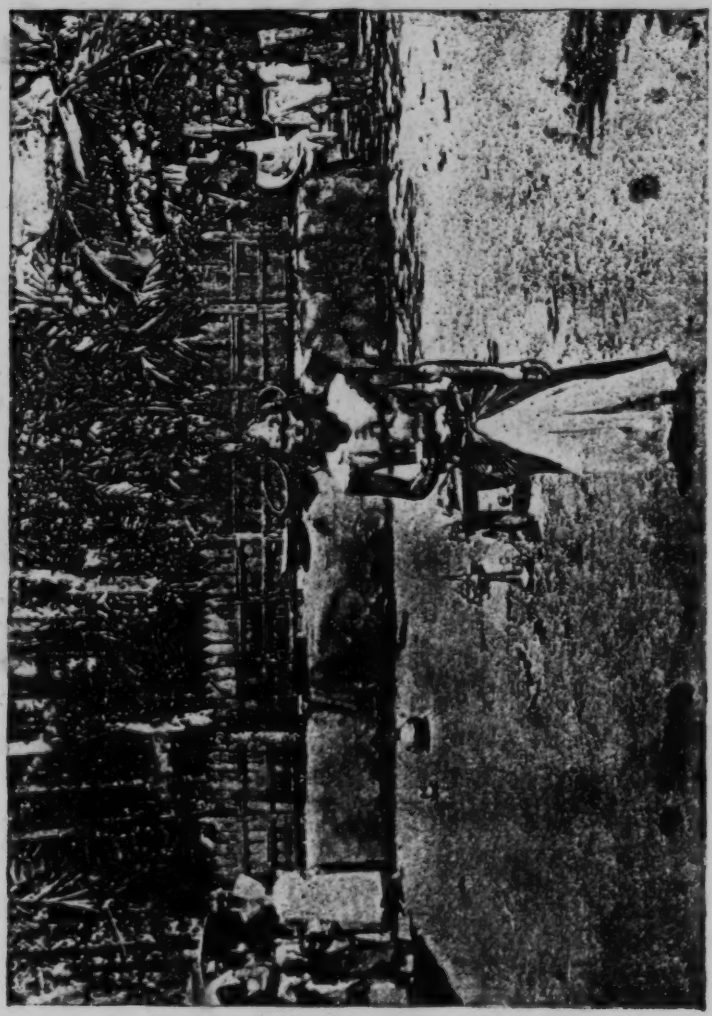

A VELICHCHAPPAD.

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[Facing P. 242]

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HIS HIGHNESS SIR RAMA VARMA, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., F.M.U.,
RAJA OF COCHIN.

[frontispiece]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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A TALI-TYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

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[facing p. 24]

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A NAIR GIRL FOR SAMBANDHAM (MARRIAGE) WITH HER BRIDESMAIDS.

[facing p. 31]

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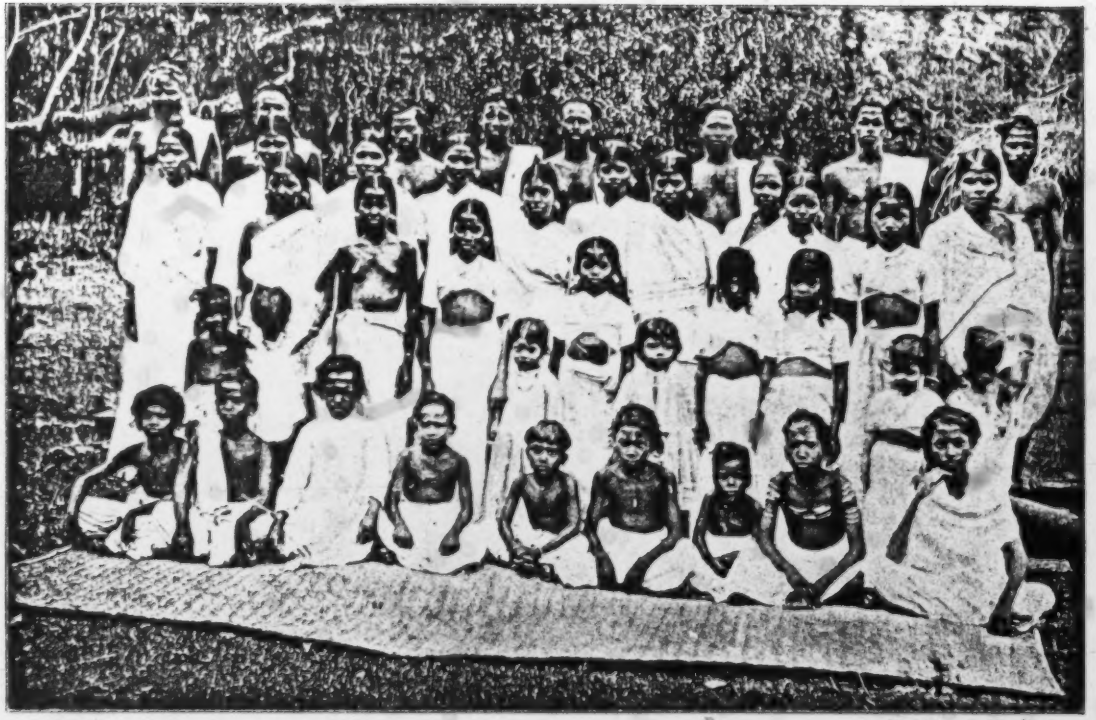

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY

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[facing p 47]

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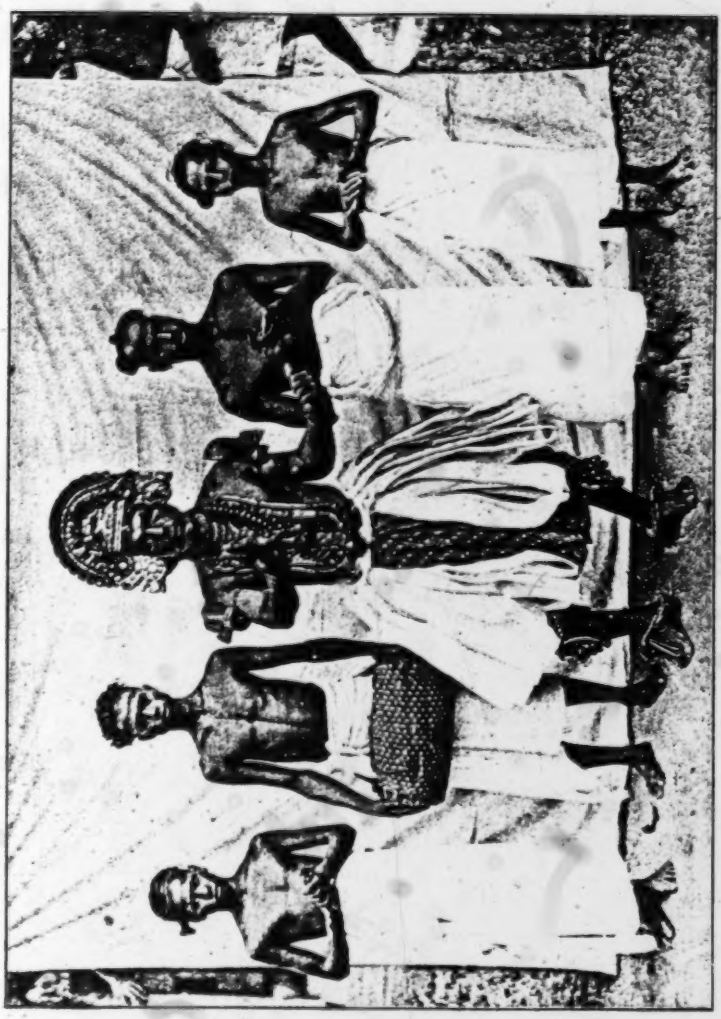

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[facing p.66]

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A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[facing p. 71]

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

791
796
142
292

A VELICHAPADU

[facing p.84]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

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291
516

Fig. 7. Parbhatiama, the Nayar woman and her sister Kunyimaluama.

Fig. 8. Kunyimaluama and her brother Krishnanayar.

[P. 238-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Thandans
Tiyas

515
142

Fig. 9. Thandan women bathing in the Ponani river of south Malabar, near Lakkidi, in the Walluvanad taluk.

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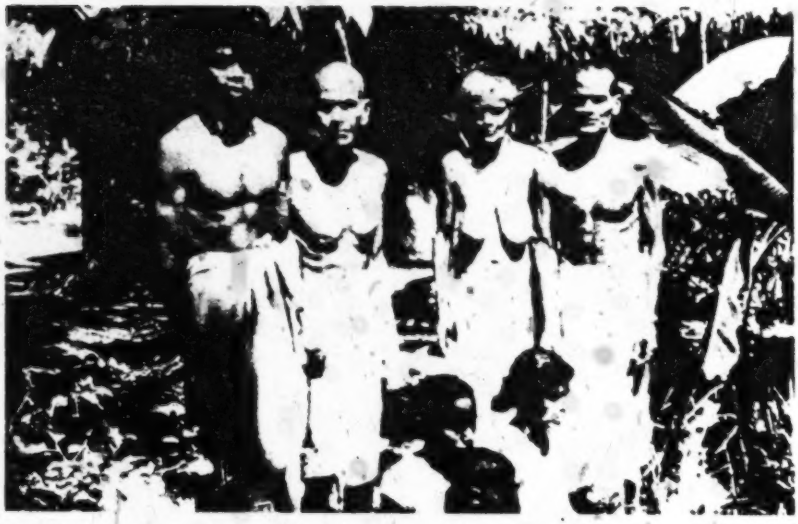

Fig. 10. Kaladiwalapil household of Perumpillav village in north Cochin. From left to right, standing: Kandapan, Mundon, Chaki and Raman; seated in front: Lakshmi, her son and Kunyu.

[P. 238-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kolla-kurups
Kammalans

142
391

Fig. 11. Kalyani standing at the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *kalarikel* household gate (the others are curious onlookers)

Fig. 12. Kunji of the *Karuwan* Mudrikelparampil household.

[P.238-D]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kolla-kurups
Toi-Kollans

147
29
[516]

Fig. 13: While Kunji, aged twelve, of the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *Kalarikel* sings, the rest of the family sits around her

[304]

Fig. 14: Old Kurunda, seventy six, of the *Tolkoitan* household of Palakarampil village, near Ottappalam: Note the enlarged holes in her ear lobes

[P. 238-E]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Parians

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29
516
85

Fig. 15. Sita of the *Panan* Villarkaden household, Kundilpadam *tarawad*. At her breast, Kumaran, then Chami and Narayana.

[P. 238-F]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Cheruma

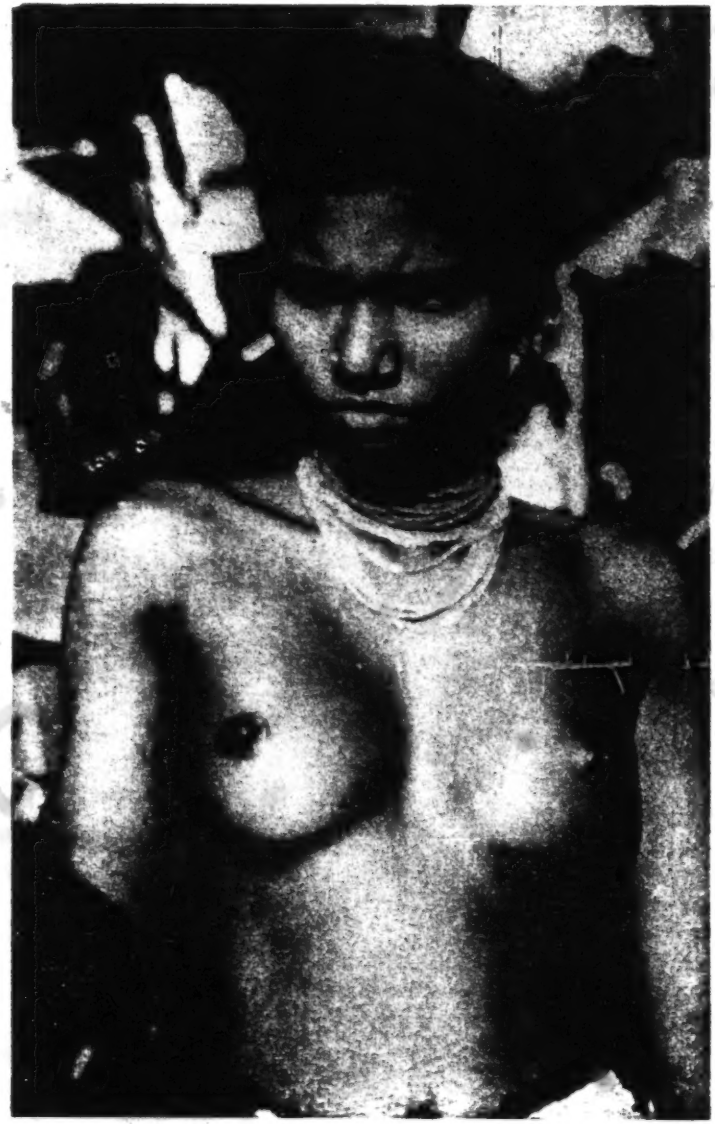

Fig.16. A handsome girl labourer of the Cheruma caste.

[P 238-G]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

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301
854

Fig. 17. An aboriginal Parayan woman with her child, in the Zamorin's colony at Chunangad, south Malabar.

[p 238-H]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

142
302
291

AKATTUCHARNA NĀYAR.

[Facing p. 305]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

NĀYAR FEMALES.

[facing P. 312]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

291
142

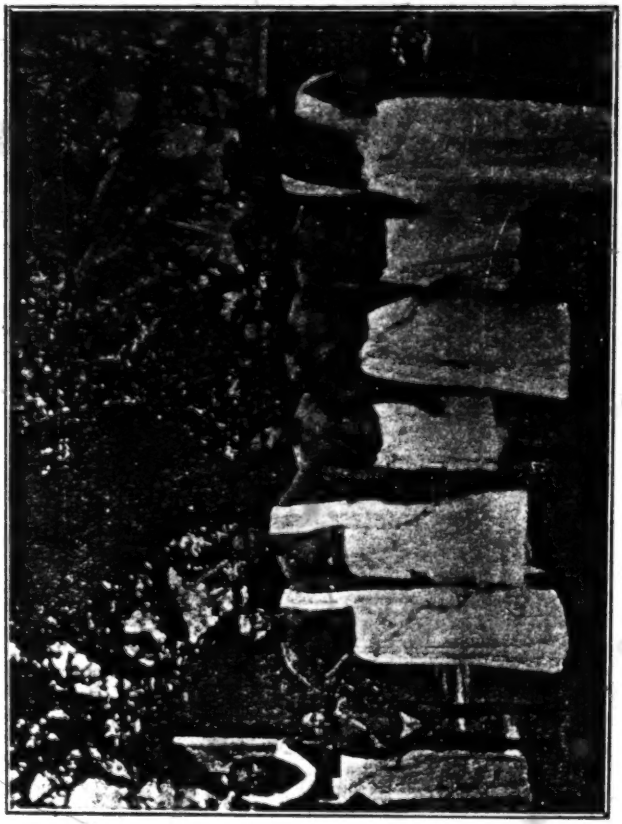

GROUP OF NAMBUDRI BRAHMANS. Photo by G. Slater.

[facing p. 128]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

In another, the alæ of the nose appear to have become enlarged through taking snuff. 141 564*

In another, the point of the ear (noticed by Darwin) in the helix ⅓ from the top, was very marked.

One individual of 29 looked at least 40. He had suffered severely from small-pox. [145]

Figure.—The average is slight to medium. One is noted as stout, and another as very strongly built.

Hair.—It has been noticed already (see Nambûtiris. Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I) that the growth of hair on the cheeks is a racial characteristic. In some of the lower races it is entirely absent, while in the Nambûtiris it is constant. About half the Urâli Nâyars examined had a regular growth of hair on the cheeks. 142 564*

On the head.—In all but one the hair on the head, invariably black and glossy, was thick and wavy; in a few, it was very thick or fairly so; and, in the case of three individuals, it was noted as curly. A few grey hairs were noticed in four individuals aged respectively 25, 29, 30, 45; and one young fellow of 20 had a small patch of white hair over the right eyebrow.

Hair on the chest was slight to moderate as a rule, but in 4 individuals it was thick.

Hair on the arms was observed to be slight in 13, and moderate or thick in 12.

In all, the hair on the legs varied between moderate and thick, excepting that in 2 the growth was very thick. One man had shaved his feet, and another had shaved the backs of his hand and his wrists. In a few there was a tolerably thick growth of hair in the small of the back. This is common to all the Nâyars.

Colour of the skin.—In 22 cases in which this was recorded the darkest was No. 43 (Broca's colour types) and the fairest No. 40. Twelve individuals were of No. 29 or fairer, and this (a little fairer than 29) seems to be about the average. A little darker than the Kiriattil.

Colour of the eyes.—8 individuals were of No. 2 (Broca); 6 individuals were of No. 1; 6 individuals between 1 and 2.

Ornaments.—A few of those examined said that men of the clan never wore earrings, though their ears were pierced. There may be some section of the clan who do not; but, as a rule, earrings are worn by those who can afford them. One man indeed said he never wore them, fearing thieves might steal them. Another wore 301 564*

crops is about 8 per cent of the gross cropped area. A direct consequence of this type of cropping pattern is the high degree of commercialization which has been attained in the agricultural sector. This has important implications for the State economy. The State exports its commercial crops, and imports its foodgrain requirements. In this exchange the State stands to gain since cash crops yield far higher return per unit of area than the food crops. Secondly, quite a few of the commercial crops grown in the State are of a perennial nature and require large investments. This has led to the establishment of numerous large scale organized plantations and farms, although small farms also play an important role. 433* 241

2.6 A chronic food deficit is the third important feature of the agricultural sector, mentioned above (para 2.1). The current production of foodgrains is roughly 967,000 tons. Current requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs.[1] of foodgrains per day per adult (unit) work out to a figure of 24 lakh tons. The gap between food requirements and the current level of production thus works out to over 50 per cent of total requirements. This is higher than in any other State. However, this need not cause excessive anxiety. It is not necessary for every State in the Union to try and achieve self-sufficiency in food at the cost of other more valuable commercial crops. From the long run point of view, the aim should be to strike a balance between supply and demand for foodgrains at the national, rather than, strictly, at the level of the State. The psychological desire to attain a balance between local supply and demand for foodgrains in the State is a legacy of the lean period of 1940–50 when the State was hard hit by the severe food shortage prevailing in the country. 433* 241 262

Climate and Geographical Factors

2.7 The climate and rainfall in Kerala are excellently suited to the prevailing cropping pattern. The climate is cool and humid in the high ranges while it is humid and warm in the plains. The range of temperature variations during the year is very small, the maximum never going beyond 90°F and minimum rarely below 75°F. The humidity, however, is very high in the rainy season—about 90 per cent. The State is fortunate in respect of rainfall. The normal annual rainfall is 95 inches a year ; it may be as high as 150 inches in the high ranges, but nowhere it is less than 65 inches. Most of the precipitation occurs during May to September when the State receives the south-west monsoon. Taking the State as a whole, it may be said that it is one of the most wet areas in the country (Table 1).[2] Assam has about the same normal rainfall as Kerala. Only the Konkan coast (Bombay) and South Kanara (Mysore) exceed it. The annual deviation in rainfall is also comparatively low with the co-efficient of mean deviation at 6.5 per cent for Travancore-Cochin and 9.2 per cent for Malabar (Table 1). On the whole rains are more reliable in Kerala than in most other States. 132

2.8 Kerala has two distinct geographical divisions, namely, the Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar area. The soils of Travancore-Cochin area are generally 134

[1] The Nutritional Advisory Committee to the Government of India recommended 18 ozs. of foodgrains per adult unit per day as the desirable norm. We have used a slightly smaller figure (17 ozs. per day) in our calculations. [146]

[2] [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed – Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

174 not borne out either by any Sanskrit authority or Dravidian traditions;[1] but certain legends refer to conflicts between them and the Hindu colonists of later times, and these are said to have been led by Parasurama, and the Nagas from Pätäla whom they found in possession of the country.[2] The latter were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kshatriyas or warriors who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmans, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle in which victory alternated with defeat. These internecine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally gave birth to a military aristocracy called the Nayars.[3]

701 The Nayars of ancient times formed the chief militia in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, and their valour and other fighting qualities evoked the admiration of foreigners, and inspired even the restless Portuguese poet Cameons, who described them in the following apt lines:—

The military character of the Nayars.

> Poliar the labouring clans were named;
> By the proud Nayars the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn;
> The shining faulchion brandished in the right;
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight.

175 One of the earliest accounts of the Nayars is found in the
701 writings of Duarte Barbosa, who described them as men of noble descent, who had to be armed as knights by the king or lord with whom they lived, and who could not call themselves Nayars until they had been so equipped as to bear arms. They were generally sent to school at the age of seven to learn all
[868] manner of athletic feats and to enable them to use their weapons.[4] Their sinews and joints were so stretched and
[147] anointed with the *oyle sesamus* by skillful fellows called "Panicars," who were captains in war, that they became very light and nimble; and could "wind and twine their bodies" as if they had no bones. They cast themselves backwards and forwards, high and low, to the astonishment of the beholders, and the delight in their weapon was so great that they

1. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, Introduction, page 107.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, page 107.
3. Primitive Folk, page 107.
4. A description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar by Duarte Barbosa, page 128—129.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 301 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [789]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their ex-
treme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual sexual promiscuity within the caste, and minimal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus Complex [59] which caused men to fear and propitiate the phallic representatives of their fathers, and women to have fantasies about "possession" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfortunately snake worship is now practically extinct; I never saw it, and found present-day informants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic, dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility of the father, which must have been experienced by Nayar children since they slept, and do today, in the mother's room till age four or five and have opportunity to witness parental intercourse, would be repressed before latency and leave its mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about the father which could be translated into the cultural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods. Such archaic representations contrast with the less distorted ones of male forbears of the taravad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

592 devoted to dead karanavans' spirits, opening off
769 the inner courtyard, contains a number of small
778 wooden stools on which the spirits are believed to come and sit. In those branches of the taravad which have remained in situ for many generations, retaining [60] an old ancestral house while collateral segments hived off into new ones (6), the ancestor shrine contains many stools, placed in order and named with the names of the karanavans going back to the first of the segment or of the lineage as a whole. In newer houses built by segments which have recently left the parent house there may be only one or two, starting with the stool of the man who built the house and was its first karanavan. (7) Offerings of cooked good, with delicacies of the kind most enjoyed by the recipient during his lifetime, are made before each stool by the living karanavan, in the presence of all members, twice annually on the new moon days of April-
592 May and October-November. The spirits of
769 dead karanavans are thought of as vindictive and
152 fearsome, ever prone to take offence against living members who fail in any of the details of ritual performances and general care of the taravad house and lands which are their duty, and to vent hostility on them out of all proportion to their offence. They are placated with fear and reverence but without affection. Their character contrasts with that of the patrilineal ancestral spirits of Tamil Brahmans, who are thought of as harmless, straving, lonely, pitiful beings who must be given food to sustain them in the life in the world of the dead. This

592 difference in the character of ancestral spirits
769 probably relates to the fact that among Nayars,
152 hostility to the mother's brother, the karanavan and all older men, though curbed by strict rules of etiquette and [61] social distance, is often either fully conscious or dealt with by projection: the mother's brother may be thought of as persecuting and his discipline strongly resented, though loyalty to the mother and the group prevents a man from openly venting his aggression. Among Brahmans, aggressive impulses against the father, elder brothers and other older men are deeply repressed; such older male figures are thought of a protective and nurturant, and inner opposition to them arouses much guilt. Perhaps because of this, their spirits are also harmless, and what is projected in beliefs about them is rather the individual's own oral dependency longings.

592 The propitiation only of heads of the property-
769 groups, by the living head on behalf of all members, underlines the corporate character of the group. Brahmans instead propitiate each man his own line of recent patrilineal forbears - father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather and their wives - thus emphasizing the strength of the asymmetrical interpersonal tie between father and son, at the expense of the
592 solidarity of the patrilineal group. Among Na-
602 yars, interpersonal relations between men of the matrilineal group are neither structurally strong nor emotionally intense: men are bound to the group and incidentally to each other by their primary ties to women (mother and sisters); rivalry between them is acute and they are kept

the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
564 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive.
[865] As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 769 564 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do. If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 769 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households [778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 152 754 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres. In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft, however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

769 564 782 613 776 152 The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi, who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad, only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple. In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[26] and the initiation rites[28] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of dis-
593 cipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in
[782] government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married. 595* 837

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well. 595* 578 152

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union. 851 564 428

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collectively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu- 595* 851

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

There appears to be no doubt that Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of the central area are gradually giving up polyandry. Others have reported on the speed with which it is disappearing, sometimes exaggerating the rapidity, it seems to me, but nevertheless correctly stating that not many more years will pass before the custom has become simply a memory, as it is with the Nayars. I think a distinction should be made, however, between the more wealthy, upper members of the caste and the lower, poorer ones. In fact, polyandry with the Thandans and Tiyas is being abandoned from the top, and this observation is valid not only for their community, but also for polyandry in general in Kerala. 177 564 595

It is the upper castes, who have had greater opportunity to educate themselves, adapt themselves to higher standards and lead a more modern, Europeanized type of life, who are giving it up as something primitive and unworthy of self-respecting citizens. Within the castes, however, it is not always the upper strata that has progressed in this way, as can be seen with the Nayars, where polyandry is reputed to be practised still in the conservative court circles of Cochin and Travancore. Among the Thandans and Tiyans it is the other way round, the upper class either professes not to follow the custom any longer or really abstains from doing so. The Kammalans and associated artisans nearly all continue to be polyandrous, and as they are without exception people of very slender means, a distinction such as the one made here does not apply.

Aiyappan, discussing new trends in the Irava community, has written: "Differences in occupations and income and the development of new sexual standards are two active forces that one sees in operation against polyandry." (*Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 103.) Iravas, according to him, had formerly very few avocations from which to choose. They pooled their resources and worked for the house, their common wife and their children, without making any individual reservations. Today, matters have changed and the men each want a different type of work, chosen from among the numerous new occupations which are open to them, and aspire to have their own family, wife and children. The old ways are no longer fashionable, and are even despised and considered to be primitive and barbarous. Jealousy thus reappears, and asserts itself in no uncertain way. The women, too, do not want to be shared any longer by a number of brothers, and prefer to return home or refuse polyandrous marriages rather than be joined in wedlock in the traditional manner. In North Cochin, however, it was the progress of the people in higher levels of the Thiyya caste that brought about a legal inter- 177 595 463 177 595 [152]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

I obtained the same kind of answer from Panju of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, it will be recalled, when I asked him how it was that his maternal uncle consented to get a new wife for him and his brother, Narayana, when they refused to live any longer in polyandry with Raman and Kuniyama. He said that his mother's brother had certainly begun by resisting the request, but that, in the end, he had given in because "times have changed" and he could not very well force them to remain in their present marriage if they said that they were dissatisfied with it.

It was Panju, too, who gave me the unexpected information that it was "immorality" that was breaking up polyandrous households. Women were not at all chaste any longer, he said, and anybody could have them "for a song". So every man now wanted a wife of his own whom he could control, instead of submitting himself to the old discipline and consenting to remain without complaint in the old polyandrous type of union.

My experience with Kammalans and other artisan castes was different. Polyandry with them is also threatened, but it cannot be said that it has deteriorated to the same extent with them as it has with the higher castes. Jealousy, however, seems to be coming very much to the surface, and I heard many tales of serious quarrelling among the men, leading to separation and to division into splinter households.

Raman, the *Asari* informant of the Perinkulam household, interviewed at Palappuram, said that polyandry was dying out because "Civilization is spreading". When I asked him what he meant by "civilization", he answered, rather simply, that people did not tie up their hair any longer in the typical Malayalam way, a top knot in front over the forehead, and that many had taken to growing moustaches. He added, however, to these very personal criteria of his, that women refused now to be wedded to many men; some wealthier people, he revealed, even go so far as to insert a clause into the marriage contract by which it is stipulated that their daughter will not be given in marriage to more than one man. He concluded by sighing, shrugging his shoulders and exclaiming that it was not right, but what could be done about it?

Kunji, the daughter of old Kurumba of the *Tolkolan* Palakaparampil household near Meitenadeshan, also complained of too much quarrelling among the men of a polyandrous family, and said that because of this, the women did not want to be married in this way any longer. She attributed to these reasons the fact that her household had already given up polyandry in the previous generation.

hardie as to come into that house. The king's children 595
shall not inherite the kingdom after their father, because [201]
they hold this opinion, that perchance they were not begotten of the king their father, but of some other man, therefore they accept for their king one of the sonnes of the king's sisters, or of some other woman of the blood roiall, for that they be sure that they are of the blood roiall."

In his "New Account of the East Indies, (1727)" 595
Hamilton wrote: "The husbands," of whom, he said, 833
there might be twelve, but no more at one time, "agree very well, for they cohabit with her in their turns, according to their priority of marriage, ten days more or less according as they can fix a term among themselves, and he that cohabits with her maintains her in all things necessary for his time, so that she is plentifully provided for by a constant circulation. When the man that cohabits with her goes into her house he leaves his arms at the door, and none dare remove them or enter the house on pain of death. When she [428]
proves with child, she nominates its father, who takes care of his education after she has suckled it, and brought it to walk or speak, but the children are never heirs to their father's estate, but the father's sister's children are."

Writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, 595
Grose says * that "it is among the Nairs that principally prevails the strange custom of one wife being common to a number; in which point the great power of custom [152]
is seen from its rarely or never producing any jealousies or quarrels among the co-tenants of the same woman. Their number is not so much limited by any specific

* Travels to the East Indies.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law.

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships.

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized

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593 Organized
[578] duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of
[613] cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars
[154] of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's
[684] socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

[561] The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

593 Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between
578 brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

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In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices. 595 554 [586]

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank. 564 602 598 554 [833] [783]

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes. 602 576 554 [154] [835]

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relationships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts, this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders. They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[35] and the initiation rites[36] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all
177 the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked
564 occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in
[782] government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *taravād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *taravād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

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865 told me that she had had no experience with girls as she had only had boys, but that friends of hers who had had them, said that they are quieter and easier to manage.

864 Boys were much worse when it came to early masturbation. This began at the age of two with them, and they seemed to delight in playing with themselves when sitting in the sand or dust. Nani told her [595] own children that they must not do this, because it would make them sick, and it was always her and not Panju or Narayana who dealt with this matter. She noticed too, that her little boys, when suckling, would sometimes get an erection, whereupon she would beat their fingers away from themselves with a small twig. She had threatened them with castration, too, but she complained that this did not seem to have the slightest effect on them.

●155 595 I enquired if Nani had noticed any preference in her boys for herself and any marked animosity and fear for their fathers or one of the fathers, at an early age. I asked her too, if, in other families where there were girls, these did not show a partiality towards their male parents. She replied that it was quite apparent that girls as well as boys preferred the mother to the fathers. As far as she was concerned, she thought that both boys and girls were more drawn to the mother than to the fathers because it was the mother who looked after them from an early age. It was, of course, impossible for me to look more deeply than this into the question of Oedipean inclinations as I had neither the time nor the opportunity to make a proper research into the matter.

864 I was interested to learn that it was Nani who threatened her boys [595] with castration when they masturbated, and neither Panju nor Narayana. What happened in the case of girls in other families, then? Nani said that they were told that they would have their genital organs pinched, and this was sometimes actually done, hard, so as to hurt. Here, I insidiously asked whether the little girls ever felt that they were castrated by comparison to the little boys, but the only effect of my question was to make them all laugh heartily – Panju and Narayana, who were eavesdropping just beyond us in the courtyard, as well.

Upon another day, while persevering in my attempts to find out about the early development of Thandan children living in polyandry, I asked if Nani had noticed a period of calm in which the children ceased masturbating and seemed no longer to take any interest in sexual matters. She took this seriously and replied yes, that she had noticed such a lull. Between the ages of four and thirteen, they were very quiet, with only brief, temporary interruptions. At the end of this time, boys and girls

K 131 595 596 428 591 Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

T 123 To 123 K 123 *General Conclusions.* I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

T 155 To 155 K 155 As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182 As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

592 nagas or cobra-deities which were believed to
782 guard each group were housed in the snake-grove in a corner of the garden and annually given offerings of milk and eggs by the karanavan in the presence of members. As well as warding
592 off ordinary sickness and misfortune they were
782 particularly [58] believed responsible for the fertility or barrenness of taravad women. Special offerings were made to them if a woman failed to conceive, and a performance was held a at which men and women of a low caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the snakes in the grove to appear. A
[787] group of women of the taravad, after purifying themselves by fasting and sex-continence for several days previously, then became possessed by the snake-gods (who are said to have "entered into them") and performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voice of the snakes and announce what propitiations were necessary to appease
[158] them. Sometimes the ceremony ended with one or more women falling into a fit. It seems
592 fairly certain that the snake-gods were (as so
786 commonly elsewhere) worshipped as phallic symbols. Since they were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forbears, but were capable of alternately withholding fertility from taravad women or causing them to conceive, it is a plausible guess that they collectively symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property-group, who had been so essential to its perpetuation yet

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

838 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
● 158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 764
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184
clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely re-
776 sembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a
593 paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults
613 are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

175 individual ends. Their struggles were eclipsed by the Muslim invasions from Mysore which began in 1766, and ended when the East Indian Company took over the area in 1792. But the idea of a United Kerala has not died, and has been repeatedly suggested since India attained [6] Independence in 1947.

161 (3) Population

The Malabar Coast is the most densely populated part of India. The figures for 1931 show a population of 3,533,944 for Malabar; 1,205,016 for Cochin; and 5,095,073 for Travancore. In Malabar the mean density was 610 per square mile; in Cochin, 814; and in Travancore, 668. This includes forest and lagoon areas. The mean density of habitable land in Cochin was 1,400.

[511] Relative to the present exploitation of resources the whole coast is overpopulated. Most of the people lead a hand-to-mouth existence on an income barely sufficient to support life. Want and indebtedness are chronic and there is much unemployment.

Reliable figures are not available for before 1891, but at least since that date and probably for 50 to 100 years previsouly, a great increase has taken place. The figures for 1891 were, for Malabar, 2,557,736; fo Cochin, 722,906; and for Travancore, 2,557,736. This increase in population is part of the baseline from which we must start in analysing kinship systems.

174 631 II The Traditional Political Background

European and Arabic reports on the Nayars

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of south-west India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

613 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars di-
592 vided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth
174 century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups
592 must have arisen from the marked increase in population during
161 British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from
174 genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five genera-
[175] tions ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the
592 amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the
174 size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional
423 retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both [858] sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, [863] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the man-
[867] ners and morals of their caste.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the production of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
[496] the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564
[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
595 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
656 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
178 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as
614 *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from
174 outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were
825 called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days
771 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent-grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a
[161] community of 3¼ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattu*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred ser-
[784] pents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars
174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

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Preface

THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC Survey of Kerala, conducted at the request of the State Government of Kerala, is one of the last few in the series of Techno-Economic Surveys of the various States of India undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research. For some time past this small State has been attracting increasing attention of the public. Although Kerala has come into limelight on account of its political turmoils, the basic problems which the State faces are primarily economic in nature. The acute intensity of its unemployment aggravated by increased population pressure, the relatively lower per capita income of the people of the State, and highly limited scope for extension of cultivable area, pose a challenging task for the economic planners.

The main objective of the Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala, as in the case of similar surveys for other States, has been to assess technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade. The first step towards this objective was to prepare an outline of the present structure of the economy and make an assessment of the existing physical and human resources of the State. A team of economists and technical experts was constituted for this purpose. The preliminary work on the project was started early in 1960. Relevant data were collected and the members of the survey team discussed the problems and potentialities in different fields, with a number of knowledgeable persons in the State. A number of working papers dealing with problems and potentialities in respect of various aspects of the economy were also prepared. Technical Appraisal Reports analysing growth potential in different sectors were then prepared by the technical members of the team.

The Preliminary Economic Report was ready by September 1961 and it was sent to the State Government for comments. The final report as printed here brings together the material contained in the working papers and the Appraisal Reports. The Appraisal Reports contain a detailed technical analysis of each of the major fields of development, e.g., Industry, Power, Transport, etc. The Economic Report, on the other hand, aims at presenting a broad and coordinated picture of the outline of the probable growth of the State Economy. It indicates the main lines along which future development of the State should proceed and highlights the strategy required for achieving a rapid growth of the State economy.

The economy of Kerala is marked by a number of distinctive features. It is the most thickly populated State in India with an average density per square mile being over three times the all-India average. In addition, the rate of growth of population has been noticeably higher in Kerala than in the other parts of India. A high density of population combined with a fast growth of population has been responsible

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
414 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades.
* 433 In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial
47 sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

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would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough.

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff.

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

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182 1.13 These, broadly, are the inter-relationship between physical features and economic aspects of the State, and largely determine the nature and structure of the Kerala economy discussed below.

Density of Population

161 [164] 1.14 In the ultimate analysis, the basic problem of Kerala, viz., an inordinately large section of the population being without any gainful work, is brought about by the very high density of population in the State. With an area only 1.2 per cent of the whole of India, Kerala has to support 3.8 per cent (16.8 million) of the total population of India. The density of population in Kerala (1,125 persons per sq. mile) is naturally over three times the all-India average (384 persons per sq. mile).

1.15 The population, however, is not evenly spread out over the whole of the State, but shows considerable variations from district to district (Table 2).* The highland, being mostly covered with forests, is sparsely populated. The average density here is only about 150 persons per square mile. On the other hand, the lowlands bear the severest burden of population. With only about 18 per cent of the State area, they support over 40 per cent of the population. On the other extreme is the coastal strip where the average density is over 2,500 persons per square mile. In certain pockets it even shoots up to 7,000 persons per square mile. The midland, though thickly populated, is not as congested as the area lying in the immediate vicinity of the sea coast.

Growth of Population

1.16 Not only is the density of population high in Kerala, but its rate of growth has also been fairly high. The following table gives the rate of growth of population over the last half century both for India as well as for Kerala.

DECENNIAL PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN POPULATION

Year	*India*	*Kerala*
1901-11	5.69	1.75
1911-21	—0.31	9.16
1921-31	11.00	21.85
1931-41	14.23	16.04
1941-51	13.34	22.82
1951-61	21.49	24.55

SOURCE: 1961 Census of Population Provisional Figures.

1.17 As can be seen, the population has grown much faster in Kerala than in the country as a whole during the last six decades. The basic reason for a faster rate of growth of population in Kerala is a comparatively low death rate while the birth rate is only slightly less than the all-India one. The comparative position of birth and death rates in India and Kerala is given in the following table. [165] [163]

* [see p. 270, category 116 -- Analyst]

[text continues on p. 8]

[P. 7]

KERALA

CHANGING PATTERN OF DENSITY OF POPULATION, 1951-1961

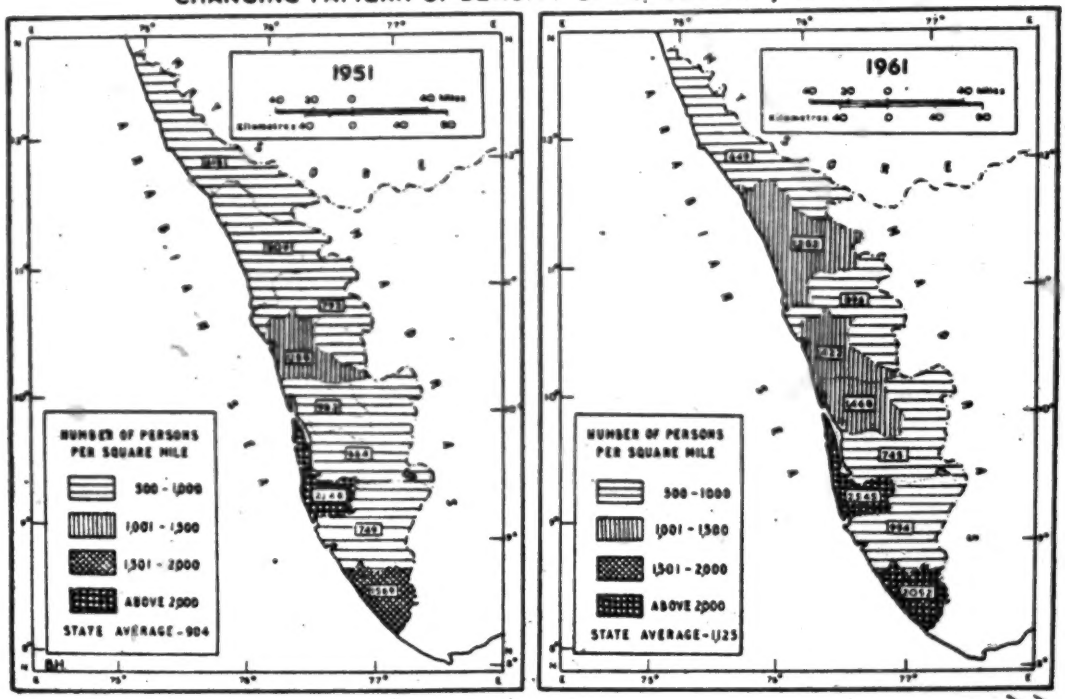

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survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 161

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 241 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 171 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

* 433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p.273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p.275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.30
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	3.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production e ll go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its l f. Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·73 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[text continues on p. 67]

Chapter 11

Manpower and Employment

PART I: MANPOWER

464 128 ONE OF THE chief problems of Kerala today is the vast unemployed section of its manpower. An appraisal of the analysis of employment prospects, therefore, becomes very important. The extent of urbanization, sex distribution, the size of the labour force, its rate of participation, and occupational distribution—all these are, therefore, studied in detail in what follows.

162 161 *Urbanization*

11.2 Progress in urbanization in Kerala is less as compared to the country as a whole. Of the total population of Kerala, 13.5 per cent live in urban areas against 17.38 per cent for the whole of India according to the Census of 1951. The degree of urbanization has been progressively increasing over the past few decades. This is shown by the table below which gives the relative rates of growth of the urban and rural population during the period 1921–51. As may be seen, urban population has been growing at a faster rate than the rural population.

MEAN DECENNIAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION

(Per Cent)

	1921–30	*1931–40*	*1941–50*
Urban	27.18	23.26	29.38
Rural	22.85	16.53	20.12
TOTAL	*23.31*	*17.27*	*21.22*

N.B.: It may be noted that these figures pertain only to the old Travancore-Cochin State.

[162] SOURCE: *Census of India*, Volume XIII, Tranvancore-Cochin (Part I, Subsidiary Table).

11.3 During the last decade, that is, 1951–61, urbanization seems to have increased at a somewhat faster rate than in the whole of India. The proportion of population living in urban areas of Kerala grew from 13.05 per cent in 1951 to 15.03 per cent in 1961, whereas in the case of all-India the proportion registered an increase from 17.38 per cent to only 17.84 per cent.[1] In view of the plans for a faster growth of industries,

[1] As pointed out in Chapter 1, too much reliance should not be placed on a comparison of urbanization between 1951 and 1961 since the definition of urban areas during the two Census operations has not been the same.

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the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census) 162 [464]

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages. [369] [166]

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56 gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951. 162 464

[1] *1961 Census* (Provisional Population figures).

[Table 56, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rates** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	737	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

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162 464 The fall in the participation ratio between 1931–51[1] may be attributed to three factors:

(i) Rise in the sex ratio in favour of females.
(ii) Increase in the school-going population.
(iii) Slow growth in employment opportunities.

11.17 The force of the first two factors, however, is not sufficient to explain the steep [161] decline in the participation rate. A fall of the magnitude, as shown in the above [433] table, primarily indicates that the increase in opportunities for gainful employment has not been keeping pace with the growth of population which had increased by over 40 per cent between 1931 and 1951 without any corresponding growth of industries or development in other sectors.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN POPULATION DENSITY AND MANPOWER

[161] 11.18 Kerala is the most thickly populated State of India having an average density of 1,125 persons to a square mile according to the Census of 1961. The population, however, is not uniformly spread out as may be noticed from the district density figures in Table 58.[3] Malabar is less thickly populated than the Travancore-Cochin area. But the proportion of working force to total population, that is, the participation rate is also lower in the Malabar area. Generally, it is expected that participation rate would be lower in the more congested areas, because an over-crowded agricultural sector naturally offers limited scope for employment. The comparison of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, however, seems to belie this conclusion. The [288] reason for this contrast perhaps lies in the fact that the major part of the coir industry, the most labour-intensive industry of Kerala, is concentrated mostly in the Travancore-Cochin region.[3] Absence of this industry on a large scale in Malabar seems to account for a lower participation rate in that area.

Occupational Distribution

162 464 433 11.19 Occupational pattern generally gives a broad idea as to the stage of economic development attained by a country or a region. The distribution of working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, is given separately for the rural and urban sectors, in Table 59.[4] A comparison with the all-India occupational distribution brings out a marked contrast in the case of Kerala. Whereas 71.8 per cent of the working force was engaged in agricultural occupations in the whole of India, in case of Kerala the proportion was only 51.4 per cent. In fact in Kerala the proportion of its population dependent upon non-agricultural activities turns out to be the highest in the whole of India.

[1] The difference in the concepts used in 1931 and 1951 Censuses perhaps exaggerates the extent of decline in the participation rates, but it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years.

[2] Both these aspects have also been dealt with in Chapter 1.

3, 4 [see p. 310, category 116 -- Analysis]

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Supply of Labour

11.36 In addition to the current back-log of unemployment, the two sources of future labour supply would be : (*i*) growth of population, (*ii*) changes in labour force population ratio. Of these, by far the most important source will be the growth of population. Long run changes in the labour force population ratio are difficult to predict. For the comparatively short period of next 10 years, this ratio may be assumed to remain constant at about 37.9 per cent or so.

11.37 A look at the population figures in Kerala over the last few decades shows that this State has witnessed a higher rate of growth of population than India as a whole and that during 1941–51 it was higher (22.82%) than in any other State.[1] There are indications to believe that the rate of growth of population during the coming decade may not be so fast. The following table gives the projections for growth of population[2] and the labour force arising out of it during the period 1956–71.

GROWTH OF POPULATION—PROJECTIONS FOR 1956—71

Year	*Population* (million)	*Increase in Population over the previous five years* (million)	*Increase in the labour force (Labour force population Ratio = 37.9 per cent)* (million)
1956	15.01	..	..
1961	16.68	1.67	.633
1966	18.34	1.66	.629
1971	20.12	1.78	.674
			1.936
Backlog of unemployment in 1956			.660
			2.596
Less jobs created during the Second Plan			.200*
Additional labour supply during 1961–71			2.396

* *Employment Trends and Prospects*—Planning Commission. Approximate estimates of employment created during the Second Plan may also be derived from investment figures. On this basis we get a smaller figure for employment generated during the Second Plan period. Public sector investment during the Second Plan was about Rs. 75 crores. Adding 50 per cent for private investment the total comes to Rs. 112.5 crores. Assuming that an investment of roughly Rs. 8,000 is required to create an additional job, the number of jobs created during the Second Plan comes to about 1.4 lakhs.

11.38 The above figures may be taken to be only rough approximations, since the projections of population and labour force ratios are based on certain assumptions. However, the magnitude of the problem is well illustrated by the fact that during the coming decade an additional 23.96 lakh jobs will have to be created if something approaching the standards of full employment has to be achieved. This figure is almost 50 per cent of the existing working force.

[1] *1961 Census*—Provisional Population figures.

[2] Based on NCAER population projections. It may be noted that the NCAER projections would have to be slightly modified in the light of the 1961 Census data. However, the extent of difference would not be so large as to make any substantial difference to our calculations.

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TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	16,875,199	1,188

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)

(At current prices)

434
433
171

	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	172.5	49.1	4,520.0	45.6
1. Agriculture	151.5	43.1	4,300.0	44.9
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0	70.0	
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	60.0	0.5
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6		
B. Secondary Incomes	52.3	14.8	1,150.0	11.8
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.3	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	126.8	36.3	3,810.0	38.3
1. Communications	..			
2. Railways	3.5			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	55.9			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	3.5			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	31.3			
6. Public Authorities	14.6			
7. House Property	18.0			
TOTAL	351.6	100	9,940	100
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

[p 159]
[pp. 1-158 not Processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. 114
Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely 184
complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south.

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical 114
all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon [132]
from June to October. The record density of the population makes for [161]
poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, [484]
the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows.

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara 131
in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is
bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which [133]
are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

3. THE PEOPLE

161 [212] The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is [871] [212] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography. 105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala 564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

[463] Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With [565] them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

regulation. They said that they were starving and that they had had nothing to eat that morning. When I asked them how they would solve their problem, they replied that it was better that I "did not ask". Evil times had befallen them in their old age, and they really did not know what they could do about it; they might hire themselves out as labourers, if they were not so old and feeble. They agreed with me that the increase in population in Kerala over the years had made the difficulty of feeding so many people increasingly great.

Their two elder sons, called Ayapakuti and Pangha, lived polyandrously, I heard, some few miles away, on a bit of land which their fathers had given them fourteen years ago, in the fifth year of their marriage and after the birth of their fourth child. The common wife, Paru, was now alone with the thirty five year old second son, as the elder had died two years ago, also at the age of thirty five. It seemed that Kandapan had originally been part of the polyandrous household but that, tiring of living in this way, he had found a wife for himself, Lakshmi, with whom he had returned to the parental house to live, after the last renewal of the lease, four years ago.

With the old folk and Kandapan's family, was also Kunyu, a daughter, twenty five years old and divorced ten years ago. She had been married at the age of fourteen to Velahu, a man eighteen years her senior. She was childless and had not remarried. She lived in the larger house with her parents.

I took photographs of the family and a group picture of them can be seen in Fig. 10. I also made their genealogy, which is attached herewith in Table 6. I stayed on and discussed various problems with these people for part of the afternoon (having provided for them to have lunch in the meantime, which was most welcome to them in their starved condition). They told me that even if polyandry was now prohibited since the Act passed in 1940, it had been dying out for some years in any case. The legislation – of which they really had no idea at all – was only the confirmation and the consecration of a *de facto* state of affairs. Concerning the inheritance of girls in Tiya families, I may mention that, since the passing of the Act, property would have to be divided. Girls would also get their share which would be half that of the boys; they would pass it on to their own children and, since they were *makkathayam*, it would become merged with that of the latter's fathers. If there were no boys and only girls in the household, its property would cease to exist after the girls had been married off, for each of them would take her part away in accordance with the above.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks,[46] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the [312]
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[46] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 269.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW1

161 Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore respectively 14, 23, and 27% in 1921–31, 11, 18, and 19% in 1931–41. The decrease in rate seems to be associated with later marriage. Females outnumber males in Cochin (1042:1000) and in both Cochin and Travancore the proportion of unmarried females over 15 years old is several times greater than that of India as a whole—in 1941 Cochin had 172 per mille and Travancore 107 against an All-India rate of 36. In Cochin also the proportion of children under 10 had been stable in the last two Censuses.[47] The rate of increase, however, turned upwards again in 1941–51, which added to Travancore-Cochin 1,772,264 souls—an increase of 23·6% compared with an *Indian* average of 13·4. Population is now **9,280,425** with a density of **1015** on 9155 sq mls.

161 311 The situation is grave; on the 1931 figures Kuriyan calculated that taking a liberal view of the potentialities of 'culturable waste' only another 2,000,000 souls could be supported. Holdings are extremely small—96% under 10 ac., 87% under 5, 38% less than 1; and 5 ac. is regarded as the minimum for a family to live in reasonable comfort.[48] In Cochin the total area per person in 1941 was 0·67 of an acre, of cultivable land 0·36, of land actually cultivated 0·29; and the rice grown is sufficient to feed the people for only 7 out of 12 months.[49] During the war the Cochin and Travancore governments prided themselves, with some justice, on the efficiency of their procurement and rationing, but the ration was minimal even by Indian standards. As we have seen, agriculture is in many respects extremely intensive; yet in many areas there is a slack season from May through August, and this coincides with the slack season in sea-fishing owing to the stormy monsoon.

Diversification and expansion of agriculture are thus urgently necessary. But the density on cultivated area in the lowland is now at least 2250, and there is here very little land available for expansion on the most optimistic view imaginable. Various plans exist for irrigating perhaps 100,000 ac., mainly in the foothills; but these will not go very far, and it is difficult to see where the 15,000 ac. allotted to jute in 1950 can be fitted in. Even in the foothills there are well over **1000** persons to the cultivated square mile. Here, however, there is perhaps some room for diversification by expansion—perhaps of poorer crops on the poorer soils. Gram, soya, and other pulses, fodder crops, and buckwheat are suggested by Kuriyan, together with more tapioca and fruit. Other occupations may play an ancillary role in relieving pressure, but their scope is limited.

361 As for settlement patterns, the extreme density of population (as in Bengal) produces a close stipple of habitations; there are no grouped villages (other than mere thickening of homesteads) except in the tran-

[47] 1941 Census, Vol. XIX (Cochin), 18–24; the discussion is largely based on Cochin figures since this, by exception in 1941, is an excellent report.
[48] *Ibid.*, 31; Kuriyan (1938), 140, where 8–10 ac. is given as the 'economic' holding.
[49] 1941 Census, Vol. XIX, 31.

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
241 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food. [101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of south-west India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic leaders. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nambudiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

564 tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in
[361] a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title
121 today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes.
564 Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name
[703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their
162 personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a sepa-
621 rate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous [162] group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received [651] land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth [564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the [463] produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and [592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

471 The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western 592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell 566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–238.

162 564 According to the Census Report, 1891, they numbered 377,828 in Malabar. The figures found in this useful document offer an instance of the unreliability of casual observation. The author of "A Manual of Malabar Law" describes the peoples of Malabar to some extent, and in his Introduction says: "The Nâyars constitute the major portion of the Malabar population." One hears of Malabar as the land of the Nâyars, as if its inhabitants were all Nâyars. Certainly they may be said to form the most distinguishing feature of the district; but, when we seek in the spirit of accuracy, we find the surprising fact that they number but 14·2 per cent. of its population.

611 564 The chief immediate interest attached to them lies in the fact of their being the best, that is the fullest, the most complete existing example of matriarchy, or, to be more strictly accurate, of inheritance through females. [171] This system, obtaining at one time amongst the Celts and other races of Europe, was probably universal in the sense that it existed at some period in the life history of every race of mankind, and is now to be found here and there in the world.

611 171 That inheritance through females was once the rule in Southern India is fairly obvious. Amongst others the Maravars, who are, so far as we can surmise at present, aborigines in the sense that we know of no earlier inhabitants in the part of the peninsula occupied by them, to this day offer strong proof of this. I refer to the genuine Maravars—the Kondayan Kottai Maravars of Tinnevelly—and not to the offshoots settled in Trichinopoly and elsewhere, who have almost entirely forsaken all the customs of their fathers.* Amongst the Maravars the girl on marriage joins the sept of her husband, but she retains her own sept name, and her children are of *her* sept; not of their father's. Marriage between persons of the same sept name is prohibited; and this is regulated solely through the mothers. The tribe is endogamous; but the septs within it are exogamous. Thus, a man or a girl cannot marry any one of the same sept, having the same sept name (which is inherited through their mother), and *must* marry some one within the tribe but of a different sept to his or her own—of his father's sept or any other. Though property

* Most of the cigar makers of Trichinopoly are Maravars in origin. Their names — ———Naidu,———Pillay, and so on are borrowed from people of higher castes.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

[P.97]

CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by occupation is not possible. They were at one time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkars* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

Occupation.

564 178 [555]

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

162 [463] [182]

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad;* and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

[text continues on p. 21]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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165

COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	*Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons*
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

[244]

Rural-Urban Breakdown

162 1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

361 1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

434 1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,980 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] *See* Appendix 2 for details.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[3] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3 [see p 272, category 11b -- Analysis]

of these schemes is being expanded to handle 250 maunds per day during the Third Plan. Under these schemes, milk from the surrounding villages would be collected and pasteurized before bottling them for sale. The schemes will serve a two-fold purpose: (*i*) they will give incentive for a higher production of milk in the rural areas by offering fair prices and (*ii*) they will provide hygienic milk to the urban population at a reasonable price. The unscrupulous middleman will be eliminated by this process. 433* 234

3.29 The dairy development programme of this type needs to be taken up on a much larger scale than at present. This is necessary to provide an outlet for the likely increase in milk production and for making hygienic fluid milk available to the urban people. Owing to acute shortage of clean and pure milk in the urban areas, milk supply schemes of the type discussed above might prove a great success. It would be good if all the urban areas with a population of over 30,000 are served with such schemes. According to 1951 Census there were 13 towns in Kerala with a population exceeding 30,000. At the end of the Second Plan, 11 among these were still without any milk scheme. It is, therefore, suggested that these milk schemes should be organized in all these towns. The capacity, investment required, etc., for these schemes is given in Table 22.[2] [162]

3.30 Many of the dairy units proposed here may find it difficult to get sufficient quantities of milk from the surrounding areas owing to the poor yield of animals and low marketable surplus with the farmers. In order to justify collection, marketing and sales organization of even the smallest size, it is considered necessary to have a handling capacity of 150 maunds per day. In case sufficient milk is not available, which is likely to be the case at least in some centres, a part of the capacity may be utilized for bottling reconstituted milk. Reconstituted milk can be of various types depending upon the fomulae. Milk powder is a common ingredient in all the types. A survey of consumer preference and tastes may be conducted before choosing the type, and part of the demand for fluid milk may be met in this way. Such a survey is essential before embarking upon the actual production of reconstituted milk because the new product may meet considerable consumer resistance in its initial stages. Propaganda and other measures to popularize the use of reconstituted milk will also have to be taken up side by side.

3.31 In smaller towns, that is, those with less than 30,000 population, cooperatives for supply of milk, may be organized with consumers or producers. There were 12 such societies in 1958. These societies should be encouraged. [474]

3.32 Munnar is a region which possesses the potential for growth into a large scale commercial dairy farming centre. Many exotic cattle breeds[1] are thriving in the region. The performance of some of the herds maintained by a few sterling tea companies is said to be of a high order and compares favourably with that of similar herds maintained in the countries from which these cattle are imported. It is suggested that the Department of Animal Husbandry should further investigate the economic feasibility of commercial dairying in the Munnar region. If the investigation reveals prospects, the State may organize a few such dairy farms in the public 433* 231 234

[1] Jersey and Holstein.

[2] [Table 22, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed - Ankahut]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilizers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. An amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

[Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

Chapter 11

Manpower and Employment

PART I: MANPOWER

464 128 ONE OF THE chief problems of Kerala today is the vast unemployed section of its manpower. An appraisal of the analysis of employment prospects, therefore, becomes very important. The extent of urbanization, sex distribution, the size of the labour force, its rate of participation, and occupational distribution—all these are, therefore, studied in detail in what follows.

162 161 *Urbanization*

11.2 Progress in urbanization in Kerala is less as compared to the country as a whole. Of the total population of Kerala, 13.5 per cent live in urban areas against 17.38 per cent for the whole of India according to the Census of 1951. The degree of urbanization has been progressively increasing over the past few decades. This is shown by the table below which gives the relative rates of growth of the urban and rural population during the period 1921–51. As may be seen, urban population has been growing at a faster rate than the rural population.

MEAN DECENNIAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION

(Per Cent)

	1921–30	*1931–40*	*1941–50*
Urban	27.18	23.26	29.38
Rural	22.85	16.53	20.12
TOTAL	*23.31*	*17.27*	*21.22*

N.B.: It may be noted that these figures pertain only to the old Travancore-Cochin State.

[10] SOURCE: *Census of India*, Volume XIII, Tranvancore-Cochin (Part I, Subsidiary Table).

11.3 During the last decade, that is, 1951–61, urbanization seems to have increased at a somewhat faster rate than in the whole of India. The proportion of population living in urban areas of Kerala grew from 13.05 per cent in 1951 to 15.03 per cent in 1961, whereas in the case of all-India the proportion registered an increase from 17.38 per cent to only 17.84 per cent.[1] In view of the plans for a faster growth of industries,

[1] As pointed out in Chapter 1, too much reliance should not be placed on a comparison of urbanization between 1951 and 1961 since the definition of urban areas during the two Census operations has not been the same.

 162 161

the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census) 162 [464]

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages. [369] [166v]

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56[2] gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951. 162 464

[1] 1961 Census (Provisional Population figures).

[2] [Table 56, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed -- Ana/pcB]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

162 464 11.8 In the context of an under-developed economy like that of Kerala, it is difficult to define distinct boundary lines for the working age group, since participation in economic activity starts at an early age and at the other end of the ladder there is no fixed age of retirement. However, taking 15-55 years, as roughly representing the age group within which people actively take part in work, 53.3 per cent of Kerala's population belonged to this group against 52.4 per cent for all-India. It will also be noted from Table 56 that the working age group of the population in Kerala has a larger component of younger people than in all-India. A higher proportion of persons fall within the category of 15-25 years in Kerala while the reverse is the case with those in the age group 25-55 years.

LIVELIHOOD CLASSIFICATION

11.9 The table below gives the comparative break-up of the population of Kerala and all-India according to the sources of livelihood (1951 Census data).

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

	All-India (in million)	*Percentage to total population*	*Kerala* (in million)	*Percentage to total population*
Total Population	356.7	100.0	13.5	100.0
Self-supporting Persons	104.8	29.4	3.7	27.4
Earning Dependents	38.4	10.8	0.8	5.9
Non-earning Dependents	213.5	59.8	9.0	66.7

It will be noticed that the proportion of non-earning dependents is very high in Kerala. In fact, it is the highest in India with the exception of Madras. The burden of dependence, therefore, is very acute in Kerala.

Working Force and Participation Rates

11.10 The converse of a high rate of dependence is the low proportion of working force to the total population. Working force is defined as that section of the total population which takes part in productive activity. In terms of the classification in 1951 Census, the earners, that is, self-supporting persons and the earning dependents comprise the working force. The ratio of working force to the total population in any sector of the economy is defined as the sectoral participation rate.

11.11 According to the 1951 Census, Kerala had a total working force of 45.4 lakhs.[1] The general participation rate, that is, the rate of total working force to total population works out to only 33.5 per cent against a much higher figure of 39.9 per cent for the whole of India. Table 57[2] gives a break-up of general participation rate in terms of sectoral rates. This table reveals that it is the rural participation rate which is primarily responsible for this wide divergence between Kerala and India. Whereas Kerala's urban participation rate is only about 2 per cent less than the all-

[1] Vide Appendix 2 for the method of calculation.

[2] [Table 57, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rate** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	757	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

162 464 The fall in the participation ratio between 1931–51[1] may be attributed to three factors:

(i) Rise in the sex ratio in favour of females.
(ii) Increase in the school-going population.
(iii) Slow growth in employment opportunities.

11.17 The force of the first two factors, however, is not sufficient to explain the steep [161] decline in the participation rate. A fall of the magnitude, as shown in the above [433] table, primarily indicates that the increase in opportunities for gainful employment has not been keeping pace with the growth of population which had increased by over 40 per cent between 1931 and 1951 without any corresponding growth of industries or development in other sectors.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN POPULATION DENSITY AND MANPOWER

[161] 11.18 Kerala is the most thickly populated State of India having an average density of 1,125 persons to a square mile according to the Census of 1961. The population, however, is not uniformly spread out as may be noticed from the district density figures in Table 58.[3] Malabar is less thickly populated than the Travancore-Cochin area. But the proportion of working force to total population, that is, the participation rate is also lower in the Malabar area. Generally, it is expected that participation rate would be lower in the more congested areas, because an over-crowded agricultural sector naturally offers limited scope for employment. The comparison of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, however, seems to belie this conclusion. The [288] reason for this contrast perhaps lies in the fact that the major part of the coir industry, the most labour-intensive industry of Kerala, is concentrated mostly in the Travancore-Cochin region.[4] Absence of this industry on a large scale in Malabar seems to account for a lower participation rate in that area.

Occupational Distribution

162 464 433 11.19 Occupational pattern generally gives a broad idea as to the stage of economic development attained by a country or a region. The distribution of working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, is given separately for the rural and urban sectors, in Table 59.[5] A comparison with the all-India occupational distribution brings out a marked contrast in the case of Kerala. Whereas 71.8 per cent of the working force was engaged in agricultural occupations in the whole of India, in case of Kerala the proportion was only 51.4 per cent. In fact in Kerala the proportion of its population dependent upon non-agricultural activities turns out to be the highest in the whole of India.

[1] The difference in the concepts used in 1931 and 1951 Censuses perhaps exaggerates the extent of decline in the participation rates, but it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years.

[2] Both these aspects have also been dealt with in Chapter 1.

3,4,5 [see p 310, category 116 -- Analysis]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas. 162 464 433

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities. 241

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations. 423 288

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951. 423

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of 464

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.
[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their 128 application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemploy- 659 ment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

162 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to 464 concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column 1 of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference betweent labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [871] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter I.

[See p. 311, category 116 -- Analyst]

actively unemployed persons during 1956 was 6.6 lakhs.[1] The total labour force during 1956 may, therefore, be taken to be 56.9 lakh persons, i.e., 37.9 per cent of the total population. 162 464

11.29 One striking feature revealed by this survey is the very high degree of open unemployment. Open unemployment comes out to be as high as 4.2 per cent of the total population, as can be seen from Table 60 (Category 7).[2] Generally it is under-employment rather than open unemployment which is prominent in backward agricultural economies. For example, unemployment in India is only 0.29 per cent of total rural population and 1.99 per cent in urban areas giving a weighted average of 0.58 per cent[3]. The percentage of open unemployment to population in Kerala is, therefore, roughly seven times as high as in the rest of India.

11.30 Category (6) of Table 60, that is, the proportion of casual workers to the total population gives an idea of the magnitude of the problem of under-employment. The incidence of under-employment is also higher in Kerala than in India. Of the total population, 9.6 per cent belongs to this category against about 6 per cent for the whole of India.[4] Among the under-employed section of the population, on an average, a worker was unemployed for about 2.35 days per week. This, however, does not tell the whole story. There are the seasonal variations which extend the period of unemployment to several days at a stretch.

11.31 The above figures do not include disguised unemployment. In rural areas, where family enterprise is the dominant form of organization, there is generally a large surplus of hidden manpower which does take part in economic activity, but whose net contribution towards increasing the output is very little. An objective assessment of the surplus in disguised unemployment is rather difficult. It would have to rely heavily upon notional norms regarding optimum labour requirements among the self-employed sector of rural population. Within the coming decade the problem of primary importance, however, is that of providing jobs for the large back-log of unemployed, who sit completely idle, rather than for those who are in the comparatively favourable position of being employed but below their full capacity. 464 369

RURAL-URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT

11.32 The nature of unemployment in rural and urban areas varies considerably. According to NSS Report on 'Employment and Unemployment' (9th Round), open unemployment in rural areas was rather insignificant affecting only 0.29 per cent of the total rural population (urban areas 1.99%). Because of the small size of the sample, the unemployment survey referred to above did not collect separate data for rural and urban unemployment in Kerala. Under these circumstances, only rough 162 464 369

[1] Table 60.

[2] It may be noted that in Table 60 the absolute number of unemployed persons is likely to be high since a portion of Travancore-Cochin, viz., Kanyakumari was transferred to Madras. However, the percentage figures may be assumed to be fairly correct.

[3] *NSS Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[4] *Ibid.*

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

162 464 369 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural and urban areas.

11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9 (86%)	2.10 (14.0%)	15 0 (100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 464 871 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The impression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is takrn to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person. [212]

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.

[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

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District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	*16,875,109*	*1,725*

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	*172.5*	*49.1*	*4,520.0*	*45.4*
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0		44.9
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	70.0	
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6	60.0	0.5
B. Secondary Incomes	*52.3*	*14.8*	*1,530.0*	*15.4*
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.3	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	*126.8*	*36.3*	*3,810.0*	*38.3*
1. Communications	3.5			
2. Railways	35.9			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	3.5			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	31.3			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	14.6			
6. Public Authorities	18.0			
7. House Property				
TOTAL	*351.6*	*100*	*9,940*	*100*
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-56)

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	Working force			*Net value added per worker* (Rs.)	
	Kerala		*India*	*Kerala*	*India*
	Lakhs[a]	*Per cent*	*Per cent*		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	..	413	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	*50.3*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*700.00*	*651.00*

[a] Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Integrated Sample Survey. According to this, estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Integrated Sample Survey are given below:

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	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	*24.5*
2. Secondary Sector	*9.4*
(a) Mining	0.5
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	*12.4*
TOTAL	*46.3*

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 A.W11 Kerala A.W11

TABLE 58

DENSITY OF POPULATION (KERALA STATE)
(Figures based on 1951 Census)

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District		*Participation rate* (Per cent)	*Density of population*	
Trivandrum	Travancore-Cochin	36.2	1,569	
Quilon			749	
Alleppey			2,148	
Kottayam			664	
Ernakulam			982	
Trichur			1,188	
Palghat		28.5	795	783
Kozhikode			809	
Cannanore			618	
STATE TOTAL			904	

Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore formed the previous districts of Malabar.

TABLE 59

OCCUPATIONAL BREAK-UP OF WORKING FORCE (1961)

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	KERALA						*INDIA*					
	Rural		*Urban*		*Combined*		*Rural*		*Urban*		*Combined*	
	Lakhs	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*
Agricultural Sector	22.3	60.3	1.1	18.9	23.4	51.4	990	81.8	30	18.9	1,020	71.8
Non-agricultural Sector	17.3	39.8	4.7	81.1	22.0	48.6	218	18.2	184	81.1	402	28.2
TOTAL	39.6	100.0	5.8	100.0	45.4	100.0	1,208	100.0	214	100.0	1,422	100.0

[Pp. 286–309 not Processed]

TABLE 60

UNEMPLOYMENT POSITION IN KERALA

Activity status	Travancore-Cochin		Malabar		Kerala	
I	II		III		IV=II+III	
	Absolute number (In lakhs)	Percentage to total population	Absolute number (In lakhs)	Percentage to total population	Absolute number (In lakhs)	Percentage to total population
(a) Below 15 years age	41.3	40.7	20.7	36.9	62.0	39.4
(b) Above 15 years	60.2	60.1	35.3	63.0	95.5	60.6
1. Students	4.0	4.0	1.2	2.1	5.2	3.3
2. Disabled or too old	4.6	4.5	3.2	3.7	7.8	4.9
3. Pensioners or Rentiers	1.1	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.8
4. Having Regular Employment	19.7	19.6	9.8	17.5	29.5	18.7
5. Household Workers	19.2	19.0	10.9	19.4	30.1	19.1
6. Casual Workers	9.1	8.0	7.2	12.1	15.2	9.6
7. People in search of employment	3.7	3.6	2.9	5.9	6.6	4.2
TOTAL POPULATION	*101.5*	*100*	*56.0*	*100*	*157.5*	*100*
LABOUR FORCE (4+6+7)	*31.4*	*30.9*	*19.87*	*35.5*	*51.2*	*32.5*
Category (7) as percentage of labour force	*3.7*	*11.62*	*2.9*	*14.64*	*6.68*	*12.79*

SOURCE: The Statistics Department, Government of Kerala.

TABLE 61

COMPARATIVE SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FORCE

Sector	Proportion of working force	
	1956	*1971*
1. Primary Sector	54.9	42.2
2. Secondary Sector	19.3	24.6
(a) Factory Sector	3.4	9.2
(b) Non-factory Sector and Mining	15.9	15.4
3. Tertiary Sector	25.8	33.2
TOTAL	*100.0*	*100.0*

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

564 582 588 114 ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

427 The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

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162 564 While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

[115]

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

It would appear, therefore, that, far from there being an excess of men, it is the other way round: there is a shortage of them. What happens then to the unmarried women? It was even more difficult to answer that question, as only a painstaking and lengthy investigation could do this. I enquired from my guides and interpreters, from those I interviewed, from officials and from fellow anthropologists, and the consensus of opinion, which I also share, is that the spinsters stay at home – with their parents, as long as they live, and with their brothers when the parents have died. The genealogies given above somewhat confirm this view, although perhaps not as decisively as one would like. 589 [162]

C. POLYANDRY IN A THANDAN FAMILY OF THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR

While engaged in a general survey of polyandry in Kerala, in the course of which I came into contact with people of all sorts and conditions, in this complex State, it was not possible for me simultaneously to make a more special study of the distinctive features of the custom. At first, I really only obtained a superficial impression which, with time, I came to look upon as insufficient for me to speak with any authority on the polyandry practised by some of the distinctive castes and sub-castes of this south-west part of India. 595* 114 124

Because I wanted to deepen my research and also out of a feeling that the opportunity to gather everything that I could while I was there should not be missed, I decided to choose one family from among those that I had already visited with my guides and interpreters, to put it under scrutiny and study its structure and activity in greater detail. Actually, I would have liked to have chosen one family in each caste or even sub-caste, but I soon realised that this meant work over a period of time far greater than I could possibly hope to have at my disposal in Kerala. So I resigned myself to enquiring where it was thought that I stood the best chance of making such a special study. I was advised to return to the Thandan family which I had first visited on the 25th and 26th of October, immediately after I had started to work in 1949. This family, it will be remembered, was called Appayl Wattakkeh, its *tarawad* had the same name, Appayl, and it was located about two miles outside the village of Ottappalam in the Walluvanad taluk of south Malabar.

The advantages of studying these people were numerous. They were close to where I lived, and to the residence of my interpreters. We had

TODA AW60
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stinct and for the orderly social procreation of offspring. Formally, it is more difficult to say why this institution has taken on this curious appearance. As far as I know, authors so far have been rather at a loss to furnish a satisfactory explanation. Many, of course, have been given, with a great amount of variety in their choice.

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For instance, we are given historical explanations. In India they say people have been polyandrous for many centuries; that there are indications, such as archaeological (about the Heftalite Huns, 6th c. A.D.) and literary (the Indian epic poem, the Mahabarata), that the people in this area, both Aryan and non-Aryan, were polyandrous in antiquity. Economic reasons for this have been given; *i.e.*, that the country is poor, that nomadism among Todas or Tibetans, in earlier times, perhaps led to a polyandrous society in order to limit the number of children. Then, demographical explanations have been given, that there is an excess of males over females in this society, and that they have to be polyandrous for that reason. For instance, the Todas practise female infanticide and this is given as a reason for their polyandry. Their men drink a lot of milk, and some people say that the fact that they have more proteins in their diet in this fashion produces more male offspring than female. I do not pretend to know how far this biological explanation is true. Sociological reasons have also been given, namely, that the men travel and have to leave one brother at home with the wife (a reason which I hinted at earlier). In east and south India, the people known as the Nayars, who once could also be called polyandrous, had a very definite military organization (somewhat like that of the Sikhs in the north), and that has been given as a reason why a people is polyandrous: one brother can always remain at home with the wife while the other is away serving with the colors.

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It seems to me that these explanations are not sufficient. As far as the historical

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

361 *Preliminary.*—Watakanchery is a Government division, rather than a true village, being marked out merely for convenience of revenue assessment. It stretches from east to west a distance of nearly four miles along the foot of a hill. A water-course which runs from east to west forms the northern boundary; the maximum distance from north to south is nearly a mile and a half. The whole area is 3,692·64 acres (nearly 5½ square miles). It is an area containing a few groups of houses intersected by paddy fields and "parambas," i.e., land on which paddy cultivation is not undertaken.

Watakanchery proper, or the town of Watakanchery, as it is called in the village accounts, is at the easternmost boundary of the Government village area and is the headquarters of the taluk containing all the public offices. Two tracts of land, one inhabited by Mappillas (Muhammadans) and another by Syrian Christians (locally known as Nasranees, i.e., Nazarenes) are included in the "town" of Watakanchery from the contiguous areas of the adjoining Government villages on the north and south respectively. Its area is 1½ square miles.

The Taluk of Talapilli contains 74 such "villages" divided solely for revenue purposes. In the "town" Brahmans live in great numbers, while the lower castes occupy the rest of the village area. This block I shall designate Watakanchery (T) and the whole area Watakanchery (V) in the following.

162 *Population.*—Watakanchery (T) has about 2,000 inhabitants;
[779] Watakanchery (V) about 4,000. Watakanchery (T) contains within
564 its limits three religions—Hindus in the centre and Mappillas (Muhammadans) and Christians to the north and south, respectively. Among the Hindus the Brahmans form the majority in the "town," while there are a few "vocational" castes such as barbers, goldsmiths, etc., and a few Nayars. Though the term "castes" is in strictness to be applied to Hindus alone the Mappillas and Christians are regarded as two other castes. The Mappillas and the Christians cannot touch the Hindu caste-people without polluting them, while there are castes within the Hindu fold itself, such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, Cherumas (vide below), Eluvas, etc., who are
[113] kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority.

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[778] * [In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

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423 his neighbour seeing the improvements resorts to bribery in order to get the land.

242 Further this system results in the disregard of agricultural principles. Supposing only ten coconut palms should be planted in a certain portion of land, the possessor actually plants fifteen or sixteen because at the end of twelve years he will get the value of fifteen or sixteen trees according to the Tenants Improvements Act. If he is content with planting only ten according to agricultural principles, he gets only the value of ten. For many years past there has been no attempt towards scientific cultivation, as a consequence of this, in the whole of Malabar. It is impossible to do so. Disregard of science means gain; regard for it means loss. There is an evident deterioration in the production of the land in Malabar due to absence of security, and disregard of science. Lands which brought a gain of Rs. 1,000 do not now bring even Rs. 400 or Rs. 500. An improvement in this system of land tenure by means of legislation would evidently increase the fertility of Malabar.

Population.—Total population 7,596.*

162 Castes and individuals in each caste—

Name of caste.	Families.	Members.
Nambudri or Malabar Brahmans	36	146
East Coast Brahmans or Brahmans who have emigrated to Malabar from the east ...	107	653
Nayars and their sub-sects	382	1,305
Tiyyas and their sub-sects	437	2,461
Muhammadans	331	2,307
Christians	118	592
Artisan castes, etc.	17	117
Total ...	1,428	7,581

163 Number of children under ten in families—Living 3,490, dead 928.

165 Number of homesteads—1,290.

	1915.	
	Births.	Deaths.
Boys	178	76
Girls	158	80
Total ...	336*	156*

165 The following table of deaths may be useful:—

Children between ages	0—10	87*
Between ages	10—20	2
"	21—25	8
"	26—30	8
"	31—35	6
"	36—40	4

Birth-rate ... ... 44·2 per thousand
Death-rate ... ... 20·5 "
Death-rate for children 0—10 ... 259 per thousand births.
Density of population ... ... 3,231 per square mile.—Ed.]

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KOTHACHIRA DESAM (PONNANI TALUK).

[*By A. Krishna Wariyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—This desam is situated about 13 miles south-east of Ponnani, a small thriving town at the mouth of the river of the same name, a Muhammadan centre and the headquarters of the taluk. The visitor to Kothachira leaves the train at Pattambi, the nearest railway station and after a six miles walk along the Pattambi-Chowghat road turns to the left and by a footpath over a rising eminence descends into the paddy fields. A two miles walk southwards through these fields will bring him to the borders of the Kothachira desam. 361

This desam is a completely rural area and there is nothing of interest in the place. The shortest distance from the nearest river (river Ponnani) is 5 miles. Hills and forests are not rare since the desam enjoys proximity to the Akalanum (east) and the Mattur (north) hills. [133]

The term 'desam' literally means a piece of territory. The desam is the political and social unit in Malabar, and is the nearest equivalent to the villages of the east. The chief differences, however, are—(1) the village organization, in its entirety, is not found here; (2) the village has no particular site. The population is distributed throughout the desam area, each individual landholder having his home and family compound often in the midst of his lands and gardens and separated far from his neighbours. 621

Population.—The population of this desam according to the censuses of 1891 and 1901 was as follows:— 162

Year of census.	Number of inhabited houses.	Total population.			Religion.			Occupation.				Population per 100 acres of occupied land.
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Others.	Landholders.	Labourers.	Weavers.	Others.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1891 ...	295	898	985	1,883	1,678	204	1	767	563	...	553	221
1901 ...	312	961	1,047	2,008	1,808	200	...	559	378	...	1,071	236

The report of the last census (that of 1911) is not obtainable. My enquiry gives the following results:—

Number of houses 333.

Males ...	1,216	Hindus ...	1,990	Landholders ...	442
Females ...	1,107	Muhammadans.	327	Labourers ...	518
		Others ...	6	Weavers ...	...
				Others * ...	1,363
Total ...	2,323		2,323		2,323

* Including all who have no regular occupation, children, women of higher castes, old men, and even a good many young men belonging to joint families.

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VATANAMKURUSSI VILLAGE (WALLUVANAD TALUK).

[*By N. Sundara Aiyar, Presidency College, Madras.*]

361 *Preliminary.*—The village lies in the interior of the district, thirty miles west of the municipal town of Palghat on the high road 489 that passes from Palghat to Ponnani. It is to the north of the railway line passing from Calicut to Palghat, and about equidistant from the two railway stations of Shoranur and Pattambi on that line (South Indian Railway). It is fifty-four miles south-east (by railway) of the port of Calicut, the capital of the district.

361 The village is more or less surrounded by low hills on all sides, and there is a small forest to the east of it. A portion of the village 131 has for its southern boundary the Bharata Puzha (called the Ponnani river, because it joins the sea at Ponnani). The river is of little use for navigation, since it is in flood during the rains and almost dry in summer. The railway passes through the village, for about a mile, though the nearest railway station is 4½ miles distant. The trunk road from Palghat also passes through the middle of the village. The village is roughly in the shape of a triangle with its apex to the north and the base on the south. Being in the midst of hilly country, dry soil abounds in the village, though the few wet acres are comparatively good.

162 *Population.*—The total population of the village in Census years was as follows :—

Year.	Occupied houses.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.
1891 ...	322	1,055	1,134	2,189	2,116	73
1901 ...	369	1,130	1,187	2,317	2,226	91
1911 ...	398	1,210	1,270	2,480	2,373	107

The figures include those of an adjacent small village, of which the total population in 1911 was 124, all Hindus.

564 There are Brahmans and Sudras, the latter split up into a large number of sub-castes and sects like the Nayars, Nambiyars, Menons, Chettis, etc., and the lower classes like the Thiyyas, or Ezhuvans, and the depressed classes of Cherumas, Pariahs and Nayadis. Nayars predominate in the village. There are a few Muhammadans, but no Christians at all.

Of Brahmans there are ten families comprising 60 individuals resident in the village. There are two families of Nambudiri Brahmans with some 30 members.

162 The great majority are Nayars, of whom there are about 150 families with nearly 1,500 individuals. Cherumas may number between 300 and 400, the Thiyyas or Ezhuvans about 500. The chief minor sub-castes in the village are Chettis (34), Kunparars (Potters, about 50), Asaris (Carpenters, 28), Karuvans (blacksmiths, 21), Thattars (goldsmiths, 19), Panans (makers of bamboo and palm leaf umbrellas, 29), Masons (13), Pariahs (42), and five families of Mannans, washermen of the lower classes, who also make mud walls, engage themselves as herdsmen and act as Pujaris, i.e.,

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perform priestly functions for the lowest classes. There are also in the village a few families of Ambalavasis (about 35 persons) who rank above the Nayars and perform menial and other functions in temples, and also practise Ayurvedic medicine. 162

Births and deaths.—The village register gives the following statistics of births and deaths for the year 1915 (as far as I could ascertain, a normal year). 163

Births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Hindus	37	41	78
Muhammadans	2	1	3
	39	42	81

Deaths. 165

Below 1 year	8	2	10
Between 1 and 5	1	4	5
" 5 and 10	4	1	5
" 15 and 20	2	1	3
" 30 and 40	2	2	4
" 40 and 50	3	...	3
" 50 and 60	2	2	4
Above 60	3	4	7
	25	16	41

Causes—

	Males.	Females.	
Fever	7	6	Causes are not accurate.
Dysentery and diarrhoea ...	11	6	
Respiratory diseases ...	6	4	
Injuries	1	...	
	25	16	

The figures seem to be fairly accurate, though not quite so. The death rate seems to be too low compared to the birth rate. But the figures are admittedly incomplete as is seen from the remarks made upon the register by the supervising authority. The deficiency is probably in the record of *deaths of young children.*

The causes of this defect are (1) registration not being compulsory; (2) indifference or ignorance of village authorities and of villagers who hardly seem to realize the importance of registration; (3) the villagers' suspicion of registration; they do not know its object.

There is no Paracheri strictly so called as in villages of eastern districts. There are scattered dwellings of depressed classes, Cherumas and Pariahs. There are five families of Pariahs, consisting of 13 men, 13 women and 16 children. Of the men two have gone for work to the Kolar Gold Fields and one to Wynaad. The proportion of children to adults is much smaller among the Cherumas and Pariahs than among the Brahmans and Nayars. 621 [167]

301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

● 163 *564 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 families of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
613 *564 Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

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Nayar

*142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] [789] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

● 163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 *564 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil	Krishnan	Cultivator	52
Paritbil	Achutan	Do.	27
613 Malabîtil	Sivarâman	Do.	22
Cholale	Râman	Do.	20
551 Muthîra	Narrâyanan	Teacher	26
463 Kanakath	Kunhi Krishnan* ...	Unemployed ...	22
Mannareth	Shangaran	Trader	30
Kûmbiyal	Kannan	Peon	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan	Do.	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—" to entice the public " as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

*142 564 The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

[302] [613] The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.	1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
" " "	1 to 2	"	6	"
" " "	2	"	7	"
" " "	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

*141 564 *Weight* of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In the 8 recorded instances the average number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

301 *564 *Ornaments.*—Ears are always pierced, and the usual Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

[304] (1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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182 1.13 These, broadly, are the inter-relationship between physical features and economic aspects of the State, and largely determine the nature and structure of the Kerala economy discussed below.

Density of Population

161 [164] 1.14 In the ultimate analysis, the basic problem of Kerala, viz., an inordinately large section of the population being without any gainful work, is brought about by the very high density of population in the State. With an area only 1.2 per cent of the whole of India, Kerala has to support 3.8 per cent (16.8 million) of the total population of India. The density of population in Kerala (1,125 persons per sq. mile) is naturally over three times the all-India average (384 persons per sq. mile).

1.15 The population, however, is not evenly spread out over the whole of the State, but shows considerable variations from district to district (Table 2). The highland, being mostly covered with forests, is sparsely populated. The average density here is only about 150 persons per square mile. On the other hand, the lowlands bear the severest burden of population. With only about 18 per cent of the State area, they support over 40 per cent of the population. On the other extreme is the coastal strip where the average density is over 2,500 persons per square mile. In certain pockets it even shoots up to 7,000 persons per square mile. The midland, though thickly populated, is not as congested as the area lying in the immediate vicinity of the sea coast.

Growth of Population

1.16 Not only is the density of population high in Kerala, but its rate of growth has also been fairly high. The following table gives the rate of growth of population over the last half century both for India as well as for Kerala.

DECENNIAL PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN POPULATION

Year	India	Kerala
1901-11	5.69	1.75
1911-21	−0.31	9.16
1921-31	11.00	21.85
1931-41	14.23	16.04
1941-51	13.34	22.82
1951-61	21.49	24.55

SOURCE: 1961 Census of Population Provisional Figures.

1.17 As can be seen, the population has grown much faster in Kerala than in the country as a whole during the last six decades. The basic reason for a faster [165] rate of growth of population in Kerala is a comparatively low death rate while the [163] birth rate is only slightly less than the all-India one. The comparative position of birth and death rates in India and Kerala is given in the following table.

[see p. 270, category 116 -- Analysis]
[text continues on p. 8]

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165

COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	*Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons*
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

[244]

Rural-Urban Breakdown

162 1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

361 1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

434 1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,980 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] *See* Appendix 2 for details.

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163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that
[361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths
165 are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	56	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths
[361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land.
[465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of
566 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The
162 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]
[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].
‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

423 his neighbour seeing the improvements resorts to bribery in order to get the land.

242 Further this system results in the disregard of agricultural principles. Supposing only ten coconut palms should be planted in a certain portion of land, the possessor actually plants fifteen or sixteen because at the end of twelve years he will get the value of fifteen or sixteen trees according to the Tenants Improvements Act. If he is content with planting only ten according to agricultural principles, he gets only the value of ten. For many years past there has been no attempt towards scientific cultivation, as a consequence of this, in the whole of Malabar. It is impossible to do so. Disregard of science means gain; regard for it means loss. There is an evident deterioration in the production of the land in Malabar due to absence of security, and disregard of science. Lands which brought a gain of Rs. 1,000 do not now bring even Rs. 400 or Rs. 500. An improvement in this system of land tenure by means of legislation would evidently increase the fertility of Malabar.

Population.—Total population 7,596.*

162 Castes and individuals in each caste—

Name of caste.	Families.	Members.
Nambudri or Malabar Brahmans	36	146
East Coast Brahmans or Brahmans who have emigrated to Malabar from the east ...	107	653
Nayars and their sub-sects	382	1,305
Tiyyas and their sub-sects	437	2,461
Muhammadans	331	2,307
Christians	118	592
Artisan castes, etc.	17	117
Total ...	1,428	7,581

163 Number of children under ten in families—Living 3,490, dead 928.

165 Number of homesteads—1,290.

	1915.	
	Births.	Deaths.
Boys	178	76
Girls	158	80
Total ...	336*	156*

165 The following table of deaths may be useful:—

Children between ages	0—10	87*
Between ages	10—20	2
"	21—25	8
"	26—30	8
"	31—35	6
"	36—40	4

Birth-rate ... ... 44·2 per thousand
Death-rate ... ... 20·5 "
Death-rate for children 0—10 ... 259 per thousand births.
Density of population ... ... 3,231 per square mile.—Ed.]

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The statistics of births and deaths of this desam are obtainable only for the year 1915. They are given below :— 163 165

Births.

Males	50	Hindu	84
Females	43	Muhammadan	9
	93		93

Deaths.

According to age—

Lifeless deliveries	7
Below one year	9
Between 1 and 10	13
" 10 and 20	1
" 20 and 30	7
" 30 and 40	3
" 40 and 50	...
" 50 and 60	3
" 60 and 80	5
	48

According to sex and castes—

Males	24	Hindus	43
Females	24	Muhammadans	5

There is no paracheri in the strict sense of the term. The depressed classes, mostly Cherumas, are still in a state of semi-serfdom, depending for everything on their landlords and masters. 566

Land.—The area of the desam by settlement is 1,803·40 acres. This desam together with Mattupalli, Peringode, Pillakkattiri, Tolukad, Mathur, Alikara, Kuttanad, Perumannur and Chalisseri desams formed the old revenue amsam of Kothachira. Now Kothachira revenue amsam includes only Kothachira, Mathur and Peringode desams. 631

The areas under each description of land— 423 311

—	Wet.	Garden.	Occupied dry.	Unoccupied dry.	Unassessed.	Inam.	Porambokе.	Total.
	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.			ACS. C.
Private Jenmi.	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	..	...	...	1,787 57
Government Jenmi.	...	..	...	..	...		..	...
Unregistered lands.	...	...		...	15 83	...	...	15 83
	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	15 83	..	...	1,803 40

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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perform priestly functions for the lowest classes. There are also in the village a few families of Ambalavasis (about 35 persons) who rank above the Nayars and perform menial and other functions in temples, and also practise Ayurvedic medicine. 162

Births and deaths.—The village register gives the following statistics of births and deaths for the year 1915 (as far as I could ascertain, a normal year). 163

Births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Hindus	37	41	78
Muhammadans	2	1	3
	39	42	81

Deaths. 165

Below 1 year	8	2	10
Between 1 and 5	1	4	5
" 5 and 10	4	1	5
" 15 and 20	2	1	3
" 30 and 40	2	2	4
" 40 and 50	3	...	3
" 50 and 60	2	2	4
Above 60	3	4	7
	25	16	41

Causes—

	Males.	Females.	
Fever	7	6	Causes are not accurate.
Dysentery and diarrhoea ...	11	6	
Respiratory diseases ...	6	4	
Injuries	1	...	
	25	16	

The figures seem to be fairly accurate, though not quite so. The death rate seems to be too low compared to the birth rate. But the figures are admittedly incomplete as is seen from the remarks made upon the register by the supervising authority. The deficiency is probably in the record of *deaths of young children.*

The causes of this defect are (1) registration not being compulsory; (2) indifference or ignorance of village authorities and of villagers who hardly seem to realize the importance of registration; (3) the villagers' suspicion of registration; they do not know its object.

There is no Paracheri strictly so called as in villages of eastern districts. There are scattered dwellings of depressed classes, Cherumas and Pariahs. There are five families of Pariahs, consisting of 13 men, 13 women and 16 children. Of the men two have gone for work to the Kolar Gold Fields and one to Wynaad. The proportion of children to adults is much smaller among the Cherumas and Pariahs than among the Brahmans and Nayars. 621 [167]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

In three the cephalic length was 20 cm. or over. In nine the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on a few individuals will be set down here. In most cases the supraciliary arches were well marked, and the nasal notch was deep. Nose generally straight, or nasal point slightly raised. Prognathism rare. Lips, especially the lower lip, often very thick.

(1) Very well bred looking. Eyebrows fleshy and thickly marked. Supraciliary arches very slight. Deep nasal notch. Nose straight; nasal point raised very slightly—and very well shaped. In the left ear a very small hole above the usual one in the lobe; I have not noted why it was made.

(2) Supraciliary arches rather prominent. Upper portion of forehead somewhat protuberant. Deep nasal notch. Nasal point raised. Lower lip thick. This man's father was a Nambûtiri. He appears in the plate.

(3) Forehead high. Deep nasal notch. Slight prognathism. Lower lip very thick.

(4) Supraciliary arches not marked. Nasal notch moderate. Lips thin.

Two out of the twenty-five were deeply pitted with small-pox, the Malabar goddess of small-pox, Bhânnâramûrti, having hurt them. In one man the broadest part of the head was above the ears, a little in front. [164] [776]

Figure.—The number of those put down as slight and those put down as medium are about equal.

Hair.—Worn in the usual Malayali fashion which has been described already and, as a rule, plentiful and wavy; treated with gingelly oil, which is sometimes perfumed. The number of individuals whose hair (on the head) was noted as "very thick and wavy" is abnormally large. A young man aged 24 had some white hairs here and there on his head; a man of 35 was a little grey; a man of 39 also; and one of 44 was quite grey. Whiskers or growth of hair on the cheeks were observed in more than half the number of subjects. In several there was hair, fairly thick in some, in the small of the back, and one man had thick hair all over the back. 142 564* [302]

Hair on the chest was "moderate" or "thick" in more than half.

Hair on the arms was "moderate to thick" in about half; in the other half "slight."

Hair on the legs was, as a rule, thick: rarely less than moderately thick. The legs of one man were like those of a bear.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 847
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile [532] to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow-dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

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796 beat the drums according to their 'science' for two or three hours. The figure of the God or Goddess is taken on the back of the middle elephant in the row. There is a display of fireworks at night.

794 A few temples in the village are managed by private people or Janmis, usually Nambudri Brahmans. Such temples have landed property managed by these Janmis who generally make use of the profits. Recently the Government has been trying to encroach upon the temple properties in its capacity of *melkoyma*; this is very much resented by the Nambudri Jánmis.

The common people as a rule have no part or lot in temple management or expenditure.

426 *State loans.*—Only one person in the village has borrowed from the Government a loan of Rs. 400 to be paid back in ten instalments of Rs. 40 each with interest at 5 per cent. The small landholders do not approach the Government for help; the mediocre landholders rent their land to others; while the few big ones have money of their own if they want to make any improvement. The fact is that agriculture is routine work with many people; no permanent improvements are thought of by the majority.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Plague and tuberculosis are not heard of. Malaria only affects those who resort for agricultural purposes to the foot of the hills four or five miles east from the village. Attacks of cholera frequently occur among the local Muhammadans, who are as a rule quite insanitary, poor, living in low and ill-ventilated thatched huts or hovels; one is sick of the stinking smell when one approaches their huts. The local Christians, though equally poor, are better in this respect. The houses of most of the Brahmans and the majority of the Nayars are decent. The hovels of the lower castes and working men again are poor and insanitary. [361] As the houses are not built in rows, but separate, each having a compound big or small, epidemic diseases such as small-pox when they come at all are easily avoided. But the case is different in the quarters of the Muhammadans and Christians, who build their houses in streets.

The chief endemic diseases are fever, rheumatism, attacks of bile.

759 There are plenty of snakes in the village everywhere. One sometimes hears of deaths caused by snake-bites. There are however a few who pretend to cure snake-bites by incantations aided by medicines.

There is a Government free dispensary established in the 'town' where the Apothecary is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. But most people resort to native (ayurvedic) physicians or vaidyans. Ayurveda, or the Hindu science of medicine, makes use of vegetable drugs both in the raw and dried state. The physician comes to your house and prescribes a certain mixture according to the directions laid down in his code which he has committed to memory in the form of verses. The drugs can be got from the market, or from a neighbouring hill, or even from one's own compound.

This science is handed down from father to son in certain families in Malabar who form even now some of the most distinguished native physicians in Malabar. Even in a petty village

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for Brahmans as a whole, and the performance of *puja* during one month in a year. 476

The two elected administrators spend the money as explained above, keep the accounts, and are responsible for the whole income. This organization is seen throughout the Brahman community in Malabar. It may be regarded as a survival of the village communal organization, the political functions of which disappeared with the advent of British rule. 794

The lower classes have appointed a family to settle caste questions and questions of excommunication, adultery, etc., and this family has been exercising this power from time immemorial. The family still holds the power and the verdict which the headman of the family pronounces about such questions is tacitly accepted by all. 692

Religious festivals are performed by the temple, and the temple *in practice* belongs to the Zamorin. It is managed by the Court of Wards at the present time, along with the Zamorin's estate. The income of the temple is the offerings of the devotees who chiefly come from distant places. The festivals which the temple performs will in a year cost more than Rs. 2,000. In addition offerings to the temple from the village itself will amount to more than Rs. 3,000. 794

The above statements of indebtedness, communal income, etc., are based on careful inquiry with well-known persons and the village munsif, and are given in round numbers as accurately as possible.

Sanitary condition.—Malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox and consumption are absent from the village. 164

The ordinary diseases of the village are fever, dysentery, elephantiasis and such like diseases. Infantile mortality is high. Out of 156 deaths 87 are infant deaths. The deaths are high among the poor, particularly the Hindu poor. It may be people cannot afford to bring up their children decently. The mothers must work for the maintenance of the family before many days have passed after child-birth. I know of a Tiyya family in which seven out of eleven children born died before they were three years old. Moreover they cannot afford medical help and they implore God to help them and resort to quack doctors. The prevalence of early marriage may be cited as one of the causes for physical deterioration. But the most potent cause especially in the case of the higher classes is the ignorance of the mothers. Domestic hygiene is a sealed book for them. Their habits are not quite sanitary. [515]

There are no venomous snakes.

There is a hospital very near the village. But the chief medical help is from the native doctors who practise privately. There are two great medical experts in the native system but there are also a large number of quacks. The experts have a tremendous business but the quacks do some injury too. 759

Wearing unclean * cloths, not keeping the house neat, using the same plate for food for the whole family, are some of the insanitary habits of the poor and the lower classes. But the higher classes are very neat and Malabar is famous for its neatness. People bathe every day. 515

* [I.e., unclean according to the Malabar standard of cleanliness, which is very high. —Ed.]

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423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry.
435 The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of Ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

II: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

182 1.13 These, broadly, are the inter-relationship between physical features and economic aspects of the State, and largely determine the nature and structure of the Kerala economy discussed below.

Density of Population

161 [164] 1.14 In the ultimate analysis, the basic problem of Kerala, viz., an inordinately large section of the population being without any gainful work, is brought about by the very high density of population in the State. With an area only 1.2 per cent of the whole of India, Kerala has to support 3.8 per cent (16.8 million) of the total population of India. The density of population in Kerala (1,125 persons per sq. mile) is naturally over three times the all-India average (384 persons per sq. mile).

1.15 The population, however, is not evenly spread out over the whole of the State, but shows considerable variations from district to district (Table 2).* The highland, being mostly covered with forests, is sparsely populated. The average density here is only about 150 persons per square mile. On the other hand, the lowlands bear the severest burden of population. With only about 18 per cent of the State area, they support over 40 per cent of the population. On the other extreme is the coastal strip where the average density is over 2,500 persons per square mile. In certain pockets it even shoots up to 7,000 persons per square mile. The midland, though thickly populated, is not as congested as the area lying in the immediate vicinity of the sea coast.

Growth of Population

1.16 Not only is the density of population high in Kerala, but its rate of growth has also been fairly high. The following table gives the rate of growth of population over the last half century both for India as well as for Kerala.

DECENNIAL PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN POPULATION

Year	India	Kerala
1901-11	5.69	1.75
1911-21	—0.31	9.16
1921-31	11.00	21.85
1931-41	14.23	16.04
1941-51	13.34	22.82
1951-61	21.49	24.55

SOURCE: 1961 Census of Population Provisional Figures.

1.17 As can be seen, the population has grown much faster in Kerala than in the country as a whole during the last six decades. The basic reason for a faster rate of growth of population in Kerala is a comparatively low death rate while the birth rate is only slightly less than the all-India one. The comparative position of birth and death rates in India and Kerala is given in the following table. [165] [163]

* [see p. 270, category 116 -- Analysis]
[text continues on p. 8]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive [244] policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

Rural-Urban Breakdown

162 1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

361 1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

434 1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,900 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] See Appendix 2 for details.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

*595
601

AIYAPPAN †

NARAYAN †.?[1]

PARAGNODEN
informant[2a]

KRISHNA
m. to
Janeki
of Odevan-
gatil t.[3]

Paru
m. to
ARMUGHAN
of Kanga-
lata t.

RAMAN
22

Devaki
20

Madevi
12

NARAYAN
10

of
atot-

all of them unmarried

BOY
irl

[1] Emigrated to Singapore, fate unknown, presumed dead.
[2a] Now eighty years old
[3] 2° m. (at 43, now 55, after 15 years of first marriage) to:
Tina
of Peralli t.

KESEVAN
11

Lakshmi
9

[4] 2° m. (at 22, now 45, after 4 years of first marriage) to:
Vali, his fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[5] His fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[6] At Manjara. Now divorced; the children are with the mother because they are still very small.
[7] Velu died of "fever"; Krishna of a "stomach ache"; Kali fell into a well; Devaki died of dysentry.

[586]
[165]

[facing P. 192-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that
[361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths
are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and
165 the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	96	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths
[361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land.
[465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of
166 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The
162 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]

[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].

‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

423 his neighbour seeing the improvements resorts to bribery in order to get the land.

242 Further this system results in the disregard of agricultural principles. Supposing only ten coconut palms should be planted in a certain portion of land, the possessor actually plants fifteen or sixteen because at the end of twelve years he will get the value of fifteen or sixteen trees according to the Tenants Improvements Act. If he is content with planting only ten according to agricultural principles, he gets only the value of ten. For many years past there has been no attempt towards scientific cultivation, as a consequence of this, in the whole of Malabar. It is impossible to do so. Disregard of science means gain; regard for it means loss. There is an evident deterioration in the production of the land in Malabar due to absence of security, and disregard of science. Lands which brought a gain of Rs. 1,000 do not now bring even Rs. 400 or Rs. 500. An improvement in this system of land tenure by means of legislation would evidently increase the fertility of Malabar.

Population.—Total population 7,596.*

162 Castes and individuals in each caste—

Name of caste.	Families.	Members.
Nambudri or Malabar Brahmans	36	146
East Coast Brahmans or Brahmans who have emigrated to Malabar from the east ...	107	653
Nayars and their sub-sects	382	1,305
Tiyyas and their sub-sects	437	2,461
Muhammadans	331	2,307
Christians	118	592
Artisan castes, etc.	17	117
Total ...	1,428	7,581

163 Number of children under ten in families—Living 3,490, dead 928.

165 Number of homesteads—1,290.

	1915.	
	Births.	Deaths.
Boys	178	76
Girls	158	80
Total ...	336*	156*

165 The following table of deaths may be useful:—

Children between ages	0—10	87*
Between ages	10—20	2
,,	21—25	8
,,	26—30	8
,,	31—35	6
,,	36—40	4

Birth-rate ... ... 44·2 per thousand
Death-rate ... ... 20·5 ,,
Death-rate for children 0—10 ... 259 per thousand births.
Density of population ... ... 3,231 per square mile.—Ed.]

165

Between ages	41—50	11
"	51—60	9
"	61—70	9
"	71—80	10
84 years of age		1
92 "		1
		156

It is to be noted that infant deaths are more than half the total deaths and number 87 out of 156 last year.

This information is not fully accurate because the people do not report births and deaths generally to the village officials and consequently they have to ascertain the facts by inquiring and it is possible that some births or deaths escape their notice. The ignorance of the people and the unnecessary fear of post-mortem examination in the case of deaths explain their silence. Probably a considerable number of infant deaths escape report.

Paracheri.—Three families, 15 members.—7 women, 8 men.

Number of dead for the last ten years—

Family No. 1	7
" " 2	5
" " 3	4

The village lana— ACS. 311

Garden lands	792½
Wet lands	360¾
Dry "	135⅜
Government lands	14⅓
Inam lands	201¾
Total	1,504 17/24

There are no waste lands.

The principal fruit trees are mangoes, jacks, plantains, and there are not many though sufficient for the village consumption. 245

There are tanks and wells in plenty. Drinking water is got from wells; and the tanks are used for bathing and for agricultural purposes. 312

Occupation of land and Agriculture.—The number of kanomdars in the village is 385. The large kanomdars do not generally cultivate the land themselves. 423

The land is divided into small strips, each strip containing from 50 to 1,000 coconut palms. The large kanomdar takes his residence on one of these strips, and he himself cultivates the particular strip where he is, and gives to small tenants the remaining strips belonging to him. Consequently only about 180 acres of the whole village are cultivated by the large kanomdars. In addition to these lands three kanomdars cultivate all of their land. Two are Muhammadans and one a Tiyya. The area belonging to these three kanomdars is about 134 acres. The remaining land, 1,200 odd acres, is given to tenants to cultivate. There are also between 200 and 300 small kanomdars belonging to the agricultural classes, who hold land insufficient for their maintenance and also cultivate the lands of big kanomdars. A number of the big [245]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

The statistics of births and deaths of this desam are obtainable only for the year 1915. They are given below :— 163 165

Births.

Males	50	Hindu	84
Females	43	Muhammadan	9
	93		93

Deaths.

According to age—

Lifeless deliveries	7
Below one year	9
Between 1 and 10	13
" 10 and 20	1
" 20 and 30	7
" 30 and 40	3
" 40 and 50	...
" 50 and 60	3
" 60 and 80	5
	48

According to sex and castes—

Males	24	Hindus	43
Females	24	Muhammadans	5

There is no paracheri in the strict sense of the term. The depressed classes, mostly Cherumas, are still in a state of semi-serfdom, depending for everything on their landlords and masters. 566

Land.—The area of the desam by settlement is 1,803·40 acres. This desam together with Mattupalli, Peringode, Pillakkattiri, Tolukad, Mathur, Alikara, Kuttanad, Perumannur and Chalisseri desams formed the old revenue amsam of Kothachira. Now Kothachira revenue amsam includes only Kothachira, Mathur and Peringode desams. 631

The areas under each description of land— 423 311

—	Wet.	Garden.	Occupied dry.	Unoccupied dry.	Unassessed.	Inam.	Porambokе.	Total.
	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.			ACS. C.
Private Jenmi.	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	..	...	...	1,787 57
Government Jenmi.	...	..	...	...	...		..	...
Unregistered lands.	...	...		...	15 83	...	...	15 83
	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	15 83	..	...	1,803 40

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [514] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	.	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	.	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

165

Peringode.

Ages of dead	Number according to age.	Fever.	Swelling.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Skin blotches.	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	4	...		...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	1	..	4	...	3	1	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	5	.	1	....	...	3	1	...	...
" 10 " 20 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 30 " 40 ...	4	...	1	..	2	...	...	...	1
" 40 " 50 ...	1	...	...	1	..	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4
Total ...	30	...	3	4	6	3	4	1	5

Mathur.

Ages of dead.	Number of dead according to ages.	Dysentery.	Diarrhœa.	Hysteria.	Tuberculosis.	Rheumatism.
Below 1	2	...	1	1	...	...
Between 30 and 40	1	...	...	...	1	...
" 50 " 60	3	1	1	...	...	1
" 60 " above ...	5	...	5	...		...
Total ...	11	1	7	1	1	1

871 *Education.*—There is one elementary school in the amsam, but it is situated in Peringode desam. It is maintained by a wealthy jenmi of Peringode, who is not an enlightened man. It was started two years ago. It has a good building and sufficient accommodation for the children now on the roll. There were a large number at the commencement of the school when there were enthusiastic teachers who knew the value of education. But they were dispensed with as they soon got into the bad books of the jenmi by their independent attitude. Since then there has been a regular decline in attendance. The maximum limit reached was 210. But now the number on the roll is 103—84 boys and 19 girls. The school is now under weak hands and highly mismanaged. The masters are not efficient and their methods of teaching antiquated. They are themselves people whose knowledge is highly limited. Reading and writing the vernacular, simple rules of arithmetic, and geography are taught.

212 Five per cent of the adults are able to read the vernacular; four
191 per cent to write it. There are only two people able to read, write and speak English, two brothers.

31: Slater S-5 (1916–1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

perform priestly functions for the lowest classes. There are also in the village a few families of Ambalavasis (about 35 persons) who rank above the Nayars and perform menial and other functions in temples, and also practise Ayurvedic medicine. 162

Births and deaths.—The village register gives the following statistics of births and deaths for the year 1915 (as far as I could ascertain, a normal year). 163

Births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Hindus	37	41	78
Muhammadans	2	1	3
	39	42	81

Deaths.

Below 1 year	8	2	10	165
Between 1 and 5	1	4	5	
" 5 and 10	4	1	5	
" 15 and 20	2	1	3	
" 30 and 40	2	2	4	
" 40 and 50	3	...	3	
" 50 and 60	2	2	4	
Above 60	3	4	7	
	25	16	41	

Causes—

	Males.	Females.	
Fever	7	6	Causes are not accurate.
Dysentery and diarrhoea ...	11	6	
Respiratory diseases ...	6	4	
Injuries	1	...	
	25	16	

The figures seem to be fairly accurate, though not quite so. The death rate seems to be too low compared to the birth rate. But the figures are admittedly incomplete as is seen from the remarks made upon the register by the supervising authority. The deficiency is probably in the record of *deaths of young children.*

The causes of this defect are (1) registration not being compulsory; (2) indifference or ignorance of village authorities and of villagers who hardly seem to realize the importance of registration; (3) the villagers' suspicion of registration; they do not know its object.

There is no Paracheri strictly so called as in villages of eastern districts. There are scattered dwellings of depressed classes, Cherumas and Pariahs. There are five families of Pariahs, consisting of 13 men, 13 women and 16 children. Of the men two have gone for work to the Kolar Gold Fields and one to Wynaad. The proportion of children to adults is much smaller among the Cherumas and Pariahs than among the Brahmans and Nayars. 621 [167]

634 He[1] had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
701 Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each
[874] village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari*
701 and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules
874 of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the
701 capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical
[121] example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[1] [i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census)

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages.

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56 gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951.

[1] *1961 Census* (Provisional Population figures).

[Table 56, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed -- Ed.]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595* 601

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. [464] [167] Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. [464] His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. [166] She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed.

Kalyany told me that she was related to the brothers of the Katukulangara *tarawad* whom I had interviewed at Kadavelur on the 27th of October. She was a half sister of Velu by another mother. I found this family particularly interesting, because it illustrated, more than any other Tiya one encountered so far, the ancient and persistant connection which the caste has with Ceylon. Their genealogy is given in Table 8.

Before going on to an account of my visits to Kammalans and other artisan families practising polyandry in Kerala, I would like to give here, together with the material that I collected about Tiyas, the description of a Thandan family that I went to see on the 25th of November 1949. 595*

They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on P. 191]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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3. Goldsmith.
4. Leathersmith.
5. Carpentry.
6. Masonry.
7. Oil pressing.
8. Making of bamboo mats, baskets, etc.
9. Trade in rice.
10. Butter and milk trade.

In arrack preparation two men (Tiyyas) are engaged, but they are also agriculturists and not more than two hours are spent on an average by them on their particular profession. They cut two or three trees daily and from the toddy thus got jaggery or arrack is made. The profit according to their own version is not more than three annas per day. The ironsmith, goldsmith, leathersmith, carpenter and stone mason are whole-time workmen. The ironsmith finds employment in making or repairing agricultural implements. Nothing above this is known to him. The goldsmith's work consists mainly of making ornaments for the jenmis. He is an expert as far as such ornaments are concerned. But beyond these customary works his genius does not go. The leathersmith gets hardly any orders for his work, but his wife supplies chunam* to the country whereby the family maintains a precarious existence. Carpenters and stone masons have work in some seasons. For example, in the ploughing time or the beginning of the watering season, the former has busy calls from every family for the repair of a plough, a water lift or the like. The stone mason wanders to other parts of the country in search of work. He has no work here. The average rate of wages for these is four annas a day and one meal. Goldsmiths' and ironsmiths' remuneration is based on the quality and quantity of their work. None of these have continuous employment for the whole year. Owing to this cause, out of the two families of carpenters consisting of ten members of workable age, eight migrate usually to Calicut where they get twelve annas wages per day. They pay occasional visits to their homes, stay there for a fortnight or so, and then again go.

[166]

The oil presses find ten or twelve days' work each year after a gingelly crop is cut.

285 Mat and basket making is the indoor industry of the Cheruma women. They help their husbands in the fields in minor works but sometimes are also employed on independent wages especially during harvest and sowing time. Their spare time is employed in this industry. These mats and baskets are made of split bamboo. They are rough productions.

252 There is a curious industry carried on by some Nayar men and women which illustrates the plight they are in. Each of them has a capital of two rupees. They go out with this ten or sometimes fifteen miles away and purchase paddy for this sum where it is sold cheaper by four nazhis (one-tenth para) a rupee. Next day it is boiled, dried and made into rice. On the third day it is carried to Kunnankulam or Guruvayoor, villages eight or ten miles to the

* [Slaked lime for chewing. It is spread thinly on betel leaves, which are folded when put in the mouth.—Ed.]

1:Gough-1 E-4, 5(no date)1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illams*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patinâluvittukar* and [357] *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chârnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[167] 4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chârna Nayars or Chârnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of [582] the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice* [264] *versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[451] 5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 62

EMIGRATION FROM AND IMMIGRATION TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

Year	*Number of*		*Percentage of population*		
	Immigrants	*Emigrants*	*Immigrants*	*Emigrants*	*Balance*
1901	82,023	16,346	2.18	0.43	1.75
1911	83,278	26,112	1.91	0.60	1.31
1921	86,602	29,025	1.78	0.58	1.20
1931	164,389	48,503	2.61	0.77	1.84
1951	206,823	205,816	2.23	2.22	0.01

SOURCE: *Census of India, 1951*, Travancore-Cochin, Part 1 A, Report.

TABLE 63

INVESTMENT DURING THE COMING DECADE (1960-61 to 1970-71)

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652
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Items	*State sector* (Rs. crores)	*Centre and private* (Rs. crores)	*Total* (Rs. crores)	*Percentage share to total investment*	*Percentage share, All-India Third Plan*
1. Agriculture	51.7	56.0	107.7	10.8	
2. Plantations	50.6	129.0	179.6	18.1	
3. Forests	5.7	..	5.7	0.6	20.8
4. Animal Husbandry	2.6	..	2.6	0.3	
5. Fisheries	2.5	8.3	10.8	1.1	
6. Minerals	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.1	
PRIMARY SECTOR	*113.6*	*193.7*	*307.3*	*30.9*	
7. Factory Industries	31.2	114.1	145.3	14.6	
8. Small Scale Sector	14.0	28.0	42.0	4.3	28.8
9. Non-factory Sector	..	18.6	18.6	1.9	
SECONDARY SECTOR	*45.2*	*160.7*	*205.9*	*20.8*	
10. Power	102.0	..	102.0	10.3	9.5
11. Transport	70.0	28.4	98.4	9.9	16.2
12. Social Services	65.0	100.8	165.8*	16.6	16.9
13. Inventories	15.0	60.0	75.0	7.5	7.8
14. Rural Public Works	40.0	..	40.0	4.0	
TERTIARY SECTOR	*292.0*	*189.2*	*481.2*	*48.3*	*50.4*
GRAND TOTAL	450.8	543.6	994.4	100.0	100.0
Loans from State Government to the Private Sector	+47.0	—47.0			
	497.8	496.6			

* Investment in social services has been derived from the Third Plan estimates (all-India) by assuming the same per capita investment as in all-India.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

The informant, Velu, with whom we spoke, kept us outside the house on some chairs in the drive leading up to the property. He did not seem inclined to let us come in.

I made the accompanying genealogy with Velu. It is rather an extensive one since the family was large, and therefore I have laid it out in two Tables (4 & 5), separating the two lots of polyandrous families in which the older generation was divided. As regards the name, the informant told me that the *tarawad* contained five households, of which this was one; they had appellations principally of the four cardinal points, the name of his household meaning "eastern".

Velu and his two younger brothers were married polyandrously to Kalyany, who had become their wife after her elder sister, Amalu, had died. This appeared to be somewhat reminiscent of sororate, but I understand that it was not so, the brothers simply having taken their sister-in-law in marriage because they liked her and thought it a good idea. The two elder brothers who were now dead, Pangan and Karapan, had also been married polyandrously to Mogami, who was still alive; she was sixty five at the time of my research work. They had had her all to themselves, because the three younger men had not wanted her, although for what reason it was impossible to make Velu say. All that he would impart to us was that they did not want her, and brought in Amalu as their wife, and kept her in the same house with the others. Even today, he said, they all lived together, without the property having been divided up between them.

Mogami had had eighteen children of whom thirteen were still alive. I had an opportunity to meet this remarkable woman some weeks later, and I found her a lively and intelligent person, who did not appear to be the slightest bit worn out by her two husbands and many children. She was thin and rather small with flashing eyes and a very sharp brain. She told me many anecdotes of her former married life, with great relish and obvious pleasure, as if she had been extremely happy in it. She was quite unashamedly proud of her achievements and her present widowed life was kept interesting by the memories for which she lived.

Two of her eldest daughters, Lakshmi and Kuniyukuti, had been married polyandrously, and still lived under that arrangement, although Chankuni, the elder husband of Kuniyukuti, was rarely at home; he was employed as a peon in Ceylon, and only paid brief visits to Kerala. This brought the total number of polyandrous families in the Kereghetil household to four.

It should be noted, however, that only the men and their families as

[Text continues on p. 183]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595* 601

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed. [464] [167] [464] [166]

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They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on P. 191]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

tarawad name was Neripatta, and the property now belonged to the old woman and her sons. They were *verumpattam* cultivators for a Nayar *kanamdar*, the Shoranur *desammangalam* (village headman) whom I had met. They paid a rent of five rupees. 595* 601 [427]

I heard that of the old generation, the four brothers, Paini, Krishna, Raman, Aiyappan and Narayan, were dead – although there was some doubt about Narayan, the last one. As he had emigrated to Singapore and had never come back, they presumed that he had died there. They had all been wed polyandrously to Kali when she was seventeen, and she was now left with her four sons, who had begun by being polyandrous, but who had eventually taken wives of their own, the common wife, Paru, having stayed with the eldest, Velandi. The property had, however, not been split up, and they lived in the mansion-sized house, which was happily large enough to contain them all. Presumably it was also sufficiently big to keep the women from quarrelling and dragging the men into their squabbles – something which people who live in polyandry seem particularly to fear. Of the third generation, the two grandsons, Velu and Krishna, had also lived polyandrously, having taken one Kalyany as a common wife. Like their two sisters they had, however, died, aged thirty and twenty respectively, leaving a couple of boys with their widow to look after. There had thus been three generations of polyandrous marriages in this family. [167]

Another point of interest was the fact that two of Kali's sons, Paragnoden and Krishna had broken away, the former after having first been married with his elder brothers to Paru. They had married their fathers' sisters' daughters, Vali in the first case, and Janeki in the second. When I enquired why this was so, I found it difficult to get a precise answer. I was told that was because this was a "right" marriage, and that if possible, marriage with a *machchunan* is "best". But I evoked only silence and some quizzical looks when I asked why then Paragnoden was first married polyandrously to Paru. It seemed to me – although this is only my personal impression and I was not told so – that the polyandrous marriage was gone through with because it was customary in those days, when the elder brother got married, for the younger ones to join in. Later, when Paragnoden, for reasons which he did not impart to me, felt like putting up a household of his own, he naturally turned to his cross-cousin, on his fathers' side. He was eighteen when he married Paru, with his brothers, and twenty two when he left her and took Vali to wife. This would not account, however, for Krishna, the youngest, not having also been married to Paru. It may be, of course that he was 595* 582 601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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in their opinion. There are no other investments so secure, and a little land will feed a man and his family even when he is indisposed to work. Again, a certain amount of prestige is attached to a landed proprietor especially when he is a big one, though there is not such adoration as can sometimes be observed in the attitude of the common people towards the Government officials big and small. 454 [556]

There has been a certain dislocation in the labour market on account of the emigration of certain classes of workers to the rubber and other estates recently established in some parts of the State and elsewhere. Their low wages, their low social position, the baits employed, somewhat nefariously, by the recruiting agents, and the grandiose hopes which the workers entertain of the unseen, have all combined to deplete the village of a certain class of workers from agriculture. The wages not only of agricultural labourers, but of all classes of workers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, coolies, etc., have gone up. Few of the emigrants have returned, and those who return are certainly not very desirous of going back. 464 167

Manual labour is still looked upon as derogatory, and a well-to-do high caste man labouring upon his own compound or his own fields or allowing either his sons or relatives to do the same would be looked upon with contempt. High caste men have always to employ low caste people for any and every work, agricultural or domestic. Skilled work such as carpentry, blacksmithy, masonry, etc., is invariably performed by the particular "castes", which are hereditary and exclusive in character. These occupy a low position in the Hindu hierarchy of caste, but not so low as that other kind of agricultural labourers whom I called "Cherumas" or Pariahs, who occupy the lowest place of all. Each is respectful to his superiors and somewhat exacting to his inferiors, but there is nothing like hatred or dissatisfaction with one's lot in any of the castes. They take it as Nature-given and the social organism works in a smooth fashion, each man having his own work and his own aspirations. Judging from the present state of affairs it is impossible, and I think undesirable, to unsettle this order of things. There is scope however for the diffusion of education and knowledge, for the opening of a diversity of occupation, for infusing better ideals of social life and joint work, for improving agriculture and removing rural indebtedness and providing means of its non-recurrence in the future. But all this requires enlightened and sympathetic workers. 461

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private
persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

APPENDIX.

I. A Possible Improvement.

By deepening the stream that flows in rainy season along the northern boundary of this desam, the lands that lie along them which now yield only a single crop can be made double crop lands. 000

II. Emigration.

There are five men in Ceylon working as labourers and sending small sums to their aged parents. These return at intervals of two or three years. There is also the annual emigration of the carpenters to Calicut. 167

III. A Typical Family.

The family is not composed of a husband, wife and children. The people follow the 'Marumakkattayam' form of inheritance, i.e., inheritance along the line of the nephew. Thus the family consists of an aged mother or grandmother and her sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters of these sisters and their progeny, and so on. The eldest male member is the 'Karnavan,' the guardian and manager of the family, all the rest are 'Anandravans' who pay allegiance to the head. The male members of one family marry the females of another and vice versa, but each lives apart and they only join occasionally. The system, however, is rudely breaking up under modern conditions. 596 [428]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

perform priestly functions for the lowest classes. There are also in the village a few families of Ambalavasis (about 35 persons) who rank above the Nayars and perform menial and other functions in temples, and also practise Ayurvedic medicine. 162

Births and deaths.—The village register gives the following statistics of births and deaths for the year 1915 (as far as I could ascertain, a normal year). 163

Births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Hindus	37	41	78
Muhammadans	2	1	3
	39	42	81

Deaths. 165

Below 1 year	8	2	10
Between 1 and 5	1	4	5
„ 5 and 10	4	1	5
„ 15 and 20	2	1	3
„ 30 and 40	2	2	4
„ 40 and 50	3	...	3
„ 50 and 60	2	2	4
Above 60	3	4	7
	25	16	41

Causes—

	Males.	Females.	
Fever	7	6	Causes are not accurate.
Dysentery and diarrhoea ...	11	6	
Respiratory diseases ...	6	4	
Injuries	1	...	
	25	16	

The figures seem to be fairly accurate, though not quite so. The death rate seems to be too low compared to the birth rate. But the figures are admittedly incomplete as is seen from the remarks made upon the register by the supervising authority. The deficiency is probably in the record of *deaths of young children.*

The causes of this defect are (1) registration not being compulsory; (2) indifference or ignorance of village authorities and of villagers who hardly seem to realize the importance of registration; (3) the villagers' suspicion of registration; they do not know its object.

There is no Paracheri strictly so called as in villages of eastern districts. There are scattered dwellings of depressed classes, Cherumas and Pariahs. There are five families of Pariahs, consisting of 13 men, 13 women and 16 children. Of the men two have gone for work to the Kolar Gold Fields and one to Wynaad. The proportion of children to adults is much smaller among the Cherumas and Pariahs than among the Brahmans and Nayars. 621 [167]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

land is the chief source of a livelihood and industries do not exist. 178
What is the conclusion? The increasing emigration to other 511
places points in the same direction. The fact that the emigrants [167]
return as soon as they earn something shows that they are not likely to leave home unless hard-pressed. The increasing indebtedness of the villagers and the growth in the number of assignments and mortgages are other evidence. But population has increased only 7 per cent between 1901 and 1911. Wages are very low and have not risen in proportion to prices. Prices of food-stuffs have in many cases doubled within my own personal knowledge. Articles like milk, ghee, etc., have doubled in price within the last ten years. The price of grain has risen enormously in a generation. I have been told on good authority that some fifty years ago grain was four times as cheap as to-day. Only the land-owning classes and those who have surplus grain to sell have profited from this high rise. Many independent owners of land have been forced to sell their land to keep themselves free from debt and to pay the Government taxes. Taxation is much heavier: when the settlement was introduced into the village some twelve years ago the assessment was doubled and many villagers suffered. Against all this evidence of deterioration one must place the improvement in the standard of living of some classes and the growth of education, though unsatisfactory in many respects.

As for possibilities of economic improvement and the opportunities therefor, it may be said that the former are many, the latter few (as things now are) unless the villagers get help from outside—from the Government. In the sphere of agriculture improvement is badly needed, though the means of bringing it seem to be lacking, methods of cultivation could be improved and the use of scientific manure introduced. But all this requires capital and that is conspicuous by its absence. The advantage must be practically demonstrated to the cultivator and to the landlord, who alone can take the initiative herein. It seems to be impossible to introduce scientific farming so long as the system of scattered and strip holdings continues. The landlord must get his [423]
lands continuous; as it is as many as half a dozen landlords may have strips of land in one survey division of half a dozen acres. A man holding 10 acres may have it in 20 parcels, a distance of a mile from one plot to another is not uncommon.

About the possibility of extending the area of irrigated land 312
only an expert could speak with confidence. As it is, out of a total area of 2,380 acres only 680·78 acres are wet land and 110 acres garden land—the rest coming under 'unoccupied or occupied dry.' It would be a very good thing if more of this could be brought under cultivation than at present. It does not appear that many more wells could be sunk with advantage. At present the wet and garden lands abound in wells, the 'dry' land being without any. It would not pay to sink wells in it and take out water according to the existing methods. If cheaper and more efficient methods are possible, then it would be worth attempting.

Something might be done—must be done, if the village is to 600
improve—to ameliorate the general condition of the villagers and

11; India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent. 371 464

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough. 161 168

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff. 114 122

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

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4.48 Compared to the eucalyptus plantations, the area over which wattle can grow is rather limited. This tree can only grow in the high ranges at elevations above 4,000 feet. The Hamilton Plateau in the Devicolom range is a suitable locality and there is a proposal to afforest, 5,200 acres during the Third Plan. The cost of afforestation is between Rs. 120 to Rs. 150 per acre. This plantation would supply the raw material for wattle bark extract industry. There does not appear to be much scope for extension of area under this species after the Third Plan period. 433* 245

4.49 As these plantations are to be raised in the high ranges, it will be desirable to establish regular labour colonies and employ labour on a more or less permanent basis. Some agricultural occupation will also have to be provided to the labour force. It is, therefore, proposed that the establishment of regular forest villages in the grasslands should be seriously considered by the Government. They will also provide the much needed labour for raising and upkeep of the plantations and later for manning the newsprint mills which will be established at the end of 10 years. The exact employment potential is difficult to work out but it is estimated that the plantations will be able to support about 500 families, each family providing two able-bodied workers. [168]

4.50 Cashewnut trees can be raised in the barren forest areas which are considered unsuitable for any other type of forest growth. In Trichur and Malayathur divisions, where these plantations are located, there are further tracts of barren unproductive reserves. Attempts at raising useful forest species having failed, these areas may be put under cashewnut plantations. If Malabar forests are acquired promptly, another 5,000 acres could be planted with cashewnuts during the next decade.

4.51 The technique of cashewnut afforestation is still in an experimental stage, but the highest success obtained so far has been with dribbling seed to a depth of 3 inches at a spacing of 30 ft. × 30 ft. which gives 49 plants per acre. Plantations raised at a spacing of 18 ft. × 18 ft. (125 trees per acre) have also given good results. Experiments on spacing should continue and the optimum spacing in different types of soil may be determined. The cost has been worked out at Rs. 35 per acre plus another Rs. 5 per acre as establishment charges.

Rubber Plantations

4.52 Rubber is one of the chief plantation crops of Kerala. The present area under rubber is roughly 2.5 lakh acres. Since rubber plantations provide a valuable raw material and a good source of employment in the primary sector, it is proposed to raise rubber plantations over a fairly large area of secondary forests. So far as protective functions of a forest area is concerned, this would be a change for the better, as areas under rubber are better protected than a forest and trespasses are not allowed. Other aspects of the problem are discussed in the Chapter 2 on Agriculture and Plantations. 433* 249

4.53 The targets for additional acreage to be brought under different type of plantations, discussed above and the figures for investment required are summarized 433* 245

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [631] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [174]

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

769 V. K.
626 Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately
613 betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding
[173] with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

562 Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may
[782] not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole
[847] concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents
[829] women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*.
[769] The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

769 Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult
613 served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*.
626 First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided
182 a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment
769 of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out
171 the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes
182 deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For
769 these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his
613 own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must
626 keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict
182 suffering on all, including himself.

Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad-Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahma

however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Nambūdiri Brahm
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahmans

father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P. 132]

SNAKE WORSHIP AMONG THE NAYARS OF SOUTH INDIA

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NO species of animal has impressed mankind to the same extent as the snake apparently has. Startling indeed is its power of sudden appearance and disappearance; and its gliding motion, without appendages, gives it an eerie quality. The lightning suddenness of its bite and the tragic consequences, coupled with its amazing swiftness, place the snake in a category of its own. Above all its habit of casting off its skin periodically endows it with a supposed immortality which becomes the cause of its extreme veneration. Snake worship is very widespread in the world and is attended by varying rites and ceremonies. In India, where many species of snakes abound, the cult is very widespread. Perhaps due to the variety of species and the consequent danger and damage involved, snake worship in India may have had a local origin, though J. Tod traces its origin to a Central Asian tribe called Tak.[1]

[114]

It is significant that in the very rude and low cultures, among tribes like the Veddahs and Andamanese, and to some extent among the Australians, snake worship is not found. The Australians do have totemic clans named after snakes, but no special veneration is paid to snakes as such. In West Africa, on the other hand, among the Dahomey tribe the monster python Dahu Sio is worshipped as a great god, and is propitiated for favourable weather, for oracles and for wealth. Even in the Palaeolithic period snakes were held in esteem, judging from the carved snake figures on the batons de commandment, and also during Mesolithic period as evinced by snake paintings on the painted pebbles of Mas-d-Azil.

E. W. Hopkins observes that in the Vedic Age snake worship was widely prevalent in India, and references are made

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to Abibuduya, the serpent of the deep. Further, an inscrip- 825
tion at Banavasi in Kanara in South India, records the erection 171
of a cobra stone in the middle of the 1st century A.D.

In Chamba district the 'golden snake' is offered milk.[2] In Bengal the snake goddess Manasa is worshipped widely, and this is supposed to give protection from snake-bite. Manasa is represented by an earthen pot with vermilion marks. Among the Meithies of Manipur the snake is believed to be the manifestation of a dead ancestor and is accordingly venerated and worshipped. A cult of the snake god is found among the Khasis of Assam, which however is diminishing now-a-days. Among the Khasis a mythical snake called U Thlen is worshipped and is propitiated by the offering of human blood.[3] It is believed that the Thlen attaches itself to homes and families and is the bestower of wealth, prosperity, fame and well-being to its hosts. However, it needs regular and periodic propitiation by the offering of human blood, and in the event of its being neglected it brings disease, ill luck and ruin to the unlucky family which has angered it.

In South India and particularly among the Nayars the 825
worship of snakes is an established cult. Snake groves or 778
kavus, which are clumps of wild trees festooned with 171
creepers, abound in plenty, usually near the homes of Malayali Hindus. These groves are called *vishathum kavu* (poison shrine) or *nagakotta* (snake shrine). Usually a block of granite is carved into the shape of a cobra's head, called *chitra kutta kalu* and is consecrated at the spot.

In Quilon district, Travancore, near Haripad is a big snake 825
worship centre in the form of the Manarsalil temple. One of 171
the important snake shrines is called *bernie kavu* situated in Chenganur taluk of the Quilon district. In Trivandrum is the great temple of Padmanabha Swami and here one of the important deities worshipped is Ananta, the mighty serpent, upon whose great coils Lord Vishnu reclines on the ocean of milk.[4] Further, in Tirunelveli a temple dedicted to Shankar and the goodess Gomiti called Sankaranianar Koil has a snake mound where worship is offered to serpents in the hope that chronic stomach ailments will be cured by propitiating the

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825 171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes. 825 Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison, 71 are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for 782 snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship 78 at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes 825 unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a 778 Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him 796 and left them in their present abode. He however promised to [173] return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

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162 According to the Census Report, 1891, they numbered
564 377,828 in Malabar. The figures found in this useful document offer an instance of the unreliability of casual observation. The author of "A Manual of Malabar Law" describes the peoples of Malabar to some extent, and in his Introduction says: "The Nâyars constitute the major portion of the Malabar population." One hears of Malabar as the land of the Nâyars, as if its inhabitants were all Nâyars. Certainly they may be said to form the most distinguishing feature of the district; but, when we seek in the spirit of accuracy, we find the surprising fact that they number but 14·2 per cent. of its population.

611 The chief immediate interest attached to them lies in
564 the fact of their being the best, that is the fullest, the most complete existing example of matriarchy, or, to be more strictly accurate, of inheritance through females.
[171] This system, obtaining at one time amongst the Celts and other races of Europe, was probably universal in the sense that it existed at some period in the life history of every race of mankind, and is now to be found here and there in the world.

611 That inheritance through females was once the rule
171 in Southern India is fairly obvious. Amongst others the Maravars, who are, so far as we can surmise at present, aborigines in the sense that we know of no earlier inhabitants in the part of the peninsula occupied by them, to this day offer strong proof of this. I refer to the genuine Maravars—the Kondayan Kottai Maravars of Tinnevelly—and not to the offshoots settled in Trichinopoly and elsewhere, who have almost entirely forsaken all the customs of their fathers.* Amongst the Maravars the girl on marriage joins the sept of her husband, but she retains her own sept name, and her children are of *her* sept; not of their father's. Marriage between persons of the same sept name is prohibited; and this is regulated solely through the mothers. The tribe is endogamous; but the septs within it are exogamous. Thus, a man or a girl cannot marry any one of the same sept, having the same sept name (which is inherited through their mother), and *must* marry some one within the tribe but of a different sept to his or her own—of his father's sept or any other. Though property

* Most of the cigar makers of Trichinopoly are Maravars in origin. Their names ——————Naidu,——————Pillay, and so on are borrowed from people of higher castes.

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devolves through the men, the degrees between which marriage is prohibitive are inherited through the women.*

But the circumstance that inheritance through women was once, perhaps, the rule in Southern India cannot be accepted as of itself proof that the Nâyars are identical with the Dravidians, as the people of Southern India are commonly called. It is not yet time to say whether they are or are not. To the ordinary visitor their outward appearance, customs, habitations, mode of life generally, are very different from what he sees in the Telugu or Tamil countries; for Malabar, "the west coast," is as unlike the rest of the Presidency as Burma. The only other district of the Madras Presidency which resembles Malabar, is Ganjám, more particularly the northern part of it, where the people are almost entirely Aryan. The resemblance between these, the Uriyas of Gumsoor and thereabouts, a fine fighting stock, and the Nâyars of Malabar is very striking. It is not, perhaps, a mere coincidence that in these two furthest remote corners of the Presidency alone, the people at large are to be seen wearing umbrella hats to protect them from the sun.

The Nâyars are divided into clans, (we will call them clans for want of a better term), many of which intermingle through marriage, but some of them are endogamous. The precise number of these clans cannot be given, as it is disputed whether certain of them have a right to belong to the cognate Nâyar body. The names of the clans which have come directly under my measuring instruments are these :—

Kiriyattil.	Kitâvu.
Sûdra.	Pallichan.
Kurup.	Muppathinâyiran.
Nambiyâr.	Vîyâpâri or Râvâri.
Úrâli.	Attikkurissi.
Nalliôden.	Mânavallan.
Viyyûr.	Vengôlan.
Akattu Chârna.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Chârna.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Âmayengolam.
Vangilôth.	

This list is not in order of priority.

* An example of this custom existing in another land may be quoted here from a modern book—'The Caroline Islands,' by F. W. Christian, 1899: "Descent is traced through the mother—a custom tolerably common amongst the Oceanic races in general. Members of the same tipu or clan cannot marry." (Page 74.)

wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.* It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

[see plate I, facing p. 220 -- An.]

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce." 564 613 588 [586]

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste. [533]

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction [171] [735] [184] [824] [415]

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891). [113]

582
613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
553 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of
585 themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth
178 it change even in such an important piece of life as marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [55] [083]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern. [541]

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564

There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him.

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890).

and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and [351]
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a [354]
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword 796
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

754 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic
789 hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan.
754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who
564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there-
[262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have
[673] heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

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Nayar
Tiyyar
Tamil AW16
Brahman

to the mother. It seems likely that the same unconscious Oedipal fears lie behind the institution of 'real' pre-puberty marriage in high Hindu castes in other parts of India,[1] whose kinship systems, though strictly patrilineal, are similarly characterized by gerontocratic authority and the joint holding of property by lineage-segments. The disappearance of the *tāli*-rite among Nayars and Tiyyars in the past twenty years, and its replacement by a 'normal' post-puberty marriage ceremony, is undoubtedly associated with the collapse of their lineage systems; with the development of cash wages and personal property and thus of a new economic autonomy of young men and a decline in attitudes of submission to elders; with the associated strengthening of the marriage-tie and weakening of the bonds with the mother and other natal kinswomen; with, related to this, a decline of observance of avoidance associated with incest-taboos in the lineage, and a relaxing of the rule of lineage exogamy; and, finally, with an increased emotional autonomy of both men and women in respect of the parental generation which, it must be supposed, accompanies a gradual decline in strength of Oedipal wishes and fears among young and middle-aged men.

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It seems probable that my hypothesis concerning Nayar and Tiyyar *tāli*-rites might be shown, given sufficient data, to apply also to certain Middle Indian pre-puberty token marriages recently described by Dr S. C. Dube (1953). In these groups, as in the Malabar castes, the pre-nubile girl who has not been married is regarded as sacred; she would be permanently polluted by any sexual act which took place before the rite was performed. Should she attain puberty before the rite, she falls, like the Malayali girl, into permanent ritual pollution and, though she is not excommunicated, she is inauspicious, is suspected of witchcraft, and may not marry with the normal rites. The token-marriage gives her the status of a married woman, and is followed some years later by a real post-puberty marriage. As among modern Nayars in some parts of South Malabar and Cochin, and among Tamil temple-dancers, the proxy-bridegroom is a weapon (here an arrow instead of a sword). Alternatively it may be a wooden paddy-pounder, probably a phallic symbol throughout southern and middle India. It may be significant that the man who goes through the rites and carries the phallic symbol is the girl's elder sister's husband, a probable father-image to her; and that, like the Malabar 'bridegroom', he is paid for his services. It seems clear from Dr Dube's account that the rite is a symbolic defloration, that it releases the girl from the sexual guardianship of her natal kinsmen, and changes her from a dangerous, sacred, and forbidden creature into a normal woman who may be married without fear. It would be interesting to know whether it is preceded by a mock menstruation ceremony. To test my hypothesis, that pre-puberty mock marriage issues from strong incest taboos and the (originally Oedipal) fear of deflowering a virgin, we should need also to know whether, like the *tāli*-rite, this rite marks a change in the etiquette of behaviour between a girl and her natal kinsmen; whether the incest taboos in these groups are culturally elaborated; whether economic and legal power are in the hands of old men of the kin-group; whether the post-puberty marriage tie

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[1] This is particularly clearly so in the Tamil institution Brahman of pre-puberty marriage. Traditionally, a girl must be married before puberty and the marriage consummated in the fifteen days following the first menstruation, if possible, to avoid loss of the female seed after menstruation has begun. Failure to carry out the pre-puberty marriage and prompt consummation after puberty brought opprobrium on the girl's father, who was regarded as an unclean man guilty of embryo murder through failing to give away his daughter's fertility. Pre-puberty marriage (*kanniga dānam*, 'gift of a virgin') is said to transfer the sexual sin of the girl's father to the son-in-law and thus ensure the father's salvation after death. The Brahmanical pre-puberty marriage is therefore at least partly prompted by incest taboos. The unconscious fear of deflowering a virgin appears in the Brahmanical consummation rites, at which the bridegroom declares his wife to have been previously married to the Vedic gods Soma, Agni, and Gandharva. In some groups, at the rites before consummation, a stick representing Gandharva is placed between the couple and removed before the consummation, at which the bridegroom says: 'O Visvavasu Gandharva, I pray you to make this girl my wife. Unite her to me. Leave her and take another.' Similarly, Brahmans rhapsodize over their former pre-puberty marriages when the girl was an infant and the boy often ten to fourteen years old, on the grounds that the participants were innocent of the sexual implications of the ceremony. As among Tiyyars, the couple were brought to the ceremony on the shoulders of their maternal uncles.

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is strong or (as we should expect) permits divorce and return to the brother's household; whether her natal kinsmen retain strong rights in a woman throughout her life; and whether the virgin is in any way associated in myth with a phallic mother-goddess.[1]

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[1] The male fear of deflowering a virgin, who may be unconsciously associated with the mother and is thus thought of as the rightful property of a father-figure or of an infant son-figure, appears in the marriage customs of several other South Indian peoples. The patrilineal Tamil Non-Brahmans of Tanjore, who have post-puberty marriage, formerly required the brahman priest who performed their marriage rites to deflower the girl as well. The fact that in these castes the mother's brother is considered the rightful husband of a girl gives further evidence of the belief that a girl should rightly be married by a man of the parental generation. Thurston (1906, pp. 49–50) reports that in the Malayali hill-tribe of Salem (also Tamil) a small boy is married to a mature woman, but the bride's father-in-law and not the husband cohabits with her and begets children on behalf of his son. When the son reaches maturity and his own legal sons are married, he in turn cohabits with their wives and raises children on behalf of his 'sons'. The Vellalas of Coimbatore are said to have a similar custom, in which a boy marries a mature woman, with whom the girl's father-in-law cohabits until the boy is adult. Similarly among the Reddis of Tinnevelly, a boy of five is reported often to be married to a girl of twenty. The girl after marriage cohabits with one of her own kinsmen on the maternal side, frequently her mother's brother, or else with the father of her boy-husband. When the husband grows up, he may in some cases never cohabit with his wife, but instead form a liaison with the wife of some other boy-kinsman. Among the Tamil Vallambans a boy is obliged to marry one or other type of cross-cousin, who may be older than himself. The girl then cohabits with her husband's elder brother, mother's brother or father, and the boy-husband legitimatizes the children when he comes of age. In all these customs we appear to have the reflection of a strong Oedipal conflict which, on the one hand, prevents a man from deflowering and sometimes from cohabiting at all with his wife and causes him to give her to his father or some other father-figure, and, on the other hand, gives such free rein to incestuous desires towards women of the filial generation as to permit men to deprive their social 'sons' of their legal wives. The defloration of a girl by one who is a father-figure to her husband is not, of course, confined to India, but appears for example in the European custom of the *droit du seigneur*. At the initiation of a Bánaro girl, her prospective bridegroom's father, being 'ashamed' to do it himself, engaged his sib-friend to deflower the girl (Thurnwald 1916, p. 261).

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606 as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar.*—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[264] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
613 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent
621 opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions.*—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[191] [1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Mechuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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daughter never calls you by any name which, in the Hindu code of manners, is done only with regard to the husband. She is your *a priori* wife, if such an expression could be used. She is spoken of as the *Mura Pennu* (*Mura* = customary, and *Pennu* = female or wife, meaning customary wife). 582

Unlike other Hindus a Nāyar may marry a girl from a lower sub-caste as long as she also is a Nāyar. He cannot marry a woman whose caste is higher than his own without the wife losing her caste. A Nāyar lady can choose her husband either from among the allied families or others, provided they are of the same or superior sub-caste. Also, she can marry from anyone of the higher castes, i.e., either from the Brahmins or from the Kshatriyas. The alliance between the Malabar Brahmins and the Nāyars is a social fact of very great interest. In no other part of India is a Brahmin allowed to marry out of his own caste. In Malabar, on the other hand, among the Nambudiris or the Aryan immigrants, only the eldest member of the family can marry among the Brahmins, the others being forced to marry among the Nāyars. The permanence through ages of matrilineal descent among the Nāyars is due to this fact. The Brahmins, being of a superior caste, and the Nāyar wife of the Brahmin being unable to live in her husband's family, the system tended to be matrilineal as well as matrilocal. Also, since the children of such a marriage are Nāyars and not Brahmins, though the father is a Brahmin, the system remained wholly unilateral without any definite bilateral development. It is only the very highest among the Nāyars that have connection with the Brahmins. Through their influence the custom preserved all its strength in the lower classes as well. 582 564

The peculiar custom of the Malabar Brahmins of not allowing their junior members to marry among their own caste introduces a complication into the Nāyar system. The idea underlying such a prohibition is evidently the preservation of the big estates which the Nampudiris own. Since the Nāyar sons of the Malabar Brahmins do not inherit anything from their fathers, their estates remain undivided and descend only to the eldest son. Primogeniture has been the custom in every country where the preservation of big landed property in the hands of a few was aimed at. The undivided family among the Nāyars is also meant to conserve their possession of the land and maintain the political influence resulting from it. A point of utmost importance which should always be kept in mind in this connection is the interaction of economic and social forces. The interest of the Nampudiris to keep their property undivided led to their custom of primogeniture, and this again induced them to use their temporal power and sacerdotal influence to perpetuate the matrilineal system among the Nāyars. Also, the desire to preserve the family estates as a whole, kept the Nāyar families from being divided, making thereby a change to patrilineal system altogether impossible. 428 564 582

the Todas also *Mochuno* (or cross-cousin) marriage is the orthodox custom. See p. 512, Rivers, *The Todas*. Also Appendix, "Similarities between the Nāyars and the Todas." 582 171

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the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day. 588

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families. 174 182 588

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous. [851] [595]

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony, implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to [765] [171]

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "ɑ" to "ʏ" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 699–70.

114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastadanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
● 171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Pennisu Putava Kotukkithennullathumunnikkittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaictam.*"

This "essential feature," therefore, is most certainly a development of the
[195] later half of the eighteenth century. It is, as a matter of fact, only within the last fifty years that cloth-giving as a synonym for marriage has come to be used widely, and even now it is used mostly by the ultra-refined, who consider it improper to utter the name of marriage in company. Therefore, to say that the Todas emigrated from the Malabar coast because of similarity in custom which, among the Nāyars at least, is a very late development, does not carry conviction.

114 Again, Dr. Rivers sees a "possible link" between Malabar and the Todas in
192 the word *Pul-palu*[2] of the Todas and the ceremony of *Puli Kudi* of the Nāyars.
171 Because of the similarity in these words, Dr. Rivers has suggested[3] "the name
174 *Pulipal* may mean tamarind dairy and be a survival of community between the Toda ceremony and that of Malabar." This is a supreme example of the danger of drawing conclusions from questionable etymological premises. Now *Puli* is a well-known Dravidian word which means both the tamarind tree and the sour taste. It is also used as a verb, in which case it means to make anything sour. Now *pul-pali* does not mean tamarind dairy, but the dairy of sour milk. How this could be a link "between Malabar and the Todas" it is utterly impossible for me to see.

114 Dr. Rivers has enumerated a number of points in which he sees "a close resemblance between the customs of the peoples of Malabar and the customs of the Todas." But I would submit that all his points in which any similarity could be seen are Dravidian customs belonging not only to the peoples of Malabar but to the rest of the non-Aryan peoples of South India. Therefore the arguments Dr. Rivers has brought forward prove only that the Todas are a Dravidian people. They do not prove that there was any connection, other than that of neighbours, between the Nāyars and the Todas.

[1] Except the last, which means cloth-cutting.
[2] Pp. 701–2.
[3] P. 702.

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *táli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *táli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkákkarappan* temple and tie the *táli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahádévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpád is the *táli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *táli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *táli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tálikettu kalyánam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tálikettu*

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kalyánam of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pittu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig védic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathâyam* Hindus, the *táli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathâyam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on the occasion of *táli* tying. The reason for this departure may have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 825 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brahmany kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykutta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a strenuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom [643] of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pávu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well [177] as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats: others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

1.2 per cent of the total area of India, this contribution is quite significant. Yet the per capita income of Kerala in 1955-56 (Rs. 234.4) was lower than the all-India average (Rs. 261) by about Rs. 27, that is, 10.3 per cent. 434 [171]

1.22 The distribution of output and employment between primary, secondary and tertiary activities gives a broad indication of the stage of development an economy has attained. As a general rule, the more advanced the stage of economic development, the higher the proportion of income and employment originating in the secondary and tertiary activities. In Kerala the sectoral distribution of output and employment presents somewhat of a contrasting picture (Tables 3 and 4). In terms of employment, the proportion of working force engaged in agriculture and allied occupations (55%) is much smaller than the corresponding all-India proportion (71.8%). This would seem to indicate that Kerala has perhaps reached a level of development somewhat comparable to that of a country like Japan. But the picture presented is quite different when one looks at the proportion of income contributed by the various sectors. The major share (49.1%) of output still originates in the primary sector (all-India: 45.4%). The secondary and tertiary sectors taken together contribute 50.9 per cent of the output against 54.6 per cent in the case of all-India. 433* 434 464 171

1.23 Thus, while the sectoral distribution of population seems indicative of a diversified structure of the economy, the sectoral distribution of income does not. Two factors seem to provide a plausible explanation for this contrast. In view of the high density of population, the possibilities of providing gainful employment in the agricultural sector are naturally limited. Super-imposed upon this is the fact that as a result of the predominence of perennial crops, especially the coconuts, in the agricultural sector, the cropping pattern in Kerala is comparatively less labour-intensive. As a result of the operation of these forces, a large section of the population appears to have been forced to turn to some sort of non-agricultural activity or the other. But this seems to be of a "make-work" character. The technology of the secondary sector is traditional and its productivity is appallingly low. 433* 464 434)

1.24 In fact, productivity in Kerala's secondary sector is even lower than in the primary sector. This reversed position of Kerala only points to one of the strange paradoxes that occur in an under-developed economy. Ultimately, it is not so much the sectoral distribution of working force as the sectoral levels of productivity that are the determinants of growth. Productivity, in turn, is a function of the level of technology. Table 4 shows that the net output per worker in the secondary and tertiary sectors is lower than the average for all-India. As may be observed, low productivity is especially marked in the secondary sector which mostly covers the industries (Kerala—Rs. 539 ; all-India—Rs. 1,294). 433* [171]

Agriculture and Plantations

1.25 On the other hand, the primary sector in Kerala is comparatively better developed. This is a distinct feature of the State economy. Primary sector comprises agriculture, plantations, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries. As may be seen from Table 4, labour productivity in the primary sector of Kerala is roughly 433* 241

2 [see pp. 270-271, category 116 --Analysis]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [438] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilized.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3 [see p 272, category 116 -- Analysis]

258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
Kerala	736

Source: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

Overhead Facilities

185 1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the Infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 241 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 171 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

* 433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

EXTENSION OF CULTIVABLE AREA

Cotton

*433 248 2.25 Prior to 1956, Kerala was considered unsuitable for the cultivation of cotton. In that year an experiment was made on a pilot scale and the results were so encouraging that the area under Sea Island (long staple) cotton rose from 126 acres in 1956 to about 3,500 acres in 1959-60.

2.26 Sea Island cotton yields superior lint which can be spun into high count expensive yarn. The latter finds a good market within the country and at present has even got to be imported. The extension of area under this crop will help in saving valuable foreign exchange and it would also provide scope for development of such industries as ginning, baling, spinning and cotton seed oil extraction.

2.27 In view of the above factors it is desirable to undertake further extension of area under cotton. A part of this increase can take place at the expense of acreage under tapioca, which is a low yielding crop. About 0.2 to 0.3 million acres out of 0.56 million acres under tapioca can be diverted in this way during the next decade. Efforts should, however, be made to keep the output of tapioca at the existing level by raising its yield which is at a very low level. [244]

2.28 There is also scope for diverting some highland area under single cropped paddy to Sea Island cotton since such a diversion would yield high returns in terms of value. The exact scope for such a diversion can, however, be ascertained only after the proposed land-use survey has been conducted. [243]

2.29 Assuming 0.3 million acres are brought under Sea Island cotton, as suggested above, additional production of long staple cotton may be expected to reach a level of 192,000 bales by 1970-71.

Sugarcane

*433 249 2.30 Sugarcane is a high value crop, and, therefore, is quite popular with the farmers. But it is one of those crops whose future extension of area is very much dependent upon the growth of sugar manufacturing industry. Its exact scope will, therefore, depend upon the growth of sugar factories.

[77] 2.31 The yield per acre of sugarcane in Kerala is very good (Kerala 40,000 lbs. per acre ; U.P. and Bihar 25,000 lbs. per acre ; all-India 28,000 lbs. per acre) and can be raised to 55,000 lbs. per acre. This factor favours the extension of sugarcane cultivation and the setting up of new sugar mills. At present there are about 25,000 acres under this crop in Thiruvella area, mostly concentrated around the Pampa river sugarcane factory. There is scope for a large increase in sugarcane acreage in the districts of Palghat, Trivandrum and Ernakulam which possess the requisite irrigation facilities. By 1971, the area under sugarcane may be doubled to about 50,000 acres.

Ginger

2.32 Ginger is a very high value yielding crop (Rs. 1,077 per acre). In view of good demand prospects for ginger in both internal and external markets, the production of

Tea

*433 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important
245 cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest
[439] number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

[132] 2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees.
[133] The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is
[171] higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution.
[452] The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation 249 in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951–56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

433 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since 249 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were 423 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

433 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in 249 Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)

[171] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

433 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific 249 manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires 242 manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control [471] of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter [244] tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

to a considerable degree in Malabar and Nelliampathi (Travancore-Cochin) areas. The major concentration of area occurs in the Kozhikode district of Malabar. It had 89 per cent of the total coffee area in the State during 1957-58. Between 1955 and 1958, coffee production in Malabar rose (18%) while that in Travancore-Cochin declined (16%). Similarly, the area under coffee during the same period registered an increase in Malabar (28.3%) but declined in Travancore-Cochin region (15.0%). 433* 245 [438]

2.134 The average yield per acre of coffee in Kerala is rather low. It has been lower than the all-India average and is far below the average yield in Mysore, the principal coffee growing State in India, (1955-56 Kerala, 285 lbs. per acre; all-India, 369 lbs. per acre; and Mysore 395 lbs. per acre). Moreover, while the yields elsewhere in India, especially in Mysore, have been rising, in Kerala they have fallen from 368 to 285 lbs. per acre during 1951–58. Within Kerala, the yields are the highest in Kozhikode district which is largely due to the better management of estates in this district. [171]

2.135 One of the characteristics of coffee plantations in Kerala is the overwhelmingly large number of small estates. In 1958, there were 14,475 registered estates with a total area of 47,675 acres. Of these, 12,412 were of less than five acres in size. There were only 99 estates out of 14,475 with an area over 50 acres. (Table 14)[2] 433* 245 423

2.136 There is a distinct relationship between the size of coffee estates and the output per acre. It is noticed that yields increase progressively as the size of the estates increases. The yield per acre of *Arabica* variety in estates in the size group of 5-10 acres was 0.68 cwts. per acre, while for the estates with 200 acres or more, it was 2.26 cwts. Moreover, the quality of coffee produced on small plantations is also inferior and fetches only 65 per cent of the price of coffee produced on big estates. It is difficult to ascertain the most economic size but it is believed that for effective and profitable functioning, the minimum size would be 50 acres. If this is accepted, then only less than one per cent of coffee estates in Kerala are economic. The question of making these plantations economic through consolidation or extension of area under coffee plantations should, therefore, receive serious attention. Two more points need attention. First, new areas should be planted with coffee *Arabica* rather than coffee *Robusta* since the former gives higher yields. Secondly, as in the case of tea, replantation is also over-due in the coffee plantations. Remedies on the same lines as suggested for tea hold good for coffee also. 433* 245

2.137 Unlike tea, the major portion of which is exported, coffee plantations are substained largely by the demand for internal consumption. Internal demand, however, has not been keeping pace with rise in the output of coffee. At present India has quite a large surplus in coffee and efforts are being made to export the surplus. In spite of an enormous surplus of coffee in South America, efforts in India have yielded good results as shown by an increase in exports from 3,000 tons in 1952-53 to 15,228 tons in 1956-57.[1] Most of our exports go to East European countries. There is scope for stepping up the exports further, in spite of the world 433* 245 439 [438]

[1] Source: Coffee Board, Bangalore.

[2] [see p. 279, category 11b -- Analysis]

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [439] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

231 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish [171] in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % [464] of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very [511] depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, con- [434] sisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, [592] about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25). Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ana]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc.

The Transport System

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores.

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport.

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average

[Text continues on p. 127]

[1] 1951 Census figures.

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491 of traffic on arterial routes (e.g., Coimbatore-Cochin). The opening of Aroor Bridge has failed to attract the high potential of traffic expected between Quilon and Ernakulam, as there are weak bridges at least at three points on the route. As a result of lack of bridges, inter-State traffic between Kasargod and Mangalore has to seek a diversion *via* South Coorg. Apart from this, the need for bypasses, which is felt today in and near Calicut, is likely to become an urgent necessity around every focal point of increased industrial growth, such as Ernakulam, Quilon, Alwaye, Palghat, Trichur, etc.

*433 491 8.16 Special mention may be made of two vital routes:

(*i*) *Cochin-Coimbatore Road* (*N.H. No. 47*). This road has already become fully saturated with traffic passing between the port of Cochin and the Coimbatore area. The opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge over the Alwaye river has contributed to this saturation to a great extent. Future industrial development and increased traffic at the Cochin port would require the reservation of this road (N.H. No. 47) for fast moving traffic with an additional lane. Infact, even to cater to the present needs, such an arrangement is necessary. Slow moving traffic will have to be diverted to an alternative route from Trichur to Coimbatore *via* Kollengode and Palghat.

(*ii*) *Aroor Bridge—Ernakulam Road.* This length of 9½ miles of the National Highway is tortuous and incapable of being widened. If it is to cope up with the expanding activities of Cochin area, it will have to be realigned, even before the ship-building yard is located in Cochin. The best plan would be to reclaim land along the coast from Aroor bridge to the site where a bridge is proposed to be constructed near the Thevara College at Ernakulam approximately a distance of four miles, and divert the road on to this reclaimed land; the reclamation will have not only to provide for a road of about 70 ft. width, but could also be used to build a chain of warehouses which are very much in demand. A water frontage to handle the water-borne traffic on this entire four-mile route will also have to be constructed.

ROAD TRANSPORT

493 8.17 The number of mechanized road vehicles in the State—trucks, buses, taxies, private cars, auto-rickshaws, etc.,—has increased sharply from 9,395 in 1956-57 to 23,087 in 1959-60. The number of goods vehicles rose from 2,714 to 5,218, i.e., by 92.2 per cent. But their proportionate share declined, 28.9 per cent of the total number of vehicles, to 22.6 per cent. During the same period, the number of buses increased from 452 to 3,236, that is by over 600 per cent. The percentage to the total number of road vehicles in their case increased from 4.8 per cent to 14 per cent. Passenger transport has thus recorded a striking increase.

8.18 The State has a vehicle density of 2.14 per mile of road, 1.54 per sq. mile of area, and 146.6 per 100,000 of population. The comparative figures for all-India and an industrially advanced State like West Bengal are as follows.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

VEHICLE DENSITY

	Per mile of road	Per sq. mile	Per 100,000 Population
Kerala	2.14	1.34	146.6
West Bengal	1.20	0.92	111.1
India	1.20	0.32	104.0

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Kerala comes up with the highest indices, but this is not surprising as the railway serves only certain limited areas and road transport has to serve the other areas.

8.19 Trivandrum and Calicut districts have the largest concentration of goods vehicles on the road; Alleppey, Ernakulam, and Quilon figure next. As regards the stage carriages, Trivandrum district has the largest fleet; Trichur, Ernakulam, and Calicut districts also account for large numbers of stage carriages but these are much smaller. The Coimbatore-Cochin route is saturated with goods traffic in cotton bales, fertilizers, planks, tea, tapioca, machinery, hardware, etc., particularly since the opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge replacing the Desom ferry. The traffic was expected to go up by about 50 per cent during 1961. Similarly the traffic between Calicut and Coimbatore, across the Palghat gap and between Calicut and Wynad (timber traffic) bound for destinations in Salem, Madras, Mysore, Tuticorin, etc., has been on the increase. As industrial developments presage considerable increase of traffic on these routes, problems of alignment, bridging, extra lanes, expressway sections, etc., may call for more investment and additional construction. 494

8.20 About 250 trucks are operating between Mysore and Kerala on inter-State routes. They are subject to the restriction that they may not operate on more than three important straight routes, not exceeding 300 miles in each State. Inter-State routing arrangements between Madras and Kerala are yet to be completed.

8.21 The business in goods transport in the State suffers from the preponderance of owner-operators of single trucks (1,717 operators). There are only five operators in the State who own more than 10 trucks. The predominance o. the owner-operator of single trucks is likely to prevent the industry from obtaining the economies and advantages of enhanced efficiency resulting from better organization of road transport in the State. [422]

8.22 Among other features of the transport system special mention may be made of chronic over-loading of vehicles and the beginning of movement in truck-trailer combinations in order to circumvent difficulties arising from restrictions of weight over weak bridges and culverts. Study and analysis of road transport problems are rendered more difficult by the paucity of data regarding traffic, the absence of regular departmental road census of vehicles and traffic, etc. A limited degree of nationalization of goods transport by road has been introduced on the Cochin-Mannar route where 10 to 18 trucks carry tea from the estates to Cochin, and rice, manures and machinery from Cochin to the estates.

8.23 Despite an early start, the nationalized road passenger services have not made much headway. About 458 vehicles are on the road, covering 24.9 million miles annually, and carrying about 65.3 million passengers. The larger revenues resulting from increased traffic and higher fares,[1] have not improved the net profits of [652]

[1] The revenues rose by Rs. 31 lakhs.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

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District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	16,875,109	1,188

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	172.6	49.1	4,520.0	45.6
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	44.9
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0	70.0	
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	60.0	0.5
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6		
B. Secondary Incomes	53.3	14.6	1,350.0	13.5
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.5	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	126.8	36.3	3,610.0	36.9
1. Communications	..			
2. Railways	3.5			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	35.9			
4. Organised Banks and Insurance	3.5			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	31.3			
6. Public Authorities	14.6			
7. House Property	18.0			
TOTAL	351.8	100	9,980	100
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-56)

	Working force			Net value added per worker (Rs.)	
	Kerala		India	Kerala	India
	Lakhs*	Per cent	Per cent		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	..	413	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	50.3	100.00	100.00	700.00	651.00

* Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Integrated Sample Survey. According to this estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Integrated Sample Survey are given below:

	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	24.5
2. Secondary Sector	9.4
(a) Mining	0.5
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	12.4
TOTAL	46.3

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 5

CONSUMER EXPENDITURE IN RUPEES PER PERSON BY ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION FOR PERIOD OF 30 DAYS IN RURAL AREAS

Items	*Travancore-Cochin*		*All-India*	
	Expenditure level (Rs.)	*Percentage*	*Expenditure level* (Rs.)	*Percentage*
Foodgrains	6.10	32.7	8.70	4.06
Milk and milk products	0.43	2.3	1.35	6.3
Edible oil	0.57	3.1	0.45	2.1
Meat, egg and fish	0.78	4.2	0.42	2.0
Sugar	0.40	2.2	0.45	2.1
Salt	0.06	0.3	0.06	0.3
Other food	2.83	15.2	2.11	9.8
FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*11.17*	*60.0*	*13.54*	*63.2*
Clothing	1.13	9.8	1.66	7.7
Fuel and light	1.13	5.9	1.16	5.4
Rent	0.08	2.8	0.30	1.4
Taxes	0.06	0.2	0.07	0.3
Miscellaneous	5.07	15.4	4.71	22.0
NON-FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*7.47*	*34.0*	*7.90*	*36.8*
TOTAL	18.64	100.0	21.44	100.0

SOURCE: *The National Sample Survey*, Fourth Round, April-September 1952, Number 13.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 58

DENSITY OF POPULATION (KERALA STATE)
(Figures based on 1951 Census)

District		*Participation rate* (Per cent)	*Density of population*	
Trivandrum	Travancore-Cochin	36.2	1,569	
Quilon			749	
Alleppey			2,148	
Kottayam			664	
Ernakulam			982	
Trichur			1,188	
Palghat		28.5	795	785
Kozhikode			809	
Cannanore			618	
STATE TOTAL			904	

Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore formed the previous districts of Malabar.

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TABLE 59

OCCUPATIONAL BREAK-UP OF WORKING FORCE (1961)

	KERALA						*INDIA*					
	Rural		*Urban*		*Combined*		*Rural*		*Urban*		*Combined*	
	Lakhs	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*
Agricultural Sector	22.3	60.3	1.1	18.9	23.4	51.4	990	81.8	30	18.9	1,020	71.8
Non-agricultural Sector	17.3	39.8	4.7	81.1	22.0	48.6	218	18.2	184	81.1	402	28.2
TOTAL	39.6	100.0	5.8	100.0	45.4	100.0	1,208	100.0	214	100.0	1,422	100.0

[Pp. 286–309 not Processed]

early in the morning to gather flowers, of which the kadali is the most important. On their return, they sit in front of the tulasi (sacred basil) mandapam, make a carpet-like bed of the blossoms which they have collected, and place a clay image of Ganapati in the centre. A writer in the Calcutta Review * describes how having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M., and then the daily decoration begins. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers, and one or two varieties of foliage of different tints, are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art, accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal (booth), hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork."

"Various field sports, of which foot-ball is the chief, are indulged in during the Onam festival. To quote Paulinus once more, the men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into parties, and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted, but exceedingly strong, and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans."

* January, 1899.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many au-
611 thors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hy-
564 pergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to dis-
[554] tinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by contrast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy.
[197] Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region ex-
[171] hibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from struc-
[184] tural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

101 The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people.
564 Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which
613 group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad*, used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan*.[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava*, "to do" in Sinhalese.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight 613
to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of 114
Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape.

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice 613
among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to 114
the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also 184
within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve [554]
(1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles.

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In 613
North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region [184]
around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group [614]
in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan.

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but 591
she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children [844]
(a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when [171]
grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of [851]
matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. 601
I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are [602]
to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the

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terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbidden as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

The categories of the terminology are widely extended and relations with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance, must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is duplicated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as to where we are. However, we are not given much information regarding endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well. 121 591 60 [564] [114]

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom. 60 171

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58). 604 588

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on. 605 582 585 [171]

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which 564 611 591

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage. [114]

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564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

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(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent. [114] [184]

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

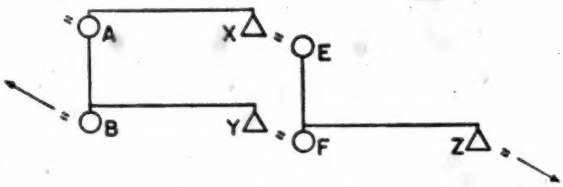

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

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121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

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perior but politically inferior to the royal lineages. This would indicate that the arguments emanating from the power structure are of limited value. Nor does the psychoanalytic argument carry conviction (see Yalman, 1963). 121 114 564 613

Dumont further suggests that the Nayar position has significant cultural affinities to certain practices of the Basavi. Among the Basavi, a girl is given in marriage to a god. She may then be approached by all kinds of men, and the children she may bear belong to her own family. Thus by virtue of her marriage to a god, her children are freed from the constraints of the rule of patrilineal descent and follow matrilineal descent. In the same fashion, Dumont thinks the girls of aristocratic matrilineages are married to Nambudiri Brahman, who are referred to as "Gods of the Earth."

Dumont's point is worth making, for it shows the element of piety involved in these customs which have been severely misunderstood in India and elsewhere. The man of the matrilineage sacrifices his own children (who belong to others) in order to give his sister to a god and keep her children.

This may indeed be one of the cultural dimensions of hypergamy in this region, but the system is so clearly and effectively associated with the fundamental structural principles of matrilineal descent groups in a caste context that the specific cultural features (piety, etc.) do not need to be treated as a necessary part of the picture. A similar set of structural circumstances gives rise to an essentially similar picture in Ceylon. 121 564 613 [171]

The general principles of status differentiation in Cochin have been subsumed under the following ideal formula by Karve (1953, p. 269): [851]

Nambudiri m.	marries	Nambudiri f.	Children	become	Nambudiri	
Nambudiri m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	Kshatriya	
Ksatriya m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	non-Kshatriya [*sic.*]	
Nambudiri m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 1	
Ksatriya m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 2	
Nayar m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 3	

It is quite clear that we find the matrilineal *taravad* in its most impressive development as a corporation precisely at the highest levels of society. At the other end of the scale we have only the desire for prestige:

The Tharvad is always named after an ancestress and referred to as the Tharvad of so and so (woman). If a man does not belong to a Tharvad he is not respected and I was told by an officer in a mill that though he was well educated and a salaried man he had not the requisite social position as

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121 they were landless orphans. If he bought land, built a house and settled there
564 with his sister, bringing up her children, he would gain social status. He said
613 he knew of many a poor labourer serving in the mill, saving money to establish a Tharvad in his sister's name and become "somebody" in his caste. (Karve, 1953, p. 267)

The problem of finding suitable husbands for the women of aristocratic matrilineal Tharvads has been solved by the Nambudiri Brahman connection in Cochin. The situation is not very different with North Malabar aristocrats. We are told that the Kolattiri lineage had difficulty in getting accepted as of high status among the ancient "Kshatriya" lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad, so the Kolattiri Rajas brought a caste called Koil Tamburan from Travancore. "Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambudiri men and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 56).

Karve with her usual insight and evocative examples puts the issue simply (1953, pp. 258–259): "The Kshatriyas claim descent from the sun-family of the ancient Hindu Kshatriyas of the north—the house of Rama. All the sons born in Kshatriya families, i.e., ruling houses of Travancore and Cochin have Sanskrit names of the Sun-god with the suffix varmā . . . We have already seen that in olden times as a rule and even now generally the Kshatriya women have Nambudiri Brahmins as husbands. . . . There is a village near Cochin belonging to a rich Nayar Thārvad . . . which is called the 'village of evening visits of the Nambudris.' " And this accurate and colorful picture is rounded up with the direct statement, "Among poorer Nayars cross-cousin marriage is favoured."

Other Evidence from Malabar

121 We have considered the evidence from Malabar from the point of
611 view of other South Indian systems and have, I believe, been able to establish both the principles of the general structure and the association of systems of hypergamy with unilineal descent. A further point to note is that systems of descent, at least in this region, could be considered as a secondary feature to a large extent independent of the specific forms of kinship and marriage. Very similar groups appear to follow different forms of descent in various regions. We should [191] recall that even the Sinhalese, who are regarded as being "patrilineal" by many authors today, followed "matrilineal" descent at least among the royal family in the seventeenth century. And conversely one author has noted that in some parts of Kerala "the Nairs also follow the father right social system" (D'Souza, 1959, p. 493).

[564] There is a vast body of literature, especially in connection with

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Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

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121 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with
551 the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 In view of the great number of communities that have remained
171 untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman,
121 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and
593 inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated
[604] at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's
[764] funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con-
121 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the
593 rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com-
764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar
[604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p.
[171] 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil-
121 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa-
593 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the
605 double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the
121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of
602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea-
171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy:
812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.
77 Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union
[601]

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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 the dialects of a common language. It is curious that principles of
171 social organization should take us back to systems of communication.

I do not wish to reify the principles of South Indian kinship into something distinct from certain categories of thought and certain patterns of behavior. In all our work there is always this curious dialectic between the fact and the idea, between action and thought, between constructs of the mind and the activities of men. But both sides of the dialectic can be regarded as emanating from the same traditional "structure" behind both the thought and the act. It is noteworthy to observe how the form of the "structure" varies in a given region like the dialects of a language. Yet the variations appear as logical permutations of a limited set of principles. Again like language, the principles are clearly not embedded in the utilitarian particularities of specific social systems. They appear to be certain fundamental principles of organization which are behind the various manifestations of specific social patterns. In this sense what we call "social structure" corresponds to a grammar which relates the activities of individuals to one another and makes communication and order possible in social life.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.— There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them :— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Páttu :—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta páttu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati páttu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs :—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam* :—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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769 Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately
626 betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding
613 with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following
[173] day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

562 Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may
[782] not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole
[841] concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents
[829] women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage
[769] ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

769 Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult
613 served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*.
626 First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided
182 a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment
769 of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out
171 the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes
182 deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For
769 these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his
613 own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must
626 keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict
182 suffering on all, including himself.

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities, or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kuttichāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kuttichāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād* was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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825 171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 825 171 782 778 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes. Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison, are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [700] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 825 779 796 [173] Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him and left them in their present abode. He however promised to return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *havu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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782 776 778 made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. 173 Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkòttu Illam, where 776 the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's 778 parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols 825 of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent god and that of the female. [115] Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla :—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandava-vanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone 778 images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, 776 a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that 782 is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Másí. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12½ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

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[173] Origin and tradition of the caste.

According to *Kerala Mahatmyam*, the Nayars are said to be the descendants of the union of the junior members of the Nambuthiri families with the Devagandarva and Rakshasa women brought in by Parasurama from extra-terrestrial regions. The *Keralotpatti* regards them as the descendants of the Sudras who accompanied the Brahman immigrants from outside Kerala.

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Some consider that the Nayars came from Tibet where polyandry prevails, while others consider them to be a very early division of the Newars of Nepal. The mere existence of polyandry in Tibet is not sufficient to suggest a racial identity, nor is the form of polyandry prevailing amongst the Nayars the same as that found amongst the Tibetans; [1] but the marital relations, mode of inheritance and other customs, as well as the style of architecture of Nepal, closely connect them with the Nayars, and go to show a common origin. [2]

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In the serpent worship of the Nayars, and also their matriarchal customs, others have found traces of a Scythian origin. It is said that the Dravidian languages retain a more intimate connection with the Scythian or Turanean tongues. Philology also comes in to support this view. It is said that Tamil and its cognate tongues were founded upon the ancient Asura or Dravidian speech, and this is strongly confirmed by the fact that the language of the Brahuis, a tribe on the borders of Sind, has been found to be closely allied to them. "The Brahuis' language", says Dr. Caldwell, "enables us to trace the Dravidian race to the southern confines of Central Asia, and that this country was the home of the Nagas to which race apparently belonged the founders of the Dravidian kingdoms." It may therefore be safely concluded that the Dravidians of South India were of the same stock as the Nagas of the North, and to these tribes of Naga colonists belonged the original serpent worshipping Nayars.[3] "The name Dravidian Races," says Friedrich Ratzel, "fits only the Tamils, Telugus, and Canarese of Southern India, remoter kindred of the dark aboriginal population to whom Aryan population brought the religion of Brahma, a high civil order and of course the opportunity of extensive intermixture. The selection of the term is connected

1. The Evolution of Marriage, Letourneau, page 80.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, C. F. Oldham, page 158.
3. The Sun and the Serpent, Chapter VII, pages 162-165.

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796 184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or 796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora- 184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali, widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati, 773 in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what 776 was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after 173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra- 796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the 184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, corian- [439] der, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu [492] Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

173 796 184 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation, birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the people. The battle was fought with the result already mentioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Kongapada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Nddnvázhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

796 184

[101] [174]

1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join in the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*I*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a
● 193 temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of
193 the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death.
591 Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to
968 her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898,
175 the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see
591 Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen
593 out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations,
182 took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were
175 younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated
591 by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of
175 Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter
182

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

173 sage of Malabar, gave it to the priestly caste of Brahmins in perpetual holding.

These Brahmins now declared themselves satisfied and moved to take it over, but were at first frightened away by the aboriginal *Naga* (serpent) worshippers. Other Brahmins were then brought in from the north and instructed by Parasu Raman to propitiate the serpents by installing them as their household gods. He also organized the priestly settlers into sixty [611] four villages (*gramams*) and directed them to adopt succession through the mother (*marumakkathayam*), which last injunction they disobeyed with the single exception of Payyanur in Chirakkal, where Brahmins observe matrilineal descent to this day. He then brought in Sudras (Nayars) from the country east of the Ghats (that is from the Tamil country) and entrusted them with the protection of the Brahmins; they were organized into *taras* and to them were given the duties of supervising, executing and issuing orders, so that rights in Kerala should not be curtailed or suffered to fall into disuse.

173 From this nebulous, mythical past, history later slowly emerges. Already, one thousand years B.C., Solomon is reputed to have traded with 175 the south-west coast of India. Commercial contacts with the Near East did actually exist in this part of the sub-continent much earlier than anywhere else in India, the sea acting as a medium of communication. With the discovery of the south-west trade winds by Hippalus in the 1st century A.D., the Romans carried on the profitable relation, and they are reputed to have even had a settlement at Cranganore in Travancore. In 52 A.D., St Thomas landed there, according to local tradition, and converted some Brahmin families to Christianity, thus laying the foundation of the present-day Malabar Christian communities. During the following decades, as a result of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus in 70 A.D., the first Jews are reputed to have arrived in Kerala to settle at Mattancheri in Cochin.

175 In the 3rd century A.D., the Brahmins called in a king to rule them and the Perumal dynasty started with Keya Perumal, who came from Keyapuram, east of the Ghats. Trade with other parts of the world continued during this period, the Arabs arriving from the Hadramut and the Persian Gulf in the 9th century. The Chinese, however, are said by Marco Polo to have been in full control of the Malabar ma[illegible] when that great traveller visited the area in the 13th century. Shortly afterwards, the last of the Perumals, Cheruman Perumal, was converted to Islam and departed to Mecca never to return.

Before leaving, Cheruman Perumal put his kingdom in order, it

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

The polyandry of the Kammalans, of the four sub-castes of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and bell-metal smiths, is in every way identical with that of the Thandans and Tiyas of the central area. This may be because they claim a common Sinhalese origin for it. The legend relates that one of the early Perumal kings of Kerala, having received some useful hints as to how to have his washing done by a *dhobi* (washerman) promised to give him a girl of the Asari (carpenter) caste in marriage. This revolted the Kammalans, and in order to avoid the degrading proposition, they emigrated in a body to Ceylon, leaving their king with none but a few workmen specialized in making roofs for the temples. The pre-historic boycott had its desired effect. The Perumal monarch, in dire distress, promised to give up the marriage he had had in mind and appealed to the king of Ceylon for the return of his indispensable artisans. These agreed to come back, but were given protection by the king of Sinhala in the form of an escort of his own subjects who brought the coconut with them, settled in Kerala and became the ancestors of the Tiyas. Presumably, the Kammalans learned the advantages of polyandry when they were in the kingdom of Kandy, and have never ceased to practise it since.

595 173 [564] [326]

I found all the artisan families which I visited polyandrous, and I was told that the custom is still very vigorous, in spite of what outsiders have to say. The same applies to those associated craftsmen castes, the Kolla- and Vil-Kurups, the Tol-kollan, Kanisans, Mannans, Panans and Pulluvans, who do not seem either to have given up polyandry in any great numbers. Their form of the institution differs in no way from that of their fellows of the senior caste.

595 564

B. POLYANDRY IN THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR AND IN NORTH COCHIN

Personal Observations

It was into this complex maze of Kerala society that I ventured, a few years ago now, to study the polyandry of some of its people. In the following pages, I give the results of this personal investigation. Thanks to my helpers and interpreters, I was able to find polyandrous households almost immediately. My first visit to the Palghat taluk and to Walluvanad allowed me to confirm that the Tiyas still practised what I was searching for, and that what I had heard about them was not incorrect. While in Tellicherry, I had the same experience, even though

595*

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood combined with the physical peculiarities of the country would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.* 173 564

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that "in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And, Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII— 175 564 701 [868] [186]

'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

MALABAR DISTRICT.

GURUVAYUR (PONNANI TALUK).

[*By V. Lakshmana Aiyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—Guruvayur is situated in the southern part of the Ponnani taluk, and is only 2 miles distant from the Arabian Sea. It is close to the backwater which extends from the northern point of the taluk to Cochin and Travancore. To the east it is only 3 miles distant from the State of Cochin. It is 14 miles away from the capital town of the taluk through which flows the chief river of Malabar. No forests can be seen throughout the whole taluk. The whole taluk is one red sandy mass with no waste lands, no mountains or hills. The chief crop of the village and perhaps of the whole taluk is coconut.

Malabar land tenure.—The system of land tenure that obtains in Malabar is entirely different from that of other districts. No doubt the theory that the Government is the legitimate owner of all the land in India and the people hold the land from the Government to which they pay a rent or tax, obtains its full significance here also. But there is an intermediary landlord, between the Government and the actual occupier of the land. How this intermediary landlord arose requires some explanation.

The origin of Malabar according to tradition is that a demi-god Parasurama reclaimed from the sea the portion of land extending from Gokarnam (Bombay) to Cape Comorin and from the Western Ghats to the sea. This demi-god having killed 21 times all the Kshatriyas, and having surrendered to Rama all his possessions after trial of battle, wanted a place to live in. He ordered the sea to recede and thus formed these lands. Malabar is a portion of that land. What historical facts are concealed in this tradition it is not easy to know but it may be guessed that in the general organizing of the Deccan, a certain number of Aryans * crossed the Western Ghats and reclaimed the lands from forest and wild beasts and made it habitable for civilized men. They may have dominated the original inhabitants by their superior civilization and Parasurama may have been the leader of that little band of Aryans. The tradition says that the demi-god gave all the lands he created to 64 Brahmans who became the leaders of the 64 villages into which the whole of the land was divided. These 64 Brahmans formed the original Malabar Brahmans or Nambudris, and they formed an assembly and decided matters of common concern. Individual villages decided their own matters and in every discussion of their affairs the Brahmana was the president and his opinion had perhaps the force of law. The whole village belonged to him and he was the Uralla or the chief man of the village. As time went on the one important family extended its branches and each branch had an equal voice in the affairs of the village. The one became many. I shall refer later to the remnants of this constitution of the village.

* [This hypothesis is ingenious, but not, in my opinion, probable.—Ed.]

[For historical sketches of cities, see category 369 or Index, category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

631 of Travancore and the Travancore legislative assembly, with headquarters in the capital, Trivandrum. On July 1st, 1949, by order of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi, the two southern states were integrated as the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Cochin retired from office, and the Maharaja of Travancore became for the duration of his life the first Rajpramukh of the new united state. The State now has its headquarters and government offices [5] at Trivandrum.

101 Despite these partly accidental political divi-
197 sions, the Malabar Coast is a discrete cultural area. Malayalam, (a Dravidian language strongly influenced in vocabulary by Sanskrit) which became distinguished as a deviant dialect of Tamil about the twelfth century, is the mother-tongue of all but a few immigrant Tamil groups in south Travancore. The area has also had some degree of political unity in the distant
174 past as the ancient kingdom of Kerala. The early history of Kerala is unknown. It was ruled by the Perumals, a succession of kings who seem to have come from outside Kerala and who may have been feudatories in the wider em-
175 pire of Chera. Their government came to an end sometime between the fourth and eleventh centuries A.D. After this Kerala was split into many petty kingdoms under indigenous Rajas of Nayar stock, having matrilineal descent. These continually fought each other and, from 1498, with the coming of the Portuguese and later the Dutch, English and French, made various alliances with these powers to gain their

175 individual ends. Their struggles were eclipsed by the Muslim invasions from Mysore which began in 1766, and ended when the East Indian Company took over the area in 1792. But the idea of a United Kerala has not died, and has been repeatedly suggested since India attained [6] Independence in 1947.

161 (3) Population

The Malabar Coast is the most densely populated part of India. The figures for 1931 show a population of 3,533,944 for Malabar; 1,205,016 for Cochin; and 5,095,073 for Travancore. In Malabar the mean density was 610 per square mile; in Cochin, 814; and in Travancore, 668. This includes forest and lagoon areas. The mean density of habitable land in Cochin was 1,400.

[511] Relative to the present exploitation of resources the whole coast is overpopulated. Most of the people lead a hand-to-mouth existence on an income barely sufficient to support life. Want and indebtedness are chronic and there is much unemployment.

Reliable figures are not available for before 1891, but at least since that date and probably for 50 to 100 years previsouly, a great increase has taken place. The figures for 1891 were, for Malabar, 2,557,736; fo Cochin, 722,906; and for Travancore, 2,557,736. This increase in population is part of the baseline from which we must start in analysing kinship systems.

174 631 II The Traditional Political Background

European and Arabic reports on the Nayars

174 take us back to before 1498, when Basco da Gama
631 first reached Calicut. From the mid-fifteenth century until the present, there is a fairly continuous series of records, by Arab, Portuguese, Dutch and later East India Company traders, and finally by British government officials and by Malayalis themselves. We may conveniently refer to the period before 1792, when the East India Company assumed government, as the period of the traditional political and economic organization, in contrast to the period between 1792 and 1947, which is the period of British rule. My picture of the traditional social structure is a composite reconstruction from literature and from the reports of my informants. It is not possible in the limits of this paper to give the derivation of each statement, but a bibliography appears at the end.

[127]

It seems clear from the literature that from the breakdown of the ancient kingdom of Kerala (c. 7th century?) until about the 14th century, the coast was divided into many small independent chiefdoms (nads.) Each nad was headed by a petty military chief of the Nayar caste. Sometime in the 9th century, the area was revisited by Arab traders after a long absence, who began to trade with the coastal chiefdoms in pepper and coconuts. Sometime between the 11th and 13th centuries, gunpowder was introduced by the Arabs, and it appears to have been from this date that some of the chiefs began to conquer neighbouring chiefdoms and to organize small kingdoms. By the early 15th century, the chief of these kingdoms were, from north to south,

174 those of Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad,
131 Kadattunad, Calicut, and Walluvanad (in what is now Malabar District), Cochin (the modern Cochin State) and to the south, the various feudatory chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore. By 1496 when the Portuguese arrived, however, the Zamorin (king) of Calicut, who had gained power by extensive Arab trade, had temporarily conquered the Walluvanad and Cochin kingdoms and reduced their rulers to the status of vassal lords. The Portuguese, allied with the Cochin Raja, drove back the Zamorin northward our of Cochin during the 16th century. From then on, wars between the major kingdoms were incessant for the next three centuries. The English reached Malabar in 1615, the Dutch in 1639, and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or other kingdom and took part in successive battles until, in 1763, the northern half of the coast was temporarily overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean invasions ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the British East India Company, and the establishment of the modern British political organization.

101 [9] Today, the coast is still divisible into three major areas, distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, by slight differences of dialect, dress and dietetic habits, and more marked differences in ritual beliefs and practices, and most markedly, by differences in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The nothern area is that of the modern North Malabar District, north

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former king-
doms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and
part of Kurumbranad. The central area compri-
ses the modern South Malabar District and Co-
chin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut,
Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall
differences of custom and social structure were
connected with major political boundaries in the
period of native rule. Though divisible into
separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the
whole of North Malabar District was temporarily
overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and
17th centuries. The central area at one period
or another was all conquered by the Zamorins
and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while
the whole southern area eventually became sub-
ject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these
three major areas, a somewhat different politi-
cal system operated, [10] and in accordance with
this the higher castes, especially the Nayars,
were differently divided into subcastes with sep-
arate administrative functions: each of these
subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced
by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship
because of failure to differentiate between the
three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had
one kinship system, whereas they in fact had
three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic leaders. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nambudiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

613 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars di-
592 vided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth
century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is
174 that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups
592 must have arisen from the marked increase in population during
British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from
161 genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five genera-
174 tions ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher
[175] proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the
592 amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the
174 size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional
423 retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other
[858] kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early
[863] childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the man-
[867] ners and morals of their caste.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [194]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

564 **Political and Economic Systems**

[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahma

however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

devolves through the men, the degrees between which marriage is prohibitive are inherited through the women.*

But the circumstance that inheritance through women was once, perhaps, the rule in Southern India cannot be accepted as of itself proof that the Nâyars are identical with the Dravidians, as the people of Southern India are commonly called. It is not yet time to say whether they are or are not. To the ordinary visitor their outward appearance, customs, habitations, mode of life generally, are very different from what he sees in the Telugu or Tamil countries; for Malabar, "the west coast," is as unlike the rest of the Presidency as Burma. The only other district of the Madras Presidency which resembles Malabar, is Ganjám, more particularly the northern part of it, where the people are almost entirely Aryan. The resemblance between these, the Uriyas of Gumsoor and thereabouts, a fine fighting stock, and the Nâyars of Malabar is very striking. It is not, perhaps, a mere coincidence that in these two furthest remote corners of the Presidency alone, the people at large are to be seen wearing umbrella hats to protect them from the sun.

The Nâyars are divided into clans, (we will call them clans for want of a better term), many of which intermingle through marriage, but some of them are endogamous. The precise number of these clans cannot be given, as it is disputed whether certain of them have a right to belong to the cognate Nâyar body. The names of the clans which have come directly under my measuring instruments are these:—

Kiriyattil.	Kitâvu.
Sûdra.	Pallichan.
Kurup.	Muppathinâyiran.
Nambiyâr.	Vlyâpâri or Râvâri.
Úrâli.	Attikkurissi.
Nalliôden.	Mânavallan.
Viyyûr.	Vengôlan.
Akattu Châma.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Châma.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Âmayengolam.
Vangilôth.	

This list is not in order of priority.

* An example of this custom existing in another land may be quoted here from a modern book—'The Caroline Islands,' by F. W. Christian, 1899: "Descent is traced through the mother—a custom tolerably common amongst the Oceanic races in general. Members of the same tipu or clan cannot marry." (Page 74.)

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breaths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note 1.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day. 588

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families. 174 182 588

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous. [851] [595]

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to [765] [171]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Nambudiri Brahman

589 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be
182 performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This
174 seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a
564 Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham*
585 not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered [554] that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from 614 outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were ● 174 called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days 825 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still 771 holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a [161] community of 3½ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattus*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred ser- [784] pents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars 174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "G" to "Y" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 669–70.

114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastadanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Penninu Putava Kotulthennullathumunnikkittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaictam.*"

This "essential feature," therefore, is most certainly a development of the
[195] later half of the eighteenth century. It is, as a matter of fact, only within the last fifty years that cloth-giving as a synonym for marriage has come to be used widely, and even now it is used mostly by the ultra-refined, who consider it improper to utter the name of marriage in company. Therefore, to say that the Todas emigrated from the Malabar coast because of similality in custom which, among the Nāyars at least, is a very late development, does not carry conviction.

114 Again, Dr. Rivers sees a "possible link" between Malabar and the Todas in
192 the word *Pul-palu*[2] of the Todas and the ceremony of *Puli Kudi* of the Nāyars.
171 Because of the similarity in these words, Dr. Rivers has suggested[3] "the name
174 *Pulipal* may mean tamarind dairy and be a survival of community between the Toda ceremony and that of Malabar." This is a supreme example of the danger of drawing conclusions from questionable etymological premises. Now *Puli* is a well-known Dravidian word which means both the tamarind tree and the sour taste. It is also used as a verb, in which case it means to make anything sour. Now *pul-pali* does not mean tamarind dairy, but the dairy of sour milk. How this could be a link "between Malabar and the Todas" it is utterly impossible for me to see.

114 Dr. Rivers has enumerated a number of points in which he sees "a close resemblance between the customs of the peoples of Malabar and the customs of the Todas." But I would submit that all his points in which any similarity could be seen are Dravidian customs belonging not only to the peoples of Malabar but to the rest of the non-Aryan peoples of South India. Therefore the arguments Dr. Rivers has brought forward prove only that the Todas are a Dravidian people. They do not prove that there was any connection, other than that of neighbours, between the Nāyars and the Todas.

[1] Except the last, which means cloth-cutting.
[2] Pp. 701–2.
[3] P. 702.

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[173] Origin and tradition of the caste.

According to *Kerala Mahatmyam*, the Nayars are said to be the descendants of the union of the junior members of the Nambuthiri families with the Devagandarva and Rakshasa women brought in by Parasurama from extra-terrestrial regions. The *Keralotpatti* regards them as the descendants of the Sudras who accompanied the Brahman immigrants from outside Kerala.

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Some consider that the Nayars came from Tibet where polyandry prevails, while others consider them to be a very early division of the Newars of Nepal. The mere existence of polyandry in Tibet is not sufficient to suggest a racial identity, nor is the form of polyandry prevailing amongst the Nayars the same as that found amongst the Tibetans; [1] but the marital relations, mode of inheritance and other customs, as well as the style of architecture of Nepal, closely connect them with the Nayars, and go to show a common origin. [2]

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In the serpent worship of the Nayars, and also their matriarchal customs, others have found traces of a Scythian origin. It is said that the Dravidian languages retain a more intimate connection with the Scythian or Turanean tongues. Philology also comes in to support this view. It is said that Tamil and its cognate tongues were founded upon the ancient Asura or Dravidian speech, and this is strongly confirmed by the fact that the language of the Brahuis, a tribe on the borders of Sind, has been found to be closely allied to them. "The Brahuis' language", says Dr. Caldwell, "enables us to trace the Dravidian race to the southern confines of Central Asia, and that this country was the home of the Nagas to which race apparently belonged the founders of the Dravidian kingdoms." It may therefore be safely concluded that the Dravidians of South India were of the same stock as the Nagas of the North, and to these tribes of Naga colonists belonged the original serpent worshipping Nayars.[3] "The name Dravidian Races," says Friedrich Ratzel, "fits only the Tamils, Telugus, and Canarese of Southern India, remoter kindred of the dark aboriginal population to whom Aryan population brought the religion of Brahma, a high civil order and of course the opportunity of extensive intermixture. The selection of the term is connected

1. The Evolution of Marriage, Letourneau, page 80.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, C. F. Oldham, page 158.
3. The Sun and the Serpent, Chapter VII, pages 162-165.

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with its use in the sacred writings of the old Indians, where it is applied to the old Kshatriyas on the east coast of the Deccan who had fallen to the rank of Sudras. As a rule, however, all are called Dravidians who are not Aryan or Semitic and speak agglutinative languages like Tamil. They are distinguished by their dark colour, Mongolian features, and smooth hair. "The nucleus of the Tamil race was indeed," says Grant, "devoted to the nomad life, the fundamental institution of Turanean existence, but the hypothesis of their close connection with the population of Tibet has not attained the rank of scientific certainty."[1]

The passage, quoted above, supports the general consensus of opinion, that the Malayalam language is an offshoot of Tamil, and that the Nayars are the immigrants from the Tamil country.

It has always been a matter of controversy whether Malayalam is the mother, sister, or daughter of Tamil. The popular opinion seems to be, that it is the archaic form of Tamil before it became a written language, and this corresponds with the information derived from the Greek writers that the country was known by the name of Limurike, Tamilike or Tamil country.[2]

Relying mainly on literary evidence, Mr. Kanakasabha Pillay has attributed a Mongolian origin to the whole Dravidian race of Tamils, among whom he includes the Nayars, but anthropometric results point otherwise.[3]

As has been seen, many distinguished authorities are unanimously agreed that the Nayars belong to the Dravidian race with no doubt a considerable admixture of Aryan blood, but the date of their arrival in Malabar cannot be accurately determined.

It is assumed by some writers that the Aryans were conquerors who reduced *Asuras* (Dravidians) to slavery. Whatever might have been the fate of the aborigines, the *Asuras* were not subdued by the Aryans, and never became their serfs or dependants, but were converted gradually to Aryan usages by a regular fusion. Bishop Caldwell supports this view and says, that the subjugation of the Dravidians by the Aryans is

1. Races of Mankind, Vol. III, page 359.
2. Malabar Law and Custom, Introduction, page 2.
3. The Tamils, eighteen hundred years ago.

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174 not borne out either by any Sanskrit authority or Dravidian traditions;[1] but certain legends refer to conflicts between them and the Hindu colonists of later times, and these are said to have been led by Parasurama, and the Nagas from Pātāla whom they found in possession of the country.[2] The latter were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kshatriyas or warriors who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmans, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle in which victory alternated with defeat. These internecine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally gave birth to a military aristocracy called the Nayars.[3]

701 The Nayars of ancient times formed the chief militia in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, and their valour and other fighting qualities evoked the admiration of foreigners, and inspired even the restless Portuguese poet Cameons, who described them in the following apt lines:—

The military character of the Nayars.

> Poliar the labouring clans were named;
> By the proud Nayars the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandished in the right;
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight.

175 One of the earliest accounts of the Nayars is found in the
701 writings of Duarte Barbosa, who described them as men of noble descent, who had to be armed as knights by the king or lord with whom they lived, and who could not call themselves Nayars until they had been so equipped as to bear arms. They were generally sent to school at the age of seven to learn all
[868] manner of athletic feats and to enable them to use their weapons.[4] Their sinews and joints were so stretched and
[447] anointed with the *oyle sesamus* by skillful fellows called "Panicars," who were captains in war, that they became very light and nimble; and could "wind and twine their bodies" as if they had no bones. They cast themselves backwards and forwards, high and low, to the astonishment of the beholders, and the delight in their weapon was so great that they

1. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, Introduction, page 107.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, page 107.
3. Primitive Folk, page 107.
4. A description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar by Duarte Barbosa, page 128—129.

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Internal structure of the caste.

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine displeasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world and in the world to come.

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It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

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Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

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In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

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kalyánam of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *páttu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig védic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathâyam* Hindus, the *táli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathâyam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on the occasion of *táli* tying. The reason for this departure may have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathâyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 70 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of [835] a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue,

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impossible to determine. It was under the influence of the tangible fact of maternity, that the notions of race, family and inheritance were elaborated and developed. Against this is the fact, that the jungle tribes and very low castes have a regular system of marriage and a kind of paternal inheritance.

Sir Henry Mayne maintains that the origin of society in patriarchal lines, is that polyandry and kinship through females are of temporary duration, liable to be brought about at any stage in the progress of society by peculiar circumstances under which it may be placed. If this were true, the popular belief that Nambuthiris brought it about to accommodate their domestic habits is easily proved.

Letourneau says that there is no warrant to consider this form of conjugal union as having been general, but that it is in exceptional form brought about by necessity in a good number of gross societies. This view to some extent is shared by Herbert Spencer who says that polyandry is one form of marital relations or arrangements independently originating in the earliest societies by successive limitations of promiscuity. Lastly, the opinion is unanimous that the Nayars and other *marumakkathâyis* are Dravidians and that polyandry and its accompanying incidents prevailed in Southern India among the non-Aryan tribes. There is strong reason to think, that the *tâli* tying ceremony, the prohibition of sexual union outside the caste, and the doctrine of *Anulomam* and *Pathilomam* were orginally introduced by Nambuthiri Brahmans as restrictions on promiscuities. Thus, so different are the views of anthropologists on this subject, that it still remains an unsettled problem in the ethnology of Kerala. As has been already said, the custom of polyandry is dead. The women of the upper and middle classes are monogamous, and marriage in practice amply satisfies the definition of Lord Penzance in Hyde v. Hyde, namely, "the voluntary union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all other".

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Polygamy.

There is nothing which prevents a man from entering into conjugal relations with more than one woman at a time; nevertheless, it is seldom practised. Indeed, when a man feels happy and contented with his own wife, very seldom has he any inclination to form *sambandham* with another for the sake of novelty unless forced by the

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173-796 184 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation, birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the people. The battle was fought with the result already mentioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Kongapada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Nâduvâzhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

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1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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snake-bite, the Nāyādis wear a brass toe-ring. And, when engaged in catching rats in their holes, they wear round the wrist a snake-shaped metal ring, to render them safe against snakes which may be concealed in the hole.

The Nāyādis who live within the jurisdiction of the Kavalapāra Nāyar near Shoranūr wear the kuḍumi (front lock of hair), as there are no Māppillas (Muhammadans) to molest them. The Kavalapara Nāyar was at one time an important chief, and directed all Nambutiri jenmis (landlords) who held land within his jurisdiction to bind themselves not to let the land to Māppillas. Nāyādis of other parts are not allowed by the Māppillas to wear the kudumi, and, if they do so, they are taken for Parayans and professional sorcerers, and beaten.

Some Nāyādis have become converts to Christianity, others to Muhammadanism, and maintain themselves by begging for alms from Muhammadans. They are called Thoppyitta (cap-wearing) Nāyādis.

The priest of the Nāyādis is called Mūppan. His appointment is hereditary, and he enquires into all matters affecting the community, and can excommunicate a guilty person.*

Average height, 155 cm.; nasal index, 86.

Nāyar.—"The Nāyars," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "are a Dravidian caste, or rather a community, for we find several distinct elements with totally different occupations among the people who call themselves by this title. The original Nāyars were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia, but the present Nāyar caste includes persons who, by hereditary

* This note is based mainly on articles by Mr. S. Appadorai Aiyar and Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyar.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Nayar

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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175.
to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nâyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nâyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

101 174 collectors of royal taxes, and to have grievously oppressed Xavier's converts among the fishermen of Travancore.* Dr. Caldwell, alluding to Xavier's letters, says † that these Badages were no doubt Vadages or men from the North, and is of opinion that a Jesuit writer of the time who called them Nayars was mistaken, and that they were really Nayakans from Madura. I believe, however, that the Jesuit rightly called them Nayars, for I find that Father Organtino, writing in 1568, speaks of these Badages as people from Narasinga (a kingdom north of Madura, lying close to Bishnaghur).‡ Bishnaghur is, of course, Vijayanagar, and the kingdom of Narasinga was the name frequently given by the Portuguese to Vijayanagar. Almost every page of Mr. Sewell's interesting book on Vijayanagar bears testimony to the close connection between Vijayanagar and the West Coast. Dr. A. C. Burnell tells us that the kings who ruled Vijayanagar during the latter half of the fourteenth century belonged to a low non-Aryan caste, namely, that of Canarese cow-herds.§ They were therefore closely akin to the Nayars, one of the leading Rajas among whom at the present time, although officially described as a Samanta, is in reality of the Eradi, *i.e.*, cow-herd caste.‖ It is remarkable that Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas) Munro, in the memorandum written by him in 1802 ¶ on the Poligars of the Ceded Districts,

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* Father Coleridge's Life and Letters of St. Francis Xavier.

† History of Tinnevelly. ‡ Coleridge's Xavier.

§ Burnell. Translation of the Daya Vibhaga, Introduction. *Vide* also Elements of South Indian Palæography (2nd ed., p. 109), where Dr Burnell says that it is certain that the Vijayanagar kings were men of low caste.

‖ *Vide* Glossary, Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, p. 2, and Day's Land of the Permauls, p. 44

¶ Fifth Report of the Committee on the affairs of the East India Company, II, 499, 530. Reprint by Higginbotham, Madras.

when dealing with the cases of a number of Poligars 101
who were direct descendants of men who had been chiefs 174
under the kings of Vijayanagar, calls them throughout his report Naique or Nair, using the two names as if they were identical. Further investigation as to the connection of the Nayars of Malabar with the kingdom of Vijayanagar would, I believe, lead to interesting results." In the Journal of the Hon. John Lindsay (1783) it is recorded * that "we received information that our arms were still successful on the Malabar coast, and that our army was now advancing into the inland country; whilst the Nayars and Polygars that occupy the jungles and mountains near Seringapatam, thinking this a favourable opportunity to regain their former independence, destroyed the open country, and committed as many acts of barbarity as Hyder's army had done in the Carnatic."

"Some," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes in a note 101
on the Nāyars of Travancore, "believe that Nāyar is derived from Nāga (serpents), as the Aryans so termed the earlier settlers of Malabar on account of the special adoration which they paid to snakes. The Travancore Nāyars are popularly known as Malayāla Sūdras—a term which contrasts them sharply with the Pāndi or foreign Sūdras, of whom a large number immigrated into Travancore in later times. Another name by which Nāyars are sometimes known is Malayāli, but other castes, which have long inhabited the Malayālam country, can lay claim to this designation with equal propriety. The most general title of the Nāyars is Pillai (child), which was once added to the names of the Brāhman dwellers in the south. It must, in all probability, have

* Lives of the Lindsays. By Lord Lindsay, 1849.

178 174 585 588 The opinion was expressed by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Winterbotham, one of the Malabar Marriage Commissioners, that the Brahman tāli-tier was a relic of the time when the Nambūtiris were entitled to the first fruits, and it was considered the high privilege of every Nāyar maid to be introduced by them to womanhood. In this connection, reference may be made to Hamilton's 'New Account of the East Indies', where it is stated that [793] "when the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambūdri, or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and he, if he pleases, may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships. And some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the clergy the same tribute, but the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the priests' places themselves."

588 Of those who gave evidence before the Malabar Commission, some thought the tāli-kettu was a marriage, some not. Others called it a mock marriage, a formal marriage, a sham marriage, a fictitious marriage, a marriage sacrament, the preliminary part of marriage, a meaningless ceremony, an empty form, a ridiculous farce, an incongruous custom, a waste of money, and a device for becoming involved in debt. "While," the report states, "a small minority of strict conservatives still maintain that the tāli-kettu is a real marriage intended to confer on the bridegroom a right to cohabit with the bride, an immense majority describe it as a fictitious marriage, the origin of which they are at a loss to explain. And another large section tender the explanation accepted by our President (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) that, in some way or other, it is an essential caste observance preliminary to the forming of sexual relations."

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes* :588 "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, [648] when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days.

This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal 796 588 of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted [779] under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. 588 L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reason- 178 able doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, 174 and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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588 178 174 [585] [613] Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 [174] ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for [184] husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

796
526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman
[184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the
[175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them
[431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a
[174] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic
[178] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu-
[176] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The
[173] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogde of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

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stinct and for the orderly social procreation of offspring. Formally, it is more difficult to say why this institution has taken on this curious appearance. As far as I know, authors so far have been rather at a loss to furnish a satisfactory explanation. Many, of course, have been given, with a great amount of variety in their choice.

For instance, we are given historical explanations. In India they say people have been polyandrous for many centuries; that there are indications, such as archaeological (about the Heftalite Huns, 6th c. A.D.) and literary (the Indian epic poem, the Mahabarata), that the people in this area, both Aryan and non-Aryan, were polyandrous in antiquity. Economic reasons for this have been given; *i.e.*, that the country is poor, that nomadism among Todas or Tibetans, in earlier times, perhaps led to a polyandrous society in order to limit the number of children. Then, demographical explanations have been given, that there is an excess of males over females in this society, and that they have to be polyandrous for that reason. For instance, the Todas practise female infanticide and this is given as a reason for their polyandry. Their men drink a lot of milk, and some people say that the fact that they have more proteins in their diet in this fashion produces more male offspring than female. I do not pretend to know how far this biological explanation is true. Sociological reasons have also been given, namely, that the men travel and have to leave one brother at home with the wife (a reason which I hinted at earlier). In east and south India, the people known as the Nayars, who once could also be called polyandrous, had a very definite military organization (somewhat like that of the Sikhs in the north), and that has been given as a reason why a people is polyandrous: one brother can always remain at home with the wife while the other is away serving with the colors.

It seems to me that these explanations are not sufficient. As far as the historical

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

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175

[For information on the political history of the Malabar coast, as well as on the traditional political and economic system, see category 116.]

631 of Travancore and the Travancore legislative assembly, with headquarters in the capital, Trivandrum. On July 1st, 1949, by order of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi, the two southern states were integrated as the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Cochin retired from office, and the Maharaja of Travancore became for the duration of his life the first Rajpramukh of the new united state. The State now has its headquarters and government offices [5] at Trivandrum.

101 Despite these partly accidental political divi-
197 sions, the Malabar Coast is a discrete cultural area. Malayalam, (a Dravidian language strongly influenced in vocabulary by Sanskrit) which became distinguished as a deviant dialect of Tamil about the twelfth century, is the mother-tongue of all but a few immigrant Tamil groups in south Travancore. The area has also had some degree of political unity in the distant
174 past as the ancient kingdom of Kerala. The early history of Kerala is unknown. It was ruled by the Perumals, a succession of kings who seem to have come from outside Kerala and who may have been feudatories in the wider em-
175 pire of Chera. Their government came to an end sometime between the fourth and eleventh centuries A.D. After this Kerala was split into many petty kingdoms under indigenous Rajas of Nayar stock, having matrilineal descent. These continually fought each other and, from 1498, with the coming of the Portuguese and later the Dutch, English and French, made various alliances with these powers to gain their

175 individual ends. Their struggles were eclipsed by the Muslim invasions from Mysore which began in 1766, and ended when the East Indian Company took over the area in 1792. But the idea of a United Kerala has not died, and has been repeatedly suggested since India attained [6] Independence in 1947.

161 (3) Population

The Malabar Coast is the most densely populated part of India. The figures for 1931 show a population of 3,533,944 for Malabar; 1,205,016 for Cochin; and 5,095,073 for Travancore. In Malabar the mean density was 610 per square mile; in Cochin, 814; and in Travancore, 668. This includes forest and lagoon areas. The mean density of habitable land in Cochin was 1,400.

[511] Relative to the present exploitation of resources the whole coast is overpopulated. Most of the people lead a hand-to-mouth existence on an income barely sufficient to support life. Want and indebtedness are chronic and there is much unemployment.

Reliable figures are not available for before 1891, but at least since that date and probably for 50 to 100 years previsouly, a great increase has taken place. The figures for 1891 were, for Malabar, 2,557,736; fo Cochin, 722,906; and for Travancore, 2,557,736. This increase in population is part of the baseline from which we must start in analysing kinship systems.

174 631 II The Traditional Political Background

European and Arabic reports on the Nayars

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[482] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: cexviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

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Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

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175 about Quilon (Ricci, 1931: 326–330; Logan, 1951, I: 282–283). Chi-
439 nese trade declined in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,
635 but that of Muslim Arabs (who had visited the coast from the eighth century) greatly increased. In the fourteenth century a third Nayar kingdom around Calicut, in the center of the coast, had expanded with the help of Arab merchants (Major, 1857: 13–18). By the time the Portuguese arrived, in 1498, Calicut practically monopolized the Arab trade, and the Zamorin (king) of Calicut held overlordship from Pudupattanam south to Porakkad (Logan, 1951, I: 293–294; Ayyar, 1938: 273, 291). Trickles of trade continued in Kolattunad and Travancore, but the kings there had grown weak by comparison with the Zamorin. Kolattunad had become divided into three virtually independent little kingdoms, and the Travancore ruler had surrendered large powers to the subordinate local chiefs of his realm. Two other small kingdoms remained independent in the interior to the east of Calicut: Walluvanad and Palghat.

The period 1498 to 1792 was one of bitter struggle between Euro-
175 pean and Middle Eastern powers, who formed shifting alliances with
439 native rulers for control of the pepper trade. By 1600 the Portuguese
648 had practically abolished the Arab trade, but they were themselves driven from the coast by the Dutch in 1663. The English reached Kerala in 1615 and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or another Nayar ruler and took part in successive battles until, in 1766, the northern half of the coast was overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean occupation ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the English East India Company and the establishment of the British bureaucratic political system (Logan, 1951, I: 404–473).

175 Shortly before the Mysorean invasions Kerala was divided into nine
648 small kingdoms and a number of border chiefdoms owing only ten-
635 uous allegiance to some king. The British after 1792 amalgamated the seven northern kingdoms (Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Kadattunad, Calicut, Walluvanad, and Palghat) to form the Malabar District of Madras Province, pensioned their rulers, and brought them under a British district officer responsible to the government of Madras. Cochin, a small kingdom in the center of the coast, remained a native state under its own ruler subject to the advice of a British Resident. So also did the southernmost kingdom of Travancore, whose ruler had already in the 1730's established a standing army, dispossessed his Nayar nobles, and formed a bureaucratic government. Kerala remained divided in this way until after the in-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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dependence of India in 1947, Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957. 175 648 635

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's. [177] [436] [564] [631]

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin. 631 635 184 [564] [601] [121]

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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613 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars di-
592 vided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth
174 century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups
592 must have arisen from the marked increase in population during
161 British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from
174 genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five genera-
tions ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher
[175] proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the
592 amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the
174 size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional
423 retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other
[858] kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early
[863] childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care,
[867] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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613 riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did
592 not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

595 It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and
175 linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike
[671] service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her en-
[613] angar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

595 Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group mar-
175 riage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern
184 Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

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a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law.

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison.

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms.

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613 178 Theoretically, office-bearing lineages were supposed to cohere forever, the officer being the eldest man of the lineage regardless of branch. In fact, if the lineage continued to expand, some other development would occur within a few generations. What its pattern might be depended on the economic and political circumstances of the times. One pattern was for the political office itself to become divided between the segments some time after they had divided their private domain. The head of each segment would then become ruler in his own right over a portion of the original territory, either (in the case of royals) as an independent small king, or (in the case of district chiefs) as a small chief independent of the rest of his lineage but still owing nominal allegiance to the original king of the kingdom as a whole. This type of fission of offices took place in areas and periods in which for some reason trade was declining, customs dues were running low, and neither king nor chiefs could muster enough extra wealth to fight wars which would maintain them in full political control. This 613 178 process went on apace from the fifteenth century to the end of the seventeenth both in Kolattunad and in Travancore, the northernmost ●175 and southernmost kingdoms of Kerala. They had been powerful 648 kingdoms for a period, with the help of Chinese traders, but declined in the fifteenth century after the Chinese trade collapsed and the Arabs built up Calicut. After 1500, different trading powers supported the smaller chiefs of these areas in trade wars against each other, so that these kingdoms remained weak and disunited until the second quarter of the eighteenth century. During this period segments of the royal lineages in both kingdoms carved up much of each kingdom into virtually independent chiefdoms. Within each of these in turn, the lineages of formerly subordinate Nayar chiefs tended also to break into segments, each retaining control over four or five villages. Early in the eighteenth century the British and French each tried to consolidate North Malabar by allying themselves with different local powers, but their struggles were temporarily eclipsed by invasions from Bednur to the north and later, in the 1760's, from Mysore in the east. In Travancore the process of disintegration persisted until the British obtained a trade monopoly and, in the 1730's, helped the king to reconquer his kingdom once and for all and to establish a bureaucratic form of rule (Innes, 1908: 55–75; Pillai, 1940: 266–466; K. M. Panikkar, 1931: chap. V).

613 669 The other course of development was for one branch of a ruling lineage to seize the office and most of the private domains and, temporarily or permanently, exclude or banish the others. This process

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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade. Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups. The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, supported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656 the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches, and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thirteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and, except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid-eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

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Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

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439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564
[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[570] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *ḳāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *ḳāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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582 endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look
* [564] upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

• 175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her
[837] this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

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635 occasionally adopted this mode of escape from the cha-
527 grin of not being re-elected by their adherents." He goes on to say what Mr. Jonathan Duncan wrote about this festival, of which his account appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

635 The festival was held last in 1743.

527 "Those who acknowledged the Zamorin's suzerainty sent
175 flags in token of fealty; and the places where these flags used to be hoisted at festival times are still pointed out. The Valluvanād Raja, who is still represented in the management of the Tirunāvāyi temple by one of the four Brahman *Kārālars*, instead of sending a flag used to send men called *Chāvers* (men who have elected to die) whose office it was to endeavour to cut their way through the Zamorin's guards to his throne in a manner presently to be described. If they had succeeded in killing him—as on the occasion cited by Hamilton, whose statement except as to date, is moreover corroborated by tradition—it is uncertain what would have happened; but probably if a capable Raja had been ruling in Valluvanād at such a time, popular opinion would have endowed him with suzerainty, for the Nāyar militia were very fickle, and flocked to the standard of the man who was fittest to command and who treated them the most considerately.

[127] "With the kind assistance of the present Zamorin, Maharaja Bahadur, the records of his family have been examined and a complete account obtained of the events attending the festival held in 1683 A.D., the festival next preceding that alluded to by Hamilton.

[821] "The festival used to continue for twenty-eight days every twelfth year when the planet Jupiter was in retrograde motion in the sign of *Karkadagam* or Cancer or the Crab, and at the time of the eighth lunar asterism in the month of Makaram the festival used to culminate.

"On the occasion in question the Zamorin some months beforehand sent orders for the preparation of the necessary timber and bamboos for the temporary buildings required at *Tirunāvāyi* and the materials were floated down stream from the Aliparamba Chirakkal lands.

"Then exactly two months before the opening day he sent out a circular to his followers worded as follows:—

'Royal writing to the *Akampati Janam* (body-guards).

'On the 5th Makaram 858 is *Mahāmakha Talpuyam* (time of the eighth lunar asterism in the festival season), and the *Lōkars* (chief people of each locality) are required to attend at Tirunāvāyi as in olden times.

'Mangātt Raman and Tinayancheri are sent to collect and bring you in regular order for the Mahāmakham.'

"The Zamorin timed himself to arrive at Tirunāvāyi on the day after that appointed for the arrival of his followers, and the

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lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank.

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction.

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand.

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp.

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

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with one hundred and fourteen small links and one clasp, making in all one hundred and fifteen'—as the record specifically testifies—and with golden bosses and other ornaments too numerous to be detailed. But this part of the ceremonies is not to be permitted to pass unchallenged, for it signifies in a formal manner the Zamorin's intention to assume the *rôle* of *Rakshapurashan* or protector of the festivities and of the people there assembled. On the instant, therefore, there is a stir among the crowd assembled near the western gate of the temple directly facing at half a mile distance the Zamorin's standing-place on the upper terrace.

"From this post, running due east in a perfectly straight line to the western gate of the temple, is the straight piece of road already described, but the road itself is clear and the armed crowd on the plain, it is seen, are hemmed in by barrel palisadings running the full length of the road on both sides. Two spears' length apart the palisades are placed, and the armed crowd on either hand, consisting on this occasion of the thirty thousand Ērnād Nāyars, it is seen, are all carrying spears. The spearmen may not enter that narrow lane, and by the mere weight of their bodies present an impossible obstacle to the free passage of the foemen now bent on cutting down the Zamorin in his pride of place.

"Amid much din and firing of guns the *morituri*, the *Chaver* Nāyars, the elect of four Nāyar houses in Valluvanād, step forth from the crowd and receive the last blessings and farewells of their friends and relatives. They have just taken of the last meal they are to eat on earth at the house of the temple representative of their chieftain; they are decked with garlands and smeared with ashes. On this particular occasion it is one of the houses of Putumanna Panikkar who heads the fray. He is joined by seventeen of his friends—Nāyar or Māppilla or other arms-bearing caste men—for all who so wish may fall in with sword and target in support of the men whe have elected to die.

"Armed with swords and targets alone they rush at the spearmen thronging the palisades; they 'winde and turn their Bodies, as if they had no Bones, casting them forward and backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders,' as worthy Master Johnson describes them in a passage already quoted (page 137). But notwithstanding the suppleness of their limbs, notwithstanding their delight and skill and dexterity in their weapons, the result is inevitable and is prosaically recorded in the chronicle thus: 'The number of *Chavers* who came and died early morning the next day after the elephant began to be adorned with gold trappings—being *Putumanna Kantur Menon* and followers—were 18.

"At various times during the ten last days of the festival the same thing is repeated. Whenever the Zamorin takes his

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stand on the terrace, assumes the sword and shakes it, men rush forth from the crowd at the west temple gate only to be impaled on the spears of the guardsmen who relieve each other from day to day. The turns for this duty are specifically mentioned in the chronicle thus: 'on the day the golden ornaments are begun to be used the body-guard consists of the thirty thousand; of Ellaya Vakkayil Vellōdi (and his men) the second day, of Netiyiruppu,* Mūttarāti Tirumulpād (and his men) the third day of Ittatūrnād,† Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fourth day, of Ērnād Mūnāmkūr,‡ Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fifth day, of Ērnād,§ Elankur Nambiyāttiri Tirumalpād (and his men) the sixth day, and of the ten thousand,|| the Calicut Talachanna Nāyar and Ērnād Mēnon the seventh day.'

"The chronicle is silent as to the turns for this duty on the eighth, ninth and tenth days. On the eleventh day, before the assembly broke up and after the final assault of the *Chāvers* had been delivered, the *Ernad Elankur Nambiyātiri Tirumalpad* (the Zamorin next in succession) and the *Tirumanisseri Nambūtiri* were conveyed in palanquins to the eastern end of the narrow palisaded lane, and thence they advanced on foot, prostrating themselves four times towards the Zamorin, once at the eastern end of the lane, twice in the middle, and once at the foot of the terraces. And after due permission was obtained they took their places on the Zamorin's right hand.

"After this, so the chronicle runs, it was the duty of the men who have formed the body guard to march up with music and pomp to make obeisance. On this occasion, however, a large portion of the body-guard seems to have been displeased, for they left without fulfilling this duty, and this story corroborates in a marked way the facts already set forth (page 132) regarding the independence and important political influence possessed by the Nāyars as a body.

"The *Ernād Menon* and the *Calicut Talachanna Nāyar* with their followers were the only chiefs who made obeisance in due form to the Zamorin on this occasion, and possibly by the time of the next festival (1695 A.D.), of which Hamilton wrote, the dissatisfaction might have increased among his followers and the Zamorin's life even may have been endangered

* The fifth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
† The fourth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
‡ The third Prince of the Zamorin's family.
§ The second Prince and heir apparent of the Zamorin's family.
|| The ten thousand of Pōlanād, the district round about Calicut, formed the Zamorin's own immediate body-guard—Conf. the account contained in the *Kēralolpatti* of how these men were originally selected — Chapter III, section (*a*).

175 as Hamilton alleges, probably through lack of men to guard
635 him. Tradition asserts that the *Chāver* who managed on one
527 occasion to get through the guards and up to the Zamorin's seat belonged to the family of the Chāndrattil Panikkar.

"The chronicle winds up with a list of the *Chāvers* slain on this occasion, viz.:—

When the Zamorin was taking his stand on the terrace apparently at the commencement of festivities	5
On the day the elephant was adorned as already stated	18
"The next day of *Chandrattil Panikkar* and followers, the number who came and died	11
'Of *Verkōt Panikkar* and followers the number that came and died the third day.	12
'The number who came to Vakkayūr and died in the four days	4
'The number of *Chāvers* who were arrested at the place where Kalattal Itti Karunākara Menon was, and brought tied to Vakkayūr and put to death	1
'The number of *Chāvers* arrested on the day of the sacrifice, when all the men together made the obeisance below Vakkayūr at the time when the Zamorin was taking his stand, and left tied to the bars, and who were afterwards brought to Vakkayūr and after the ceremony was over and the Zamorin had returned to the palace were put to the sword	4
Total ...	55

"The chronicle does not mention the fact, but a current tradition states that the corpses of the slain were customarily kicked by elephants as far as the brink of the fine well, of which mention has been made, and into which they were tumbled promiscuously. The well itself is nearly filled up with débris of sorts, and a search made at the spot would probably elicit conclusive evidence of the truth of this tradition.

627 "The martial spirit of the Nāyars was in former days kept alive by such desperate enterprises as the above, but in every-day-life the Nāyar used to be prepared and ready to take vengeance on any who affronted him, for he invariably carried weapons, and when a man was slain it was incumbent on his

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In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

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Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

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UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tālikettukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost 564 all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine 12 this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North 611 Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the 591 double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, 121 a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much 588 controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of [175] the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about [127] twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was [114] carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout. [101]

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. [114] While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. [122]

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121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curf Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvāris*) of districts (*nādi*). These owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
175 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavāris*) of villages (*desams*).
564 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars
631 were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvāri*
613 or *desavāri* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukadu, Attikurusi (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

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588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

131

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

133 North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
● 175 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since Marco Polo travelled in Asia.

"In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po ! po ! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

[1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

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595 the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in
175 the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it
[609] must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house.
[114] Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that
595 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar,
174 whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes
538 minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to
174 be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking
613 of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer,
[564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the
[787] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the
[604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few
[593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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174 not borne out either by any Sanskrit authority or Dravidian traditions;[1] but certain legends refer to conflicts between them and the Hindu colonists of later times, and these are said to have been led by Parasurama, and the Nagas from Pätäla whom they found in possession of the country.[2] The latter were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kshatriyas or warriors who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmans, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle in which victory alternated with defeat. These internecine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally gave birth to a military aristocracy called the Nayars.[3]

701 The Nayars of ancient times formed the chief militia in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, and their valour and other fighting qualities evoked the admiration of foreigners, and inspired even the restless Portuguese poet Cameons, who described them in the following apt lines:—

The military character of the Nayars.

> Poliar the labouring clans were named;
> By the proud Nayars the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandished in the right;
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight.

175 One of the earliest accounts of the Nayars is found in the
701 writings of Duarte Barbosa, who described them as men of noble descent, who had to be armed as knights by the king or lord with whom they lived, and who could not call themselves Nayars until they had been so equipped as to bear arms. They were generally sent to school at the age of seven to learn all
[868] manner of athletic feats and to enable them to use their
[147] weapons.[4] Their sinews and joints were so stretched and anointed with the *oyle sesamus* by skillful fellows called "Panicars," who were captains in war, that they became very light and nimble; and could "wind and twine their bodies" as if they had no bones. They cast themselves backwards and forwards, high and low, to the astonishment of the beholders, and the delight in their weapon was so great that they

1. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, Introduction, page 107.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, page 107.
3. Primitive Folk, page 107.
4. A description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar by Duarte Barbosa, page 128—129.

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persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with 175 701
such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the 648
Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. 175
Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand 411
and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again [714]
were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with 175
equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with 726
such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of [701]
the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers 175
and his peculiar weapon is an instrument 411
with a thin but very broad blade hooked to- [714]
wards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet' or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies,

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien,

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411 disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

704 Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The sol-
714 diers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried
411 swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella
[293] formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane,
[643] for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the
726 other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brah-
704 mans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same
[465] course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant,
[701] and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

701 The Nayars whom the king received in his service were
643 never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even
[784] in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family
[752] of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

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342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated
[312] tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from
[515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut
[245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sdmanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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rights. Thus did these *kúttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramdnis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 623 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 681 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There 564 was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom [671] fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

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564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days during which every method of torture known to the keepers of the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrapped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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175

or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Nádurvázhi* (ruler of a *Nad*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désavázhi.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi.* There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis.* The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yules Marco Polo, page 374.

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a
173 temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of
173 the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death.
591 Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to
968 her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898,
175 the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see
591 Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen
593 out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations,
182 took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were
175 younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated
591 by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of
175 Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter
182

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name "Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one.

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12* and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband, Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their elementary families, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional visiting marriage; the second daughter *29* returned to this house after her husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children, occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional *tarwad*, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

173 sage of Malabar, gave it to the priestly caste of Brahmins in perpetual holding.

These Brahmins now declared themselves satisfied and moved to take it over, but were at first frightened away by the aboriginal *Naga* (serpent) worshippers. Other Brahmins were then brought in from the north and instructed by Parasu Raman to propitiate the serpents by installing them as their household gods. He also organized the priestly settlers into sixty [611] four villages (*gramams*) and directed them to adopt succession through the mother (*marumakkathayam*), which last injunction they disobeyed, with the single exception of Payyanur in Chirakkal, where Brahmins observe matrilineal descent to this day. He then brought in Sudras (Nayars) from the country east of the Ghats (that is from the Tamil country) and entrusted them with the protection of the Brahmins; they were organized into *taras* and to them were given the duties of supervising, executing and issuing orders, so that rights in Kerala should not be curtailed or suffered to fall into disuse.

173 From this nebulous, mythical past, history later slowly emerges. Already, one thousand years B.C., Solomon is reputed to have traded with
● 175 the south-west coast of India. Commercial contacts with the Near East did actually exist in this part of the sub-continent much earlier than anywhere else in India, the sea acting as a medium of communication. With the discovery of the south-west trade winds by Hippalus in the 1st century A.D., the Romans carried on the profitable relation, and they are reputed to have even had a settlement at Cranganore in Travancore. In 52 A.D., St Thomas landed there, according to local tradition, and converted some Brahmin families to Christianity, thus laying the foundation of the present-day Malabar Christian communities. During the following decades, as a result of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus in 70 A.D., the first Jews are reputed to have arrived in Kerala to settle at Mattancheri in Cochin.

175 In the 3rd century A.D., the Brahmins called in a king to rule them, and the Perumal dynasty started with Keya Perumal, who came from Keyapuram, east of the Ghats. Trade with other parts of the world continued during this period, the Arabs arriving from the Hadramaut and the Persian Gulf in the 9th century. The Chinese, however, are said by Marco Polo to have been in full control of the Malabar marts when that great traveller visited the area in the 13th century. Shortly afterwards, the last of the Perumals, Cheruman Perumal, was converted to Islam and departed to Mecca never to return.

Before leaving, Cheruman Perumal put his kingdom in order, it is

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

said, by dividing it up between the rajas of Travancore, Cochin, Kolattiri, Kurumbranad, Walluvanad and others. To the Zamorin of Calicut, who was later to become so famous, he left only his sword with the recommendation to "die, kill and annex". The latter potentate and his descendants took the injunction seriously and very quickly in the two following centuries, the 14th and 15th, assumed a leading role on the Kerala stage. They encouraged Arab trade in spices and other commodities, and by their scrupulous honesty and absolute security of commerce, obtained and held it for fully two hundred years. 175

It was then that the first Europeans arrived on the scene. The Portugese came to beign with, in an attempt to break the Moors' monopoly of Far Eastern products. Coming into conflict with their Mohammedan rivals and with their protégé the Zamorin, they successfully supported the raja of Cochin against these and thus gained a footing on the coast while taking over command of the sea. They were only forced out by the Dutch in the 17th century (although they still hold Goa further north, to this day), and the Dutch in turn were superseded by the British and the French, who settled respectively at Tellicherry and at Mahe, from which fortified places they fought each other for supremacy in the pepper trade for another two centuries.

In the 18th century, the Mohammedan rulers of Mysore descended on Kerala and, after forcibly converting a great number of its inhabitants to Islam, annexed large tracts of it. Tipu Sultan, however, the ally of Napolean, fell foul of the British East India Company, which eventually defeated him at Seringapatnam in 1792. British supremacy in Kerala dates from that year and a system of farming out revenue to the local rajas was instituted. It proved to be a mistaken method of collection, and was the cause of the serious rebellions of Kerala Varma, Raja of the Padinnara Kovilagam of Kottayam, the Pazhassi raja, otherwise known as Pychy raja, in 1797 and from 1800 to 1805. With their termination, the British took over direct administration of Malabar, while leaving Cochin and Travancore to that of their rajas. They were to keep it until 1947 when India was given her independence. 175 631 648

Two years later, the States of Travancore and Cochin were merged to form a United State under the Maharaja of Travancore. In 1953, France finally relinquished her hold on Mahe, and in 1957, the whole coastal region from South Canara to Cape Comorin became the State of *Kerala* which we know today. The name has been variously interpreted as meaning either "land of coconut trees" or "land of the Cheras", an ancient Hindu dynasty of south India. [101]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: "... and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood 173
combined with the physical peculiarities of the country 564
would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars 175
as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that 564
"in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom 701
in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn [868]
the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their [186]
Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And, Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

> 'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
> By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

175 564 701 went on to observe: 'These lines, and especially the two last, contain a good description of a Nayr, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in [411] their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders' (Asiatic Researches, V. 10, 18). M. Mahé de la Bourdonnais, who 726 175 564 701 had some experience of their fighting qualities in the field, thus described them: 'Les Nairs sont de grands hommes basanés, légers, et vigoureux: Ils n'ont pas d'autre profession que celle des armes, et seraient de fort bons soldats, s'ils étiaent disciplinés: mais ils combattent sans ordre, ils prennent la fuite dès qu'on les serre de près avec quelque supèriorité; pourtant, s'ils se voient pressés avec vigueur et qu'ils se croient en danger, ils reviennent à la charge, et ne se rendent jamais' (M. Esquer, Essai sur les Castes dans l'Inde, page 181). Finally, the only British General of any note—Sir Hector Munro—who had ever to face the Nāyars in the field, thus wrote of their modes of fighting:—

'One may as well look for a needle in a Bottle of Hay as any of them in the daytime, they being lurking behind sand banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the Fort, and then they appear like bees out in the month of June.' 'Besides which,' he continued, 'they point their guns well, and fire them well also' (Tellicherry Factory Diary, March, 1761). They were, in short, brave light troops, excellent in skirmishing, but their organization into small bodies with discordant interests unfitted them to repel any serious invasion by an enemy even moderately well organised. Among other strange Malayāli customs, Sheikh

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in ravaging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

726 175 564 701 643 796 762 175

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

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* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. 175 868

. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise." 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat * that the Nāyars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Nayar

175

to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

796
526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman
[184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the
[175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them
[431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a
[194] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic
[198] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu-
[176] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The
[773] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogde of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by 526
squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nāyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nāyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, 631
"have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the dēsam, presided over by a Dāsavazhi. A number of dēsams adjoining one another constituted a nādu, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the Nāduvazhi. Above the Nāduvazhis was the Rājah, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each nādu split itself up into a certain number of taras, over the affairs of which a Karanavan, or elder, presided. An assembly of these Karanavans [613]
constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military [623]
organisation of the Nāyars in mediæval times. These 631
six hundred are referred to in two places in the second 175
Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 623
A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371 M.E., the same organisation is referred to as Venattarunuru, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

631 [175] [623] working of temples and charitable institutions connected therewith. As Venad was divided into eighteen districts in ancient days, there might have been altogether eighteen six hundred in the country. The Nāduvazhis possessed considerable authority in all social matters, and possessed enough lands to be cultivated by their Kudiyans. A feudal basis was laid for the whole organisation. Large numbers served as soldiers in times of war, and cultivated their lands when the country was quiet. In modern times, none of them take to military service in Travancore, except those employed as sepoys in the Nāyar Brigade."

[901] Concerning the organisation of the Nāyars, Mr. Logan writes that they were, "until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district (Malabar). This name implies that they were the 'leaders' of the people. Originally they seem to have been organised into six hundreds, and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nād or country. The nād was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil teru, in Telugu teruvu, and in Canarese and Tulu teravu. The tara was the Nāyar territorial unit of organisation for civil purposes, and was governed by representatives of the caste, who were styled Kāranavar or elders. The six hundred was probably composed exclusively of those Karanavar or elders, who were in some parts called Mukhyastans (chief men) or Madhyastans (mediators), or Pramānis (chief men), and there seem to have been four families of them to each tara, so that the nād must have originally consisted of one hundred and fifty taras. This tara organisation of the protector caste played a most important

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathálam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the [782] drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniyáttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of south-west India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

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conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

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177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product [245] is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 328). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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701 702 634 564 castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

726 [411] [477] The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

726 177 Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic [436] feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

564 692 Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with [681] members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders [567] were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then be- [439] came the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

564 621 [692] [623] Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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178 613 604 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 594 152 593 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father. Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children [154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond- [769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 564 177 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tendency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox [829] forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 769 564 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out. This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste [755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are [782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They 564*
shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a
couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of [412]
scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom.
In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are [177]
kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the
barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive
from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the [305]
eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of
course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent
authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old
and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The
young women never.

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The 142
darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. 564*
Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome.

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One 301
or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a 564*
rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some
of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi- [304]
nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly.

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam [789]
of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, [515]
on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to

wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.*[1] It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

[1] [see plate I, facing p. 220 -- An.]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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legend "made in Austria." The Nâyars wear none but the gold, "mounted" as they call it (the mounting being much as the upper portion of one section of the necklace, in the plate), strung together through the mounting just as the necklace: a very effective ornament for the neck. The brass imitations of the sequin are worn by the women of the inferior races of whom we shall have some description hereafter. If one asks the ordinary Malayali, say a Nâyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rama and Sita; between them a cocoanut tree! 301 177 564*

Turkish coins, French half louis, and German 10 mark pieces are also used in the same way, each one being known by a distinctive vernacular name, and no corruption of its nomenclature in European coinage, so that it is always easy to identify one of these coins by its vernacular name. For instance, every Malayali knows what an "Amâda" is: it is what we know to be a real or imitation Venetian sequin.* The half louis of the empire is known as the "pakshikkas," probably from the eagle on the reverse. And so on.†

Ornaments are never worn on the ankles or on the waist, as is the rule in other parts of Southern India. 564* 301

Dress, men.—This is very simple; ordinarily one cloth round the loins, the ends overlapping a foot or two in front. It is not tucked between the legs, which is the fashion practically all over India, but hangs straight to the ground. It should touch the ground, or very nearly do so. Wearing a cloth in such fashion carries with it dignity to the wearer. A Tîyan, or a man of any inferior 291 564*

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* I have never heard any explanation of the word Amâda in Malabar. The following comes from Tinnevelly: "Amâda was the consort of Bhagavati and he suddenly appeared one day before a Shânâr (the caste devoted to climbing the palms and drawing off the juice) and demanded food. The Shânâr said he was a poor man with nothing to offer but toddy, which however he gave in a palmyra leaf. Amâda drank the toddy and performing a mantram over the leaf it turned into gold coins which bore on one side the pictures of Amâda, the Shânâr and the tree; and these he gave the Shânâr on a reward for his willingness to assist him. This explains the two names—Shânâr caste (as they are called in Tinnevelly, but where they are not very common), and Amâda." [773]

† It is scarcely right to say any of these coins, even the sequin, is not current. The value of each is known everywhere to a nicety. It must be remembered that throughout Malabar copper coins of the English and Dutch East India Companies, of Mysore, and of almost every former dynasty of South India are to be found amongst the coins actually current with the people, while in the rural parts reckoning is always in fanams: not in annas. [436]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*141 564 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated. Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 564 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspicuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one [293] starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees [177] replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman 292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater, 751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terunda Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration*.

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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771 177 abound. The militant Romanism of the Holy Inquisition, and the no less militant Protestantism of the Dutch, had their chance, in turn, for at least a century and a half. Yet, with all the great religions of the world to choose between during the last two thousand years, it is nothing short of marvellous to see the Nāyars, who have, it must be remembered, assimilated a very great deal of the material and intellectual culture of their neighbours, and, more than that, excelled them in literature and music, still maintain with undiminished vigour their spirit-worship, black-magic, and demoniacal ceremonies, and are devoid of almost every element of true religious life.

771 We may be accused of the narrow use of a wide word in the phraseology of Tylor when we deny that the Nāyars have any religion apart from a veneer of Hindu influence. Their beliefs are mainly magical. Here, of course, I am treading on very dangerous ground, dangerous even to the initiated, but fatal to the novice. In this essay I have taken the distinction between religion and magic as being primarily a question of method rather than of intention or possible effect. The 771 orthodox French opinion that the difference between magic and religion is that 114 the latter is social while the former is anti-social, has been proved by Mr. E. S. Hartland and Dr. Marett to be wholly untenable; while the contention of Dr. Marett himself[1] is that the difference between magic and religion lies in the attitude of society towards them.[2]

771 Among the Nāyars there is an implicit distinction between practices to propitiate 782 a god and those with which to bully a spirit. Bullying a spirit for purposes of social 114 benefit I have not considered to be religion, though it is recognised by society as beneficial and therefore according to Dr. Marett should be considered as religious—because it does not possess the emotional and the psychological elements which

[1] *Anthropology*, p. 210 (Home Univ. Series).

[2] Dr. Marett has recently expressed his view thus:—

"The dominant social tradition tolerates in a community only certain practices and the beliefs associated with them. These may be said to constitute the religion of the community. It does not matter whether they embody customs such as sacrifice and prayer which are essential to the civilised man's notion of *his* religion, or whether they involve processes of sympathetic magic, etc., such as have for us become disreputable.

"On the other hand, when resort is had to the supernaturalistic means in order to gain selfish and anti-social ends we may speak of magic." (Class Lecture on Primitive Morals.)

Here Dr. Marett seems to go back to the French view and hold that the difference between magic and religion is that the former is selfish and anti-social while the latter is disinterested and social. The view here submitted is different. It is submitted that primitive society understands the difference between magical and religious customs even when both are essentially social and disinterested. To the primitive mind, the difference between religion and magic lies in the method and procedure of the ceremonies, or, as we shall now call them, the ritual. As method and procedure only reflect the mental state of the performer and the society to the benefit of which these ceremonies are performed, this difference is essentially psychological. This position is better explained by the Nāyar customs and beliefs noted below.

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717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
484 journey :
717
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Muppōram
Trikēta iva ēzhu Naal
Vitakkil vittyā Bhūmi
Pākwanakil aram uni.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

771 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
● 177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

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valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one 771
becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" 177
or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyin* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which [114]
lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. 241
The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of 242
excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific 245
skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme [177]
fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut 245
cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by 471
the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person [361]
it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. 241
Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. [438]
It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the [432]
market.

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CHAPTER I.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS).

Introduction.

THE NAYARS are an interesting caste of people, forming a 101
considerable portion of the population of the 564
Cochin State; they constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of the pure "*Sudras of Malayala*". They were mostly nobles who engaged [554]
neither in handicraft, nor in commerce, nor in any other occupation but that of arms, which they always carried; and no one could be called a Nayar who was not of noble lineage. They were in fact the magnates of the rulers of Kerala, and exercised as much authority over their inferiors as their rulers did over them. They formed in ancient times a warlike race with military leaders and civil administrators of all kinds. Very much [177]
influenced as they are by modern civilisation, their customs widely differ from those of other people, in marriage, family and social organizations, as also in maternal filiation. These customs, which are primitive, are being tenaciously retained by them; and they are even now, as they have always been, a [178]
unique people whose customs may appear peculiarly strange to foreigners.

The word *Nayar*, which is the honourific plural of *Nayan*, is derived from *Nayaka*, which means a leader of the people; and the name, which in the widest sense at present includes a large number of sub-castes quite distinct from one another, may have been given by a class of Brahmans called the Nambuthiris [1] to the Nayars proper, who formed a military class in ancient times. Some consider it to be more correct to derive *Nayars* from *Nagas* (snakes or snake-worshipping Nagas or Scythians) from the worship of the Nagas or snakes which has been the characteristic cult of the community.

1. See account of the Nambuthiris.

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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to 342
the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in [357]
the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most [778]
auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an
open space *(mittam)* in the centre; the western portion of it is [251]
the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The
northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at
the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room
in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept
as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The [823]
house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and
yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the
western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patin-* [574]
jattu muri—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber [769]
in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must
be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway
the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above
mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah
room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a
portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the
building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quad-
rangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the 342
science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and 787
other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native
Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always
consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the
formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even
calamities are often attributed to the violation of these prin-
ciples, and very often a newly built house is either altered to
remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again
houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the 342
poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and [735]
ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a veran-
dah either in front or on all sides of the main building.
With the increase of population, and with the demand for [178]
more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are be-
ing overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned [532]
houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary
principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and
substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls
are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till [177]

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342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated [312] tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [515] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen. an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman [574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [343] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [245] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [356] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur- [177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *válkannáti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 9.

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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 136.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 85.

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177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawads*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Polyandry. Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

[593] [604] [582] [564] The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of death.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kúval-kkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pat[illegible] Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

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291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pívu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well [177] as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [578] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [71] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores.

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.)

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries.

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle.

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: ". . . and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 194 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

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836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is
[127] bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

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conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully.

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change.

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State.

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people;

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but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

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"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

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177 564 members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

177 564 595 Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheritance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

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[423] [427] [1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

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There appears to be no doubt that Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of the central area are gradually giving up polyandry. Others have reported on the speed with which it is disappearing, sometimes exaggerating the rapidity, it seems to me, but nevertheless correctly stating that not many more years will pass before the custom has become simply a memory, as it is with the Nayars. I think a distinction should be made, however, between the more wealthy, upper members of the caste and the lower, poorer ones. In fact, polyandry with the Thandans and Tiyas is being abandoned from the top, and this observation is valid not only for their community, but also for polyandry in general in Kerala. 177 564 595

It is the upper castes, who have had greater opportunity to educate themselves, adapt themselves to higher standards and lead a more modern, Europeanized type of life, who are giving it up as something primitive and unworthy of self-respecting citizens. Within the castes, however, it is not always the upper strata that has progressed in this way, as can be seen with the Nayars, where polyandry is reputed to be practised still in the conservative court circles of Cochin and Travancore. Among the Thandans and Tiyans it is the other way round, the upper class either professes not to follow the custom any longer or really abstains from doing so. The Kammalans and associated artisans nearly all continue to be polyandrous, and as they are without exception people of very slender means, a distinction such as the one made here does not apply.

Aiyappan, discussing new trends in the Irava community, has written: "Differences in occupations and income and the development of new sexual standards are two active forces that one sees in operation against polyandry." (*Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 103.) Iravas, according to him, had formerly very few avocations from which to choose. They pooled their resources and worked for the house, their common wife and their children, without making any individual reservations. Today, matters have changed and the men each want a different type of work, chosen from among the numerous new occupations which are open to them, and aspire to have their own family, wife and children. The old ways are no longer fashionable, and are even despised and considered to be primitive and barbarous. Jealousy thus reappears, and asserts itself in no uncertain way. The women, too, do not want to be shared any longer by a number of brothers, and prefer to return home or refuse polyandrous marriages rather than be joined in wedlock in the traditional manner. In North Cochin, however, it was the progress of the people in higher levels of the Thiyya caste that brought about a legal inter- 177 595 463 177 595 [152]

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177 595 diction of polyandry. (For a synopsis of the Act of 1940, see p. 238 ff.)

While travelling round with my guides and interpreters in 1949, I had ample opportunity to hear what the polyandrous families were thinking about the ancient form of matrimony which was beginning to be despised. Here are some of the remarks which were made to me in the course of my interviews:

177 564 595 Raman, the informant of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, said that if only twenty five per cent of two hundred and fifty Thandan families in the Walluvanad taluk still practised polyandry today, it was because the Moplas, Nayars and Brahmins ridiculed the practice as low-caste and primitive. The Thandans wanted to reform themselves and aspired to higher things, therefore they had to give up polyandry as representing something backward.

Velu, informant of the Kereghetil household of the Katukulangara *tarawad*, told me that as long as the property was undivided, they practised polyandry, as it kept them from having many wives in whose quarrels they might become involved and thus break with each other. But now, as each man wanted to go his way, things were different, and polyandry was no longer possible.

It will be remembered that, on the 2nd of November, 1949, I attempted to visit a rich Tiya household near Kunnamkulam in north Cochin, only to be put off by an old man, accompanied by a younger one, who assured me that no one was polyandrous in their family any more. When I went on to a poor labourer's house nearby, I was told that this was not true. There were three brothers in the older generation (one of whom was the elder of the two men to whom we had spoken) and they lived in polyandry, although, being wealthy, they did not like to admit it.

In the Kaladiwalapil household, that of the miserable Tiya labourers next door, in the village of Perumpillav, the informant, Raman, said that the ancient custom by which brothers shared a common wife, and thus avoided the quarrelling among sisters-in-law in which they feared to become embroiled, was changing now because the younger people found it "more convenient" to be monogamous. When I asked him what he meant exactly by this phrase, he replied that "times have changed" and that it is "easier" thus. Not yet satisfied, I insisted on more clarification, whereupon I heard that polyandry is "not done any longer", that it was "out of fashion", and not "modern". Raman was unable to express himself better, and seemed plainly puzzled and embarrassed by my request for a more precise explanation.

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I obtained the same kind of answer from Panju of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, it will be recalled, when I asked him how it was that his maternal uncle consented to get a new wife for him and his brother, Narayana, when they refused to live any longer in polyandry with Raman and Kuniyama. He said that his mother's brother had certainly begun by resisting the request, but that, in the end, he had given in because "times have changed" and he could not very well force them to remain in their present marriage if they said that they were dissatisfied with it.

It was Panju, too, who gave me the unexpected information that it was "immorality" that was breaking up polyandrous households. Women were not at all chaste any longer, he said, and anybody could have them "for a song". So every man now wanted a wife of his own whom he could control, instead of submitting himself to the old discipline and consenting to remain without complaint in the old polyandrous type of union.

My experience with Kammalans and other artisan castes was different. Polyandry with them is also threatened, but it cannot be said that it has deteriorated to the same extent with them as it has with the higher castes. Jealousy, however, seems to be coming very much to the surface, and I heard many tales of serious quarrelling among the men, leading to separation and to division into splinter households.

Raman, the *Asari* informant of the Perinkulam household, interviewed at Palappuram, said that polyandry was dying out because "Civilization is spreading". When I asked him what he meant by "civilization", he answered, rather simply, that people did not tie up their hair any longer in the typical Malayalam way, a top knot in front over the forehead, and that many had taken to growing moustaches. He added, however, to these very personal criteria of his, that women refused now to be wedded to many men; some wealthier people, he revealed, even go so far as to insert a clause into the marriage contract by which it is stipulated that their daughter will not be given in marriage to more than one man. He concluded by sighing, shrugging his shoulders and exclaiming that it was not right, but what could be done about it?

Kunji, the daughter of old Kurumba of the *Tolkolan* Palakaparampil household near Meitenadeshan, also complained of too much quarrelling among the men of a polyandrous family, and said that because of this, the women did not want to be married in this way any longer. She attributed to these reasons the fact that her household had already given up polyandry in the previous generation.

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177 595 Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

671 *Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.*

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

[101 564 918] Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

[585] Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

595 As to the present existence or non-existence of polyandry I must call recent writers into the witness-box. The Rev. S. Mateer, Mr. Fawcett writes,* "informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry among the Nāyars of Travancore—that he had 'known an instance of six brothers keeping two women, four husbands to one, and two to the other. In a case where two brothers [197] cohabited with one woman, and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the [177] Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition.' I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nāyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that, if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), it certainly did not long [564] ago." Mr. Gopal Panikkar says † that "to enforce this social edict upon the Nairs, the Brāhmans made use of the powerful weapon of their aristocratic ascendancy in the country, and the Nairs readily submitted to the Brāhman supremacy. Thus it came about that the custom of concubinage, so freely indulged in by the Brāhmans with Nair women, obtained such firm hold upon the country that it has only been strengthened by the lapse of time. At the present day there are families, especially in the interior of the district, who look upon it as an honour to be thus united with Brāhmans. But a [178] reaction has begun to take place against this feeling, and Brāhman alliances are invariably looked down upon in respectable Nair tarwads. This reactionary feeling took shape in the Malabar Marriage Act." Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar says: "There is nothing strange or to be ashamed of in the fact that the Nāyars were originally of a stock that practiced polyandry, nor if the

* *Op cit.*

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his 593

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu."

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes * that

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

chelakkamotiram, amatāli, arumpumani, and kumilatāli 301
are fast vanishing. The kuttu-minnu is worn on the [588]
neck for the first time by a girl when her tāli-kettu is celebrated. This ornament is also called gnali. Prior to the tāli-kettu ceremony, the girls wear a kāsu or sovereign. The inseparable neck ornament of a Nāyar woman in modern days is the addiyal, to which a patakkam is attached. The only ornament for the ears is the takka or toda. After the lobes have been dilated [304]
at the karnavedha ceremony, and dilated, a big leaden ring is inserted in them. The nose ornament of women is called mukkuthi, from which is suspended a gold wire called gnattu. No ornament is worn in the right nostril. The wearing of gold bangles on the wrists has been long the fashion among South Indian Hindu females of almost all high castes. Round the waist Nāyar women wear chains of gold and silver, and, by the wealthy, gold belts called kachchapuram are worn. Anklets were not [177]
worn in former times, but at the present day the kolusu and padasaram of the Tamilians have been adopted. So, too, the time-honoured toda is sometimes set aside in favour of the Tamil kammal, an ornament of much smaller size. Canter Visscher (who was Chaplain at Cochin in 291
the eighteenth century) must have been much struck by the expenditure of the Nāyar women on their dress, for he wrote* 'there is not one of any fortune who does not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of robes made of silver and other valuable materials, for it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same dress two or three days in succession'."

It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the Venetian sequin, 177
which probably first found its way to Malabar in the days 301

* Letters from Malabar.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged." 301 789

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year. 304 [177] [564]

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th 776 [532] [778] [775] [766] [791] [789] [782]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of south-west India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

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conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

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621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative
[178] power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
[622] in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages iso-
[613] lated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

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651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

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613 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason
687 against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that
627 the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth [178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction
613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis-
627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor
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837

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604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy retained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 592 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 [576] Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relationships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 576 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility—characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [174]

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595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
[566] adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made possible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons) organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between [178] group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE
592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
423 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

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613 Theoretically, office-bearing lineages were supposed to cohere for-
178 ever, the officer being the eldest man of the lineage regardless of branch. In fact, if the lineage continued to expand, some other development would occur within a few generations. What its pattern might be depended on the economic and political circumstances of the times. One pattern was for the political office itself to become divided between the segments some time after they had divided their private domain. The head of each segment would then become ruler in his own right over a portion of the original territory, either (in the case of royals) as an independent small king, or (in the case of district chiefs) as a small chief independent of the rest of his lineage but still owing nominal allegiance to the original king of the kingdom as a whole. This type of fission of offices took place in areas and periods in which for some reason trade was declining, customs dues were running low, and neither king nor chiefs could muster enough extra wealth to fight wars which would maintain them in full political control. This
613 process went on apace from the fifteenth century to the end of the
178 seventeenth both in Kolattunad and in Travancore, the northernmost
175 and southernmost kingdoms of Kerala. They had been powerful
648 kingdoms for a period, with the help of Chinese traders, but declined in the fifteenth century after the Chinese trade collapsed and the Arabs built up Calicut. After 1500, different trading powers supported the smaller chiefs of these areas in trade wars against each other, so that these kingdoms remained weak and disunited until the second quarter of the eighteenth century. During this period segments of the royal lineages in both kingdoms carved up much of each kingdom into virtually independent chiefdoms. Within each of these in turn, the lineages of formerly subordinate Nayar chiefs tended also to break into segments, each retaining control over four or five villages. Early in the eighteenth century the British and French each tried to consolidate North Malabar by allying themselves with different local powers, but their struggles were temporarily eclipsed by invasions from Bednur to the north and later, in the 1760's, from Mysore in the east. In Travancore the process of disintegration persisted until the British obtained a trade monopoly and, in the 1730's, helped the king to reconquer his kingdom once and for all and to establish a bureaucratic form of rule (Innes, 1908: 55–75; Pillai, 1940: 266–466; K. M. Panikkar, 1931: chap. V).

613 The other course of development was for one branch of a ruling
669 lineage to seize the office and most of the private domains and, temporarily or permanently, exclude or banish the others. This process

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terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses.

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them.

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties.

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations.

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

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178

arate terms, we have a "lineal" classification for the women of this generation. Men of the first ascending generation are classified in a "lineal" manner, with FaBr = MoBr, both separated from Fa. Female affines of the first ascending generation are "lineal," with FaBrWi = MoBrWi, both separated from Mo. Male affines of the first ascending generation are "generational," with Fa = MoSiHu = FaSiHu. The terms faithfully reflect an extreme matrilineal system which is in process of breaking down in favor of bilateral kindreds.

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[161] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-
[434] culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward neolocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has
[562] carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as
178 the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matrilocally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of dis-
593 cipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in
[782] government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *taravād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *taravād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778]
yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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[1] Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 86.
[2] Erskine & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113
[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.
[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.
[5] Hodson : *The Naithais*, 110.

who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live 613
there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

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has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstruation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [589]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

582
613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
553 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of
585 themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth it change even in such an important piece of life as
● 178 marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, which is much more conservative than the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâranavan and the women † of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

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683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed. [201]
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

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CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635 published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [762] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his [574] nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid 178 aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end 527 of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief [114] administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut). . . . after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

175 564 613 631 [901] [566]

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

613 [601] [783] [971] [969] [592]

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

[591] [595] [178]

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

613 582 564

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurnis (Chidigans in Cochin), Velutheclans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

588 [564] [793] 588 833 178 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Eliayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 782 787 793 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

776 [831] [753] [782] [834] Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

588 [783] [264] The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

588 184 595 [765] [783] [851] In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achan* (originally

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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *reppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage [842] ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a 184 clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the tradi- 178 tional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and 776 themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he [613] could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 613 564 184 833 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 632).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the *nuptials*, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambûdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars. 588 613 564

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that 184 833

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723: 585 793

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.' 588 833

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children. 588 613 182 [586]

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambûdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambûdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has 588 564 [178]

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588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdóm. Within the small kingdoms, *nāduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nād*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nāduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nāduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[566] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
591 Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
594 his *taravād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
684
851

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

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Brahman

to the mother. It seems likely that the same unconscious Oedipal fears lie behind the institution of 'real' pre-puberty marriage in high Hindu castes in other parts of India,[1] whose kinship systems, though strictly patrilineal, are similarly characterized by gerontocratic authority and the joint holding of property by lineage-segments. The disappearance of the *tāli*-rite among Nayars and Tiyyars in the past twenty years, and its replacement by a 'normal' post-puberty marriage ceremony, is undoubtedly associated with the collapse of their lineage systems; with the development of cash wages and personal property and thus of a new economic autonomy of young men and a decline in attitudes of submission to elders; with the associated strengthening of the marriage-tie and weakening of the bonds with the mother and other natal kinswomen; with, related to this, a decline of observance of avoidance associated with incest-taboos in the lineage, and a relaxing of the rule of lineage exogamy; and, finally, with an increased emotional autonomy of both men and women in respect of the parental generation which, it must be supposed, accompanies a gradual decline in strength of Oedipal wishes and fears among young and middle-aged men.

It seems probable that my hypothesis concerning Nayar and Tiyyar *tāli*-rites might be shown, given sufficient data, to apply also to certain Middle Indian pre-puberty token marriages recently described by Dr S. C. Dube (1953). In these groups, as in the Malabar castes, the pre-nubile girl who has not been married is regarded as sacred; she would be permanently polluted by any sexual act which took place before the rite was performed. Should she attain puberty before the rite, she falls, like the Malayali girl, into permanent ritual pollution and, though she is not excommunicated, she is inauspicious, is suspected of witchcraft, and may not marry with the normal rites. The token-marriage gives her the status of a married woman, and is followed some years later by a real post-puberty marriage. As among modern Nayars in some parts of South Malabar and Cochin, and among Tamil temple-dancers, the proxy-bridegroom is a weapon (here an arrow instead of a sword). Alternatively it may be a wooden paddy-pounder, probably a phallic symbol throughout southern and middle India. It may be significant that the man who goes through the rites and carries the phallic symbol is the girl's elder sister's husband, a probable father-image to her; and that, like the Malabàr 'bridegroom', he is paid for his services. It seems clear from Dr Dube's account that the rite is a symbolic defloration, that it releases the girl from the sexual guardianship of her natal kinsmen, and changes her from a dangerous, sacred, and forbidden creature into a normal woman who may be married without fear. It would be interesting to know whether it is preceded by a mock menstruation ceremony. To test my hypothesis, that pre-puberty mock marriage issues from strong incest taboos and the (originally Oedipal) fear of deflowering a virgin, we should need also to know whether, like the *tāli*-rite, this rite marks a change in the etiquette of behaviour between a girl and her natal kinsmen; whether the incest taboos in these groups are culturally elaborated; whether economic and legal power are in the hands of old men of the kin-group; whether the post-puberty marriage tie

[1] This is particularly clearly so in the Tamil institution Brahman of pre-puberty marriage. Traditionally, a girl must be married before puberty and the marriage consummated in the fifteen days following the first menstruation, if possible, to avoid loss of the female seed after menstruation has begun. Failure to carry out the pre-puberty marriage and prompt consummation after puberty brought opprobrium on the girl's father, who was regarded as an unclean man guilty of embryo murder through failing to give away his daughter's fertility. Pre-puberty marriage (*kanniga dhānam*, 'gift of a virgin') is said to transfer the sexual sin of the girl's father to the son-in-law and thus ensure the father's salvation after death. The Brahmanical pre-puberty marriage is therefore at least partly prompted by incest taboos. The unconscious fear of deflowering a virgin appears in the Brahmanical consummation rites, at which the bridegroom declares his wife to have been previously married to the Vedic gods Soma, Agni, and Gandharva. In some groups, at the rites before consummation, a stick representing Gandharva is placed between the couple and removed before the consummation, at which the bridegroom says: 'O Visvavasu Gandharva, I pray you to make this girl my wife. Unite her to me. Leave her and take another.' Similarly, Brahmans rhapsodize over their former pre-puberty marriages when the girl was an infant and the boy often ten to fourteen years old, on the grounds that the participants were innocent of the sexual implications of the ceremony. As among Tiyyars, the couple were brought to the ceremony on the shoulders of their maternal uncles.

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
701 Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each
[874] village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa*
701 in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari*
874 and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the
701 capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Palayanis* (*Pala*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical
[121] example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

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626 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were per-
564 suaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their
621 village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all
178 matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at[illegible] the lea[illegible] of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it
[425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar
351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called
613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women.
[562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns
421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family,
[179] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

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When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself ; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Talikettu kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

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as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother, and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister. She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

Enangar.—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

Marriage Restrictions.—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. 585 [591] [178]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunderstanding or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly conducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its distinguished author. [184] [581] 586 [649] 581 [648]

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions. A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry anyone who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort. 582 [564]

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a specially aristocratic privilege. 591 [582] [178]

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for the last fifty years. 595

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[789] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharavad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intelligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following:

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patrilocal* system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars."

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

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CHAPTER I.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS).

Introduction.

THE NAYARS are an interesting caste of people, forming a considerable portion of the population of the Cochin State; they constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of the pure "*Sudras of Malayala*". They were mostly nobles who engaged neither in handicraft, nor in commerce, nor in any other occupation but that of arms, which they always carried; and no one could be called a Nayar who was not of noble lineage. They were in fact the magnates of the rulers of Kerala, and exercised as much authority over their inferiors as their rulers did over them. They formed in ancient times a warlike race with military leaders and civil administrators of all kinds. Very much influenced as they are by modern civilisation, their customs widely differ from those of other people, in marriage, family and social organizations, as also in maternal filiation. These customs, which are primitive, are being tenaciously retained by them; and they are even now, as they have always been, a unique people whose customs may appear peculiarly strange to foreigners.

The word *Nayar*, which is the honourific plural of *Nayan*, is derived from *Nayaka*, which means a leader of the people; and the name, which in the widest sense at present includes a large number of sub-castes quite distinct from one another, may have been given by a class of Brahmans called the Nambuthiris [1] to the Nayars proper, who formed a military class in ancient times. Some consider it to be more correct to derive *Nayars* from *Nagas* (snakes or snake-worshipping Nagas or Scythians) from the worship of the Nagas or snakes which has been the characteristic cult of the community.

1. See account of the Nambuthiris.

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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space *(mittam)* in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and 178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(mataṁ)* for the Brahman [574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

256 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathâyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

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deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large number of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the breakfast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

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613 592 [421] by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *káranavan.*

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawád* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawád*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *káranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawád* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The [562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

613 592 82 78 The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *káranavan* and the other members, the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawád* splits up into *távashis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

[562] It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

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of many joint members dependent on the *kâranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *kâranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *kâranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *tâvazhis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

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1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nad*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désa vázhi.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kāranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Pūrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 238.

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CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Occupation.

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by occupation is not possible. They were at one time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkirs* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

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291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a
[292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pívu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over
[464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well
[177] as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats: others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this
[177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body
[369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambu-
[178] thiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis-
[548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as
[171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in
[576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

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below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

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/Information on recent socio-cultural disintegrative changes in the tarawad will be found in category 182./

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[3] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

[3] [see p. 272, Category 11b -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Imports and Exports

439 1.53 Reference has already been made to the fact that Kerala is very much of an exchange economy. On the one hand it has to import a substantial part of its foodgrain requirements from the other parts of India. No exact estimates of total import of foodgrains into the State are available. The total amount of rice arriving in Kerala by train was 3.8 lakh tons during 1958 and 4.8 lakh tons during 1959.[1] This does not, however, include imports by roads or by the sea. In addition to foodgrains, almost all the industrial raw materials like coal, alumina, iron and steel, salt, etc., are obtained from the other parts of India.

1.54 On the other hand, Kerala also contributes substantially to India's export trade. As may be seen from Table 6, the total value of goods exported from the ports of Kerala to the other parts of the world is roughly Rs. 55 crores per annum, but the figure has been rising over the last few years. This is quite a substantial amount, being about 10 per cent of the overall foreign exchange earnings of India. Since this State occupies only 1.2 per cent of the total area of India, in relation to its area it may be claimed to be eight to nine times more productive in terms of its foreign exchange earnings than the whole of India.

1.55 The main export commodities of Kerala are listed in Table 6. It will be seen that the three major items which contribute about 75 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings of Kerala are tea, cashewnuts and coir and coir products. Except for fish, prawns and ilmenite, all other exportable commodities originate in the agricultural sector.

439 178 1.56 Whereas exports of most of the commodities have been rising, the trend in the case of coir, pepper and ginger has not been a promising one. Of these three commodities, pepper shows the most serious decline in foreign exchange earnings. In physical quantity the export of pepper has not declined much. It was 3,3 lakh cwts. in 1951-52 and 3.2 lakh cwts. in 1958-59. The decline in foreign exchange earnings from the export of pepper has been due to a drastic fall in the world price of pepper. The crash in prices has, in turn, been primarily due to a large increase in the production of pepper in other competing countries like Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya. Similarly, in case of ginger and coir products no preceptible rise in exports has taken place due to competitive pressure in the foreign markets.

Unemployment

464 1.57 According to the Census of 1951, Kerala had a working force[2] of 4.54 million persons out of a total population of 15 million, giving a participation ratio (i.e., working force divided by total population) of 33.5 per cent. Since a participation rate of the order of 33.5 per cent is one of the lowest in the whole of India, it gives a fair indication of the very high degree of unemployment prevalent in Kerala. A low participation rate reflects the lack of adequate opportunities for gainful employment. These conclusions are borne out by the results of an unemployment

[113] [1] *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959: Government of Kerala.

[2] Working Force is equal to the sum of earning dependents and self-supporting persons. For a detailed note see Appendix 3.

3 [see p. 273, category 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 161

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India.

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first.

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns.

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.")

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

regulation. They said that they were starving and that they had had nothing to eat that morning. When I asked them how they would solve their problem, they replied that it was better that I "did not ask". Evil times had befallen them in their old age, and they really did not know what they could do about it; they might hire themselves out as labourers, if they were not so old and feeble. They agreed with me that the increase in population in Kerala over the years had made the difficulty of feeding so many people increasingly great.

Their two elder sons, called Ayapakuti and Pangha, lived polyandrously, I heard, some few miles away, on a bit of land which their fathers had given them fourteen years ago, in the fifth year of their marriage and after the birth of their fourth child. The common wife, Paru, was now alone with the thirty five year old second son, as the elder had died two years ago, also at the age of thirty five. It seemed that Kandapan had originally been part of the polyandrous household but that, tiring of living in this way, he had found a wife for himself, Lakshmi, with whom he had returned to the parental house to live, after the last renewal of the lease, four years ago.

With the old folk and Kandapan's family, was also Kunyu, a daughter, twenty five years old and divorced ten years ago. She had been married at the age of fourteen to Velahu, a man eighteen years her senior. She was childless and had not remarried. She lived in the larger house with her parents.

I took photographs of the family and a group picture of them can be seen in Fig. 10. I also made their genealogy, which is attached herewith in Table 6. I stayed on and discussed various problems with these people for part of the afternoon (having provided for them to have lunch in the meantime, which was most welcome to them in their starved condition). They told me that even if polyandry was now prohibited since the Act passed in 1940, it had been dying out for some years in any case. The legislation – of which they really had no idea at all – was only the confirmation and the consecration of a *de facto* state of affairs. Concerning the inheritance of girls in Tiya families, I may mention that, since the passing of the Act, property would have to be divided. Girls would also get their share which would be half that of the boys; they would pass it on to their own children and, since they were *makkathayam*, it would become merged with that of the latter's fathers. If there were no boys and only girls in the household, its property would cease to exist after the girls had been married off, for each of them would take her part away in accordance with the above.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 ● [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 619 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. 175 868

. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise." 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat* that the Nāyars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

mentioned in vernacular books, are Kiriyam, Illam, 564
Svarupam, Itacheri or Idacheri, Pallichan, Ashtikkurichchi, Vattakātan, Otatu, Pulikkal, Vyapari, Vilakkitalavan, and Veluthetan. Of these Ashtikkurichchi and Pulikkal [463] are divisions of Mārān, Vyapari is a division of Chettis, and Vilakkitalavan and Veluthetan are barbers and washermen respectively.

"The chief divisions of Nāyars, as now recognised, are as follows:—

1. Kiriyam, a name said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit griha, meaning house. This represents the highest class, the members of which were, in former times, not obliged to serve Brāhmans and Kshatriyas.

2. Illakkar.—The word illam indicates a Nambūtiri Brāhman's house, and tradition has it that every illam family once served an illam. But, in mediæval times, any Nāyar could get himself recognised as belonging to the Illam division, provided that a certain sum of money, called adiyara, was paid to the Government. The [262] Illakkar are prohibited from the use of fish, flesh, and [273] liquor, but the prohibition is not at the present day [178] universally respected. In some parts of Malabar, they have moulded many of their habits in the truly Brāhmanical style.

3. Svarupakkar.—Adherents of the Kshatriya families of Travancore. The members of the highest group, Parūr Svarupam, have their purificatory rites performed by Mārāns. It is stated that they were once the Illakkar servants of one Karuttetathu Nambutiri, who was the feudal lord of Parūr, and afterwards became attached to the royal household which succeeded to that estate, thus becoming Parūr Svarupakkar.

4. Padamangalam and Tamil Padam were not originally Nāyars, but immigrants from the Tamil

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
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595 As to the present existence or non-existence of polyandry I must call recent writers into the witness-box. The Rev. S. Mateer, Mr. Fawcett writes,* "informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry among the Nāyars of Travancore—that he had 'known an instance of six brothers keeping two women, four husbands to one, and two to the other. In a case where two brothers [797] cohabited with one woman, and one was converted to [177] Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition.' I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nāyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that, if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), it certainly did not long [564] ago." Mr. Gopal Panikkar says † that "to enforce this social edict upon the Nairs, the Brāhmans made use of the powerful weapon of their aristocratic ascendancy in the country, and the Nairs readily submitted to the Brāhman supremacy. Thus it came about that the custom of concubinage, so freely indulged in by the Brāhmans with Nair women, obtained such firm hold upon the country that it has only been strengthened by the lapse of time. At the present day there are families, especially in the interior of the district, who look upon it as an honour to be thus united with Brāhmans. But a [178] reaction has begun to take place against this feeling, and Brāhman alliances are invariably looked down upon in respectable Nair tarwads. This reactionary feeling took shape in the Malabar Marriage Act." Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar says: "There is nothing strange or to be ashamed of in the fact that the Nāyars were originally of a stock that practiced polyandry, nor if the

* *Op cit.*

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

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The opinion was expressed by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Winterbotham, one of the Malabar Marriage Commissioners, that the Brahman tāli-tier was a relic of the time when the Nambūtiris were entitled to the first fruits, and it was considered the high privilege of every Nāyar maid to be introduced by them to womanhood. In this connection, reference may be made to Hamilton's 'New Account of the East Indies', where it is stated that [793] "when the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambūdri, or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and he, if he pleases, may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships. And some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the clergy the same tribute, but the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the priests' places themselves."

588 Of those who gave evidence before the Malabar Commission, some thought the tāli-kettu was a marriage, some not. Others called it a mock marriage, a formal marriage, a sham marriage, a fictitious marriage, a marriage sacrament, the preliminary part of marriage, a meaningless ceremony, an empty form, a ridiculous farce, an incongruous custom, a waste of money, and a device for becoming involved in debt. "While," the report states, "a small minority of strict conservatives still maintain that the tāli-kettu is a real marriage intended to confer on the bridegroom a right to cohabit with the bride, an immense majority describe it as a fictitious marriage, the origin of which they are at a loss to explain. And another large section tender the explanation accepted by our President (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) that, in some way or other, it is an essential caste observance preliminary to the forming of sexual relations."

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes* :588 "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, [648] when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . 796 . This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal 588 of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted [779] under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. 588 L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reason- 178 ● able doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, 174 and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

588 178 Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the 174 Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better [585] classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrad- ing custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, [613] especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was [174] nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for [184] husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

575 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the
184 description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale.
[574] There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett
[582] states that "my informant says in the first place that the
[178] man should not enter into sambandham with a woman
[181] until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar,
[582] which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [821].
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

shouting, gesticulation and laughter. Those returning, 526
after securing a large number of arrows, turned somersaults, and expressed their joy in saltatory motions." In a note on this game with bows and arrows in Kurumbranad, Mr. E. F. Thomas writes that "the players form themselves into two sides, which shoot alternately at the mark. Beside the mark stand representatives of the two sides. When the mark is hit by a member of either side, on his representative shouting 'Run, man,' he runs up the lists. His object is to seize the mark before it is hit by any one belonging to the other side. If he can do this, his side takes all the arrows which have been shot, and are sticking in the stop-butt. If, on the other hand, the mark is hit by the other side before he reaches it, he may not seize the mark. A member of the other side runs up in his turn to seize the mark if possible before it is hit again by the first side. If he can do this, he takes out, not all the arrows, but only the two which are sticking in the mark. If, while number two is running, the mark is hit a third time, a member of the first side runs up, to seize the mark if possible. The rule is that one or three hits take all the arrows in the stop-butt, two or four only the arrows sticking in the mark. Great excitement is shown by all who take part in the game, which attracts a number of spectators. The game is played every fortnight by Nāyars, Tiyans, Māppillas, and others. I am told that it is a very old one, and is dying [178]
out. I saw it at Naduvanūr."

The Ōnam games in the south-east of Malabar, in 796
the neighbourhood of Palghat, are said by Mr. Fawcett 526
to be of a rough character, "the tenants of certain jenmis 184
(landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights, in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing, which

796
526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman
[184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the
[175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them
[431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a
[194] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic
[198] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu-
[776] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The
[773] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogue of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy
[357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so
[178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing
872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of
[212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female
875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of
873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent
[658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the
181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of
[464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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744 Inspector the outbreak of any epidemic. He makes tours in the villages; the two vaccinators in the taluk are under him. These vaccinators have to make tours in the taluk according to a programme previously laid down by the Sanitary Inspector. Public wells, tanks, cremation grounds, markets, cart-stands, etc., are also under his supervision. All towns which have no town-councils (and our town has not) are under health-officers, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon acting as the Health Officer. He attends to lighting.

625 *Police.*—Police administration is under a Sub-Inspector who has constables under him. He is under a Divisional Inspector (of whom there are three in the State) with a Superintendent of Police above him. There is, as a rule, one Sub-Magistrate for each taluk.

674 The official figures for the detection of crime are available only for a division of which there are three (A, B and C) in the State, and not for a village. The figures for the C Division, in which my village lies, are as follows:—

Cases.						Persons.						Property.					
1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.		
Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.
												RS.	RS.		RS.	RS.	
165	143	86·6	96	77	80·2	240	192	80	149	91	61	3,762	1,146	30·46	4,372	2,208	50·50

178 *History and Prospects of the village.*—I see no signs of economic improvement in the past; nor is there much deterioration worth speaking about. There has been, however, an increase in population in recent times. There has been no diversity of occupation. The same routine of paddy cultivation goes on with the old primitive tools and implements. Much capital is not invested even for agricultural improvements for the excellent reason that the small landholders who form the majority cannot afford to experiment on a grand scale, and the few big landholders are sleeping partners distributing their holdings to small men for rent. Nevertheless there are opportunities for economic improvement. The establishment of co-operative credit societies is an urgent need. An "Agricultural Society" consisting of members of the occupation could be conveniently started to diffuse modern scientific ideas in agriculture by distributing pamphlets in the vernacular and discussing questions of importance. A little more attention could be given to the rearing of agricultural stock and the use of agricultural implements. As irrigation does not depend for the most part upon wells in our parts, there is no use in multiplying them. [454]

454 People buy land because land is the best form of investment

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178 426 The increase in the number of families must not be taken for a sign of prosperity. I have sought out its causes. It has both a social and an economic cause. The breaking up of the old 'Tharvads' into small homesteads, owing to want of harmony among the members, mismanagement of property due to ignorance and rank illiteracy, growing indebtedness of the once rich Tharvads to the local money-lenders or the landlord, are the causes of the downfall of the great Tharvads of old which half a century ago were gracing this desam; the stories yet current in those parts of men of high worth and talents who belonged to them, and the occasional ruined foundations of their family houses alone remain. Indeed joint families have almost all broken up and the Tharvad properties all absorbed by the local 'Jenmis.' The people are day by day being reduced to want and dependence on the landlord and the creditor.

564 The desam cannot be called a 'caste' desam strictly speaking. There are no separate quarters allotted on the basis of caste difference. In spite of the rigorous observance of the 'system of pollution' between caste and caste, peculiar to the Malabar country, all castes hold lands, work, and have families promiscuously throughout the land. For example, every landholding farmer, who is usually a Nayar, has in his family precincts (indeed far enough away to be out of reach of pollution) small homesteads of his labourers who are generally Cherumas or Pulayas * by caste.

There are—

3	Brahman	families ...	24	individuals.
3	Ambalavasi	" ...	36	"
137	Nayar	" ...	956	"
85	Tiyya	" ...	584	"
80	Cheruma	" ..	390	"
24	Muhammadan	" ...	27	"
1	Christian family	...	6	"

[463] The *Tiyya* class includes the families of the artisans—'Asari' (carpenter—two families), 'Karuvan' (blacksmith—one family), 'Kollan' (shoemaker—two families), 'Thattan' (goldsmith—one family), 'Mannan' (washerman of the lower class—one family), 'Panikkan' (stone-mason—one family).

Children living	642	
" dead	188	Born within the last ten years.
" born lifeless	67	

Children below ten are alone included in this. This has been ascertained by enquiry among the mothers.

342 Homesteads number 266. The homesteads of the villagers are miserable looking and squalid, frequently being only mud hovels of eight by five feet, more or less. Not more than 40 houses out of 333 are houses worthy of the name. The rest are simply hovels, often the very picture of poverty and famine.

* Between these two depressed castes there are only minute differences.

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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

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178 were farmers who owned vast extents of lands, which were cultivated by means of their own capital and stock. These families yet survive, but have scattered hovels to live in and are reduced to the rank of landless cultivators, entirely dependent on the landlords for subsistence.

000 There is however ample scope for economic improvement if some of the standing evils be removed. First of all must come education and enlightenment among the masses, for which nothing short of free and compulsory education can be of help in view of the poverty and the rank apathy of the people. A law must regulate the relations of the jenmi and kudiyan (tenant) which would deal successfully with the problem of oppression of the weak by the strong, and the absolute economic and social servility of the one to the other. Agriculture must be improved and co-operation stimulated. The indebted classes must gradually be liberated from the coils of the money-lenders and landlords, either by means of loans on nominal interest or otherwise. The public must be educated in the modern developments of agricultural science as well by example as by precept. They must also be initiated into the advantages of co-operation and mutual help. The operations of the savings banks, assurance societies, agricultural loans, etc., must be brought into more intimate reach of the ryot. Deeper and more wells should be dug and irrigation works also introduced. Roads and other public ways must be opened into the hearts of these sequestered areas. Boys and girls must be educated and trained to be good industrious men and citizens. In short, a strong movement must be started to awaken the people from apathy into activity, from thraldom into self-help and self-reliance, from illiteracy into enlightenment.

For all these, none but the landlords can take the best initiative. Therefore education must first of all be given to them. Now they belong to a class which is the most conservative, the most dominant, the richest and the most oppressive in Malabar. By education, they must be brought round to a sense of justice, brotherhood and [171] philanthropy. They are orthodox religionists who spend days and nights in ceremonials and chanting of vedic lore. But they do not know what their chants mean and do this because their forefathers did so. This cannot make men cultured and helpful to society.

These are some of the reforms that have to be undertaken and some of these have to come from the people themselves, but there are others which the Government alone can deal with effectively.

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217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

624 *Village administration.*—There is no panchayat. There seems to be scope for one, and educated men are not wanting. The general administration of the village is in the hands of the village munsif or adhikari, who is assisted by the karnam. The adhikari represents the Government in all matters. The village 625 officers can send for the police from the nearest police station— 674 4 miles away. There is no regular police quartered in the village. But there is no need for any. The villagers are not prone to criminal acts and nuisances are not committed. The villagers are terribly afraid of the police too. Above the village officers is the Tahsildar of the taluk, who checks all their acts. Occasionally the Tahsildar or his deputy pays a visit to the village and is warmly welcomed by the prominent landlords. Revenue Inspectors and Land Records Tahsildars also visit the village to verify and check the village accounts. There has been no serious crime of any sort within recent years. Petty thefts are occasionally heard of particularly when corn is very dear and many of the poor actually starve.

691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

• 178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

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land is the chief source of a livelihood and industries do not exist. 178 ●
What is the conclusion? The increasing emigration to other 511
places points in the same direction. The fact that the emigrants
return as soon as they earn something shows that they are [167]
not likely to leave home unless hard-pressed. The increasing indebtedness of the villagers and the growth in the number of assignments and mortgages are other evidence. But population has increased only 7 per cent between 1901 and 1911. Wages are very low and have not risen in proportion to prices. Prices of food-stuffs have in many cases doubled within my own personal knowledge. Articles like milk, ghee, etc., have doubled in price within the last ten years. The price of grain has risen enormously in a generation. I have been told on good authority that some fifty years ago grain was four times as cheap as to-day. Only the land-owning classes and those who have surplus grain to sell have profited from this high rise. Many independent owners of land have been forced to sell their land to keep themselves free from debt and to pay the Government taxes. Taxation is much heavier: when the settlement was introduced into the village some twelve years ago the assessment was doubled and many villagers suffered. Against all this evidence of deterioration one must place the improvement in the standard of living of some classes and the growth of education, though unsatisfactory in many respects.

As for possibilities of economic improvement and the opportunities therefor, it may be said that the former are many, the latter few (as things now are) unless the villagers get help from outside—from the Government. In the sphere of agriculture improvement is badly needed, though the means of bringing it seem to be lacking, methods of cultivation could be improved and the use of scientific manure introduced. But all this requires capital and that is conspicuous by its absence. The advantage must be practically demonstrated to the cultivator and to the landlord, who alone can take the initiative herein. It seems to be impossible to introduce scientific farming so long as the system of
scattered and strip holdings continues. The landlord must get his [423]
lands continuous; as it is as many as half a dozen landlords may have strips of land in one survey division of half a dozen acres. A man holding 10 acres may have it in 20 parcels, a distance of a mile from one plot to another is not uncommon.

About the possibility of extending the area of irrigated land 312
only an expert could speak with confidence. As it is, out of a total area of 2,380 acres only 680·78 acres are wet land and 110 acres garden land—the rest coming under 'unoccupied or occupied dry.' It would be a very good thing if more of this could be brought under cultivation than at present. It does not appear that many more wells could be sunk with advantage. At present the wet and garden lands abound in wells, the 'dry' land being without any. It would not pay to sink wells in it and take out water according to the existing methods. If cheaper and more efficient methods are possible, then it would be worth attempting.

Something might be done—must be done, if the village is to 600
improve—to ameliorate the general condition of the villagers and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, which is much more conservative than the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâranavan and the women † of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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RELIGION.

771 It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in [181] general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and [291] women can scarcely wear less than they do in compa- [515] tibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal [264] cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally [783] twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breadths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note 1.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AW11 Kerala AW11
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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 138.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 25.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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175

or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a complete military organisation among the Sudras 634 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nâds*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nâds* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divisions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families [428] and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Nâduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nâd*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désavázhi.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

838 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Nayar

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

575 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the
184 description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vidāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. [574] There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett [582] states that "my informant says in the first place that the [178] man should not enter into sambandham with a woman until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running [181] wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, [582] which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Râman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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has supplied many of the leading members of the learned professions."

Nāyi (dog).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

Nāyinar.—Nāyinar, Nāyanar, or Nainar, has been recorded as a section of Vellālas, who are thought to be descended from Jains who were converted to Hinduism, and as a title of Jains, Kaikōlans, Pallis, and Udaiyāns. Nāyanikulam occurs as a synonym of Bōya. The word Nāyinar is the same as Nāyaka, meaning lord or master, and the Saivite saints, being religious teachers, are so called, *e.g.*, Sundara Mūrti Nāyanar.

Nāyinda.—Recorded, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, as the name of a caste, which follows the hereditary occupation of barber, and also of agriculture. "They are," it is there said, "members of the village hierarchy. They are paid, like the Agasa (washerman), in kind for their services. They are also fiddlers, and have the exclusive right of wind instruments. They are known as Kēlasiga or Hajām. They are both Saivites and Vaishnavites. A section of them wear the lingam, and follow Lingayetism. They are known as Silavanta. These people are largely in requisition at feasts, marriages, etc., when they form the music band." Kelasi is the name of a Canarese barber caste, and Hajām is a Hindustani word for barber.

Nedungādi.—This name, denoting a settlement in Nedunganād in the Walluvanād taluk of Malabar, has been returned as a sub-caste of Nāyars and Sāmantas.

Nekkāra.—A small class of washermen in South Canara. The women only are said to do the washing, while the men are employed as devil-dancers.

Nellika (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).—An illam of Tiyan.

Nellu (paddy, unhusked rice).—A gōtra of Kurni.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

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613 birth pollutions were not extended to them by their host lineage. In-
182 stead, as we have seen, they continued to observe these rites for several generations along with their clansfolk elsewhere.

The information on this procedure is incomplete because it does not take place in modern times. It is not known whether a lineage segment ever became incorporated into a new retainer caste as well as a new neighborhood, although this seems unlikely. It is not known whether an indigenous lineage which shrank to the size of one small property group ever allied itself in putative matrilineal kinship with another established lineage. It is also uncertain whether major segments of a very large lineage might over time break the pollution bond and gradually cease to observe exogamy. Some evidence from a Cochin village suggests that this may have happened. Shortly before my stay a man and woman of two lineages which had the same enangar and had never been known to marry, entered into a traditional type of informal marriage relationship. Elders of the village then began to wonder whether the lineages had not once formed one lineage, either by true matrilineal kinship or by joint performance of the tāli rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to the junior generation the marriage persisted. Thus, what may once have been an ancient tie of lineage and clan exogamy was quietly broken. I do not know whether fission within a lineage was traditionally possible or whether it occurs only in modern times, when the neighborhood assembly and the lineage itself are both disintegrating.

THE PROPERTY GROUP

613 *Structure* The property group among Nayar retainers was a seg-
592 ment of the lineage having a time depth of some three to six generations, including the youngest members and the common ancestress. It therefore typically comprised a group of brothers and sisters (real or classificatory), together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint-property-owning unit. Its members were from birth equal co-parceners in the buildings, land, movables, serfs, and all other property which had come to them from their matrilineal forebears, or had been conferred on them by their feudal lord, or had been acquired by the efforts of individual members. The group's oldest male member (kāranavan) was its legal guardian and represented it in the caste assembly.

When spoken of in its own right the property group, like the lineage, was called a taravād. When spoken of as a segment of the lineage it was called a *tāvari* (literally, "mother's line"). Tāvari could also be used of any intermediate segment of the lineage or of a mini-

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
241 ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts, and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
[566] adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made possible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons) organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between
[178] group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE

592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
423 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

634 613 635 622 726 succession to district chiefship and to vil-
lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office. This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 635 634 613 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 554 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as [648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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626 Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately
613 betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding
[173] with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

562 Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may
[782] not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole
[841] concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents
[829] women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage
[769] ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

769 Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult
613 served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*.
626 First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided
182 a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment
769 of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out
171 the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes
182 deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For
769 these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his
613 own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must
626 keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict
182 suffering on all, including himself.

Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

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769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
182 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact
626 fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
564 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive.
[865] As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
518 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[25] and the initiation rites[26] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [770] [782]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [789]

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564 should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst
837 the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

581 The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

585 The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem
764 to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see
182 relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are
less influenced by considerations of property than else- [421]
where. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be [121]
attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, [613] the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

●182 562 611 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person *is* and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road *as Zamorin*, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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with any Nambūdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambūdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambūdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambūdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tāli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambūdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tāli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tāli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambūdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambūdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambūdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

58 564 182

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tāli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tāli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tāli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannāns, called Mannāns in the south) and barbers (Kāvutiyyans, called Vātthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [420] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs. 613 602 588 182 184

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravāḍ*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child. 182 184 593 613 843 [827] [822]

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring. [607]

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1] 184 843 789 182 [564] [787] [782]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravāḍ* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake- 000

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravāḍ* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pradhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *iman*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the
276 taravād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (nagas) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawdd* with barrenness among women, disease, and child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
184 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one
782 or more women of the propitiating *tarawdd*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes
787 then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawdd* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawdd*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawdd*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawdd*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to
182 these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Rohrim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *taravād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*preetham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tāli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *taravād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [083] [765] [769] [083]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

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184 68 The unconscious
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about

593 the spirits of dead *kāraṇavan*s of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavan*s' spirits,
775 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
595 however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
184 sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
182 the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
613 through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
182 This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom, who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
184 married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed, however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother. He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are permitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
593 clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
182 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond

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between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

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588 182 184 *sambandham* lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites [illegible]ing the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

[842] [533] [789] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

564 881 182 842 [782] [533]

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pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face. 000

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion. 881 588 564 533 182

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'. 588 783 182 831 588 783 182

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual 588 182 564

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of ostracism by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tāli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his older kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâduvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by [693] name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions [584] and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-[793] broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he [782] makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil [783]

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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 [588] [793] [852] [764]

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

564 588 182

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial-head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

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up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-therrtham* ('disc-water').

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *taravād*. She was called a *Kannichāru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 52).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol. 773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son. 588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet. 841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

796 831 78 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nâdurani* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 831 78 182 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is normally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

564 588 881 182 831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty, yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man. These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emotional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This dependence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and perpetuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

182 831 613 564 423 593

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-03) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day. 588

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families. 194 182 588

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous. [851] [595]

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to [765] [171]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Nambudiri Brahman

588 182 174 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 564 585 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham* not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered [554] that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Amomāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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This is mostly due to two reasons: 434

First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [182] without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245] on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511 fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer classes, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613] the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182] their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262 beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vizhakkā Kari yuntoru vaku* [539]
> *Bhata Bhojana matu Kootiltilla.*"
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264 people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262 as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 29 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184 Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439] richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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Internal structure of the caste.

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine displeasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world and in the world to come.

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It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

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Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

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In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity,[1] and the omission or neglect of it will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

585 Marriage customs.

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588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *káranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

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[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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588 171 *kalyánam* of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, [533] the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials [789] in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pittu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig védic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathâyam* Hindus, the *táli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathâyam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at 588 194 hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on the occasion of *táli* tying. The reason for this departure may 585 have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the [182] early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *káranavan*.

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawád* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawád*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *káranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawád* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The [562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

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The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *káranavan* and the other members of the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawád* splits up into *távashis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

[562] It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

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of many joint members dependent on the *kâranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *kâranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *kâranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable ; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *tîvashis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

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1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathâyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.— There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them :— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Páttu :—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta pattu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati pattu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs :—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam* :—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

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CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by 564
occupation is not possible. They were at one 178
time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by [355]
a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkars* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

Occupation.

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of 162
these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, [463]
agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few [182]
take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

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[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 [591] [593] [429]

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 [564] [491]

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. [114] [122]

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. [113]

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

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613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathavam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
[56] the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad*
occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

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except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad;* and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

[text continues on p. 21]

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[Marayil Tarwad]

by which the Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*I*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a
193 temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of
193 the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death.
591 Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to
968 her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898,
175 the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see
591 Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen
593 out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations, took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were
182 younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of
175 the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated
591 by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of
175 Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter
182

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[Marayil Tarwad]

group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name "Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one.

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12* and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband, Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their elementary families, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional visiting marriage; the second daughter *29* returned to this house after her husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children, occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional *tarwad*, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters. For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
421 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
175 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their
182 grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's
604 advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
182 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where
182 they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
591 the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
602 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
182 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
602 were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
353 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

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The observed ambivalent attitudes found in Nayar men during and after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system is very similar to that of many matrilineal peoples, where the system allows the cohabitation of husband and wife. There it is a characteristic feature that a man is placed in an ambivalent situation between the obligations and duties towards his own matrilineal kin and towards his wife and children. From this angle, the present Nayar still live in the matrilineal atmosphere. It is very interesting to speculate where Nayar system will go. How long does it take the Nayar to become free from a matrilineal ideology, the shadow of the *tarwad* life? Many of the present Nayar population have experiences of the *tarwad* life, so the real change might be expected in the next generation. However, even then, it seems to me it would not shift to a patrilineal system, though it could possibly take the patrinominal system with a kind of bilateral arrangement. Whatever it may be, I think the future of the Nayar family and kinship system presents one of the most interesting examples for its study of the effects of historical and economic changes on a kinship system; and how far this kinship ideology can persist.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

133 182 464 133 509

3 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

[23.1]

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[312] [339]

[text continues on p. 8]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

182 1.13 These, broadly, are the inter-relationship between physical features and economic aspects of the State, and largely determine the nature and structure of the Kerala economy discussed below.

Density of Population

161 [164] 1.14 In the ultimate analysis, the basic problem of Kerala, viz., an inordinately large section of the population being without any gainful work, is brought about by the very high density of population in the State. With an area only 1.2 per cent of the whole of India, Kerala has to support 3.8 per cent (16.8 million) of the total population of India. The density of population in Kerala (1,125 persons per sq. mile) is naturally over three times the all-India average (384 persons per sq. mile).

1.15 The population, however, is not evenly spread out over the whole of the State, but shows considerable variations from district to district (Table 2).* The highland, being mostly covered with forests, is sparsely populated. The average density here is only about 150 persons per square mile. On the other hand, the lowlands bear the severest burden of population. With only about 18 per cent of the State area, they support over 40 per cent of the population. On the other extreme is the coastal strip where the average density is over 2,500 persons per square mile. In certain pockets it even shoots up to 7,000 persons per square mile. The midland, though thickly populated, is not as congested as the area lying in the immediate vicinity of the sea coast.

Growth of Population

1.16 Not only is the density of population high in Kerala, but its rate of growth has also been fairly high. The following table gives the rate of growth of population over the last half century both for India as well as for Kerala.

DECENNIAL PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN POPULATION

Year	*India*	*Kerala*
1901-11	5.69	1.75
1911-21	—0.31	9.16
1921-31	11.00	21.85
1931-41	14.25	16.04
1941-51	13.34	22.82
1951-61	21.49	24.55

SOURCE: 1961 Census of Population Provisional Figures.

1.17 As can be seen, the population has grown much faster in Kerala than in the country as a whole during the last six decades. The basic reason for a faster rate of growth of population in Kerala is a comparatively low death rate while the birth rate is only slightly less than the all-India one. The comparative position of birth and death rates in India and Kerala is given in the following table. [165] [163]

* [see p. 270, category 116 -- Analyst]

[text continues on p. 8]

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217
656 therein laid down, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father, respectively, and to succeed to half his self-acquired [586] property, if he dies intestate; while the parties to such a sambandham cannot register a second sambandham during its continuance, that is, until it is terminated by death or by a formal application for divorce in the Civil 585 Courts. The total number of sambandhams registered 182 under the Act has, however, been infinitesimal, and the 656 reason for this is, admittedly, the reluctance of the men to fetter their liberty to terminate sambandham at will by such restrictions as the necessity for formal divorce, or to undertake the burdensome responsibility of a legal obligation to maintain their wife and offspring. If, as the evidence recorded by the Malabar Marriage Commission tended to show, 'a marriage law in North Malabar, and throughout the greater part of South Malabar, would merely legalise what is the prevailing custom,' it is hard to see why there has been such a disinclination to lend to that custom the dignity of legal sanction." * The following applications to register sambandhams under the Act were received from 1897 to 1904:—

—	Nayars.	Tiyans.	Others.	Total.
1897	28	6	2	36
1898	8	2	4	14
1899	8	2	4	14
1900	8	..	9	17
1901	3	...	1	4
1902	...	...	...	...
1903	2	...	...	2
Total ...	57	10	20	87

* Gazetteer of Malabar.

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Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

Ti 123 To 123 K 123

General Conclusions. I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

Ti 155 To 155 K 155

As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182

As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

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stinct and for the orderly social procreation of offspring. Formally, it is more difficult to say why this institution has taken on this curious appearance. As far as I know, authors so far have been rather at a loss to furnish a satisfactory explanation. Many, of course, have been given, with a great amount of variety in their choice.

For instance, we are given historical explanations. In India they say people have been polyandrous for many centuries; that there are indications, such as archaeological (about the Heftalite Huns, 6th c. A.D.) and literary (the Indian epic poem, the Mahabarata), that the people in this area, both Aryan and non-Aryan, were polyandrous in antiquity. Economic reasons for this have been given; *i.e.*, that the country is poor, that nomadism among Todas or Tibetans, in earlier times, perhaps led to a polyandrous society in order to limit the number of children. Then, demographical explanations have been given, that there is an excess of males over females in this society, and that they have to be polyandrous for that reason. For instance, the Todas practise female infanticide and this is given as a reason for their polyandry. Their men drink a lot of milk, and some people say that the fact that they have more proteins in their diet in this fashion produces more male offspring than female. I do not pretend to know how far this biological explanation is true. Sociological reasons have also been given, namely, that the men travel and have to leave one brother at home with the wife (a reason which I hinted at earlier). In east and south India, the people known as the Nayars, who once could also be called polyandrous, had a very definite military organization (somewhat like that of the Sikhs in the north), and that has been given as a reason why a people is polyandrous: one brother can always remain at home with the wife while the other is away serving with the colors.

It seems to me that these explanations are not sufficient. As far as the historical

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vltil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

595 and girls of suitable age. But only older men
701 were permitted to marry and form a household with their wives and children.

The similarity between systems like the Masai and the Nayar system is that in those groups of the population organized for warfare, male sexuality was divorced from the upbringing of children, which among Nayars took place within the lineage and concerned only lineage members. Among the Masai this freeing of a man's sexual life from the responsibilities of child-rearing concerned only certain age-groups of men, while in Calicut and Cochin it applied to the total male population of one caste.

595 The extent to which Nayar kinship was in-
701 fluenced by their relation to the land and by the
566 military organization becomes clearer when we
184 compare the kinship system in Calicut and Cochin with that of Nayars in the northern kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam and Kadattunad, north of the Kora River which formed the northern boundary of the Calicut kingdom at the height of the Zamorin's power.

Apart from the narrow coastal belt, the country in north Malabar was rocky and mountainous, and comprised much waste land and virgin forest. Perhaps because of this, the sparsely populated northern kingdom never achieved the degree of political centralization found in the central kingdom. Government was ostensibly by nadavaris owing a tenuous allegiance to their Rajas. In fact, however, in all these kingdoms chiefs perpetually rebelled against their Raja and shook off his power for long periods, while

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage: infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1956.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957. 175 648 635

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's. [177] [436] [564] [631]

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin. 631 635 184 [564] [601] [121]

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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613 riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did
592 not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

595 It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and
175 linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike
[671] service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her en-
[613] angar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

595 Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group mar-
175 riage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern
●184 Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

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a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [174]

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613
tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal 576
etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates 591
a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. 593
The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various 591
particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some 582
of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. [428]
Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's [593]
descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or 591
widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. 593
Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her
taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at [844]
the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own
Taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more [593]
usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North [584]
Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's [184]
niece.

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and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

593 [591]

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

[264] [844] [613] [431]

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

[595]

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Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

587

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

[858]

593 184 858 [613]

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

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593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never
184 polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but
593 their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them. A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he
[431] often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

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605 836 837 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take vengeance.

AFFINES

602 576 184 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her 602 592 613 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the [593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as [598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and [607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his [604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 613 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and [604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

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The wives of her elder matrilineal kinsmen figured prominently in the life-crisis rites of a girl, performing the ritual acts done by enangar women in Central Kerala. 602 613 796

Because of residence patterns men had less contact than did women with the property groups of their spouses. They must be invited to all ceremonies and had ritual duties in those connected with their own children. As sambandhakkar of a property group, the husbands of its female members were usually consulted formally by its kāranavan before he undertook important matters such as building houses or dividing property. He was not, however, obliged to follow their advice. 613 602

Kinship Terms

601 184

A. MATRILINEAL KIN

The pattern of terms was the same as in Central Kerala. Lexically, the only difference was that MoMo and her sisters (A1) were called *acchamma* (literally, "father's mother"), a term extended to them from FaMo. This usage probably resulted from the fact that a child normally recognized FaMo earlier than MoMo and had more contact with her.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES

In North Kerala, as might be expected, there were customary kinship terms for the patrilateral kin. The terms for affines and non-matrilineal cognates were as follows.

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Acchappan* ("Father's father"). M. and F. speaking. FaFa and FaFaBr. FaFaSiHu, FaMoBr, FaMoSiHu. MoFa and MoFaBr. MoFaSiHu, MoMoSiHu.

(5) *Acchamma* ("Father's mother"). FaMo and FaMoSi. FaFaBr-Wi, FaFaSi and FaMoBrWi. MoFaSi, MoMo, MoMoSi, MoFaBrWi.

(6) *Amma* ("Mother"). M. and F. speaking. Extended from Mo and MoSi to FaSi and FaBrWi. FaSi is called *valiya* ("big") mother or *elaya* ("younger") mother according to her age in relation to the father. FaBrWi is so designated according to FaBr's age in relation to Fa.

(7) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Fa, mother's current husband,

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601 FaBr, FaSiHu, MoSiHu. The last three are designated "older" or
• 184 "younger" in the same manner as above.

(8) *Ammāyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of any male of first or second ascending generations within ego's lineage, especially within his property group.

(9) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and Wi's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(10) *Jyēshtatti amma.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of older male of ego's generation within his lineage, primarily within his property group.

(11) *Machunian.* M. and F. speaking. Male cross cousin, i.e., male of ego's father's lineage in ego's generation, or So of ego's own, or classificatory MoBr within his lineage. Extended to male cross cousins of either parent.

(12) *Machunichi.* M. and F. speaking. The female equivalent of B11.

(13) *Makan.* M. speaking. WiSo. Reference only.

(14) *Makal.* M. speaking. WiDa. Reference only.

(15) *Pērakutti.* M. and F. speaking. Reciprocal of B4 and B5. Used primarily of own grandchild through either So or Da. Reference only.

[602] A man or woman used the same terms to address the spouse's natal kin as the own natal kin except in case of an avoidance relationship.

[605] An individual *addressed* all cross-cousins in the same manner as siblings, reserving terms B11 and B12 for reference. He addressed and referred to paternal parallel cousins as siblings.

[564] Kinship terms were used in relationships with affines or cognates of higher or lower matrilineal caste but not in relationships with Nambudiri Brahman relatives.

601 *Comment:* Males and females of the second ascending generation
602 were equated with grandparents, except for the maternal great-uncle and his wife. This fits the fact that relationships with the maternal great-uncle and his wife were distant and authoritative while those with other kin of this generation were non-authoritative and informal. Similarly, in the first ascending generation the mother's brother and his wife are singled out as distant and authoritative figures. All others of this generation are classed with the parents as non-authoritative figures.

The existence of Iroquois cousin terms for reference fits the special joking relationship and preferential marriage between cross cousins as contrasted with the prohibition of marriage between parallel cousins of both sides.

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[85] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 593
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source 591
of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184
clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

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159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely re-
776 sembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother
593 finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

● 184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her
613 immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
182 this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
626 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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his forebears. Thereafter he offers rice balls and other oblations in a *śrāddham* ceremony 184 on each anniversary of the death. 564

Many of these customs are of long standing among the Nāyars. Barbosa[18] reported in 1518 that Nāyar royalty observed *dīkṣā* for the dead in the same manner as Nambūdiris. Sheikh Zein-ud-Deen[19] recorded the custom for commoner Nāyars in 1579. Linschoten[20] reported in 1598 that Nāyars normally cremated their dead. Today, Nāyar death and anniversary rites are almost identical in form with those of Nambūdiris. During the period of death pollution they employ a lower matrilineal caste to instruct them in the rites. (In Cochin, Chīdigans fulfill this function; in South Malabar, Attikūrssis; and in North Malabar, Mārārs.) The same caste assists Nambūdiri Brahmans to prepare the ritual materials for their funerals, and has clearly transmitted the Brahmanical rites to the Nāyars. Similarly, at the end of the death pollution on the sixteenth day, during the *dīkṣā* period, and on anniversary days, Nāyars are instructed in their oblations by a priest of a degraded subcaste of Brahmans. (This subcaste is the Elayads in Cochin and South Malabar and the Nambidis in North Malabar.) A few peculiarly non-Brahmanical rites do, however, survive. In Kottayam, poorer Nāyars among commoners customarily bury their dead.[21] In both areas those who burn the dead bury the bones and ashes in a pot under a jack-fruit tree outside the ancestral house near the ancestor shrine. Some leave the bones there permanently and consider that the ghost remains near the bones and the ancestral house. Others dig up the bones after the period of mourning, dispose of half of them in a sacred river, and return the other half to the grave. The bones of *kārāmans* are sometimes [613] placed on an open platform under a jack-fruit tree, to which food offerings are made on days of propitiation. Other rites spring from the Nāyar view that the ghost requires appeasement rather than mere assistance to another world. Brahmans, for example, pour holy water into the mouth of a dying man to purify him for entry into the world of ancestors. Old-fashioned Nāyars offer rice gruel as a last act of appeasement.

Even the Sanskritic rites are in fact so adapted to Nāyar requirements that they 76 carry a quite different emphasis of meaning from that associated with them by Brah- 184 mans. First, the role-structure of the rites is, of course, completely adapted to the 564 descent system. A Nambūdiri deceased's chief mourner is his or her eldest son, or, 613 if there is no Nambūdiri son, the eldest brother's son. A Nāyar woman's chief mourner is her eldest son; that of a man, the man next junior to him in the property group. But all males of the *taravād* junior to the deceased make subsidiary *bali* offerings to him in the period of pollution. Brahman spouses observe mourning and death pollution for each other. Nāyar spouses traditionally observe no mourning or pollution for each other, for they belong to different *taravāds* and have no mutual legal obligations. If a Nāyar dies in a wife's house, his body must traditionally be returned to his *taravād* for cremation. Shortly before or after the death of her husband, a woman goes to view his body for the last time. She is then ceremonially conducted out of the house on the north side—the side opposite to that from which the god of death arrives. She is returned to her natal home, and after this she may never reenter her dead husband's house. In Cochin, where men traditionally had no obligations to their children, a child did not observe death pollution for his genitor. But in North Malabar, [591] where children have an intimate relationship with the father in avunculocal residence during childhood, a man's sons make offerings for him during death pollution, and the eldest son is second-in-command to the chief mourner at the cremation. The

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities, or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kuttichāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kuttichāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād* was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin

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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[628] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kôlattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the
582 Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhû-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce." 564 613 588 [586]

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste. [533]

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction [171] [735] [184] [824] [415]

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891). [113]

564 613 588 of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) [184] which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, [586] confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the [765] divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli [783] on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while 585 the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the [588] Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu 184 Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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"The variations of the Sambandham are the Pudamuri, Vastradánam, Uzhamporukkuka, Vitáram Kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malayali who would not readily understand what is meant by *Sambandham tudan guga* (to begin Sambandham). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout Kéralam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. 585 184

"It is thus found that Sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among Marumakkattayam Nâyars. It will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this Sambandham ceremony, all over the Kéralam, are in the main the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically: the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony: the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place: the presentation of the *danam* (gifts) to the Brahmans: the sumptuous banquet: the meeting of the bride and the bridegroom,—are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted Sambandhams in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to, are gone through at all Sambandhams among respectable Nâyars, and I would further say that they ought to be gone through at every Sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the Sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of Sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the Putamuri, or Vastradanam, as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of Sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of Sambandham I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. Of course my description will be borne out by the evidence that is before us. The preliminary ceremony, in every Putamuri, is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes 585 787 184

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585 184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the [787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and [574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra- [584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and [613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the [564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats [43] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the [574] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to [787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

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the lit-up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and the bridegroom, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. 585 184 [431]

"This is an unvarnished account of a 'Putamuri.' Next morning the Vettilakkettu or Salkâram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is a feasting, etc., in honour of the occasion.

"Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídâram Kayaral is a peculiar form of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the description given above, that the Putamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people generally resort to the less costly ceremony of Uzhamporukkuka or Vídâram Kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as Putamuri; but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The toasting is confined to the relations of the married couple. The particular incident attached to this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular Putamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídâram Kayaral ceremony, and with grown-up children being the issue of such marriage, undergoing the Putamuri ceremony some 15 or 20 years after Uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally.

"The Sambandham of South Malabar, and the Kidakkora-kalyânam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of Putamuri, except the presenting of the cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also *Salkâram* ceremony, wanting in South Malabar as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

But all this formality and ceremonial is not the rule. The Sambandham is always a matter for careful arrangement, in which the wishes of the parties to it are considered, and which it is expected will bring mutual benefit to the two Taravâds concerned.

In South Malabar the girl or woman never lives in her husband's house; she lives on in her own Taravâd house and is there visited by her husband. The ordinary huggermugger, which sometimes stultifies all pleasure in existence, is thus avoided. In North Malabar the woman 591 184

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184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkaṭṭâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not
585 be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:——"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [198]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [589]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place [582] the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In [181] North Malabar, which is much more conservative than [184] the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâra- 585 navan and the women † of his household choose the 564 bride, and communicate their choice to the intending 613 bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they [787] agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for [574] the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

"*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important ceremony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

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613 in the larger houses), and, if there is not, is taken to the
[351] front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandalwood paste and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is then done what is called the Potavekkuka ceremony or placing new cotton cloths (kóti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the (deceased's) Taravâd followed by all the other members, also sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse when being
[184] taken to the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried (well covered in the cloths) by hand. In either
[204] case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed there is done another ceremony called Para Virakkuka (filling up pâras—a pâra is a measure nearly as big as a gallon). All adult male members of the Taravâd take part in it under the direction of a man of the Atikkurissi clan (who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisite all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit). It consists in filling up three pâra measures with paddy, and one edangâli ($\frac{1}{10}$ of a pâra) with raw rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a (burning) lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela villâku. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end, one in the middle; on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased, tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist, and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist a piece of iron, generally a

* The eldest male member of the Malabar Taravâd is called the Kâranavan, as noted already (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1); all male members, brothers, nephews and so on, who are junior to him are called Anandravans of the Taravâd.

place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a [604] year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [301] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for 765 the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

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796 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate im-
114 portance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited
184 entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti
782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the
[346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others
[126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of
[532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver
[326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guruvayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

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Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. 796 788 785 [782]

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock. 796 788

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars 796 184 788

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890). [171] [113]

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796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

[See cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- Ed.]

796 festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy is [132] harvested. As a rule the Ônam season is one of bright sunshine following the almost continuous rain of June, July and August.

526 I once witnessed a very interesting game called êitû 796 (êiththu), played by the Nâyars in the Southern portion [184] of Kurumbranâd during the ten days preceding Ônam. Curiously, the locality and the period are, so to speak, fixed. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to "sides." Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo about 18 inches in length, and arrows or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the leaf at one end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the "cheppu" as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight and stick in readily) carries of all the arrows lying on the ground. Each "side" strives to secure all the arrows and to deprive the other side of theirs. A sort of "beggar my neighbour." He who hits the mark *last* takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit it first was running the 25 yards to touch the "cheppu." Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it; and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much shouting, gesticulation, and laughter. Those returning after securing a large number of arrows turned somersaults, and in saltatory motions expressed their joy.

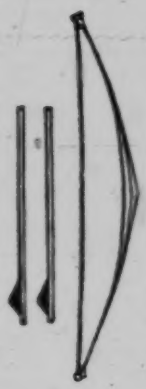

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In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight 776 [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

776 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men
821 do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal
[184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three
241 days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar,
[243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one
[132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there
[776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom;
241 rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food
252 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake—
262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these
262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if
466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar
241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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APPENDIX A.

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The account of the funeral ceremonies which has been given is not, of course, full and accurate as regards all the clans; but it is precise as regards one, and suffices for the present to give a clear idea of the ceremonies as performed by all. There are many interesting features in the ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil clan. Want of space forbids more than the briefest mention of some of these.

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Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the Taravâd thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are well lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the Taravâd prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the Enangru carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round.

They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men, standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled.

After this is done the "kodali karma" ceremony, using the spade, the axe and a big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all; and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Wallu-
[131] vanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvāris*) of districts (*nāds*). These
175 owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
564 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavāris*) of villages (*desams*).
631 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal
613 family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvāri* or *desavāri* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

588 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house
[564] and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad,
[793] a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bride-
groom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house
588 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times
when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabita-
833 tion would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been
required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is
178 indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi
took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger)
782 Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to
the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by
787 hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy,
coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following
793 which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then
donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the
power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.)
Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping
his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host
kâranavan that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his
insignia were removed.

776 Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar
village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol
[831] of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's
sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the
[753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She
is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar
[782] rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last
night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must
[834] observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music.
588 On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand,
they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage
[783] house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then
fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received
[264] clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At
588 the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides,
though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with
184 other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride-
595 groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never
visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological
[965] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally
observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover
[983] and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual
father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word
[851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achan* (originally

a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Aṟān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Aṭāṉ of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*asuwatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambûdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambûdiris, and Tamil Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambûdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Aṭāṉ in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambûdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

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Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

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Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

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The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *tarawād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children. [586]

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The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambûdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvāris* over *desavāris*, of kings over *nāduvāris*, and in religious matters, of Nambûdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has [178]

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

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184 588 582 This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

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Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

184 588 831 The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

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This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

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These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *tarawād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

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To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

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The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those [262] stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention [783] to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual [834] desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in*
613 *genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *karanavan*. This man is
564 usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but par-
602 ticularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen,
[586] sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pēdhaṅ*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *iṟar*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the
276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
782 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
787 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*predham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *idli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [083] [065] [069] [083]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters; they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

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184 68 The unconscious E. KATHLEEN GOUGH
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
593 the spirits of dead *kāranavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāranavans'* spirits, are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
175 however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests
595 of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
184 sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with
182 his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children
613 for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates
184 the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons. This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
182 who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but unmarried girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
184 avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed, however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother. He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are permitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
593 clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kinsmen retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond
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between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

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588 182 184 sambandham lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tâli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tâli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tâli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tâli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tâli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tâli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing', Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tâli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tâli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [533] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [182] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdurari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 587 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 588 305 587 582 The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

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CHART I. *Variations in Essential Features of the Tali-Rite in Four Groups*

Essential Features of the Ceremony	*South Malabar and Cochin Nayars*	*North Malabar Nayars*	*North Malabar Tiyyars*	*South Malabar and Cochin Tiyyars*
Basic economic and residential group in the Kinship System	Matrilineal lineage segment, uxorilocal	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence; or patrilineal or ambilineal group	Patrilineal, patrilocal extended family
Descent and inheritance systems	Exclusively matrilineal	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Double unilineal descent; patrilineal inheritance
Age of girl at *tāli*-rite	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty
Place of ceremony	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house or father's own house	Patrilineal group's ancestral house
Expenses of ceremony met by	Matrilineal lineage as a whole	Matrilineal lineage as a whole with help from fathers	Senior MB and father jointly	Father with help from senior MB
Preliminary mock menstrual seclusion	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes
Girl ceremonially 'given away' by	Brother or head of matrilineal group	Brother or head of matrilineal group	MB, MBW, or father	Father; secondarily, MB
Tāli tied by	*Enangen*, district chief, or elderly Nambūdiri Brahman	Elderly Nambūdiri Brahman	MBW, FSi, prospective mother-in-law, or barber woman (Barbers – elderly man)	Young boy, sometimes prospective husband
Supplementary 'fertility' or 'defloration' rites performed by	Nambūdiri Brahman priest or village military leader	Marar (lower caste of funeral priests)	Barber	Village headman's wife
Subsequent seclusion of girl	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Uncertain	Girl secluded with 'bridegroom' or with bridegroom's loincloth

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. 585 [591] [178] [184]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunderstanding or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly conducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its distinguished author. [581] 586 [648] 581 [648]

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions. A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry anyone who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort. 582 [564]

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a specially aristocratic privilege. 591 [582] [178]

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for the last fifty years. 595

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This is mostly due to two reasons:

First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Kittal wizhakkā Kari yuniaru cakn*
> *Bhatu Bhojana matu Kootillā.*"
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood
302 paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made
412 of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this
326 does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge
178 into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny
611 undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste
564 war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early childhood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. 352 [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days furnished with articles of European manufacture, and all their [177] domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Bráhmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Asán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremony the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *tâli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkâkkarappan* temple and tie the *tâli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahâdévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpâd is the *tâli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *tâli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tâlikettu kalyânam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tâlikettu*

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881 she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. [184] In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

585 The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only [184] two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs con- [582] nected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other [584] classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bride- [787] groom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kâranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bride-groom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly wel- comed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Râmâyanam* or other sacred book, referring to marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read by the Asân or village school master. Some music is also provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvváthira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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585 184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 [586] [581] The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 192 197 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *vivóham* is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the *marumakkathóyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *vivóham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradánam* used in South Malabar.

3. *Uzhamporukkuka*, and *Vidáram Kairuga* of North Malabar.

4. The *Kidakkóra kalyánam* of Palghat and parts of Nedunganád.

Pudamuri, *Vastradánam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidáram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 184 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word denoting marriage among the *marumakkathóyam* Nayars. It

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will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, 585 that the principal features of this *sambandham* ceremony all 184 over Keralam, are, in the main, the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the [787] examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether the stars agree astrologically, the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony, the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place, the presentation of the *dánam* (gifts) to the Brahmans, the sumptuous banquet, the meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are the features which will invariably be found in all well conducted *sambandhams* in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state, that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all *sambandhams* among respectable Nayars, and I would further say, that they ought to be gone through at every *sambandham*, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of *sambandham*, with the particular incident attached to certain forms of *sambandham* in South Malabar. I shall describe the *Pudamuri* or *Vastradánam* as celebrated in North Malabar, and show how the other forms of *sambandham* are related to it. I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The preliminary ceremony in every *Pudamuri* is 585 the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom 184 by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride 787 in the presence of the relations of the bride and the bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculation on a piece of palmyra leaf with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's *kúranavan* and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bride- [574] groom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the [431] former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth, and this preliminary ceremony is invariably performed

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184 at all *Pudamuris* in North Malabar. It is called *Pudamuri*
[787] *Kodukkal* (giving pieces of cloth for dressing), and it is unknown in South Malabar.

Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the *Pudamuri*, the bridegroom visits his *kúranavans* and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nut, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house of the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends, to seats
[431] provided in the *tekkini* or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*dánams*) or money gifts to the Brahmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now the time for the
[787] astrologer to appear and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *patinjúttu* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated and turned into a bed room for the occasion.
[354] There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps and *ashtamangalyam* which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangalyam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, lighted fire and a small round wooden box called a *cheppu* made in a peculiar fashion. They will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his best man enters the room through the western door accompanied by the bride's aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the *ashtamangalyam* and lits up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom are touched, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to
[431] perform another duty. At the *tekkini* or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes and betel leaves and

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the 184
place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom re- [431]
tires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *nalkàram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a mar- 585
riage in the legal or sacramental sense of the 564
term. The views of the members of the 184
orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The [P31]
aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and 586
ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kàranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who [562]
denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37.

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595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathâyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of [835] a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

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595 [554] circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *kiranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kiranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kiranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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845 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by [564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 852 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kiranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Púrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 258.

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184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemoration of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali, widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati, in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tradition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, coriander, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

796 184 773 776 173 796 184 [439] [492]

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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796 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation,
184 birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the people. The battle was fought with the result already mentioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Konga-
796 pada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by
184 the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Nâdnvâzhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

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1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

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supposed to take part under the supervision and guidance of the Srikandath Panikkar, whose family is the military instructor and leader of the people of Chittur. The Panikkar's duty is to train the youths of the 100 houses in the military arts. The performance referred to is, more or less, an exhibition of the bodily prowess of the youths trained by the Panikkar, and at the end of it he receives presents from the *Nâduvizhi* and one hundred fanoms—one fanom for each house—from his pupils. The amount of one hundred fanoms is still paid to him every year, and is defrayed out of the collection made for the Kongapada festival for which the Panikkar's family is exempted from the payment of all subscriptions. The training of the youths of the place is begun a few weeks before the Kongapada festival in the *kalari* (military gymnasium) of the Srikandath Panikkar, and the Panikkar takes a prominent part in all the functions connected with the festival from beginning to end.

The "Pana" festival of Chittur.

Once in a few years and commencing on an auspicious day after *Vishu*, this ceremony is performed on a grand scale, in which the Nayars of the town (one male member from almost every house) organised themselves into parties, one party for singing songs in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati, another for dancing before her, and the third for playing on musical instruments. These men have, during this period, to bathe early in the morning, cook their own food and remain under a vow to be ever in devotion to the deity. Preliminary to the celebration of the actual festival, which sometimes run for a number of days, the men are given 41 days' training in the several courses of dancing in the Porayattu family house, one of the four *Pramânakkars* (leading members) of the place, and the final performance takes place in the Pokkumarath house.

In the court-yard of the latter house a large pandal supported on 64 posts, is put up and in its middle is drawn a floral diagram (*padmam*) over which a lighted brass lamp, and in front of it a stool, are placed with a metal pot of water surmounted by a full pod of cocoanut flowers and a washed cloth arranged in the form of a beautiful crown. The Goddess, who is supposed to be located therein by means of holy *mantrams*, is propitiated every night between 9 and 12 P. M., with offerings and *pujas*, to the accompaniment of drumming, singing,

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796 184 [782] and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, [789] the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which

Agricultural ceremonies.

[787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- An alyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Ucharal is the date on which all agricultural leases should expire, and demand for surrender of property should not be made at any other time, but the courts, by a liberal interpretation, have extended the term up to the day of *Vishu*. Special *Ucharal* festivals are held at Cherpulasseri in the Walluvanad Taluk and near Shoranur, at which straw models of cattle are taken in procession to the temples of Bhagavati.

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

As explained earlier, the effective capacity could not be increased beyond 84.5 MW mainly on account of foreign exchange difficulties. 433* 377

7.14 The relative shares of various consumers in the coming years will naturally depend on the pace of economic development. Nevertheless, it can be reliably forecast that the relative proportions will not significantly change and industry will retain its predominant place since it is expected that the industrial development will continue to be considered the pivot for economic growth of Kerala.

7.15 Per capita consumption of electrical energy in the State was about 27.75 kWh in 1959-60, which was slightly less than the all-India level of 30.45 kWh.

Regional Distribution of Electricity Facilities

7.16 There is some imbalance in the distribution of electricity in Kerala. The southern districts which were part of the former progressive State of Travancore-Cochin, are more developed from the standpoint of industry and power, whereas the northern districts constituting the Malabar area are comparatively backward. The relative position of different districts in this regard is indicated in Table 34.† 377 184

7.17 Similarly, the network of transmission and distribution lines also depicts a concentration of electrical facilities in the south or south-central region. Naturally, this has led to a clustering of industries in this area. However, it is possible to even out the position in future by undertaking the extension of transmission lines to the northern parts of Kerala as well. The present programme of extending 110 KV line to the north is a step in the proper direction.

Cost of Power Generation

7.18 One of the outstanding features of power development in Kerala is the low cost of generation. Generally investment per kW of installed capacity is higher in the case of hydro schemes than in the case of thermal power stations. In Kerala, however, the figure for investment per kW of installed capacity is Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 for hydro schemes which is no higher than in the case of thermal stations. Most of the hydro sites are still unexploited and are ideally suitable for hydel generation. Since the catchment areas of hydel projects receive rain from both the south-west and north-east monsoons, the storage capacity required per kW of generating capacity is relatively small which in turn reduces the overall capital cost per kW. It is because of these factors that the initial investment normally incurred in case of hydro-electric schemes in Kerala, excluding transmission and distribution, is as low as Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 per kW of installed capacity against the all-India average of Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,000. Not only investment per kW of installed capacity is about the same for hydro and thermal projects in Kerala, the foreign exchange component of investment on hydro schemes up to generation, will also be of the order of only 25 per cent whereas in case of thermal schemes it is about 50 to 60 per cent. 377 435

7.19 Since the capital cost of hydro-power in Kerala is exceptionally low, the average cost of generation from the existing hydro stations is only 1.7 nP per unit. In the case of schemes under execution as well as the schemes already investigated,

† [Table 34, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 6

VALUATION OF FOREIGN EXPORTS FROM THE PORTS OF COCHIN, ALLEPPEY AND CALICUT
(Rs. lakhs)

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Some important commodities of export	*1953-54*	*1954-55*	*1955-56*	*1956-57**	*1957-58*
Cardamom	22.44	32.84	50.17	54.84	55.90
Cashew(kernels and liquids)	927.55	1,014.52	1,155.12	1,112.02	1,141.82
Coffee	72.39	82.88	93.69	76.50	90.75
Coir and Coir Products	804.00	731.37	856.86	878.09	704.87
Fish and Prawns	102.69	79.34	31.85	123.86	149.33
Ginger	27.94	33.24	58.71	61.40	39.25
Metals, Minerals, Ores	21.56	22.78	28.93	77.10	60.77
Lemon grass oil	72.62	104.73	130.65	147.00	138.41
Pepper	962.13	569.81	378.61	341.69	295.67
Tea	1,912.96	2,196.86	1,992.17	1,974.75	2,434.78
Others	235.72	443.83	591.64	525.75	491.40
Total Value of Foreign Exports	*5,162*	*5,312*	*5,369*	*5,313*	*5,663*
Total Value of Exports to Ports of India	*2,238*	*2,193*	*2,489*	*2,404*	*2,318*
Value of Total Exports	7,400	7,505	7,858	7,747	7,921

*Value of exports from Calicut includes exports to both foreign and Indian ports.
SOURCE: *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959.

TABLE 7

CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF HOLDINGS AND LAND AREA OF HOLDINGS IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN AREA AND THE MALABAR DISTRICT

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Grade of holdings	*Travancore-Cochin*		*Malabar*	
	No. of holdings	*Area*	*No. of holdings*	*Area*
Up to 1 acre	66.72	16.49	28.91	2.43
Up to 2.50 acres	86.47	36.96	51.52	8.22
Up to 5 acres	94.84	57.07	60.55	17.68
Up to 10 acres	98.35	73.35	83.79	32.30
Up to 20 acres	99.50	83.59	93.91	52.58
Up to 40 acres	99.86	90.15	97.88	68.57
Up to 100 acres	..	..	99.62	82.37
All	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*

SOURCE: *Kerala 1959: An Economic Review*, Government of Kerala (1960).

TABLE 14

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED COFFEE ESTATES ACCORDING TO SIZE AND AREA AS ON THE 31ST JULY 1958

(Area in acres)

District	Below 5 acres		5 to 10		10 to 25		25 to 50		50 to 100		100 to 200		150 to 200		200 to 250		250 and above		Total	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Malabar	9,121	16,187	1,123	4,936	515	4,956	62	2,272	46	2,965	10	1,218	8	1,293	6	1,336	14	5,650	10,505	40,813
Kottayam	3,130	3,596	185	56	58	57	14	343	5	323	1	129	1	150	..		1	703	3,395	5,367
Cochin	5	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	125	3	561	2		1	330	15	1,016
Quilon	147	N.A.	2	N.A.	..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149	30

Source: *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1957-58*, Vol. IV., Coffee Board.

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962. AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 60

UNEMPLOYMENT POSITION IN KERALA

Activity status	Travancore-Cochin		Malabar		Kerala	
I	II		III		IV=II+III	
	Absolute number (In lakhs)	Percentage to total population	Absolute number (In lakhs)	Percentage to total population	Absolute number (In lakhs)	Percentage to total population
(a) Below 15 years age	41.3	40.7	20.7	36.9	62.0	38.4
(b) Above 15 years	60.2	60.1	35.3	63.0	95.5	60.6
1. Students	4.0	4.0	1.2	2.1	5.2	3.3
2. Disabled or too old	4.6	4.5	3.2	5.7	7.8	4.9
3. Pensioners or Rentiers	1.1	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.8
4. Having Regular Employment	19.7	19.6	9.8	17.5	29.5	18.7
5. Household Workers	19.2	19.0	10.9	19.4	30.1	19.1
6. Casual Workers	9.1	8.0	7.2	12.1	15.2	9.6
7. People in search of employment	3.7	3.6	2.9	5.9	6.6	4.2
TOTAL POPULATION	*101.6*	*100*	*56.0*	*100*	*157.6*	*100*
LABOUR FORCE (4+6+7)	*31.4*	*30.9*	*19.87*	*35.5*	*51.2*	*32.5*
Category (7) as percentage of labour force	*3.7*	*11.62*	*2.9*	*14.64*	*6.66*	*12.79*

SOURCE: The Statistics Department, Government of Kerala.

TABLE 61

COMPARATIVE SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FORCE

Sector	Proportion of working force	
	1956	*1971*
1. Primary Sector	54.9	42.2
2. Secondary Sector	19.3	24.6
(a) Factory Sector	3.4	9.2
(b) Non-factory Sector and Mining	15.9	15.4
3. Tertiary Sector	25.8	33.2
TOTAL	*100.0*	*100.0*

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

[p 159]
[pp. 1-158 not Processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. 114
Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely 184
complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south.

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical 114
all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon [132]
from June to October. The record density of the population makes for [161]
poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, [484]
the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows.

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara 131
in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which [133]
are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an [183] unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the
[463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation
of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan 595
say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now [851]
be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar [581]
marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli- 588
tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of [184]
this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the [881]
ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called
[301] a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes

consider a coral necklace an essential. In her right hand she holds a vālkannādi (brass hand mirror), and in her left a charakkal (a highly ornate arrow). In front of the girl are placed, in addition to the five-wicked lamp and nirachaveppu, a metal dish or talam of parched rice, and the eight lucky things known as ashtamangalyam. A woman, termed Brahmini or Pushpini, usually of the Nambissan caste, sits facing her on a three-legged stool (pidam), and renders appropriate and lengthy songs, at the close of which she scatters rice over her. About midday there is a feast, and in the evening songs in the macchu are repeated. Next morning, the ceremonial in the macchu is repeated for the third time, after which the paraphernalia are removed to the nearest tank or to the east of the household well, where the Pushpini sings once more, goes through the form of making the girl's toilet, and ties a cocoanut frond round each of her wrists (kappōla). The girl has then to rise and jump over a kindi (vessel) of water with an unhusked cocoanut placed on the top, overturning it the third time. The party then proceed to the pandal, two men holding a scarlet cloth over the girl as a canopy, and a Chāliyan (weaver) brings two cloths (kōdi vaṣtiram), which the girl puts on. In the evening, the previous day's ceremonial is repeated in the macchu. The third day is the most important, and it is then that the central act of the ceremony is performed. For this the girl sits in the inner pandal richly adorned. In some cases she is carried from the house to the pandal by her karnavan or brother, who makes a number of pradakshinams round the pandal (usually 3 or 7) before he places her in her seat. Before the girl are the various objects already specified, and the hymeneal ditties of the Pushpini open the proceedings. At the auspicious moment the

589 184 Manavâlan arrives in rich attire. He is often preceded by a sort of body guard with sword and shield who utter a curious kind of cry, and is met at the gate of the girl's house by a bevy of matrons with lamps and salvers decorated with flowers and lights, called talams. A man of the girl's family washes his feet, and he takes his seat in the pandal on the girl's right. Sometimes the girl's father at this stage presents new cloths (mantravâdi or mantrokôdi) to the pair, who at once don them. The girl's father takes the tâli, a small round plate of gold about the size of a two-anna bit, with a hole at the top, from the goldsmith who is in waiting, pays him for it, [787] and gives it to the Manavâlan. The karnavan or father of the girl asks the astrologer thrice if the moment has arrived, and, as he signifies his assent the third time, the Manavâlan ties the tâli round the girl's neck amidst the shouts of those present. The Manavâlan carries the girl indoors to the macchu, and feasting brings the day to [533] a close. Tom-toming and other music are of course incessant accompaniments throughout as on other festal occasions, and the women in attendance keep up a curious kind of whistling, called kurava, beating their lips with their fingers. On the fourth day, girl and Manavâlan go in procession to the temple richly dressed. The boy, carrying some sort of sword and shield, heads [782] the party. If the family be one of position, he and the girl must be mounted on an elephant. Offerings are made to the deity, and presents to the Brâhmans. They then return home, and, as they enter the house, the Manavâlan who brings up the rear is pelted by the boys of the party with plantains, which he wards off with his shield. In other cases, he is expected to make a pretence of forcing the door open. These two usages are no doubt to be classed with those marriage ceremonies which take the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 528
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavālan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574] entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nāyar houses will feed 1,000 Brāhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tāli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nāyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801] represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622] a Nāyar tāli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

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[787]

astrologer, and those youths in the tarwads who have passed the age of eighteen, and whose horoscopes agree with those of the girls, are declared to be eligible. The ola (palm-leaf) on which the Kaniyan (astrologer) writes his decision is called the muhurta charutu, and the individual who receives it from him is obliged to see that the ceremony is performed on an auspicious day in the near future. The next important item is the fixing of a wooden post in the south-west corner or kannimula of the courtyard. At the construction of the pandal (booth) the Pidakakkar or villagers render substantial aid. The mandapa is decorated with ears of corn, and hence called katirmandapa. It is also called mullapandal. On the night of the previous day the kalati or Brāhman's song is sung. A sumptuous banquet, called ayaniunnu, is given at the girl's house to the party of the young man. The ceremony commences with the bridegroom washing his feet, and taking his seat within the pandal. The girl meanwhile bathes, worships the household deity, and is dressed in new cloths and adorned with costly ornaments. A Brāhman woman ties a thread round the girl's left wrist, and sings a song called Subhadraveli, which deals with the marriage by capture of Subhadra by Arjuna. Then, on the invitation of the girl's mother, who throws a garland round his neck, the bridegroom goes in procession, riding on an elephant, or on foot. The girl's brother is waiting to receive him at the pandal. A leading villager is presented with some money, as if to recompense him for the permission granted by him to commence the ceremony. The girl sits within the mandapa, facing the east, with her eyes closed. The bridegroom, on his arrival, sits on her right. He then receives the minnu (ornament) from the Ilayatu priest, and ties it round the girl's neck. A song is sung called

[533]

A song is sung called
ammachampattu, or the song of the maternal uncle. If 588
there are several brides, they sit in a row, each holding 184
in her hand an arrow and a looking-glass, and the [533]
ornaments are tied on their necks in the order of their ages. Unless enangans are employed, there is usually only one tāli-tier, whatever may be the number of girls. In cases where, owing to poverty, the expenses of the ceremony cannot be borne, it is simply performed in front of a Brāhman temple, or in the pandaramatam, or house of the village chieftain. In many North Travancore taluks the girl removes her tali as soon as she hears of the tali-tier's death." It is noted by the Rev. S. Mateer * that " a Nair girl of Travancore must get married with the tāli before the age of eleven to avoid reproach from friends and neighbours. In case of need a sword may even be made to represent a bridegroom." Sometimes, when a family is poor, the girl's mother makes an idol of clay, adorns it with flowers, and invests her daughter with the tāli in the presence of the idol.

In an account of the tali-kettu ceremony, in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, it is stated that " the celebration of the ceremony is costly, and advantage is therefore taken of a single occasion in the course of ten or twelve years, at which all girls in a family, irrespective of their ages, and, when parties agree, all girls belonging to families that observe death pollution between one another go through the ceremony. The ceremony opens with the fixing of a post for the construction of a pandal or shed, which is beautifully decorated with cloth, pictures and festoons. The male members of the village are [574]
invited, and treated to a feast followed by the distribution

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., XII, 1883.

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184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is
[574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by
[424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain
[643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is
[782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

stool in the pandal. A male member of the family, 588 generally a brother or maternal uncle of the girl, washes 184 the feet of the bridegroom. The girls are covered with new cloths of cotton or silk, and brought into the pandal, and seated screened off from one another. After the [431] distribution of money presents to the Brāhmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the tāli, or thin plate of gold shaped like the leaf of aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), and tacked on to a string, to the Tirumulpād, who ties it round the neck of the girl. A single Tirumulpād often ties the tāli round the neck of two, three, or four girls. He is given one to eight rupees per girl for so doing. Sometimes the tāli is tied by the mother of the girl. The retention of the tāli is not at all obligatory, nay it is seldom worn or taken care of after the ceremony. These circumstances clearly show the purely ceremonial character of this form of marriage. The Karamel Asan, or headman of the village, is an important factor on this occasion. In a conspicuous part of the marriage pandal [622] he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which a grass mat, a black blanket, and white cloth are spread one over the other. Before the tāli is tied, his permission is solicited for the performance of the ceremony. He is paid 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 puthans (a puthan = 10 pies) per girl, according to the means of the family. He is also given rice, curry stuff, and pān-supāri. Rose-water is sprinkled at intervals on the males and females assembled on the occasion. With the distribution of 574 pān-supāri, scented sandal paste and jasmine flowers to 588 the females of the village and wives of relatives and 184 friends, who are invited for the occasion, these guests return to their homes. The male members, one or two from each family in the village, are then treated to a sumptuous feast. In some places, where the Enangu

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
[574] day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspi-
[536] cious moment for the performance of each item. During the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

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beg some of their relations and friends to marry these daughters, and they do so. It must be said that they have some gold jewel made, which will contain half a ducat of gold, a little shorter than the tag of lace, with a hole in the middle passing through it, and they string it on a thread of white silk; and the mother of the girl stands with her daughter very much dressed out, and entertaining her with music and singing, and a number of people. And this relation or friend of hers comes with much earnestness, and there performs the ceremony of marriage, as though he married her, and they throw a gold chain round the necks of both of them together, and he puts the above mentioned jewel round her neck, which she always has to wear as a sign that she may now do what she pleases. And the bridegroom leaves her and goes away without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation; and, if he is not so, he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it. And from that time forward the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women." 588 184 [833]

The tāli-kettu ceremony is referred to by Kerr, who, in his translation of Castaneda, states that "these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nāyar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel round her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life, as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives." 588

588 178 174 [585] [613] 585 [174]

Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

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sambandham ceremony all over Kēralam are in the main 585
the same. As there are different local names denoting 184
marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examina- [787]
tion, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically; the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony; the usual hour at which the ceremony takes place; the presentation [431]
of dānam (gifts) to Brāhmans; sumptuous banquet; the [574]
meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted sambandhams in all parts of Kēralam alike. But here I would state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all sambandhams among respectable Nāyars; and I would further state that they ought to be gone through at every sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the pudamuri or vastradānam as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of sambandham, I consider the pudamuri the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The prelimi- [787]
nary ceremony in every pudamuri is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the [574] Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

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The cloths are placed in the western room of the house (padinhatta), in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and ashtamangalyam, which consists of eight articles symbolical of mangalyam or marriage. These are rice, paddy (unhusked rice), the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round box called cheppu. These will be found placed on the floor of the room as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groomsman enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloths and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east, with the ashtamangalyam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groomsman then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride sprinkles rice over the lamps and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom, who immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. Next morning, the vettilakettu or salkāram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is feasting in honour of the occasion. Uzhamporukkuka or vidāram kayaral is a peculiar form

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575 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the
184 description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. [574] There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett [582] states that "my informant says in the first place that the man should not enter into sambandham with a woman [178] until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running [181] wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, [582] which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

A sambandham ceremony at
585 Calicut is recorded by Mr. Fawcett, at which there were
[574] cake and wine for the guests, and a ring for the bride.

[184] In connection with sambandham, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes from Travancore that "it is known in different localities as gunadosham (union through good or evil), vastradānam or putavakota (giving of cloth), and uzhamporukkal (waiting one's turn). It may be performed without any formal ceremony whatever, and is actually a private transaction confidentially gone through in some families. The bridegroom and his friends assemble at the house of the bride on the appointed night, and, before the assembled guests, the bridegroom presents the bride with a few unbleached cloths. Custom enjoins that four pieces of cloth should be presented, and the occasion is availed of to present cloths to the relatives and servants of the bride also. The girl asks permission of her mother and maternal
[431] uncle, before she receives the cloths. After supper, and the distribution of pān-supāri, the party disperses. Another day is fixed for the consummation ceremony.
[574] On that day the bridegroom, accompanied by a few friends, goes to the bride's house with betel leaves and nuts. After a feast, the friends retire."

It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that one name for the sambandham rite is kitakkora, meaning
881 bed-chamber ceremony. In the same report, the following account of a puberty ceremony is given. "The tirandukuli ceremony is practically a public declaration that a girl has reached the age of maturity. When a girl attains puberty, she is seated in a separate room, where a lamp is lit, and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass called vālkannādi, literally a looking-glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by korava

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 881
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 585
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
656

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

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on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with
the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind
branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782]
juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824]
waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers,
and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour
begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564]
of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is
the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764]
lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825]
woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of
the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824]
Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the
ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the
family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water
from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's
head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she
again plunges in the water, from which she emerges
thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the
mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has
also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on
the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few
drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828]
superstitious believe that the temperament of the child
is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles
the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613]
pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

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764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
[782] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

The spirits of those who have committed suicide, or met death by any violent means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman priests are called in, and appease them by means of tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it." 766 775 [782]

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting features in the death ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round. They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all, and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre." 764 184 613 [564]

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 763 184

763 184 [778] moments of a dying person are really very trying. All members (male and female), junior to the dying person, pour into his or her mouth drops of Ganges or other holy water or conjee (rice) water in token of their last tribute of regard. Before the person breathes his last, he or she is removed to the bare floor, as it is considered sacrilegious to allow the last breath to escape while lying on the bed, and in a room with a ceiling, which last is supposed to obstruct the free passage of the breath. The names of gods, or sacred texts are loudly dinned into his or her ears, so that the person may quit this world with the recollections of God serving as a passport to heaven. The forehead, breast, and the joints especially are besmeared with holy ashes, so as to prevent the messengers of death from tightly tying those parts when they carry away the person. Soon 764 184 after the last breath, the dead body is removed to some open place in the house, covered from top to toe with a washed cloth, and deposited on the bare floor with the head towards the south, the region of the God of death. A lighted lamp is placed near the head, and other lights are placed all round the corpse. A mango tree is cut, or other firewood is collected, and a funeral pyre is constructed in the south-eastern corner of a compound or garden known as the corner of Agni, which is always reserved as a cemetery for the burning or burial of the dead. All male members, generally junior, bathe, and, without wiping their head or body, they remove the corpse to the yard in front of the house, and place it on a plantain leaf. It is nominally anointed with oil, and bathed in water. Ashes and sandal are again smeared on the forehead and joints. The old cloth is removed, and the body is covered with a new unwashed cloth or a piece of silk. A little gold or silver, or small coins are put into the

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

342 [823] west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlapura or four-556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

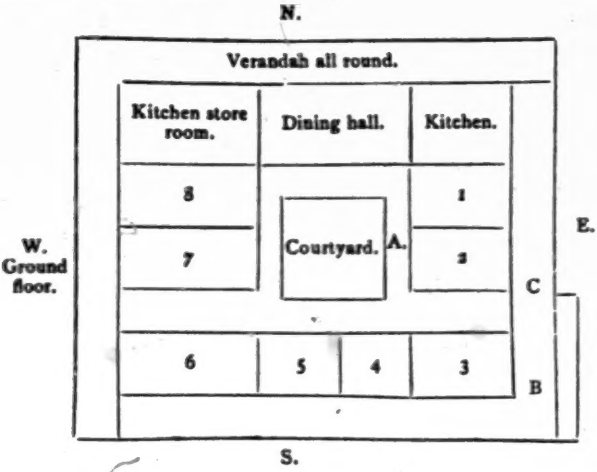

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

291 [177] [564] [564] [184] [576] [643]

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

shouting, gesticulation and laughter. Those returning, 526
after securing a large number of arrows, turned somersaults, and expressed their joy in saltatory motions." In a note on this game with bows and arrows in Kurumbranad, Mr. E. F. Thomas writes that "the players form themselves into two sides, which shoot alternately at the mark. Beside the mark stand representatives of the two sides. When the mark is hit by a member of either side, on his representative shouting 'Run, man,' he runs up the lists. His object is to seize the mark before it is hit by any one belonging to the other side. If he can do this, his side takes all the arrows which have been shot, and are sticking in the stop-butt. If, on the other hand, the mark is hit by the other side before he reaches it, he may not seize the mark. A member of the other side runs up in his turn to seize the mark if possible before it is hit again by the first side. If he can do this, he takes out, not all the arrows, but only the two which are sticking in the mark. If, while number two is running, the mark is hit a third time, a member of the first side runs up, to seize the mark if possible. The rule is that one or three hits take all the arrows in the stop-butt, two or four only the arrows sticking in the mark. Great excitement is shown by all who take part in the game, which attracts a number of spectators. The game is played every fortnight by Nāyars, Tiyans, Māppillas, and others. I am told that it is a very old one, and is dying [178]
out. I saw it at Naduvanūr."

The Ōnam games in the south-east of Malabar, in 796
the neighbourhood of Palghat, are said by Mr. Fawcett 526
to be of a rough character, "the tenants of certain jenmis 184
(landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights, in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing, which

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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796 526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman [184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the [175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them [431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a [194] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic [198] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu- [176] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration [773] of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogue of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 578 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple, by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

788 and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-
[785] locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

796 "Brief mention must be made of the festival held
788 at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost
184 corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan's Manual of Malabar. 'It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts "Nada-a Nada-a" of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of "Nada-a Nada-a" (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled
[195] at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many au-
611 thors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hy-
564 pergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by con-
[554] trast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy.
[197] Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region ex-
[171] hibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from struc-
[184] tural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

101 The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people.
564 Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which
613 group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad*, used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan*.[7]

[7] "One 'who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava*, "to do" in Sinhalese.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight 613 to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of 114 Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape.

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice 613 among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to 114 the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also 184 within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve [554] (1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles.

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In 613 North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region [184] around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group [614] in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan.

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but 591 she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children [844] (a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when [171] grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of [851] matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. 601 I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are [602] to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
121 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
114 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
613 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
184 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question
[605] of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent. [114] [184]

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

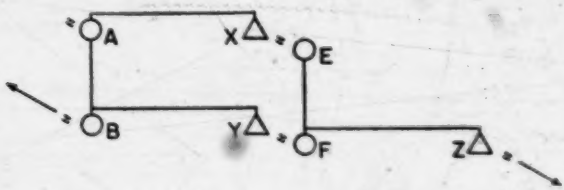

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

113, 185, 427 Kerala AW11

[For information on tenancy reform legislation in Travancore-Cochin see 39: Patel, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 345-350.]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,326
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

of paddy. This would not only give additional production of pulses which are deficit in the State, but also enrich the soil by leaving a nitrogen residue, and thereby constitute a better rotation. It may be possible to develop pulse crops on 250,000 acres. Assuming an yield of a quarter ton per acre, the additional production of pulses by crop intensification, as suggested here, would be roughly 62,500 tons per year. 433* 242

2.74 Better plant protection is another measure for getting a substantial increase in yields. It is estimated that yields increase approximately by about 10 per cent through this method. The Department of Agriculture should tackle this problem more effectively. This would only be possible by strengthening the Plant Protection Wing of the Department of Agriculture. [642]

Implements

2.75 Agricultural implements in use in the State are antiquated and inefficient. The wooden plough continues to be the master implement and is used for tillage operations of almost all the crops. Iron ploughs and other tillage implements are not popular. In fact the number of iron ploughs decreased by 22 per cent during 1951-56 and at present stands at 10,225. Tractors during the same period, however, increased from 59 to 187. Irrigation pumps too have shown an increase of 116 per cent. 407

2.76 The slow adoption of improved implements is mostly due to non-availability of implements and machinery suited to local conditions as well as due to their high cost. The topographical conditions and techniques of cultivation are unique in Kerala and there are no implements designed and developed to suit such conditions. There is, therefore, need for developing efficient implements for rice cultivation, plantation crops, soil conservation work and also for specialized implements such as ridgers and earthers for ginger and tapioca. It would be necessary to have a well equipped and adequately staffed agricultural engineering station to undertake the type of work suggested here. The proposed station may also do some work in designing of irrigation aids and may advise farmers on the selection of pumping sets and cane crushers. 433* 407

Soil Erosion

2.77 Soil erosion is a serious problem in Kerala. Conditions prevalent in the State such as lateritic soils, undulating to steep topography, the system of farming followed and heavy cloud burst—all these constitute towards excessive soil erosion. There is no reliable estimate regarding the extent of area affected or vulnerable to soil erosion, but it is estimated that about one-third of the cultivated area—approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres—is affected by it. It should be possible to protect at least one million acres through soil conservation measures by 1971. 134 185

2.78 Soil conservation work as carried out by the Department of Agriculture has become very popular with the farmers. The Department gives technical advice on soil conservation matters and undertakes operations in specified areas in water-shed units. [147]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conservation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

[464]

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
647 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

[656]

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood 173
combined with the physical peculiarities of the country 564
would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars 175
as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that 564
"in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom 701
in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn [868]
the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their [186]
Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And, Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

> 'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
> By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India

Kerala AW11

Sirkar Girls' Primary Vernacular School.

871

—	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Standard IV	1	10	2	...	...	13
" III	10	3	2	..	5	20
" II (a)	14	6	1	...	1	22
" (b)	7	6	1	...	10	24
" I (a)	15	10	6	...	3	34
" (b)	2	19	2	...	13	36
Total ...	49	54	14	...	32	149

Nearly 75 per cent of the adults know how to read and write the vernacular, but those who know how to read and write English may be about 2 per cent. There are no pandits worth the name, nor specially educated persons, except the Nambudri Brahmans who study Sanskrit and the Vedas, but they are extremely exclusive and never mix with any people high or low. Their manners and customs would form an interesting study by themselves. [191]

The number of boys (of girls there is not one single instance) who have advanced to more advanced schools elsewhere are only a few. What with the poverty of the people and what with the rigour of the examinations only a few, perhaps fifty, in the place have been able to reach the Matriculation standard, and of these only 7 have been able to graduate, of whom two are B.L.'s. One is studying for medicine as an Hospital Assistant.

The school expenses are usually met by the students' fathers, and in the case of Nayars, uncles. But a father's purse, as I pointed out already, is not very deep. Of the seven graduates mentioned only three were able, with difficulty, to meet the high costs of modern education. The remaining four were assisted by their wives' dowries or by their fathers-in-law.

The choice of career for a candidate who has passed his Matriculation or Secondary School-leaving Certificate is very limited. Most of them engage themselves in the Government service for salaries sometimes as low as Rs. 9 per mensem, but more often Rs. 12 or Rs. 15 to start with, as clerks, teachers in the lower standards, etc. No one sees any other opening so sure and so lasting. In my judgment the modern literary education which stops with the Secondary School-leaving Certificate is not of much use. The student's energy is damped when he enters the world with his Secondary School-leaving Certificate, at least that is my experience in my village. But it is good perhaps that education is becoming less and less useful as an opening to lucrative employment; but the authorities also, in my humble opinion, should change the character of education or so modify it as to make it less literary and more technical, so that an anxious father may not look forward in vain to his son getting into some employment however mean or undignified. [873]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private
persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

165

Peringode.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Swelling.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Skin blotches.	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	1	...	4	...	3	1	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	5	...	1	...	...	3	1	...	...
" 10 " 20 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 30 " 40 ..	4	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	1
" 40 " 50 ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4
Total ...	30	...	3	4	6	3	4	1	5

Mathur.

Ages of dead.	Number of dead according to ages.	Dysentery.	Diarrhœa.	Hysteria.	Tuberculosis.	Rheumatism.
Below 1	2	...	1	1	...	...
Between 30 and 40	1	...	...	...	1	...
" 50 " 60	3	1	1	...	...	1
" 60 " above ...	5	...	5	...		...
Total ...	11	1	7	1	1	1

871 *Education.*—There is one elementary school in the amsam, but it is situated in Peringode desam. It is maintained by a wealthy jenmi of Peringode, who is not an enlightened man. It was started two years ago. It has a good building and sufficient accommodation for the children now on the roll. There were a large number at the commencement of the school when there were enthusiastic teachers who knew the value of education. But they were dispensed with as they soon got into the bad books of the jenmi by their independent attitude. Since then there has been a regular decline in attendance. The maximum limit reached was 210. But now the number on the roll is 103—84 boys and 19 girls. The school is now under weak hands and highly mismanaged. The masters are not efficient and their methods of teaching antiquated. They are themselves people whose knowledge is highly limited. Reading and writing the vernacular, simple rules of arithmetic, and geography are taught.

212 Five per cent of the adults are able to read the vernacular; four
191 per cent to write it. There are only two people able to read, write and speak English, two brothers.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

APPENDIX B.

648 [127] At the last moment I have received from Dr. E. Hultzsch, Ph.D., the Government Epigraphist, the following excerpt from the number of the *Epigraphia Indica* which is now under publication, and which with his permission I add to this monograph. It is interesting evidence of the old martial spirit of the Nayars:—

"According to an inscription of the 14th year of his reign (=A.D. 1083–84) the Chola King Kulôttuṅga I. 'conquered Kuḍamalai-nâḍu, *i.e.*, the Western hill country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the Nayars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.'—*South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 130.

Translation of an Inscription of the 14th Year of Kulôttunga I. at Tirukkaḷukkuṉram.

Line 27.—'While all the heroes [1] in the Western hill-country (Kuḍamalai-nâḍu) ascended voluntarily to heaven,' etc.—*South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 147.

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[1] In Malayâlam *châvoér* (Tamil *sâveru*) means 'one who has elected to die, *moriturus*.' [92]

8:Panikkar 1-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastalanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Pennim Putava Kotulithennullathumunaikkittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaicham.*"

This "essential feature," therefore, is most certainly a development of the
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AWll Kerala AWll
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585 184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, [586] but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a [581] marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 192 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *viváham* 197 is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the *marumakkathúyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *viváham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradánam* used in South Malabar.

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Pudamuri, *Vastradánam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidúram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 184 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word denoting marriage among the *marumakkathúyam* Nayars. It

588 178 174 [585] [613] Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 [174] ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] [184] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastadanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Pennin Putava Kotukkenavallathumunnikkittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaictam.*"

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[195] later half of the eighteenth century. It is, as a matter of fact, only within the last fifty years that cloth-giving as a synonym for marriage has come to be used widely, and even now it is used mostly by the ultra-refined, who consider it improper to utter the name of marriage in company. Therefore, to say that the Todas emigrated from the Malabar coast because of similarity in custom which, among the Nāyars at least, is a very late development, does not carry conviction.

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inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796
Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 788
Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564]
by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785]
and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783]
as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [185]
ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782]
assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

796 788 and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-
[785] locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

796 "Brief mention must be made of the festival held
788 at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost
184 corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan's Manual of Malabar. 'It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts "Nada-a Nada-a" of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of "Nada-a Nada-a" (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled
[195] at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

631 of Travancore and the Travancore legislative assembly, with headquarters in the capital, Trivandrum. On July 1st, 1949, by order of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi, the two southern states were integrated as the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Cochin retired from office, and the Maharaja of Travancore became for the duration of his life the first Rajpramukh of the new united state. The State now has its headquarters and government offices [5] at Trivandrum.

101 Despite these partly accidental political divi-
197 sions, the Malabar Coast is a discrete cultural area. Malayalam, (a Dravidian language strongly influenced in vocabulary by Sanskrit) which became distinguished as a deviant dialect of Tamil about the twelfth century, is the mother-tongue of all but a few immigrant Tamil groups in south Travancore. The area has also had some degree of political unity in the distant
174 past as the ancient kingdom of Kerala. The early history of Kerala is unknown; It was ruled by the Perumals, a succession of kings who seem to have come from outside Kerala and who may have been feudatories in the wider em-
175 pire of Chera. Their government came to an end sometime between the fourth and eleventh centuries A.D. After this Kerala was split into many petty kingdoms under indigenous Rajas of Nayar stock, having matrilineal descent. These continually fought each other and, from 1498, with the coming of the Portuguese and later the Dutch, English and French, made various alliances with these powers to gain their

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

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4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many au-
611 thors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hy-
564 pergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to dis-
[554] tinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by contrast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy.
[197] Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region ex-
[171] hibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from struc-
[184] tural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

101 The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people.
564 Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which
613 group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad,* used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan.*[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava,* "to do" in Sinhalese.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to [776]
Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at [613]
Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign [586]
that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [198]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is 421
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for [201]
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the [773]
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
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[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
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[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

595 realised, the women among the Nāyars not being
[585] restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Nāyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same
586 time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which from the frailty of nature domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man
581 another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off, and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age."

595 In a note on the Nāyars in the sixteenth century,
[201] Cæsar Fredericke writes as follows.* "These Nairi having their wives common amongst themselves, and when any of them goe into the house of any of these women, he leaveth his sworde and target at the door, and the time that he is there, there dare not be any so

* The Voyage and Travell of M. Cæsar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice, into the East Indies and beyond the Indies (1563). Translation. Hakluyt Voyages, V. 394.

hardie as to come into that house. The king's children 595
shall not inherite the kingdom after their father, because [201]
they hold this opinion, that perchance they were not begotten of the king their father, but of some other man, therefore they accept for their king one of the sonnes of the king's sisters, or of some other woman of the blood roiall, for that they be sure that they are of the blood roiall."

In his "New Account of the East Indies, (1727)" 595
Hamilton wrote: "The husbands," of whom, he said, 833
there might be twelve, but no more at one time, "agree very well, for they cohabit with her in their turns, according to their priority of marriage, ten days more or less according as they can fix a term among themselves, and he that cohabits with her maintains her in all things necessary for his time, so that she is plentifully provided for by a constant circulation. When the man that cohabits with her goes into her house he leaves his arms at the door, and none dare remove them or enter the house on pain of death. When she [428]
proves with child, she nominates its father, who takes care of his education after she has suckled it, and brought it to walk or speak, but the children are never heirs to their father's estate, but the father's sister's children are."

Writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, 595
Grose says * that "it is among the Nairs that principally prevails the strange custom of one wife being common to a number; in which point the great power of custom [152]
is seen from its rarely or never producing any jealousies or quarrels among the co-tenants of the same woman. Their number is not so much limited by any specific

* Travels to the East Indies.

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brāhmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. A woman without [851] shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [441] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[701] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnáttu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Brahmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purínic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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631 and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and plea-
643 sure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many
[644] of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the funda-
mental and long established laws of the country.

646 Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by
[203] right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were
[428] despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

643 The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were
646 conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuo-
578 sity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly
[687] sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called 536
Attakkathas (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kuthakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a [873] high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only the- [532] atrical property known in those days were figures clumsily [534] drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon intro- [176] duced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, [534] which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for [262] an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock [203] they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of [345] mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two [354] bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled [534] cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at [326] noon, and at night. Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
241 ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts, and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Sriparamêsvaranûm Srî Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâî Ezhunellumpôl Srî

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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771 mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika reli-
795 gion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to
776 worship Bhairi dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female, Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

776 The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

789 A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

• 212 It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire
789 possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books, the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

[113] * From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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magic. Fortunately, by the kindness of Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, these blanks have been filled up in the translation which he has obtained for me—from *one who knows.* 789 212

I will give here an excerpt from it, which is fairly representative of the sympathetic side of magic such as is common in Malabar. It is not, I think, concerned with sympathetic or symbolic magic exclusively, as, unless I am much mistaken, an evil spirit is here also invoked. It is within the domain of black magic, in which, I think, an evil spirit is always made to help if not to work the evil. 754 212

It describes how to cause certain pains in the body of another. A mantram is written (here, I think, an evil spirit is called up, though such does not appear to be said), on the stem of the kâitha plant. The stem should be the length of eight fingers. A figure representing the person to be injured is (also) drawn on the stem. A hole is bored to represent the navel. The mantram is repeated, and at each repetition a certain thorn (kâra mollu) is fixed into the limbs of the figure. The name of the person and of the star under which he was born are written on a piece of cadjan leaf, which is stuck into the hole representing the navel. The thorns are stuck in 21 times; that is, removed and replaced 21 times. Two magic circles are drawn below the nipple on the figure. The stem is then hung up in the smoke of the kitchen. A pot of toddy and some other accessories are procured, and with these certain rites are performed by the warlock. When he has concluded them, he moves three steps backwards. He shouts aloud thrice, fixing in again the thorns, thinking all the while of the particular mischief with which he would afflict the person to be injured.

When all this has been done, the person whose figure has been drawn on the stem and pricked with thorns, feels pain as if *he* were being pricked with thorns.

The grandha describes also how an enemy may be stuck dumb. The head of a dark coloured fowl is cut off. The head is then split, and a piece of cadjan on which are written a mantram, the name of the person to be injured, and the name of the star under which he was born, is stuck into the split head which is then sewn up, taking care to stitch the tongue to the beak. The head is then inserted in a certain fruit, which, after being tied up with a withe of a certain creeper nine spans in length, is deposited under the enemy's gateway. [825]

In it, too, we are told how to win over a man, or a quarrelsome husband; how to quiet refractory cows which

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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754 object to be milked; how to cure a headache; to prevent
512 bad dreams, and so on.

N.B.—A mantram must be spoken, breathed, whispered with extreme accuracy. There must be no omission or false accent. Anything of the kind, or wrong pronunciation, destroys its efficacy at once.

FAMOUS MAGICIANS OF MALABAR.

791 We will close this chapter on magic which, though painfully inadequate, is already rather too long for its purpose, by mention of some of the famous workers in the art. Those who are familiar with the west coast will at once recall to mind the names of three Brâhman families whose scions are famed throughout the land as possessors of stores of magic, and at the same time—so interwoven is magic with religion!—revered for their saintliness. The eldest member of one of these is said to be "an honoured guest throughout the length and breadth of Kêrala; and on certain State occasions in Trevandrum and elsewhere, his presence is indispensable." A well-known tradition relates how that magic came, so to speak, into the family. (It is not necessary to give the family name, even though it is a household word on the west coast).

773 Long ago in the days of the Perumals, a Brâhman and
791 his friend were belated in the Yakshi paramba (*yakshi*—
776 female demon, *paramba*—garden) near Trichur.* The place was dreary; nothing but palms around. Suddenly they were accosted by lovely damsels who asked them to pass the night under their roof, and soon they were lodged in a sumptuous house, each in a separate chamber. But in the night, the damsels who had, *Lorelei* fashion, attracted the travellers, resumed their demoniacal forms and ate the Brâhman. His friend they could not touch as he had on his person a grandha sacred to Bhagavati; but in the morning he found himself perched on the top of a palm tree underneath which lay the bones of his friend, the Brâhman.

The Brahman's widow gave birth to a son soon after the strange death of her husband. When the boy was eleven years of age, she related to him how he had been made fatherless. He vowed vengeance on the Yakshis and Gandharvas (male demons) and, like a sensible boy, set about preparation for his life-task. It was not long before he had mastered the Vedas and all learning, and having done so he retired to the jungle, where he was

* To this day people avoid this place at night.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

464 564 [212] The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population belong to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning [357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 [515] [771] Food. The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worshipping in the temple close at hand. Their meals are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between 262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice 264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular [272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for [556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation [562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 556 [357] In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the Infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

162 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural
464 and urban areas.
369 11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	Urban	Total
1. Population	12.9 (86%)	2.10 (14.0%)	15 0 (100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be
464 helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The im-
871 pression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of [212] the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.
[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of
[212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also
[871] very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is
[212] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography.
105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala
564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

[463] Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or
[565] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [213] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom [574] distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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464

has supplied many of the leading members of the learned professions."

Nāyi (dog).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

Nāyinar.—Nāyinar, Nāyanar, or Nainar, has been recorded as a section of Vellālas, who are thought to be descended from Jains who were converted to Hinduism, and as a title of Jains, Kaikōlans, Pallis, and Udaiyāns. Nāyanikulam occurs as a synonym of Bōya. The word Nāyinar is the same as Nāyaka, meaning lord or master, and the Saivite saints, being religious teachers, are so called, *e.g.*, Sundara Mūrti Nāyanar.

Nāyinda.—Recorded, in the Mysore Census Report, 1901, as the name of a caste, which follows the hereditary occupation of barber, and also of agriculture. "They are," it is there said, "members of the village hierarchy. They are paid, like the Agasa (washerman), in kind for their services. They are also fiddlers, and have the exclusive right of wind instruments. They are known as Kēlasiga or Hajām. They are both Saivites and Vaishnavites. A section of them wear the lingam, and follow Lingayetism. They are known as Silavanta. These people are largely in requisition at feasts, marriages, etc., when they form the music band." Kelasi is the name of a Canarese barber caste, and Hajām is a Hindustani word for barber.

Nedungādi.—This name, denoting a settlement in Nedunganād in the Walluvanād taluk of Malabar, has been returned as a sub-caste of Nāyars and Sāmantas.

Nekkāra.—A small class of washermen in South Canara. The women only are said to do the washing, while the men are employed as devil-dancers.

Nellika (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).—An illam of Tiyan.

Nellu (paddy, unhusked rice).—A gōtra of Kurni.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212] [191]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

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About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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165

Peringode.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Swelling.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Skin blotches.	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	1	..	4	...	3	1	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	5	..	1	...	...	3	1	...	...
" 10 " 20 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 30 " 40 ..	4	...	1	..	2	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	1
" 50 " 60 ...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Total ...	30	...	3	4	6	3	4	1	5

Mathur.

Ages of dead.	Number of dead according to ages.	Dysentery.	Diarrhœa.	Hysteria.	Tuberculosis.	Rheumatism.
Below 1	2	...	1	1	...	...
Between 30 and 40	1	...	...	...	1	...
" 50 " 60	3	1	1	...	...	1
" 60 " above ...	5	...	5	...		...
Total ...	11	1	7	1	1	1

871 *Education.*—There is one elementary school in the amsam, but it is situated in Peringode desam. It is maintained by a wealthy jenmi of Peringode, who is not an enlightened man. It was started two years ago. It has a good building and sufficient accommodation for the children now on the roll. There were a large number at the commencement of the school when there were enthusiastic teachers who knew the value of education. But they were dispensed with as they soon got into the bad books of the jenmi by their independent attitude. Since then there has been a regular decline in attendance. The maximum limit reached was 210. But now the number on the roll is 103—84 boys and 19 girls. The school is now under weak hands and highly mismanaged. The masters are not efficient and their methods of teaching antiquated. They are themselves people whose knowledge is highly limited. Reading and writing the vernacular, simple rules of arithmetic, and geography are taught.

212 191 Five per cent of the adults are able to read the vernacular; four per cent to write it. There are only two people able to read, write and speak English, two brothers.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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556 own most of the cultivable land in the village. This family draws an income of rather more than 10,000 paras of paddy from the village, husking it in the village and using it to feed a vast household of Nambudri priests and students, and maintain a choultry. It employs a Sanskrit pandit, whose time, as the demand for Sanskrit teaching diminishes, is partly taken up with the recital to the young students of Puranic stories to which the unseen ladies of the household listen eagerly.

312 *Water-supply.*—The water-supply is abundant and is obtained from deep wells and tanks. Water from deep wells alone is used for drinking purposes. Owing to the rocky nature of the subsoil some wells are dry in summer. Each house has one or more wells; it costs about Rs. 20 to bore an ordinary deep well. The quality of well water is excellent and is an asset to the village. All people [515] bathe every day in tanks, sometimes both in the morning and evening, especially Brahmans. The villagers are personally very clean and tidy.

871 *Education.*—One elementary school, started (very recently) and managed by the philanthropic Nambudri landlord of the place, gives free instruction to boys and girls of all castes up to the fifth standard. The school has two tiled buildings, one having an area of 72 by 20 feet, inside, and a verandah of the same length which is 9 feet broad, and the other having an area of 15 by 18 feet. Both are well ventilated and well situated and have a good appearance. There is a small flower garden in front. The school is provided with the necessary furniture, maps, and pictures, and is as far as it goes one of the best equipped of such schools. It teaches reading, writing and arithmetic, music, drawing and gardening. About the practical, as distinct from the cultural value of this education, one must say (like the Scotchman) "I have my doots." There are now no less than 5 "qualified" teachers; how one wishes that "qualified" meant much more than it does mean in educational language! They are so ill-paid (Rs. 7 to 15 per month) that it is hopeless to expect more capable men to be forthcoming or to take real interest in the work of the school. As it is, I know that at least one master is interested in the work. One hundred and twenty-six boys and 42 girls, I am informed, attend the school more or less regularly. These are drawn from all classes, except the very lowest like Cherumas and Paraiyas. The vast majority however are caste Hindus—all the girls are—and come from the Nayar and Brahman families. One could wish for greater regularity in their attendance. But they complain of having work to do at home, in assisting their parents, or they are sometimes too hungry to attend school. They are as a rule too poor to buy their own books or slates and these have to be provided by the school. Numerous prizes of books, slates, etc., are given by liberal villagers and the manager every year, to encourage the pupils to persist and to attract others. The school is steadily growing.

The average duration of school life is about four years. Many 871 students leave before that period owing to the necessity of working for their livelihood.

●212 About 18 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular. This

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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includes hardly any females. Some 12 per cent can write the vernacular. Nearly one per cent can talk and read and write English. There are some ten pandits or others who have made a special study of grammar, logic and rhetoric, medicine, astronomy and astrology, all according to Sanskrit works. Two are able Sanskrit scholars, both Brahmans. All the Brahman scholars—some four in all—are well versed in Vedic lore. But no one cares nowadays for such learning, and in consequence their scholarship is miserably inadequately rewarded. They have given up the idea of bringing up their sons in their own fashion and instead send them to English schools. There is one boy in Madras in the Presidency College and some eight others in colleges in Calicut and Palghat, reading in the High School or college classes. 871 [212]

Most of the Brahman boys proceed to advanced schools; there are about ten such now. No Brahman girls proceed to higher schools. But with the advent of an elementary school in the village, they attend that. Formerly they learnt at home or in pial schools with boys. Social difficulties stand in the way of their advanced study. Non-Brahman boys also now go in small numbers to advanced schools. They number not more than a dozen, and none of them has reached a high standard.

One or two of the more advanced students get scholarships covering the school fees; all of them manage with great difficulty to defray their expenses, by borrowing money at high rates of interest, by starting what are called "Kuris," i.e., loans which are paid back by instalments; by selling any property they possess, etc. There is no one in the village who can easily maintain his son at school. Fathers, however, spend their all on their sons' education, hoping that they will get remunerative employment afterwards. [426]

A few boys from the village who have passed through secondary schools have obtained small jobs; none has a good situation. Poorly paid schoolmasters, railway employees and clerks make up the list of the small number of such persons—not more than a dozen. It is more and more difficult for persons who have not got high educational qualifications to get suitable employment. Boys of the village who have received a secondary education and cannot proceed further complain of getting no satisfactory work and having to stay at home or return to their old occupations, which they have very likely neglected and forgotten during their school life. So farmers complain that such education is no good to their sons and we can say nothing in reply, unless we can guarantee situations for the educated. "What is the use of all this fine education," they ask, "if it does not procure a living and makes the boys unfit for what work they know? We would much rather keep them at home to stick to that work and earn a living." How can one urge the cultural and other benefits of education in the face of this practical argument? The quality and kind of education must be improved, made more practical and a better preparation for life.

There are some private libraries of Sanskrit books and palm-leaf manuscripts with the pandits numbering perhaps some 500 in all. The school has a little library where magazines (in the vernacular) and books (English and vernacular) to the number of about 100 are kept. Some of the more advanced students—there are only two or three—have small libraries of English books, 217

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952) 1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district-chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new-moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 881
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supâri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 575
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
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217
656
[586]

therein laid down, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father, respectively, and to succeed to half his self-acquired property, if he dies intestate; while the parties to such a sambandham cannot register a second sambandham during its continuance, that is, until it is terminated by death or by a formal application for divorce in the Civil Courts. The total number of sambandhams registered under the Act has, however, been infinitesimal, and the reason for this is, admittedly, the reluctance of the men to fetter their liberty to terminate sambandham at will by such restrictions as the necessity for formal divorce, or to undertake the burdensome responsibility of a legal obligation to maintain their wife and offspring. If, as the evidence recorded by the Malabar Marriage Commission tended to show, 'a marriage law in North Malabar, and throughout the greater part of South Malabar, would merely legalise what is the prevailing custom,' it is hard to see why there has been such a disinclination to lend to that custom the dignity of legal sanction." * The following applications to register sambandhams under the Act were received from 1897 to 1904:—

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187
656

—	Nayars.	Tiyans.	Others.	Total.
1897	28	6	2	36
1898	8	2	4	14
1899	8	2	4	14
1900	8	..	9	17
1901	3	...	1	4
1902	...	...	...	...
1903	2	...	...	2
Total ...	57	10	20	87

* Gazetteer of Malabar.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for
217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

538 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth*, *ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

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217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

624 *Village administration.*—There is no panchayat. There seems to be scope for one, and educated men are not wanting. The general administration of the village is in the hands of the village munsif or adhikari, who is assisted by the karnam. The adhikari represents the Government in all matters. The village 625 officers can send for the police from the nearest police station— 674 4 miles away. There is no regular police quartered in the village. But there is no need for any. The villagers are not prone to criminal acts and nuisances are not committed. The villagers are terribly afraid of the police too. Above the village officers is the Tahsildar of the taluk, who checks all their acts. Occasionally the Tahsildar or his deputy pays a visit to the village and is warmly welcomed by the prominent landlords. Revenue Inspectors and Land Records Tahsildars also visit the village to verify and check the village accounts. There has been no serious crime of any sort within recent years. Petty thefts are occasionally heard of particularly when corn is very dear and many of the poor actually starve.

691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

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5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

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5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon. [232]

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5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries. [523]

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture. 433* 228

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with garden crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultivation of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new cloths to women after menstruation, but my information on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the goldsmith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only. 796 564 [294] [326]

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple; Vannân bringing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day. [293]

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword. 796 326 226 564

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the 796 564 [752] [482] [326]

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (*i*) and (*ii*) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [171] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [462] [511] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25).[2] Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[2] [Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ana]

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 199 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [874] [494] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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*433 5.23 One of the reasons for the poor development of culture fisheries is the absence of suitable species of fish in the State. However, organized fish culture in fresh waters has been introduced recently. The varieties of fish stocked are Pearlspot, Tilapia, Mullets, all collected locally and major carps obtained from Madras, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal.

DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS OF FISHERIES

*433 5.24 Fisheries hold a prominent place in the economy of Kerala. Their basic importance arises on account of three factors (*i*) in a food deficit State like that of Kerala, the shortfall in the local output of paddy can be counter-balanced to a large extent by increased consumption of fish. Being rich in proteins, they can form a valuable supplement to tapioca which is deficient in protein. In fact, a combination of rice, tapioca and fish can form a well balanced diet; (*ii*) some of the important species found in Kerala, e.g., prawns and shrimps are very good foreign exchange earners; and (*iii*) in addition, fishing is a source of livelihood for a large section of the population. The object of fishery development programmes should be to aim at a progressive increase in the catch of fish with a view to promote its consumption within the State as well as to enhance the foreign exchange earnings through the export of Prawns and the other valuable species.

Marine Fisheries

*433 5.25 Considerable scope exists for the development of marine fisheries in the State. For increasing production from off-shore waters more trawlers and other large vessels will have to be operated. While production from the coastal waters could be raised substantially by operating mechanized boats, more trawlers and other vessels will be necessary for increasing the catch from off-shore waters. Introduction of mechanized boats would call for the provision of adequate docking and navigational facilities.

Off-shore Fisheries

5.26 The potentialities of the off-shore fisheries are yet to be determined. Some of the richest Prawn grounds of the world are located off Kerala coast, and Prawns caught there are of excellent quality. Besides Prawns, fairly large quantities of other valuable species are also caught in the off-shore waters. It may, therefore, be useful to undertake shrimp and purse-sienning. It will also be desirable to operate one or two vessels for Tuna fishing on an experimental basis. Tuna is at present landed in small quantities, but it is believed that there are good prospects of large catches in the off-shore and more distant waters. Since both bull-trawling and other trawling have proved almost equally successful in the Kerala waters, it will be desirable to continue and enlarge these operations further.

5.27 The fishing pressure in the off-shore waters of Kerala is at present negligible. Judging by the intensity of fishing in many other parts of the world, it seems likely

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

●226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
647 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be espe-
655 cially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

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Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks,[48] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the [312]
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[48] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 269.

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 177 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [874] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them.

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26.

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon.

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species.

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries.

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrum, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them.

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DEVELOPMENT PROSPECTS OF FISHERIES

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Off-shore Fisheries

5.26 The potentialities of the off-shore fisheries are yet to be determined. Some of the richest Prawn grounds of the world are located off Kerala coast, and Prawns caught there are of excellent quality. Besides Prawns, fairly large quantities of other valuable species are also caught in the off-shore waters. It may, therefore, be useful to undertake shrimp and purse-sienning. It will also be desirable to operate one or two vessels for Tuna fishing on an experimental basis. Tuna is at present landed in small quantities, but it is believed that there are good prospects of large catches in the off-shore and more distant waters. Since both bull-trawling and other trawling have proved almost equally successful in the Kerala waters, it will be desirable to continue and enlarge these operations further.

5.27 The fishing pressure in the off-shore waters of Kerala is at present negligible. Judging by the intensity of fishing in many other parts of the world, it seems likely

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

that the addition of about 35 trawlers, 50 medium-sized boats and one or two Tuna boats may not have any adverse effect on the resources. However, it is advisable to proceed cautiously in this matter. It is, therefore, suggested that during the next five years only 15 trawlers, 20 medium-sized boats and one Tuna boat be put into operation. If the suggested operations prove successful, the number of off-shore fishing vessels can be increased by another 20 trawlers, 30 medium-sized boats and a few Tuna boats during the Fourth Plan.

5.28 For the present trawlers like Japanese bull-trawlers operating in the off-shore waters of Maharashtra may be employed in Kerala too. The cost of such a trawler with the necessary gear and equipment including navigational and fish finding aids is expected to be Rs. 500,000. The investment in the Third Plan period, for putting into operation 15 such trawlers will be about Rs. 75 lakhs.

5.29 It is expected that the total landing of each of the proposed trawlers will not be less than 700 tons per annum. On account of large proportion of prawns and other quality fishes landed by the off-shore fishing vessels, the value of the catch of a trawler may be estimated at Rs. 210,000 and that of the 15 trawlers about Rs. 30 lakhs.

5.30 For shrimp trawling, purse-seinning and gile netting, medium-sized boats of 50 to 60 feet in overall length, fitted with 80 to 100 H.P. engines may be suitable. A Tuna boat may have to be 120 feet or more in length with a gross tonnage of 250-300. The capital cost of 20 medium-sized boats and a Tuna boat would be about Rs. 45 lakhs. On a rough estimate, the catches would come up to 3,000 tons valued at about Rs. 9 lakhs. The total capital cost for all the vessels would thus be Rs. 1.2 crores, and the anticipated additional annual production by the end of the Third Plan about 12,000 tons valued at Rs. 39 lakhs. The additional investment for the new vessels proposed for the Fourth Plan would come to Rs. 1.75 crores, and the additional production by the end of 1970-71 to about 19,000 tons valued at Rs. 57 lakhs. Thus, the total capital cost of developing the off-shore fisheries during the next decade would be about Rs. 2.95 crores and the total annual additional production would be of the order of 32,000 tons, valued at Rs. 96 lakhs. A total crew of about 850 will be necessary.

5.31 As far as possible commercial off-shore fishing should be undertaken by private companies in collaboration with foreign fishing interests. Such collaboration will not only save the foreign exchange necessary for the purchase of the fishing vessels, gears and other equipment, but it would also provide valuable opportunities for the training of Indian personnel.

Coastal Fisheries

5.32 Introduction of mechanized fishing in the State would substantially increase the output from coastal fisheries. In addition, encouraging results are expected from a more extensive use of improved fishing gear. Mechanization of fishing will require several ancillary facilities like berthing, landing, preservation, marketing, etc. A 22 feet mechanized boat yields about 60 per cent and a 25 feet boat about 110 per cent larger catch as compared with the catch by non-mechanized boats.

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*433 228 435 154 5.33 The introduction of about 1,600 mechanized boats during the next decade is not likely to subject Kerala's fishing grounds to undue pressure. A beginning may be made with 600 such boats during the Third Plan. The cost of a new mechanized boat (engine, fishing gear and equipment) would be about Rs. 29,000. It is desirable to continue with the present pattern of financial help to the fishermen for boats and gears in the form of loans and subsidies for some time to come.[1] A subsidized mechanized boat would cost about Rs. 19,000. This amount should be advanced to the fishermen by the Government as a long-term loan. On this basis, the total capital cost of putting 1,600 mechanized boats into operation during the next 10 years will be of the order of Rs. 4.64 crores (Rs. 1.76 crores as subsidy and Rs. 2.88 crores as loan). The consequential annual production is expected to be of the order of 30,000 tons by the end of the Third Plan, and 80,000 tons by the end of the Fourth Plan. The value of the additional production of 80,000 tons will be Rs. 2 crores.

*433 228 5.34 These mechanized boats should be operated from a select number of Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, each centre being provided with such basic facilities for the fishing industry as the supply of oils and lubricants, refrigeration, processing, etc. The establishment of a number of such Integrated Centres should be the utilimate aim. The Indo-Norwegian Project has already developed an Integrated Centre at Neendakara. About 15 of these centres may be established during the next two Plans. Among other places, Quilon, Alleppey, Cochin, Azhikode, Ponnani, Beypore, Tellichery, Cannanore and Balliapatam would provide good sites for developing such centres.

5.35 The introduction of 1,600 mechanized boats will create employment opportunities directly for about 6,400 fishermen. In order to obviate the unemployment situation, the Government may undertake a programme of supplying about 6,000 indigenous boats which will create employment for about 22,000 fishermen by the end of the Fourth Plan. The average cost of an indigenous boat with the necessary gear would be Rs. 2,000 (Rs. 1,000 for the craft and an equivalent amount for the gear). A subsidy of 25 per cent on the cost of the boat and another 33⅓ per cent on the cost of gear may be given to the fishermen. The total capital cost on 6,000 boats would be about Rs. 1.2 crores. The additional catch from these indigenous boats is expected to be of the order of 60,000 tons per annum by the end of 1970-71, valued at Rs. 1.5 crores.

5.36 The existing boats can increase their catches considerably if they are provided with better fishing gear. At present there are about 22,000 indigenous crafts in the coastal waters of Kerala. Initially, at least a third of these boats should be supplied with better gear. The cost of such a programme would be about Rs. 85 lakhs. At the present rate of subsidy of 33⅓ per cent, the Government's share in this cost will be Rs. 28 lakhs. An additional production of 25,000 tons of fish valued at Rs. 62.5 lakhs may be expected by the end of the Fourth Plan.

5.37 Thus, the development of coastal fisheries would entail a total investment of about Rs. 7 crores, of which Rs. 3 crores would be required during the Third Plan. As a result of this investment, an additional annual production of 80,000 tons valued

[1] A subsidy of 50 per cent is given on the cost of engine, 25 per cent on that of hull, and 33⅓ per cent on that of gear and tackle.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 . AW11 Kerala AW11

at Rs. 2 crores may be expected by 1965-66 and of 165,000 tons valued at Rs. 4.6 crores by 1970-71.

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INLAND FISHERIES

Estuarine and Backwater Fisheries

5.38 The catch of fish from the backwaters could be increased considerably by establishing fish farms on a large scale. Out of the 300 square miles of backwaters, the area that can be profitably converted into fish farms is not known. It is however, believed that it will not be difficult to develop about 15 square miles of this area.

5.39 Areas close to the entrance to the sea can be partly reclaimed by putting up embankments and then converted into fish farms. The fish tanks thus formed can be filled with water from the sea at high tides through channels fitted with sluice and wire gauze shutters. It would be desirable to encourage the private fish farmers and their cooperatives to take up this work on a large scale with the help of Government loans and subsidies. The total initial capital cost for this purpose will be of the order of Rs. 1 crore, of which Rs. 50 lakhs will be required during the Third Plan. The yield per acre of the existing fish farms is about 250 lbs. per annum. But with proper stocking of suitable species, the yield can be raised to 400 lbs. per acre. On this basis, the total output from 15 square miles would be of the order of 1,800 tons valued at Rs. 9 lakhs by the end of the Fourth Plan.

Reservoir Fisheries

5.40 Reservoir fisheries in Kerala also have scope for development. Since the wild stocks comprise mostly cat fish, minor carp and other uneconomic varieties, the reservoirs will have to be stocked intensively with fingerlings of more valuable species. At present there are about 15,000 acres of reservoirs available for fish culture, and an additional area of the same order is likely to become available during the Third Plan. In view of the existing dearth of fish seed, an area of not more than 23.16 square miles may be intensively stocked during the Third Plan. This may be raised to 46.32 square miles by the end of the Fourth Plan. The annual fish seed requirement for stocking 23.16 square miles by the end of the Third Plan will be of the order of 15 millions, increasing to 30 millions by the end of the Fourth Plan. A number of fish seed farms where induced breeding can be undertaken, will have to be established with facilities for rearing the seed into fingerlings. The capital cost of such farms and of five vehicles for transporting the fish seed, etc., would be about Rs. 12 lakhs, half of which could be implemented in the Third Plan. The total annual production of fish from 30,000 acres of reservoirs is expected to be of the order of 2,000 tons, valued at Rs. 9 lakhs.

5.41 Although fish seed production and the stock and management of reservoirs would be the responsibility of the State Fisheries Department, their exploitation should

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*433 228 be entrusted to Fishermen's Cooperatives. This can be done either on lease or on royalty basis. The Department should, however, provide the necessary technical guidance for exploitation work.

5.42 Effective exploitation of the reservoirs may present some problems on account of the depth of water and presence of obstrcutions at the bottom. In reservoirs still under construction or planned for the future, all the obstructions like tree stumps, boulders, etc., should be removed before the water is impounded.

GENERAL MEASURES

5.43 An increase in the output of fish or for that matter of any other commodity is not an end in itself. Adequate measures have to be taken to distribute these to the final consumers. A proper distribution system assumes a much greater importance in case of a perishable commodity like fish. The three important aspects of the distribution system viz., refrigeration, transport and marketing are discussed in what follows.

*433 228 254 *Refrigeration*

5.44 The provision of adequate refrigeration facilities is important for the preservation and marketing of fish. The present production of ice in Kerala is about 100 tons. The bulk of this production is consumed in restaurants and other similar establishments ; the quantity available for the fishery industry is far from adequate. The State Fisheries Department has established four ice and cold storage plants, two of them having ice and cold storage equipment only, and the remaining two having freezing facilities as well. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has a freezing plant at Vizhinjom. The Indo-Norwegian Project also runs an ice plant, and the ice produced there is utilized for the marketing of fish undertaken by the Project as well as by the fishermen of the Project area. Nearly 814 tons of ice were produced at this plant in 1958-59. Two more ice plants, one each at Chowghat and Azhikode, with a capacity of 5 tons of ice per day and ice and storage capacity of about 40 tons, are expected to be established shortly.

5.45 The existing refrigeration facilities in Kerala will have to be expanded considerably during the Third and Fourth Plans. It will be desirable to set up ice and cold storage plants at all production centres, especially at the proposed Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where the bulk of the sea fish will be landed. Important consumption centres like Kottayam, Trivandrum, etc., will also require these facilities. It is estimated that about 10 ice and cold storage plants will be required during the Third Plan and another 15 during the Fourth Plan. The total capital expenditure for the installation of these 25 ice and cold storage plants will be of the order of Rs. 75 lakhs of which about Rs. 30 lakhs will be in the Third Plan. It is worthwhile considering the grant of some subsidy to the prospective operators for the installation of such plants. Cooperative societies should also be encouraged to set up and operate these plants.

*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme
647 suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
655 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be especially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

will be essential to provide a properly trained and experienced Fisheries Development Officer in overall charge of each Integrated Centre for coordinating its activities.

Training

5.57 At present there are three centres to train fishermen in the State. The training course which extends over six months aims mainly at training the fishermen in the operation, servicing and maintenance of marine engines, making of nets and tackles, improved fishing methods and the fundamentals of navigation.

5.58 These centres are located at Neendakara, Ernakulam, and Beypore. The first two centres can train 20 fishermen each in a batch, and the last can train 15. So far, 272 fishermen have been trained at the Ernakulam and Beypore centres (run by the Fisheries Department), of whom 150 are now actually employed in mechanized fishing. At the Neendakara centre, which is run by the Indo-Norwegian Project, 121 fishermen have undergone training so far.

5.59 The programme suggested for the next 10 years would require a crew of about 6,400. This would involve a huge training programme and entail a heavy burden on the State. Arrangements can at best be made to provide training facilities to about half the number. The rest can receive on-the-job training from the trained fishermen. As about 1,200 trained fishermen would be required by the end of the Third Plan, not only will the capacity of the existing training centres have to be increased but also at least five new centres will have to be established.

5.60 The operation of the proposed medium-sized boats will also require the services of trained skipper-cum-master fisherman. Either a special centre for training skippers should be established in the State, or the facilities at the Government of India Deep-Sea Fishing Stations at Bombay and other places should be expanded. For operating trawlers, the State Government should enlist the collaboration of foreign fishing companies in order to obtain along with the fishing vessels, the services of trained technical personnel. At the same time efforts should also be made to train Indian personnel in the various fields by appointing them as understudies to the foreign technicians or by sending them abroad. The training of Fisheries Development Officers, Marketing Officers and other high level technical staff can be arranged at the Institute of Fisheries Education, which is proposed to be started by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture. For training the middle and lower level staff, it is desirable to establish a Fisheries Training Institute in the State.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

5.61 A substantial part of investment will be on mechanization of boat craft and acquisition of trawlers for off-shore fishing. These two items alone will absorb Rs. 6.35 crores out of a total investment of Rs. 10.72 crores.[1] Details of investment on various items are given in Table 27. This does not include expenditure on deve-

[1] The outlay allocated for the Third Plan is Rs. 4.5 crores, which will leave a balance of Rs. 6.75 for the Fourth Plan, if suggestions made in this Report are to be implemented.

[Table 27, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Ed/yt]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 lopment of fishing harbours, landing and berthing facilities, rail transport, training,
654 welfare work, cooperatives, research, etc. A considerable part of the expenditure will
228 be in the form of loan to fishermen recoverable in course of time.

5.62 As a result of this programme the additional production of fish by the end of the Fourth Plan can be expected to be of the order of 200,800 tons per annum, valued at Rs. 5.26 crores. These programmes for fishing development would create additional employment opportunities for about 33,000 persons in Kerala during the next decade. This figure, however, does not include employment opportunities which would be created by the development of culture fisheries, marketing, net-making, transportation, supervision and training.

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she-buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The corresponding all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularise them.

231 232 [154]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 23 [464] Although animal husbandry programmes do not create any significant increase in direct employment opportunities, they do help in reducing the degree of unemployment situation within the family. Moreover, some of the animal husbandry activities such as piggery, poultry-rearing, and bee-keeping need little investment to start with and are quick to yield returns.

3.9 Development of animal husbandry on commercial lines by individual rural families may not be possible without adequate State action. Aid should be given for implementing measures of improvement with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of the livestock. The aid could be given int he form of easy loans, development of marketing and processing facilities, sale of feed and fodder at reasonable prices, etc. These are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs separately for cattle and other livestock.

CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

*433 231 232 3.10 The output of milk from cattle and buffaloes as well as draught capacity can be improved through a scientific breeding programme and the prevention and control of diseases. As stated previously, cattle found in the State are of non-descript types. Unless they are imparted with high productivity genes, any amount of improvement in feeding and rearing will not be of much use beyond a particular stage. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on improving the breed of cattle and buffaloes. There are two ways of tackling this problem: (*i*) selective breeding and (*ii*) mass upgrading.

3.11 The former is not feasible, as there may not be enough cattle to start with if rigid norms are employed for selection. There will also be the problem of finding suitable means of disposal of the useless cattle. The practical solution under these circumstances would be to resort to a scheme of mass upgrading according to which the local bulls are to be replaced with bulls of some outside breed, suited to local needs and conditions. To be really effective, the upgrading programme should be made to cover the entire State and should stretch over a span of at least four decades. During this period, no bulls, other than the approved ones, should be allowed to sire.

*433 231 232 654 3.12 The value of the upgrading programme was realized in Kerala a few decades ago. The scheme was introduced on a large scale during the First Plan by starting five Key Village Schemes. The number was raised to 14 in the Second Plan. It is estimated that by 1965-66, it would be possible to cover about a quarter of the eligible milch cattle under the Key Village and Artificial Insemination Schemes. But even though the programme is well conceived and implemented, the NCAER team was left with the impression that the scheme had not made any significant impact in the improvement of cattle and buffalo breeds in the State. Apart from the inadequate coverage of the programme, non-elimination of the local or scrub bulls is a serious problem. For success and effectiveness of the upgrading programme, it is, therefore, necessary, first, to implement the programme intensively all over the State and secondly, competition from the local bulls should also be eliminated by compulsorily castrating all the males before they reach the fourth year of their life. These suggestions may be implemented during the Third Plan.

*433 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such
231 as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.
234

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there
235 are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin
474 area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all
235 the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view
439 of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans
23 from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great
452 help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.30
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	5.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production e ll go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its l f. Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·75 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[Text continues on p. 67]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 17

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT FROM ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN KERALA

23
435

(Rs. lakhs)

Item	*1955-56*	*1956-57*	*1957-58*
Milk consumed as such	531	540	561
Other milk products	593	604	608
Beef	56	58	62
Buffalo flesh	18	19	20
Mutton	93	97	98
Hides and Skins	29	30	31
Bones and Horns	6	7	7
Eggs	84	121	136
Poultry	72	78	84
Dung	321	381	394
Increment in stock	96	113	116
Miscellaneous	4	4	3
GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT	*1903*	*2032*	*2120*

SOURCE: *Regional Income of Kerala* (At current prices) 1955-56 to 1957-58: Government of Kerala (1960). [113]

TABLE 18

LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF KERALA—MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1951 AND 1956

231

Category	*Total*		*Percentage of increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1956 over 1951*
	1951	*1956*	
Cattle	2,151,522	2,510,376	+ 16.7
Buffaloes	444,368	487,553	+ 9.7
Sheep	423,513	97,820	— 76.9
Goats	423,345	955,570	+ 125.7
Horses and Ponies	518	1,690	+ 226.2
Mules	14	2	— 85.7
Donkeys	689	1,415	+ 105.2
Pigs	117,932	113,711	— 3.6
TOTAL LIVESTOCK	*3,561,901*	*4,168,237*	+ *17.1*
Fowls	3,854,519	6,462,799	+ 67.6
Ducks	263,147	322,083	+ 26.2
Others	..	161	..
TOTAL POULTRY	*4,117,666*	*6,785,045*	+ *64.7*

235

SOURCE: *Statistical Outline of Kerala State, 1960.* [113]

[Pp. 280-282 not Processed]

231, 113 Kerala AW11

[For a general discussion of animal husbandry in India, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. 228-231.]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
[825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[231] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
613 been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
574 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
783 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
[824] place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
[431] bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
613 the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

[783] Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed
[825] that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be
776 remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out
825 of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles
[231] seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
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THE NAYAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pûjas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kôlamezhuthum Pattum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
796 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
[534] man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[532] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakâli on the floor. The *Velichapâd*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapâd* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tâlam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapâds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sâsta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralôlpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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824 765 782 613 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank [825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the [775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must [231] not eat the offerings.

765 783 613 574 During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [434] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

231 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

*433 23 [464] programmes do not create any significant increase in direct employment opportunities, they do help in reducing the degree of unemployment situation within the family. Moreover, some of the animal husbandry activities such as piggery, poultry-rearing, and bee-keeping need little investment to start with and are quick to yield returns.

3.9 Development of animal husbandry on commercial lines by individual rural families may not be possible without adequate State action. Aid should be given for implementing measures of improvement with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of the livestock. The aid could be given int he form of easy loans, development of marketing and processing facilities, sale of feed and fodder at reasonable prices, etc. These are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs separately for cattle and other livestock.

CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

*433 231 232 3.10 The output of milk from cattle and buffaloes as well as draught capacity can be improved through a scientific breeding programme and the prevention and control of diseases. As stated previously, cattle found in the State are of non-descript types. Unless they are imparted with high productivity genes, any amount of improvement in feeding and rearing will not be of much use beyond a particular stage. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on improving the breed of cattle and buffaloes. There are two ways of tackling this problem: (i) selective breeding and (ii) mass upgrading.

3.11 The former is not feasible, as there may not be enough cattle to start with if rigid norms are employed for selection. There will also be the problem of finding suitable means of disposal of the useless cattle. The practical solution under these circumstances would be to resort to a scheme of mass upgrading according to which the local bulls are to be replaced with bulls of some outside breed, suited to local needs and conditions. To be really effective, the upgrading programme should be made to cover the entire State and should stretch over a span of at least four decades. During this period, no bulls, other than the approved ones, should be allowed to sire.

*433 231 232 654 3.12 The value of the upgrading programme was realized in Kerala a few decades ago. The scheme was introduced on a large scale during the First Plan by starting five Key Village Schemes. The number was raised to 14 in the Second Plan. It is estimated that by 1965-66, it would be possible to cover about a quarter of the eligible milch cattle under the Key Village and Artificial Insemination Schemes. But even though the programme is well conceived and implemented, the NCAER team was left with the impression that the scheme had not made any significant impact in the improvement of cattle and buffalo breeds in the State. Apart from the inadequate coverage of the programme, non-elimination of the local or scrub bulls is a serious problem. For success and effectiveness of the upgrading programme, it is, therefore, necessary, first, to implement the programme intensively all over the State and secondly, competition from the local bulls should also be eliminated by compulsorily castrating all the males before they reach the fourth year of their life. These suggestions may be implemented during the Third Plan.

3.13 The Sindhi bulls which have been selected for the upgrading work in Kerala are scarce these days, and it may be difficult to procure the required number for the proposed programme. The number of bulls needed would, however, be much smaller under artificial insemination than under natural service. The former programme should, therefore, be preferred to the latter. As the State is well served with roads and has a good and efficient transport system, three or four central semen collecting centres would be needed to cover the entire State provided the product is quickly dispatched and properly stored while in transit. The centres may be located at Trivandrum, Trichur, Calicult and Palghat. Bulls should be provided for natural service in remote and out of the way places. The proposed breeding programme would need buildings, equipment and livestock for artificial insemination centres. These programmes would require an investment of Rs. 8.76 lakhs over the Third and Fourth Plan periods. 433* 231 232

Prevention and Control of Diseases

3.14 Prevention of diseases peculiar to livestock and a machinery for their control is a pre-requisite for proper development of animal husbandry. Under the present circumstances, where there is a heavy incidence of disease and high mortality rates, any enterprise in the field of animal husbandry is fraught with high risks ; and farmers are hesitant to hazard investment on any animal husbandry business. The major share of burden will naturally have to be borne by the Government. 433* 232

3.15 For effective prevention and control of diseases, it is necessary to have an adequate number of well-staffed veterinary dispensaries and hospitals. These institutions should, as far as possible, render free treatment. Under the conditions prevailing in Kerala, it is considered necessary to have at least two veterinary hospitals in every taluk and one dispensary or first-aid clinic in every Panchayat. Measured by this norm, the existing facilities are utterly inadequate. While there are 55 taluks and 892 Panchayats in Kerala, the total number of hospitals and dispensaries,[1] at the end of 1958-59 were only 45 and 69 respectively. (Table 21)[2] 3.

3.16 Two factors are responsible for this situation : (*i*) shortage of personnel and (*ii*) paucity of funds. With the opening of the veterinary college at Trichur, the situation may be expected to improve with regard to the personnel, provided adequate funds are made available. The State should try to achieve the above norms by the end of the Fourth Plan. Investment on the proposed 20 additional hospitals and 723 dispensaries would be about Rs. 77.3 lakhs. [874]

POULTRY DEVELOPMENT

3.17 Though Kerala has the best developed commercial poultry industry in the country, conditions under which the birds are reared are far from satisfactory. The birds are not adequately fed, and consequently they resort to scavenging. A good 433* 235

[1] Includes Stockman's stations and Inspector's stations.

[2] In 1960 the numbers were 65 and 155 respectively.

3 [see p. 285, category 11b - = Analysis]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 235 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] [164] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 231 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 231 234 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs. (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter [269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

urban households and this is due to better management. Scientific goat-rearing should be encouraged in the State by educating the people about the techniques and economics of goat-rearing. For the sake of convenience and better implementation, goat development may form a part of the Key Village Programme. This would effect saving in costs and also reduce the need for additional personnel. Through this programme, the local stock can be upgraded with the desirable outside milk breeds as Bikaner or Jamunpari after studying their performance and suitability. 433* 231

Rearing of Pigs

3.22 Pig-rearing is not popular in Kerala, even though conditions such as climate and rainfall are favourable. The pig population has even fallen by 3.6 per cent during the period 1951–56. Piggery development did not receive any attention during the First and Second Plans and this, perhaps, is partly responsible for the decline of interest in pig-rearing in Kerala.

3.23 Pig-rearing needs to be encouraged in the State, as it is the quickest means of increasing meat production. But there has not been any research or studies on pig-rearing which could be applicable to the conditions prevailing in Kerala. It is suggested that the State should undertake research on these problems without any delay. In the meantime, this avocation may be developed on the lines suggested by the Department of Animal Husbandry for the Third Plan through the creation of piggery development blocks. In addition, the State should also provide certain facilities such as the supply of feed, provision of processing, grading, storage and marketing facilities and supply of credit on easy terms.

Supply of Feed

3.24 As a result of measures proposed for agricultural development, the production of cereals, pulses and oilseeds would increase by about 100 per cent during the next decade. Since livestock, especially the bovines, are fed on byproducts of agriculture (stalk, straw, husk, bran, etc.), the availability of basic feeds would also increase. Rice straw, the principal roughage in the State even may be surplus. Concentrates will, however, continue to be in deficit despite the large likely increase in the output of pulses and cereals. The situation of course, would change if oilcake, the byproduct of oil-crushing industry, is not allowed to move out of the State. This is a matter of all-India policy as the coconut oilcake is an important item that is marketed outside the State in large quantities and is even exported. Assuming, therefore, that situation regarding oilcakes does not alter, the State should do the needful towards making concentrates easily available to the farmers. This deficiency could partly be reduced by supplying concentrates (ready-to-feed mixtures) in dehydrated form. Different ready-to-feed mixtures should be evolved for cattle, poultry and other livestock. The composition and formulae for such mixtures should be worked out on the basis of nutritional experiments. In anticipation of demand for the mixtures, it is suggested that three ready-to-feed mixture factories of 200,000 tons capacity each, may be started in the State during the Third Plan. 433* 231 241 [439]

of these schemes is being expanded to handle 250 maunds per day during the Third Plan. Under these schemes, milk from the surrounding villages would be collected and pasteurized before bottling them for sale. The schemes will serve a two-fold purpose: (i) they will give incentive for a higher production of milk in the rural areas by offering fair prices and (ii) they will provide hygienic milk to the urban population at a reasonable price. The unscrupulous middleman will be eliminated by this process. 433* 234

3.29 The dairy development programme of this type needs to be taken up on a much larger scale than at present. This is necessary to provide an outlet for the likely increase in milk production and for making hygienic fluid milk available to the urban people. Owing to acute shortage of clean and pure milk in the urban areas, milk supply schemes of the type discussed above might prove a great success. It would be good if all the urban areas with a population of over 30,000 are served with such schemes. According to 1951 Census there were 13 towns in Kerala with a population exceeding 30,000. At the end of the Second Plan, 11 among these were still without any milk scheme. It is, therefore, suggested that these milk schemes should be organized in all these towns. The capacity, investment required, etc., for these schemes is given in Table 22.* [162]

3.30 Many of the dairy units proposed here may find it difficult to get sufficient quantities of milk from the surrounding areas owing to the poor yield of animals and low marketable surplus with the farmers. In order to justify collection, marketing and sales organization of even the smallest size, it is considered necessary to have a handling capacity of 150 maunds per day. In case sufficient milk is not available, which is likely to be the case at least in some centres, a part of the capacity may be utilized for bottling reconstituted milk. Reconstituted milk can be of various types depending upon the fomulae. Milk powder is a common ingredient in all the types. A survey of consumer preference and tastes may be conducted before choosing the type, and part of the demand for fluid milk may be met in this way. Such a survey is essential before embarking upon the actual production of reconstituted milk because the new product may meet considerable consumer resistance in its initial stages. Propaganda and other measures to popularize the use of reconstituted milk will also have to be taken up side by side.

3.31 In smaller towns, that is, those with less than 30,000 population, cooperatives for supply of milk, may be organized with consumers or producers. There were 12 such societies in 1958. These societies should be encouraged. [474]

3.32 Munnar is a region which possesses the potential for growth into a large scale commercial dairy farming centre. Many exotic cattle breeds[1] are thriving in the region. The performance of some of the herds maintained by a few sterling tea companies is said to be of a high order and compares favourably with that of similar herds maintained in the countries from which these cattle are imported. It is suggested that the Department of Animal Husbandry should further investigate the economic feasibility of commercial dairying in the Munnar region. If the investigation reveals prospects, the State may organize a few such dairy farms in the public 433* 231 234

[1] Jersey and Holstein.

* [Table 22 appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed – Ankahpur]

*433 23 234 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 235 434 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 235 439 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 23 452 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 in the following table :
245

Type of Plantation	Third Plan		Fourth Plan		Fifth Plan	
	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)
Teak	20,000	15.0	40,000	30.0	60,000	45.0
Softwood	15,000	15.0	30,000	30.0	50,000	50.0
Grassland Sholas[a] (Eucalyptus grandis)	10,000	75.0	15,000	102.5	—	—
Burma Bamboo[b]	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Cashewnut	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Casurina and Matchwood on Coastal Perrumbavur	1,000	2.0	2,000	4.0	3,000	6.0
Wattle	5,200	7.8	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	53,200	115.8	91,000	168.0	119,000	104.0

[a] All grassland sholas would be afforested by the end of the Fourth Plan.
[b] Most of these plantations in the Fourth and Fifth Plans will be in the private forests acquired in Malabar.

SOME TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS

*433 4.54 The existing logging techniques and modes of extraction entail a lot of wastage of timber. Since there is a general shortage of timber, supply of timber from the forest areas could be enhanced by incorporating some of the improvements disscussed below.

Proper Seasoning Facilities

4.55 A large amount of timber at present goes waste or is used as fuel. This could be more economically utilized if proper seasoning and preservation facilities are introduced. Seasoning and preservation plants should be encouraged in all areas where there is a concentration of saw mills. This would make possible utilization of a large variety of secondary timber through upgrading them and making them commercially profitable. Government departmental rules may have to be modified to insist on the use of seasoned timber in place of the more valuable teak timber in all Government construction works.

Better Logging Techniques

4.56 The present methods of logging need to be mechanized, especially as a good network of roads exists through which mechanical saws, etc., can be taken to the actual coupes. The techniques currently employed are antiquated and involve a lot of wastage. With improved techniques, the extent of wastage could be reduced. [231] The extraction of timber by elephants in Malabar should be continued as it has proved to be cheap and quite efficient.

TABLE 17

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT FROM ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN KERALA

23
435

(Rs. lakhs)

Item	*1955-56*	*1956-57*	*1957-58*
Milk consumed as such	531	540	561
Other milk products	593	604	608
Beef	56	58	62
Buffalo flesh	18	19	20
Mutton	93	97	98
Hides and Skins	29	30	31
Bones and Horns	6	7	7
Eggs	84	121	136
Poultry	72	78	84
Dung	321	381	394
Increment in stock	96	113	116
Miscellaneous	4	4	3
GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT	*1903*	*2052*	*2120*

SOURCE: *Regional Income of Kerala* (At current prices) 1955-56 to 1957-58: Government of Kerala (1960). [113]

TABLE 18

LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF KERALA—MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1951 AND 1956

231

Category	*Total*		*Percentage of increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1956 over 1951*
	1951	*1956*	
Cattle	2,151,522	2,510,376	+ 16.7
Buffaloes	444,368	487,553	+ 9.7
Sheep	423,513	97,820	— 76.9
Goats	423,345	955,570	+ 125.7
Horses and Ponies	518	1,690	+ 226.2
Mules	14	2	— 85.7
Donkeys	689	1,415	+ 105.2
Pigs	117,932	113,711	— 3.6
TOTAL LIVESTOCK	*3,561,901*	*4,168,237*	+ *17.1*
Fowls	3,854,319	6,462,799	+ 67.6
Ducks	263,147	322,085	+ 26.2
Others	..	161	..
TOTAL POULTRY	*4,117,466*	*6,785,045*	+ *65.1*

235

SOURCE: *Statistical Outline of Kerala State, 1960.* [113]

[Pp. 280-282 not Processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 19

NUMBER OF COWS AND SHE-BUFFALOES IN MILK PER THOUSAND POPULATION IN KERALA AND OTHER INDIAN STATES

State	*Number of cows and she-buffaloes in milk in 1956*	
	Total number	*Rate per thousand population of the State*
Andhra Pradesh	3,017,305	89
Assam	1,012,055	96
Bihar	2,592,908	63
Bombay	4,277,810	81
Jammu & Kashmir	318,105	666
Kerala	457,711	430
Madhya Pradesh	4,087,860	148
Madras	1,716,664	33
Orissa	1,950,792	91
Punjab	694,638	45
Rajasthan	2,175,132	123
Uttar Pradesh	5,149,353	150
West Bengal	1,428,996	76
Delhi	57,156	27
Himachal Pradesh	233,079	208
Manipur	32,394	52
Tripura	67,792	103
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1,416	35
ALL-INDIA	*31,808,171*	*89*

[231]
[234]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 20

CATTLE AND BUFFALOES IN KERALA (CATEGORIES) 1956

231

Categories	Cattle (in '000 numbers)	Buffaloes (in '000 numbers)	Total (in '000 numbers)
1. Males over 3 years	620	279	899
(i) Breeding	11	4	15
(ii) Working	571	268	839
(iii) Others	38	7	45
2. Females over 3 years	1003	163	1166
(i) Breeding			
(a) In milk	398	63	461
(b) Dry and not calves	577	65	642
(ii) Working	8	11	19
(iii) Miscellaneous	19	3	22
3. Young stock	814	94	1008
TOTAL	2536	515	3051

SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

[113]

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF VETERINARY INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA STATE (1958-59)

232
634

District	Hospitals	Dispensaries	Stockman's stations	Inspectors' stations
Trivandrum	5	3	..	..
Quilon	5	7	..	..
Alleppey	6	5	..	..
Kottayam	5	4	..	..
Ernakulam	9	12	..	..
Trichur	7	13	4	..
Palghat	5	8	..	8
Kozhikode	2	10	..	..
Cannanore	1	7	..	3
TOTAL	45	69	4	11

SOURCE: Director of Animal Husbandry, Trivandrum.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963, AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

*595 the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to
564 Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In con-
[361] trast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather
[342] miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs
[241] about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now
[231] also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

*595 We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged
[601] fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of
[574] hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the
[611] Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected,
[614] and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom
*595 they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple
427 *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-
293 mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work"
[464] (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and
*595 they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of
326 goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given
436 this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

[601] Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) =
[804] 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

243 Area yielding one crop—205·23 acres.
Area yielding two crops—448·01 acres.

There are a few acres yielding three crops, but only two crops are assessed.

There are different kinds of paddy, each having different periods of growth, and specially suited to particular soils. The fields are manured and in some cases slightly ploughed just before the rains in summer. The south-west monsoon usually begins in June and lasts for four months. As soon as the rain comes, lands are ploughed and paddy is sown in particularly favourable areas. Then all the fields of the farmer are well ploughed and manured; the seedlings are replanted over the whole area after a growth of twenty-eight days. Some kinds of paddy grow for sixty days, others eighty and ninety days. The system in which no replantation takes place is also in much vogue. The fields are protected from animal or bird pests; after a period of at most three months the paddy is mown by agricultural workers who separate the paddy from the stalks.

Another crop is also generally sown during the north-east monsoon season (October and November) which usually gives rain for about one month.

[407] The ploughs used are primitive and old-fashioned. The furrowing is done in this wise:—a flat piece of iron sharpened at one end is attached to a wooden frame with a handle; this handled frame is attached by means of a pole to a yoke which is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen or buffaloes; the worker then holds the handle and drives the oxen round and round the field until the whole field is well furrowed over. This is done *before* the heavy rain, when the ground is softened, but not under water. The sod is then crushed by means of sticks, this being generally done by females. The women walk in a row, beating the sod to and fro with heavy sticks held in one hand. After the field has been well watered by rains it is once more worked over by means of a log of wood (levelling board) drawn by oxen.

[412] The other agricultural implements used are the sickle, a big knife and spades.

231 *Stock.*—The following is the official census of the stock:—

Working oxen	245
Cows	289
Male buffaloes	361
Cow buffaloes	20
Young stock—	
Calves	169
Young buffaloes	7
Horses	2
Donkeys and mules	22
Sheep and goats	583

Oxen are used to drag carts, and for ploughing the fields. Most of the oxen here appear to be lean and weak; especially those used in ploughing. Cart-drawing oxen are better.

234 Cows are used for milking only, though the Muhammadans of the locality are not averse to eating beef now and then. The milk, buttermilk and ghee of the cow are in great demand especially among the Brahmans who cannot do without them; the lower

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII
231
241

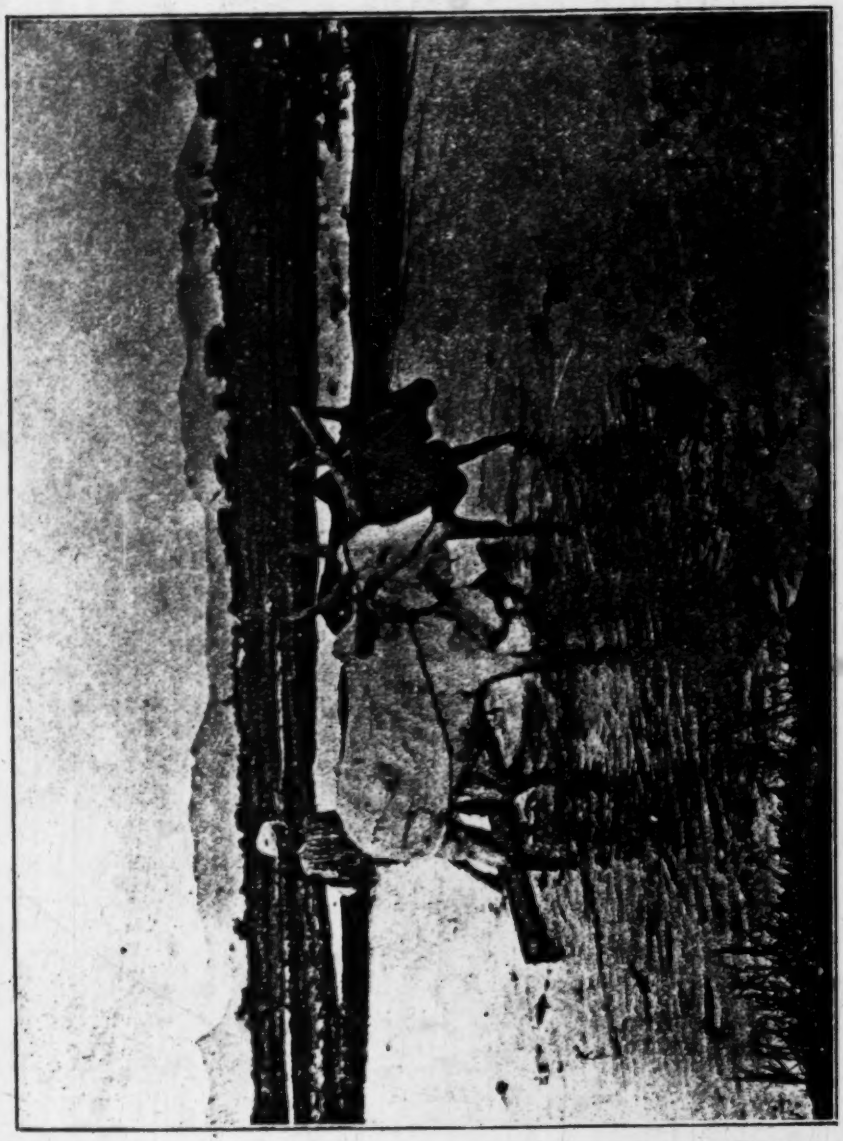

LEVELLING BOARD AT WORK. Photo by Agricultural College.

[facing page 130]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWI

234 castes very rarely use these products. The cows too are not brought up on a scientific basis, and are consequently of a weak [804] build and generally yield from 4 nalis * to 6 or 8 nalis of milk per day.†

Male buffaloes are used in ploughing and sometimes to draw loaded carts. These too are of weak build.

Cow buffaloes are used mostly for milking, but sometimes in ploughing. The milk they yield is greater in quantity but inferior in quality to that of the cows.‡

231 Very little care is taken of the young of the above species. The young calf or calf-buffalo is not usually reared with the object of getting strong or vigorous oxen or buffaloes, but allowed to grow haphazardly. Some die off young, and especially the buffalo-calf since the buffalo can be milked without its young and not so the cows.§ The official figures in this respect (vide above) are instructive. The usual practice is to buy cows or buffaloes from a fair for milking purposes and to dispose of them, buffaloes especially, unless needed for ploughing, when the milk dries up.

The only use to which the horse is put is to drive jutkas, but as jutkas are rare in this village, horses are seldom seen here.

Donkeys and mules too are few.

Sheep and goats are used for their mutton which is in demand among the lower castes, but more for their milk, which is considered to be medicinal.

Pigs are reared for their flesh by the local Christians; the Muhammadans consider it to be a sacrilege even to utter the name.

Cows, oxen and buffaloes are made to stand in stalls, two or more being allowed to be in the same stall. Bundles of rice straw form the chief food, but green grass is used during the rainy season. Rice dust and poonac (copra from which the oil has been extracted) mixed in water is given. Cows are let loose during the daytime under care of a keeper to feed in the fields or near the hills.

241 Cattle-dung mixed with cattle urine is used as manure in the paddy fields. This is scattered in the fields during the hot season 237 (April-May). The percentage of cattle-dung will approximately be 25 per cent of the total manure used. Dung is also used as fuel. Women are becoming averse to making varatties and use more wood.

Sheep dung is sometimes used.

241 But green manure consisting of leaves of certain plants and trees is scattered in the fields after they have been well ploughed in the first fall of the monsoon rains. Green manure is never grown, but is obtained from the neighbouring hills.

351 Every house without exception has a compound big or small surrounding it in which there are coconut palms, arecanut palms, mango trees, jack fruit trees, plantains, etc., and sometimes pepper. During the hot months (March-April-May) vegetables

* [1 nali (nari or nazhi) = ¼ of a Madras measure and very nearly = 9 fluid ounces or nearly half a pint.—Ed.]

† I.e., one or two quarts of milk per day. A Madras cow yields up to five quarts per day.

‡ [I.e., it is less valued. Buffalo's milk is very rich.—Ed.]

§ [It is a fact that an Indian cow refuses to give milk without the calf. If the calf dies the dairyman stuffs the skin and makes an imitation calf. This serves the purposes. —Ed.]

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(7) pestle and mortar for husking rice,

(8) (for coconut cultivation) a long broad knife with blade and handle each 1 foot long (this serves all purposes), 412

(9) an implement intermediate between an axe and mamoti, with a thick sharp blade, and a fairly long handle, used for cutting wood, etc.,

(10) a basket, with ropes attached at both sides, worked by two men, to transfer water from a tank or from one field to another,

(11) a form of picotah, worked by a man standing on a platform inside the well, with his hands,

(12) the ordinary bullock lift,

(13) a sharp rod fixed in the earth for removing the outer cover of the coconut,

(14) ropes tied circularly for the purpose of climbing the coconut tree.

Stock— 231*

Working oxen	922*
Cows	220
Male buffaloes	503*
Cow ,, ...	221
Young stock	1,103
Horses	7
Donkeys and mules	...
Sheep and goats	1,305
Pigs	20

There are 112 carts.

The cattle are fed on dry paddy straw, coconut fodder, waste powdered rice mixed with water, and grass in the winter season. The feeding of cattle is very carelessly done. They keep their skins and bones only.

Manuring.—Cattle dung is used for three purposes :— 237

(1) For cleaning the whole house. Hindus believe that the sprinkling of cattle dung water purifies the house. Consequently, every day every house is thus cleaned.

(2) For fuel. Chaff mixed with straw and dung is dried and burnt for culinary purposes. All the dung from cows kept by the non-agricultural classes (nearly every family of means keeps a cow for milk) is used in the above ways.

(3) The dung produced among the agricultural classes is used [241] for manure, not for paddy or coconut, but for the cultivation of vegetables. Very little dung is used for the cultivation of chief crops. The wastage is also large. Perhaps one-fourth of the total dung is used for manuring vegetables. All the rest is used as stated above or wasted. A small portion of the cattle urine is collected in pots and used as manure for vegetables, but nearly all is wasted.

Fish and muddy water are used as manure for coconuts, but 241 not to a very great extent, and only by the three rich kanomdars who themselves cultivate. Some also use salt for manure, when they plant coconut. This is very advantageous, and sometimes

* [This shows the very high proportion of one working ox or buffalo for each acre of cultivated land, a proportion accounted for by what is stated about the condition of the animals.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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423 The desam contains 130 survey fields in all. The settlement
651 was first introduced in this desam in fasli 1313.

The following table shows the nature and extent of the holdings and revenue as given in the 'A' register of the village:—

Holdings and Revenue.

Fasli.	Occupied area. Wet. Extent.	Wet. Assessment.	Garden. Extent.	Garden. Assessment.	Dry. Extent.	Dry. Assessment.	Total. Extent.	Total. Assessment.	Deduct waste remitted. Extent.	Deduct waste remitted. Assessment.	Remainder charged. Actual cultivation.	Waste charged.	Total extent charged.	Assessment.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.			ACS.		ACS.	RS. A.
1313	445·27	2,226 5	209·43	502	197·16	157 14	851·86	2,886 3	...	...	851·86	...	851·86	2,886 3

Fasli—*cont.*	Second crop. Extent.	Second crop. Charge.	Miscellaneous revenue.	Total ryotwari demand excluding waste remitted.	Deduct remission other than waste already shown in column 11. Occasional remission other than for waste.	Other remissions and deductions.	Total.	Net demand for the year.	Amount collected within year. Arrear.	Current.
	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)
	ACS.	RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.
1313	8·96	13 11	96 5	2,996 3	...	851 12	851 12	2,144 7	...	2,144 7

312 The ryots mostly depend on the mercy of the monsoon for the watering of fields. But throughout the summer season beginning from the end of December to the end of July, watering is carried on from wells and tanks, especially in the case of garden cultivation. Tanks and wells are not sufficient and those existing are not deep enough and frequently dry up towards March.

241 The chief crops cultivated are coconut, arecanut, paddy, gingelly, pulses, horsegram, plantain and jack.

231 Pasturage is obtainable for the cattle on the unoccupied dry lands. Water for the cattle is obtained from channels, private tanks and wells.

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651 On registered double crop land, the charge for the second crop has been consolidated at one-quarter of the single crop assessment. For occasional second crop on land assessed as single crop, the charge will be one-half the single crop assessment.

231 The stock as ascertained by personal enquiry are as shown below. The account of the stock of Kothachira was not obtainable from the village officials, for it is lost. I have tried my best to make the statement complete and exhaustive. But this is a period of extreme fatality to the stock in these parts. Daily one or more are dying. In a single family there died twenty within forty-five days leaving only one or two pairs. The numbers are—

Bullocks	240	
Cows	403	
Buffaloes	287	
Young stock	374	under 4 years.
Goats	712	
[407] Ploughs	414	
Carts	5	
Oil mills	4	

A comparison with the figures for the census of 1899–1900 for the whole amsom of Kothachira (the three desams of Kothachira, Peringode and Mattur) shows an all-round decrease of about forty per cent. I believe the causes of this great reduction to be partly a succession of very bad seasons for stock, and partly selling off under pressure of poverty.

Cattle feeding.—Bullocks and working oxen and buffaloes, besides being left to graze on the unoccupied dry lands and on cultivable areas when they are lying fallow, are given straw and 'kanchi,' water mixed with the dusty part of rice and 'punac' or oil-cake. For cows and young stock only straw is given besides grazing. Goats are simply left to graze. Straw is given to the above working stock after they are housed in their sheds for the evening. The 'kanchi' water is given in the morning just before leading them into fields and in the afternoon after their work is over. They are led to be washed after field work. Bullocks and buffaloes are the working stock.

The breed.—The cattle are very second rate in their breed. The most healthy working oxen grow to a height of from three to three and a half feet and their strength is not half as much as the oxen employed by the firms of Madras. The cow is a pitiable thing ordinarily two to three feet high and milking on an average from a half to one Madras measure per day.* Comparison, it need hardly be said, with Madras cows is odious. They can be milked for only six months. The best come into milking again within a year, but many only within two years.

241 *Manure.*—Almost all the cattle dung is used for manure. One per
[237] cent perhaps goes for purposes of washing floors, etc. The cattle urine is allowed in some places to flow into the dung-pit, but no systematic attempt is anywhere made to utilize it to the best advantage. Besides this, burnt ashes and green manure are in common

* [A Madras measure is 62·5 fluid ounces = 3½ pints. A fair Madras cow in full milk yields about 3½ Madras measures per day, i.e., 5 quarts.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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lings for the second crop are then planted and will be ready for harvest in December or January. In double-crop wet lands both crops are as a rule paddy. But a small area may be used for growing garden vegetables, and this is invariably the case in the three crop lands. Only one crop is raised in the dry lands actually tilled and this crop is determined by a rotation of crops, consisting of paddy, other grains and pulses, gingelly, etc. There is great variety in rotation. Usually the field lies fallow once in three years, often for two or three years continuously, according to the fertility of the soil. The importance of rain in due season for paddy cultivation cannot be over-estimated, the whole prospects of the village for the year may be altogether changed by even a slight failure of the monsoon at the critical stages in cultivation. In that case the local prices of paddy go up very suddenly, as now (August 1917). 243

Only one type of plough is seen—the usual old fashioned country plough, which merely scratches the ground. It lasts only for a year or two and costs only from ten to twelve annas. 407

Other implements are the levelling board, harrow (a long wooden hammer used by the hand), spade, kuzhi kutti (i.e., burrowing tool), jack-knife, etc. The levelling board costs about Rs. 2½ and lasts from 6 to 8 years; the spade costs Re. 1 and is worn out in a year. It has a blade set at right angles to the handle and is swung like a pick-axe.

Stock.— 231

	1914.	1910.
(*a*) Working oxen	296	250
(*b*) Cows	350	382
(*c*) Male buffaloes	256	286
(*d*) Cow buffaloes	6	10
(*e*) Young stock of above species ...	266	221
(*f*) Riding horses	2	...
(*g*) Donkeys and mules...	...	..
(*h*) Sheep	...	...
(*i*) Goats	201	285
(*j*) Pigs	...	...

The 1914 figures are approximately true in 1916.

Working oxen and buffaloes are better fed than others. They are given enough straw or grass, and hot conjee (gruel) mixed with oil-cake, bran, atc. Occasionally working oxen are given flesh (fowls). Cows and cow-buffaloes are given straw and conjee and bran water. They are led out to graze on the hill sides and pastures during the day. Their young follow them. The goats are allowed to stray and feed themselves as best they can. Their milk is used for medicinal purposes and is considered very nutritious.

There is no good pasture in the village, and the cattle are lean and bony. After harvest cattle stray over the stubbles, finding what food they can. The fields are often quite small, say 100 by 75 feet, and frequently there are considerable differences of level between adjoining fields, which is a difficulty in the way of proper irrigation.

Manuring.—About seventy-five per cent of the cattle dung is used as manure. The rest is dried in the form of thick cakes 237

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).[7] The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

433* 23

7 [Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

*433 23 [464] Although animal husbandry programmes do not create any significant increase in direct employment opportunities, they do help in reducing the degree of unemployment situation within the family. Moreover, some of the animal husbandry activities such as piggery, poultry-rearing, and bee-keeping need little investment to start with and are quick to yield returns.

3.9 Development of animal husbandry on commercial lines by individual rural families may not be possible without adequate State action. Aid should be given for implementing measures of improvement with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of the livestock. The aid could be given int he form of easy loans, development of marketing and processing facilities, sale of feed and fodder at reasonable prices, etc. These are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs separately for cattle and other livestock.

CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

*433 231 232 3.10 The output of milk from cattle and buffaloes as well as draught capacity can be improved through a scientific breeding programme and the prevention and control of diseases. As stated previously, cattle found in the State are of non-descript types. Unless they are imparted with high productivity genes, any amount of improvement in feeding and rearing will not be of much use beyond a particular stage. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on improving the breed of cattle and buffaloes. There are two ways of tackling this problem: (*i*) selective breeding and (*ii*) mass upgrading.

3.11 The former is not feasible, as there may not be enough cattle to start with if rigid norms are employed for selection. There will also be the problem of finding suitable means of disposal of the useless cattle. The practical solution under these circumstances would be to resort to a scheme of mass upgrading according to which the local bulls are to be replaced with bulls of some outside breed, suited to local needs and conditions. To be really effective, the upgrading programme should be made to cover the entire State and should stretch over a span of at least four decades. During this period, no bulls, other than the approved ones, should be allowed to sire.

*433 231 232 654 3.12 The value of the upgrading programme was realized in Kerala a few decades ago. The scheme was introduced on a large scale during the First Plan by starting five Key Village Schemes. The number was raised to 14 in the Second Plan. It is estimated that by 1965-66, it would be possible to cover about a quarter of the eligible milch cattle under the Key Village and Artificial Insemination Schemes. But even though the programme is well conceived and implemented, the NCAER team was left with the impression that the scheme had not made any significant impact in the improvement of cattle and buffalo breeds in the State. Apart from the inadequate coverage of the programme, non-elimination of the local or scrub bulls is a serious problem. For success and effectiveness of the upgrading programme, it is, therefore, necessary, first, to implement the programme intensively all over the State and secondly, competition from the local bulls should also be eliminated by compulsorily castrating all the males before they reach the fourth year of their life. These suggestions may be implemented during the Third Plan.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

3.13 The Sindhi bulls which have been selected for the upgrading work in Kerala are scarce these days, and it may be difficult to procure the required number for the proposed programme. The number of bulls needed would, however, be much smaller under artificial insemination than under natural service. The former programme should, therefore, be preferred to the latter. As the State is well served with roads and has a good and efficient transport system, three or four central semen collecting centres would be needed to cover the entire State provided the product is quickly dispatched and properly stored while in transit. The centres may be located at Trivandrum, Trichur, Calicut and Palghat. Bulls should be provided for natural service in remote and out of the way places. The proposed breeding programme would need buildings, equipment and livestock for artificial insemination centres. These programmes would require an investment of Rs. 8.76 lakhs over the Third and Fourth Plan periods. 433* 231 232

Prevention and Control of Diseases

3.14 Prevention of diseases peculiar to livestock and a machinery for their control is a pre-requisite for proper development of animal husbandry. Under the present circumstances, where there is a heavy incidence of disease and high mortality rates, any enterprise in the field of animal husbandry is fraught with high risks ; and farmers are hesitant to hazard investment on any animal husbandry business. The major share of burden will naturally have to be borne by the Government. 433* 232

3.15 For effective prevention and control of diseases, it is necessary to have an adequate number of well-staffed veterinary dispensaries and hospitals. These institutions should, as far as possible, render free treatment. Under the conditions prevailing in Kerala, it is considered necessary to have at least two veterinary hospitals in every taluk and one dispensary or first-aid clinic in every Panchayat. Measured by this norm, the existing facilities are utterly inadequate. While there are 55 taluks and 892 Panchayats in Kerala, the total number of hospitals and dispensaries,[1] at the end of 1958-59 were only 45 and 69 respectively. (Table 21)[2] 3 A.

3.16 Two factors are responsible for this situation : (*i*) shortage of personnel and (*ii*) paucity of funds. With the opening of the veterinary college at Trichur, the situation may be expected to improve with regard to the personnel, provided adequate funds are made available. The State should try to achieve the above norms by the end of the Fourth Plan. Investment on the proposed 20 additional hospitals and 723 dispensaries would be about Rs. 77.3 lakhs. [874]

POULTRY DEVELOPMENT

3.17 Though Kerala has the best developed commercial poultry industry in the country, conditions under which the birds are reared are far from satisfactory. The birds are not adequately fed, and consequently they resort to scavenging. A good 433* 235

[1] Includes Stockman's stations and Inspector's stations.

[2] In 1960 the numbers were 65 and 153 respectively.

3 [see p. 285, category 11b - Analysis]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 20

CATTLE AND BUFFALOES IN KERALA (CATEGORIES) 1956

231

Categories	*Cattle* (in '000 numbers)	*Buffaloes* (in '000 numbers)	*Total* (in '000 numbers)
1. Males over 3 years	*620*	*279*	*899*
(*i*) Breeding	11	4	15
(*ii*) Working	571	268	839
(*iii*) Others	38	7	45
2. Females over 3 years	*1008*	*142*	*1044*
(*i*) Breeding			
(*a*) In milk	398	63	461
(*b*) Dry and not calves	577	65	642
(*ii*) Working	8	11	19
(*iii*) Miscellaneous	19	3	22
3. Young stock	*914*	*94*	*1008*
TOTAL	2536	515	3051

SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

[113]

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF VETERINARY INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA STATE (1958-59)

232 634

District	*Hospitals*	*Dispensaries*	*Stockman's stations*	*Inspectors' stations*
Trivandrum	5	3	..	..
Quilon	5	7	..	..
Alleppey	6	5	..	..
Kottayam	5	4	..	..
Ernakulam	9	12	..	..
Trichur	7	13	4	..
Palghat	5	8	..	8
Kozhikode	2	10	..	..
Cannanore	1	7	..	3
TOTAL	*45*	*69*	*4*	*11*

SOURCE: Director of Animal Husbandry, Trivandrum.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neighbouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent [435] head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 ● [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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237 (called varatties) and used as fuel to supplement firewood, by the poorer classes, who go about picking the stray deposits of cattle-dung in the by-ways and streets. Perhaps a small percentage of cattle-dung is wasted. Yet it is the most important manure and an acre of land uses 100 to 150 baskets of it.

Cattle urine is not used, except by Brahman ladies to a very small extent, in growing kitchen vegetables in their backyards.

The refuse of goat-pens and of fowls (which are kept in most low-class and Nayar houses), as well as bone dust, is used in small quantities for growing garden vegetables.

241 All sorts of green manure are used. About fifty to seventy-five bales of green stuff are used on one acre of land. But green manure is not grown; it is obtained from the neighbouring woods, and the shrubby undergrowth which is commonly found on almost every hillside and in the compounds of houses.

Wood-ash is commonly used, especially in garden cultivation.

Salt is used in coconut plantations.

Chemical manures are unknown in the village.

Garden cultivation is an important item, and very profitable too, though it is not yet carried on very extensively. About 110 acres of land are used for this purpose. Water is obtained mostly from wells, of which there is one or more in every garden. The chief products are coconuts (selling at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per 100), arecanuts used for chewing, etc. (Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2 per 1,000), plantains or bananas (Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 per 1,000), jack-fruits (2 to 6 annas each), mangoes, yams and various kitchen vegetables like pumpkins, brinjals, etc. These are cultivated in almost all gardens. Pepper and ginger, betel leaves and turmeric, are also cultivated in all good gardens. Pepper is very valuable and gives a good profit.

[722] Coconuts being largely exported in the form of copra, have fallen 50 per cent in price, through shortage of freight, during the war. This has entailed great hardship on the large classes of coconut growers and workers in the Malabar Coast, this village suffering with the rest.

242 *Insect-pests.*—A kind of beetle sometimes does great damage to the crops—especially the new paddy crops and plantains. Small birds also carry away grains of corn. The usual method of combating them is to keep watch in the fields and drive them off—a very tedious and difficult operation. No help is got from the Agricultural Department, of whose very existence the village is unaware.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Hoof disease is the commonest and most dangerous. Kerosene oil mixed with lamp black is the popular remedy. There is another disease—a sort of suffocation. A cholera-like disease is also heard of, accompanied by bleeding, etc. Snake-poisoning is another danger, a bite on the nose being supposed to be fatal. The villagers have their traditional methods of combating these. Charms and incantations are used to supplement medicine. No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural Department.

313 *Wood* is obtained from the neighbouring forests, as well as from the clusters of trees in the village. Building timber is often

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "G" to "Y" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 699–70.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely 133 aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region 288 —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section 182 of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence [464] of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala 133 would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have 487 also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the 509 coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

133 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed [234] available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. [312] Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse [339] repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 8]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [434] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

231 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon. 231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too. 433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output. 231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them. 231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry 433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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433 235 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] [164] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

433 231 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

433 231 234 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs. (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter [269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

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*433 246 3.25 The supply of succulent green fodder throughout the year also needs to be improved. The farmers should be induced to grow leguminous and perennial fodders like elephant and napier grass in the field corners or on waste lands. Distribution of seeds and cuttings to the farmers and demonstration of fodder cultivation on the fields of cultivators would go a long way in improving the production of green fodder. Municipalities and panchayats may also organize fodder farms for utilizing sewage and city compost.

*433 234 3.26 The development measures and aids proposed here, when implemented, would increase the output of animal husbandry products. Proper feeding of cattle and buffaloes can bring about an immediate increase of about 50 per cent in the production of milk.[1] Egg production may increase by over 100 per cent of the present output. Similar increases may be expected in other items too. This would give rise to the problem of suitable utilization of the additional output. Surprisingly enough, even the existing production is not being suitably utilized. For instance, even though milk output in the State is very low and there is an acute scarcity of fluid milk in the urban areas, as much as 41 per cent of the milk is processed into ghee.[2] In a State like Kerala which has a shortage of milk, it would have been more appropriate to consume the maximum possible amount of milk in a fluid state rather than in the form of milk products, since fluid milk is more wholesome and the processing of [442] milk partly destroys its vital nutritional content. This situation is due to lack of purchasing power with the rural people together with absence of facilities to market the milk in the urban areas. Since milk is a highly perishable commodity, the next best course for producers to follow in such a situation is to process it into the comparatively non-perishable ghee. But this is a wasteful process and the profits are also low.

*433 235 442 3.27 It is also gathered that 15 to 25 per cent of the total egg production in the State is wasted by breakage and spoilage due to defective and inadequate marketing facilities. Unless adequate and prompt measures are taken to remove drawbacks in the marketing system, the measures proposed here cannot be expected to yield full benefits and the producers cannot be expected to take a sustained interest in these. The solution to this problem lies in providing at least some of these facilities, the most urgent being the organization of marketing and processing facilities and services for dairy and poultry products.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

*433 234 3.28 Dairy development on scientific lines is a pressing need. This was a neglected field prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan, however, dairy development received some attention. Two schemes for processing 150 maunds of milk per day, one each in Trivandrum and Calicut, were taken up during the Second Plan. Each

[113] [1] *Third Five Year Plan, Draft Outline*, Government of Kerala, 1960.

[2] In 1956 the total production of milk in Kerala was 4,940 thousand maunds, of this 2,332 thousand maunds (47%) were consumed in the fluid state and 2,020 thousand maunds (41%) converted into ghee.

[113] (SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*: Issued by the Economic and Statistical Adviser, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

of these schemes is being expanded to handle 250 maunds per day during the Third Plan. Under these schemes, milk from the surrounding villages would be collected and pasteurized before bottling them for sale. The schemes will serve a two-fold purpose: (i) they will give incentive for a higher production of milk in the rural areas by offering fair prices and (ii) they will provide hygienic milk to the urban population at a reasonable price. The unscrupulous middleman will be eliminated by this process. 433* 234

3.29 The dairy development programme of this type needs to be taken up on a much larger scale than at present. This is necessary to provide an outlet for the likely increase in milk production and for making hygienic fluid milk available to the urban people. Owing to acute shortage of clean and pure milk in the urban areas, milk supply schemes of the type discussed above might prove a great success. It would be good if all the urban areas with a population of over 30,000 are served with such schemes. According to 1951 Census there were 13 towns in Kerala with a population exceeding 30,000. At the end of the Second Plan, 11 among these were still without any milk scheme. It is, therefore, suggested that these milk schemes should be organized in all these towns. The capacity, investment required, etc., for these schemes is given in Table 22.[2] [162]

3.30 Many of the dairy units proposed here may find it difficult to get sufficient quantities of milk from the surrounding areas owing to the poor yield of animals and low marketable surplus with the farmers. In order to justify collection, marketing and sales organization of even the smallest size, it is considered necessary to have a handling capacity of 150 maunds per day. In case sufficient milk is not available, which is likely to be the case at least in some centres, a part of the capacity may be utilized for bottling reconstituted milk. Reconstituted milk can be of various types depending upon the fomulae. Milk powder is a common ingredient in all the types. A survey of consumer preference and tastes may be conducted before choosing the type, and part of the demand for fluid milk may be met in this way. Such a survey is essential before embarking upon the actual production of reconstituted milk because the new product may meet considerable consumer resistance in its initial stages. Propaganda and other measures to popularize the use of reconstituted milk will also have to be taken up side by side.

3.31 In smaller towns, that is, those with less than 30,000 population, cooperatives for supply of milk, may be organized with consumers or producers. There were 12 such societies in 1958. These societies should be encouraged. [474]

3.32 Munnar is a region which possesses the potential for growth into a large scale commercial dairy farming centre. Many exotic cattle breeds[1] are thriving in the region. The performance of some of the herds maintained by a few sterling tea companies is said to be of a high order and compares favourably with that of similar herds maintained in the countries from which these cattle are imported. It is suggested that the Department of Animal Husbandry should further investigate the economic feasibility of commercial dairying in the Munnar region. If the investigation reveals prospects, the State may organize a few such dairy farms in the public 433* 231 234

[1] Jersey and Holstein.

[2] [Table 22 appearing on p 286 of the text, has not been processed - Akshay]

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*433 231 234 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 235 474 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 235 439 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 23 452 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

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INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.30
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	3.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production e ll go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its l f. Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·73 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[text continues on p. 67]

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TABLE 19

NUMBER OF COWS AND SHE-BUFFALOES IN MILK PER THOUSAND POPULATION IN KERALA AND OTHER INDIAN STATES

State	*Number of cows and she-buffaloes in milk in 1956*	
	Total number	*Rate per thousand population of the State*
Andhra Pradesh	3,017,305	89
Assam	1,012,055	96
Bihar	2,592,908	63
Bombay	4,277,810	81
Jammu & Kashmir	318,105	666
Kerala	457,711	430
Madhya Pradesh	4,087,860	148
Madras	1,716,664	53
Orissa	1,950,792	91
Punjab	694,638	45
Rajasthan	2,175,132	123
Uttar Pradesh	5,149,353	150
West Bengal	1,428,996	76
Delhi	37,156	27
Himachal Pradesh	233,079	208
Manipur	32,394	52
Tripura	67,792	105
Andaman and Nicobar Islands	1,416	35
ALL-INDIA	*31,900,171*	*89*

[231]
[234]

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the
[463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation
of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

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243 Area yielding one crop—205·23 acres.
Area yielding two crops—448·01 acres.

There are a few acres yielding three crops, but only two crops are assessed.

There are different kinds of paddy, each having different periods of growth, and specially suited to particular soils. The fields are manured and in some cases slightly ploughed just before the rains in summer. The south-west monsoon usually begins in June and lasts for four months. As soon as the rain comes, lands are ploughed and paddy is sown in particularly favourable areas. Then all the fields of the farmer are well ploughed and manured; the seedlings are replanted over the whole area after a growth of twenty-eight days. Some kinds of paddy grow for sixty days, others eighty and ninety days. The system in which no replantation takes place is also in much vogue. The fields are protected from animal or bird pests; after a period of at most three months the paddy is mown by agricultural workers who separate the paddy from the stalks.

Another crop is also generally sown during the north-east monsoon season (October and November) which usually gives rain for about one month.

[407] The ploughs used are primitive and old-fashioned. The furrowing is done in this wise:—a flat piece of iron sharpened at one end is attached to a wooden frame with a handle; this handled frame is attached by means of a pole to a yoke which is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen or buffaloes; the worker then holds the handle and drives the oxen round and round the field until the whole field is well furrowed over. This is done *before* the heavy rain, when the ground is softened, but not under water. The sod is then crushed by means of sticks, this being generally done by females. The women walk in a row, beating the sod to and fro with heavy sticks held in one hand. After the field has been well watered by rains it is once more worked over by means of a log of wood (levelling board) drawn by oxen.

[412] The other agricultural implements used are the sickle, a big knife and spades.

231 *Stock.*—The following is the official census of the stock:—

Working oxen	245
Cows	289
Male buffaloes	361
Cow buffaloes	20
Young stock—	
Calves	169
Young buffaloes	7
Horses	2
Donkeys and mules	22
Sheep and goats	583

Oxen are used to drag carts, and for ploughing the fields. Most of the oxen here appear to be lean and weak; especially those used in ploughing. Cart-drawing oxen are better.

234 Cows are used for milking only, though the Muhammadans of the locality are not averse to eating beef now and then. The milk, buttermilk and ghee of the cow are in great demand especially among the Brahmans who cannot do without them; the lower

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234 castes very rarely use these products. The cows too are not brought up on a scientific basis, and are consequently of a weak [804] build and generally yield from 4 nalis * to 6 or 8 nalis of milk per day.†

Male buffaloes are used in ploughing and sometimes to draw loaded carts. These too are of weak build.

Cow buffaloes are used mostly for milking, but sometimes in ploughing. The milk they yield is greater in quantity but inferior in quality to that of the cows.‡

231 Very little care is taken of the young of the above species. The young calf or calf-buffalo is not usually reared with the object of getting strong or vigorous oxen or buffaloes, but allowed to grow haphazardly. Some die off young, and especially the buffalo-calf since the buffalo can be milked without its young and not so the cows.§ The official figures in this respect (vide above) are instructive. The usual practice is to buy cows or buffaloes from a fair for milking purposes and to dispose of them, buffaloes especially, unless needed for ploughing, when the milk dries up.

The only use to which the horse is put is to drive jutkas, but as jutkas are rare in this village, horses are seldom seen here.

Donkeys and mules too are few.

Sheep and goats are used for their mutton which is in demand among the lower castes, but more for their milk, which is considered to be medicinal.

Pigs are reared for their flesh by the local Christians; the Muhammadans consider it to be a sacrilege even to utter the name.

Cows, oxen and buffaloes are made to stand in stalls, two or more being allowed to be in the same stall. Bundles of rice straw form the chief food, but green grass is used during the rainy season. Rice dust and poonac (copra from which the oil has been extracted) mixed in water is given. Cows are let loose during the daytime under care of a keeper to feed in the fields or near the hills.

241 Cattle-dung mixed with cattle urine is used as manure in the paddy fields. This is scattered in the fields during the hot season 237 (April-May). The percentage of cattle-dung will approximately be 25 per cent of the total manure used. Dung is also used as fuel. Women are becoming averse to making varatties and use more wood.

Sheep dung is sometimes used.

241 But green manure consisting of leaves of certain plants and trees is scattered in the fields after they have been well ploughed in the first fall of the monsoon rains. Green manure is never grown, but is obtained from the neighbouring hills.

351 Every house without exception has a compound big or small surrounding it in which there are coconut palms, arecanut palms, mango trees, jack fruit trees, plantains, etc., and sometimes pepper. During the hot months (March-April-May) vegetables

* [1 nali (nari or nazhi) = ¼ of a Madras measure and very nearly = 9 fluid ounces or nearly half a pint.—Ed.]

† I.e., one or two quarts of milk per day. A Madras cow yields up to five quarts per day.

‡ [I.e., it is less valued. Buffalo's milk is very rich.—Ed.]

§ [It is a fact that an Indian cow refuses to give milk without the calf. If the calf dies the dairyman stuffs the skin and makes an imitation calf. This serves the purposes. —Ed.]

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west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and [291]
cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is [435]
not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476]
along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

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and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

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But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon. 231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too. 433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output. 231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them. 231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry 433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

3.13 The Sindhi bulls which have been selected for the upgrading work in Kerala are scarce these days, and it may be difficult to procure the required number for the proposed programme. The number of bulls needed would, however, be much smaller under artificial insemination than under natural service. The former programme should, therefore, be preferred to the latter. As the State is well served with roads and has a good and efficient transport system, three or four central semen collecting centres would be needed to cover the entire State provided the product is quickly dispatched and properly stored while in transit. The centres may be located at Trivandrum, Trichur, Calicut and Palghat. Bulls should be provided for natural service in remote and out of the way places. The proposed breeding programme would need buildings, equipment and livestock for artificial insemination centres. These programmes would require an investment of Rs. 8.76 lakhs over the Third and Fourth Plan periods. 433* 231 232

Prevention and Control of Diseases

3.14 Prevention of diseases peculiar to livestock and a machinery for their control is a pre-requisite for proper development of animal husbandry. Under the present circumstances, where there is a heavy incidence of disease and high mortality rates, any enterprise in the field of animal husbandry is fraught with high risks ; and farmers are hesitant to hazard investment on any animal husbandry business. The major share of burden will naturally have to be borne by the Government. 433* 232

3.15 For effective prevention and control of diseases, it is necessary to have an adequate number of well-staffed veterinary dispensaries and hospitals. These institutions should, as far as possible, render free treatment. Under the conditions prevailing in Kerala, it is considered necessary to have at least two veterinary hospitals in every taluk and one dispensary or first-aid clinic in every Panchayat. Measured by this norm, the existing facilities are utterly inadequate. While there are 55 taluks and 892 Panchayats in Kerala, the total number of hospitals and dispensaries,[1] at the end of 1958-59 were only 45 and 69 respectively. (Table 21)[2] 3/A.

3.16 Two factors are responsible for this situation : (*i*) shortage of personnel and (*ii*) paucity of funds. With the opening of the veterinary college at Trichur, the situation may be expected to improve with regard to the personnel, provided adequate funds are made available. The State should try to achieve the above norms by the end of the Fourth Plan. Investment on the proposed 20 additional hospitals and 723 dispensaries would be about Rs. 77.3 lakhs. [874]

POULTRY DEVELOPMENT

3.17 Though Kerala has the best developed commercial poultry industry in the country, conditions under which the birds are reared are far from satisfactory. The birds are not adequately fed, and consequently they resort to scavenging. A good 433* 235

[1] Includes Stockman's stations and Inspector's stations.

[2] In 1960 the numbers were 63 and 155 respectively.

2 [see p. 285, category 116 - : Analysis]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction
235 of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has
[164] come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite
231 contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per
231 goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs.
234 (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter
[269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

*433 246 3.25 The supply of succulent green fodder throughout the year also needs to be improved. The farmers should be induced to grow leguminous and perennial fodders like elephant and napier grass in the field corners or on waste lands. Distribution of seeds and cuttings to the farmers and demonstration of fodder cultivation on the fields of cultivators would go a long way in improving the production of green fodder. Municipalities and panchayats may also organize fodder farms for utilizing sewage and city compost.

*433 234 3.26 The development measures and aids proposed here, when implemented, would increase the output of animal husbandry products. Proper feeding of cattle and buffaloes can bring about an immediate increase of about 50 per cent in the production of milk.[1] Egg production may increase by over 100 per cent of the present output. Similar increases may be expected in other items too. This would give rise to the problem of suitable utilization of the additional output. Surprisingly enough, even the existing production is not being suitably utilized. For instance, even though milk output in the State is very low and there is an acute scarcity of fluid milk in the urban areas, as much as 41 per cent of the milk is processed into ghee.[2] In a State like Kerala which has a shortage of milk, it would have been more appropriate to consume the maximum possible amount of milk in a fluid state rather than in the form of milk products, since fluid milk is more wholesome and the processing of [442] milk partly destroys its vital nutritional content. This situation is due to lack of purchasing power with the rural people together with absence of facilities to market the milk in the urban areas. Since milk is a highly perishable commodity, the next best course for producers to follow in such a situation is to process it into the comparatively non-perishable ghee. But this is a wasteful process and the profits are also low.

*433 235 442 3.27 It is also gathered that 15 to 25 per cent of the total egg production in the State is wasted by breakage and spoilage due to defective and inadequate marketing facilities. Unless adequate and prompt measures are taken to remove drawbacks in the marketing system, the measures proposed here cannot be expected to yield full benefits and the producers cannot be expected to take a sustained interest in these. The solution to this problem lies in providing at least some of these facilities, the most urgent being the organization of marketing and processing facilities and services for dairy and poultry products.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

*433 234 3.28 Dairy development on scientific lines is a pressing need. This was a neglected field prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan, however, dairy development received some attention. Two schemes for processing 150 maunds of milk per day, one each in Trivandrum and Calicut, were taken up during the Second Plan. Each

[113] [1] *Third Five Year Plan, Draft Outline*, Government of Kerala, 1960.

[2] In 1956 the total production of milk in Kerala was 4,940 thousand maunds, of this 2,332 thousand maunds (47%) were consumed in the fluid state and 2,020 thousand maunds (41%) converted into ghee.

[113] (Source: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*: Issued by the Economic and Statistical Adviser, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 23 234 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 235 474 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 235 439 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 23 452 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.90
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	3.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production e ll go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its l f. Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·73 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[text continues on p. 67]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 17

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT FROM ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN KERALA

23
435

(Rs. lakhs)

Item	*1955-56*	*1956-57*	*1957-58*
Milk consumed as such	531	540	561
Other milk products	593	604	608
Beef	56	58	62
Buffalo flesh	18	19	20
Mutton	93	97	98
Hides and Skins	29	30	31
Bones and Horns	6	7	7
Eggs	84	121	136
Poultry	72	78	84
Dung	321	381	394
Increment in stock	96	113	116
Miscellaneous	4	4	3
GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT	*1903*	*2052*	*2180*

SOURCE: *Regional Income of Kerala* (At current prices) 1955-56 to 1957-58: Government of Kerala (1960). [113]

TABLE 18

LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF KERALA—MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1951 AND 1956 231

Category	*Total*		*Percentage of increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1956 over 1951*
	1951	*1956*	
Cattle	2,151,522	2,510,376	+ 16.7
Buffaloes	444,368	487,353	+ 9.7
Sheep	423,513	97,820	— 76.9
Goats	423,345	955,570	+ 125.7
Horses and Ponies	518	1,690	+ 226.2
Mules	14	2	— 85.7
Donkeys	689	1,415	+ 105.2
Pigs	117,932	113,711	— 3.6
TOTAL LIVESTOCK	*3,561,901*	*4,168,237*	+ *17.1*
Fowls	5,854,319	6,462,799	+ 67.6
Ducks	263,147	322,085	+ 26.2
Others	..	161	..
TOTAL POULTRY	*6,117,466*	*6,785,045*	+ *65.1*

235

SOURCE: *Statistical Outline of Kerala State, 1960.* [113]

[Pp. 280-282 not Processed]

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

*142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the other of silver and iron. [789] The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of the right hand. [237] An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my collection) on a string round the waist. [789] The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. [776] Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are
[783] sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are
[201] common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard-[356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile [532] to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow-dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

796 eighteenth century, observes that about the tenth of September the rain ceases in Malabar. All nature seems then as if renovated; the flowers again shoot up, and the trees bloom. In a word, this season is the same as that which Europeans call spring. The Ōnam festival is said, therefore, to have been instituted for the purpose of soliciting from the gods a happy and fruitful [237] year. It continues for eight days, and during that time the Indians are accustomed to adorn their houses with [825] flowers, and to daub them over with cow-dung, because the cow is a sacred animal, dedicated to the Goddess Lakshmi, the Ceres of India. On this occasion they also put on new clothes, throw away all their old earthenware, and replace it by new. Ōnam is, according to some, the annual celebration of the Malabar new year, which first began with Cheraman Perumal's departure for Mecca. But, with the majority of orthodox Hindus, it is the day of the annual visit of Mahabali to his country, which he used to govern so wisely and well before his overthrow. There is also a belief that it is Maha-Vishnu who, on Ōnam day, pays a visit to this mundane universe, for the just and proper maintenance of which he is specially responsible. In some North Malabar title-deeds and horoscopes, Mr. Logan says, the year is taken as ending with the day previous to Ōnam. This fact, he notes, is quite reconcileable with the other explanation, which alleges that the commencement of the era coincides with Perumal's departure for Arabia, if it is assumed, as is not improbable, that the day on which he sailed was Thiruvōnam day, on which acknowledgment of fealty should have been made. Ōnam, it may be observed, is a contraction of Thiruvōnam which is the asterism [824] of the second day of the festival. Throughout the festival, boys from five to fifteen years of age go out

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her 796
followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773]
visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March.
Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple
priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having
swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793]
five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi
kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237]
five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779]
some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha
grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789]
temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said
over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all
about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus
purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793]
will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either
immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave
the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his
office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613]
sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783]
these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the
temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant
(Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been
in the custody of one of them since the last festival.
The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the
temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has
begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411]
is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201]
mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals.
After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the
temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788]
few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond
the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of
Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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234 castes very rarely use these products. The cows too are not brought up on a scientific basis, and are consequently of a weak [804] build and generally yield from 4 nalis * to 6 or 8 nalis of milk per day.†

Male buffaloes are used in ploughing and sometimes to draw loaded carts. These too are of weak build.

Cow buffaloes are used mostly for milking, but sometimes in ploughing. The milk they yield is greater in quantity but inferior in quality to that of the cows.‡

231 Very little care is taken of the young of the above species. The young calf or calf-buffalo is not usually reared with the object of getting strong or vigorous oxen or buffaloes, but allowed to grow haphazardly. Some die off young, and especially the buffalo-calf since the buffalo can be milked without its young and not so the cows.§ The official figures in this respect (vide above) are instructive. The usual practice is to buy cows or buffaloes from a fair for milking purposes and to dispose of them, buffaloes especially, unless needed for ploughing, when the milk dries up.

The only use to which the horse is put is to drive jutkas, but as jutkas are rare in this village, horses are seldom seen here.

Donkeys and mules too are few.

Sheep and goats are used for their mutton which is in demand among the lower castes, but more for their milk, which is considered to be medicinal.

Pigs are reared for their flesh by the local Christians; the Muhammadans consider it to be a sacrilege even to utter the name.

Cows, oxen and buffaloes are made to stand in stalls, two or more being allowed to be in the same stall. Bundles of rice straw form the chief food, but green grass is used during the rainy season. Rice dust and poonac (copra from which the oil has been extracted) mixed in water is given. Cows are let loose during the daytime under care of a keeper to feed in the fields or near the hills.

241 Cattle-dung mixed with cattle urine is used as manure in the paddy fields. This is scattered in the fields during the hot season 237 (April-May). The percentage of cattle-dung will approximately be 25 per cent of the total manure used. Dung is also used as fuel. Women are becoming averse to making varatties and use more wood.

Sheep dung is sometimes used.

241 But green manure consisting of leaves of certain plants and trees is scattered in the fields after they have been well ploughed in the first fall of the monsoon rains. Green manure is never grown, but is obtained from the neighbouring hills.

351 Every house without exception has a compound big or small surrounding it in which there are coconut palms, arecanut palms, mango trees, jack fruit trees, plantains, etc., and sometimes pepper. During the hot months (March-April-May) vegetables

* [1 nali (nari or nazhi) = ¼ of a Madras measure and very nearly = 9 fluid ounces or nearly half a pint.—Ed.]

† I.e., one or two quarts of milk per day. A Madras cow yields up to five quarts per day.

‡ [I.e., it is less valued. Buffalo's milk is very rich.—Ed.]

§ [It is a fact that an Indian cow refuses to give milk without the calf. If the calf dies the dairyman stuffs the skin and makes an imitation calf. This serves the purposes. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

(7) pestle and mortar for husking rice, 412

(8) (for coconut cultivation) a long broad knife with blade and handle each 1 foot long (this serves all purposes),

(9) an implement intermediate between an axe and mamoti, with a thick sharp blade, and a fairly long handle, used for cutting wood, etc.,

(10) a basket, with ropes attached at both sides, worked by two men, to transfer water from a tank or from one field to another,

(11) a form of picotah, worked by a man standing on a platform inside the well, with his hands,

(12) the ordinary bullock lift,

(13) a sharp rod fixed in the earth for removing the outer cover of the coconut,

(14) ropes tied circularly for the purpose of climbing the coconut tree.

Stock— 231

Working oxen	922*
Cows	220
Male buffaloes	503*
Cow „	221
Young stock	1,103
Horses	7
Donkeys and mules	...
Sheep and goats	1,305
Pigs	20

There are 112 carts.

The cattle are fed on dry paddy straw, coconut fodder, waste powdered rice mixed with water, and grass in the winter season. The feeding of cattle is very carelessly done. They keep their skins and bones only.

Manuring.—Cattle dung is used for three purposes :— 237

(1) For cleaning the whole house. Hindus believe that the sprinkling of cattle dung water purifies the house. Consequently, every day every house is thus cleaned.

(2) For fuel. Chaff mixed with straw and dung is dried and burnt for culinary purposes. All the dung from cows kept by the non-agricultural classes (nearly every family of means keeps a cow for milk) is used in the above ways.

(3) The dung produced among the agricultural classes is used [241] for manure, not for paddy or coconut, but for the cultivation of vegetables. Very little dung is used for the cultivation of chief crops. The wastage is also large. Perhaps one-fourth of the total dung is used for manuring vegetables. All the rest is used as stated above or wasted. A small portion of the cattle urine is collected in pots and used as manure for vegetables, but nearly all is wasted.

Fish and muddy water are used as manure for coconuts, but 241 not to a very great extent, and only by the three rich kanomdars who themselves cultivate. Some also use salt for manure, when they plant coconut. This is very advantageous, and sometimes

* [This shows the very high proportion of one working ox or buffalo for each acre of cultivated land, a proportion accounted for by what is stated about the condition of the animals.—Ed.]

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651 On registered double crop land, the charge for the second crop has been consolidated at one-quarter of the single crop assessment. For occasional second crop on land assessed as single crop, the charge will be one-half the single crop assessment.

231 The stock as ascertained by personal enquiry are as shown below. The account of the stock of Kothachira was not obtainable from the village officials, for it is lost. I have tried my best to make the statement complete and exhaustive. But this is a period of extreme fatality to the stock in these parts. Daily one or more are dying. In a single family there died twenty within forty-five days leaving only one or two pairs. The numbers are—

Bullocks	240	
Cows	403	
Buffaloes	287	
Young stock	374	under 4 years.
Goats	712	
[407] Ploughs	414	
Carts	5	
Oil mills	4	

A comparison with the figures for the census of 1899–1900 for the whole amsom of Kothachira (the three desams of Kothachira, Peringode and Mattur) shows an all-round decrease of about forty per cent. I believe the causes of this great reduction to be partly a succession of very bad seasons for stock, and partly selling off under pressure of poverty.

Cattle feeding.—Bullocks and working oxen and buffaloes, besides being left to graze on the unoccupied dry lands and on cultivable areas when they are lying fallow, are given straw and 'kanchi,' water mixed with the dusty part of rice and 'punac' or oil-cake. For cows and young stock only straw is given besides grazing. Goats are simply left to graze. Straw is given to the above working stock after they are housed in their sheds for the evening. The 'kanchi' water is given in the morning just before leading them into fields and in the afternoon after their work is over. They are led to be washed after field work. Bullocks and buffaloes are the working stock.

The breed.—The cattle are very second rate in their breed. The most healthy working oxen grow to a height of from three to three and a half feet and their strength is not half as much as the oxen employed by the firms of Madras. The cow is a pitiable thing ordinarily two to three feet high and milking on an average from a half to one Madras measure per day.* Comparison, it need hardly be said, with Madras cows is odious. They can be milked for only six months. The best come into milking again within a year, but many only within two years.

241 *Manure.*—Almost all the cattle dung is used for manure. One per
[237] cent perhaps goes for purposes of washing floors, etc. The cattle urine is allowed in some places to flow into the dung-pit, but no systematic attempt is anywhere made to utilize it to the best advantage. Besides this, burnt ashes and green manure are in common

* [A Madras measure is 62·5 fluid ounces = 3½ pints. A fair Madras cow in full milk yields about 3½ Madras measures per day, i.e., 5 quarts.—Ed.]

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lings for the second crop are then planted and will be ready for harvest in December or January. In double-crop wet lands both crops are as a rule paddy. But a small area may be used for growing garden vegetables, and this is invariably the case in the three crop lands. Only one crop is raised in the dry lands actually tilled and this crop is determined by a rotation of crops, consisting of paddy, other grains and pulses, gingelly, etc. There is great variety in rotation. Usually the field lies fallow once in three years, often for two or three years continuously, according to the fertility of the soil. The importance of rain in due season for paddy cultivation cannot be over-estimated, the whole prospects of the village for the year may be altogether changed by even a slight failure of the monsoon at the critical stages in cultivation. In that case the local prices of paddy go up very suddenly, as now (August 1917). 243

Only one type of plough is seen—the usual old fashioned country plough, which merely scratches the ground. It lasts only for a year or two and costs only from ten to twelve annas. 407

Other implements are the levelling board, harrow (a long wooden hammer used by the hand), spade, kuzhi kutti (i.e., burrowing tool), jack-knife, etc. The levelling board costs about Rs. 2½ and lasts from 6 to 8 years; the spade costs Re. 1 and is worn out in a year. It has a blade set at right angles to the handle and is swung like a pick-axe.

Stock.— 231

	1914.	1910.
(*a*) Working oxen	296	250
(*b*) Cows	350	382
(*c*) Male buffaloes	256	286
(*d*) Cow buffaloes	6	10
(*e*) Young stock of above species ...	266	221
(*f*) Riding horses	2	
(*g*) Donkeys and mules...	...	..
(*h*) Sheep	...	...
(*i*) Goats	201	285
(*j*) Pigs	...	...

The 1914 figures are approximately true in 1916.

Working oxen and buffaloes are better fed than others. They are given enough straw or grass, and hot conjee (gruel) mixed with oil-cake, bran, atc. Occasionally working oxen are given flesh (fowls). Cows and cow-buffaloes are given straw and conjee and bran water. They are led out to graze on the hill sides and pastures during the day. Their young follow them. The goats are allowed to stray and feed themselves as best they can. Their milk is used for medicinal purposes and is considered very nutritious.

There is no good pasture in the village, and the cattle are lean and bony. After harvest cattle stray over the stubbles, finding what food they can. The fields are often quite small, say 100 by 75 feet, and frequently there are considerable differences of level between adjoining fields, which is a difficulty in the way of proper irrigation.

Manuring.—About seventy-five per cent of the cattle dung is used as manure. The rest is dried in the form of thick cakes 237

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237 (called varatties) and used as fuel to supplement firewood, by the poorer classes, who go about picking the stray deposits of cattle-dung in the by-ways and streets. Perhaps a small percentage of cattle-dung is wasted. Yet it is the most important manure and an acre of land uses 100 to 150 baskets of it.

Cattle urine is not used, except by Brahman ladies to a very small extent, in growing kitchen vegetables in their backyards.

The refuse of goat-pens and of fowls (which are kept in most low-class and Nayar houses), as well as bone dust, is used in small quantities for growing garden vegetables.

241 All sorts of green manure are used. About fifty to seventy-five bales of green stuff are used on one acre of land. But green manure is not grown; it is obtained from the neighbouring woods, and the shrubby undergrowth which is commonly found on almost every hillside and in the compounds of houses.

Wood-ash is commonly used, especially in garden cultivation.

Salt is used in coconut plantations.

Chemical manures are unknown in the village.

Garden cultivation is an important item, and very profitable too, though it is not yet carried on very extensively. About 110 acres of land are used for this purpose. Water is obtained mostly from wells, of which there is one or more in every garden. The chief products are coconuts (selling at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per 100), arecanuts used for chewing, etc. (Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2 per 1,000), plantains or bananas (Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 per 1,000), jack-fruits (2 to 6 annas each), mangoes, yams and various kitchen vegetables like pumpkins, brinjals, etc. These are cultivated in almost all gardens. Pepper and ginger, betel leaves and turmeric, are also cultivated in all good gardens. Pepper is very valuable and gives a good profit.

[722] Coconuts being largely exported in the form of copra, have fallen 50 per cent in price, through shortage of freight, during the war. This has entailed great hardship on the large classes of coconut growers and workers in the Malabar Coast, this village suffering with the rest.

242 *Insect-pests.*—A kind of beetle sometimes does great damage to the crops—especially the new paddy crops and plantains. Small birds also carry away grains of corn. The usual method of combating them is to keep watch in the fields and drive them off—a very tedious and difficult operation. No help is got from the Agricultural Department, of whose very existence the village is unaware.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Hoof disease is the commonest and most dangerous. Kerosene oil mixed with lamp black is the popular remedy. There is another disease—a sort of suffocation. A cholera-like disease is also heard of, accompanied by bleeding, etc. Snake-poisoning is another danger, a bite on the nose being supposed to be fatal. The villagers have their traditional methods of combating these. Charms and incantations are used to supplement medicine. No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural Department.

313 *Wood* is obtained from the neighbouring forests, as well as from the clusters of trees in the village. Building timber is often

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
241 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

241 Large plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and
313 cinnamon have been developed, chiefly by British, in the highlands in the past hundred years, and in the forests teak provides a basic industry.

132 The rainfall is very heavy, especially in the north where the mountains encroach nearer to the sea. Through most of the area it varies between 75" and 170"; in the extreme south it drops to 32". Most of the rain comes with the southwest monsoon between May and September; lighter rains occur with the northeast monsoon in late November and December. Humidity is
[243] always very high. In most areas two wet paddy crops are taken in a year, in February and September. The temperature varies from 70° to 90°, and is hottest in April just before the monsoon breaks.

[4] (2) Political Divisions

63 From the establishment of British supremacy in 1792, until July 1949, the Malabar Coast was divided into three political areas. In the north is the Malabar District of Madras State, in area 5,790 square miles. It is governed in internal affairs by the legislative assembly of Madras, and is under a Collector (of land revenue) who lives in Calicut, the capital of the district. The port of Cochin is also administered as part of Malabar District. In the centre was Cochin State, in area 1,493 square miles. It was governed internally by the Maharaja of Cochin, assisted by the Cochin legislative assembly, whose headquarters was in Ernakulam, the capital. In the south was Travancore State with an area of 7,625 square miles, under the Maharaja

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[482] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of
563 manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored, part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to
[465] juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous training in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts,
241 and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
[496] the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

564 **Political and Economic Systems**

[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

776 821 [184] during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

241 [243] [132] [776] Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 241 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their 252 own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar 241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

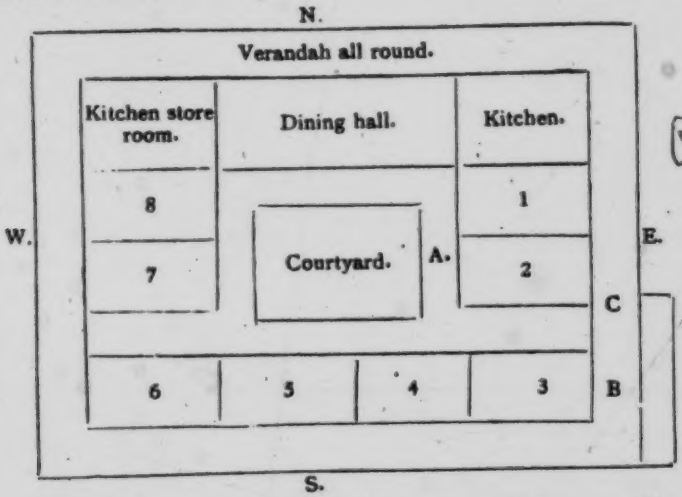

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one 771
becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" 177
or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyin* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which [114]
lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. 241
The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardomon have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of 242
excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific 245
skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme [177]
fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut 245
cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by 471
the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the [361]
Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. 241
Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. [438]
It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the [432]
market.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 56 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly remained serfs in spite of the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 796 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 [444] The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people; but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, [789] the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which

Agricultural ceremonies.

[787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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●241 the gate of the houses, he is met by a woman with a lighted lamp and some leaves on which is placed the rice. This is carried into the yard in procession, while those assembled cry out, 'Fill, fill, increase, fill the house, fill the basket, fill the stomach of the children'. Three times is it carried on a plantain leaf placed on a wooden plank while the lighted lamp is [782] placed on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and stalks of paddy with ears of grain in them are stuck [776] with cow-dung to the various parts of the house, to the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous breakfast brings the ceremony to a close.

Puthari:—The next ceremony is the formal cooking and eating of the new rice (*Puthari*). It sometimes takes place on the *Nira* day, but generally it is an independent festival. An [777] auspicious day is chosen as soon as the first crop is harvested and threshed—a day which must be before the *Onam*. The [263] rice is cooked and eaten with a special curry made of *tagara* (Cassia tora) peas, the fruit of *puthari chunda* (Swertia Cherata), brinjals (Solanum Melongena) and green pumpkin.

Ucharai:—At the end of Makaram (January-February), when the second crop has been harvested, the year's agricultural operations are supposed to be over, and Mother Earth, *Bhúmi Dévi*, is considered to rest during the hot weather until the [776] first shower begins. At the beginning of this period the Malayali observes a festival in honour of the Goddess' menstruation, which, like the *Roman Februria*, is supposed to take place at this time. On the last three days during this festival, all granaries are closed, paddy is not sold, and no implement of agriculture is touched, while even the rice to be eaten during these three days is pounded before-hand. On the first day before sunset the granaries are closed, some thorns and shrubs of broom are fixed to the door and cow-dung and ashes are spread in front of it. The next two days are holidays for all; the house must not be swept, nor the floors smeared with cow-dung, and the garden even may not be swept or watered. On the fourth day the granaries are opened, and a basketful of leaves is taken to the field and burnt with a little manure perhaps to indicate that the cultivator remains in possession.

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Ucharal is the date on which all agricultural leases should expire, and demand for surrender of property should not be made at any other time, but the courts, by a liberal interpretation, have extended the term up to the day of *Vishu*. Special *Ucharal* festivals are held at Cherpulasseri in the Walluvanad Taluk and near Shoranur, at which straw models of cattle are taken in procession to the temples of Bhagavati.

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[692]
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161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
414 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there
* 433 been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades.
47 In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
● 241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 is the undulating terrain of the midland with laterite soil. This middle region is [24] rich in agricultural produce ; paddy, tapioca, spices and cashewnut being some of the main crops of this area.

Climate and Rainfall

132 1.5 The same diversity which characterizes the physical features of the State, also occurs in case of the climatic conditions. Whereas the highland has a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, the plains are hot and humid. However, the range of variation in temperature is very narrow, the normal limits being 80°–90°F.

1.6 The average level of annual rainfall is quite high being in the neighbourhood of 96 inches. In fact only Konkan and Malabar–South Konkan region with 109 inches and 121 inches surpass Kerala in the annual volume of rainfall. Since Kerala is fortunate in getting precipitation both from the south-west and the north-east monsoons, the rainfall is fairly spread out over the year. January to April are practically the only months which are completely dry. Moreover, annual variations in rainfall are also comparatively low. The co-efficient of mean deviation of annual rainfall is only 6.5 which is lower than that of all the other States, except Assam (Table 1).[1] Draughts are, naturally, rare.

ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

133 1.7 The influence of geological formation and geographical features on the economic structure and the growth possibilities varies from region to region. However, some of these stand out distinctly in the case of Kerala. The high mountainous wall of the Western Ghats and its close proximity to the sea is responsile for the heavy and regular rainfall which this State receives. The high characteristic rainfall, in turn, is responsible for a number of features of this State. The large number of high value yielding plantation crops and the rich forest growth owe their existence to the rainfall and the suitable climatic conditions found in the Western Ghats. The abundant rainfall has also provided Kerala with a large number of rivers. These are the storehouse of water resources—one of the chief assets of Kerala. There are 44 rivers in addition to a much larger number of small rivulets and streams. Forty-one of these rivers are west flowing and yield a total run off of 2,500 T.M.C. ft.[2] This is as high as 5 per cent of India's total water potential, whereas the total area of Kerala is only about 1.2 per cent of the area of India.

1.8 Since the Western Ghats are in close proximity of the sea coast, most of the rivers are also very short, the average length being only 40 miles. Only four rivers, viz., Beypore, Bharatapuzha, Periyar and Pamba are more than 100 miles in length. Although the rivers are small, they carry sizable flows and these provide the State with rich irrigation potential.

[text continues on p. 4]

[1] Table 1 refers to the States as they existed before the reorganization. The conclusions, strictly speaking, refer to only Travancore-Cochin. However, they are broadly true of Kerala as a whole also.

[2] T.M.C. ft.—Thousand Million Cubic Feet.

Source: *Water Resources of Kerala*, PWD, Government of Kerala.

113

* [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

1.2 per cent of the total area of India, this contribution is quite significant. Yet the per capita income of Kerala in 1955-56 (Rs. 234.4) was lower than the all-India average (Rs. 261) by about Rs. 27, that is, 10.3 per cent. 434 [171]

1.22 The distribution of output and employment between primary, secondary and tertiary activities gives a broad indication of the stage of development an economy has attained. As a general rule, the more advanced the stage of economic development, the higher the proportion of income and employment originating in the secondary and tertiary activities. In Kerala the sectoral distribution of output and employment presents somewhat of a contrasting picture (Tables 3 and 4).[2] In terms of employment, the proportion of working force engaged in agriculture and allied occupations (55%) is much smaller than the corresponding all-India proportion (71.8%). This would seem to indicate that Kerala has perhaps reached a level of development somewhat comparable to that of a country like Japan. But the picture presented is quite different when one looks at the proportion of income contributed by the various sectors. The major share (49.1%) of output still originates in the primary sector (all-India: 45.4%). The secondary and tertiary sectors taken together contribute 50.9 per cent of the output against 54.6 per cent in the case of all-India. 433* 434 464 171

1.23 Thus, while the sectoral distribution of population seems indicative of a diversified structure of the economy, the sectoral distribution of income does not. Two factors seem to provide a plausible explanation for this contrast. In view of the high density of population, the possibilities of providing gainful employment in the agricultural sector are naturally limited. Super-imposed upon this is the fact that as a result of the predominence of perennial crops, especially the coconuts, in the agricultural sector, the cropping pattern in Kerala is comparatively less labour-intensive. As a result of the operation of these forces, a large section of the population appears to have been forced to turn to some sort of non-agricultural activity or the other. But this seems to be of a "make-work" character. The technology of the secondary sector is traditional and its productivity is appallingly low. 433* 464 [434]

1.24 In fact, productivity in Kerala's secondary sector is even lower than in the primary sector. This reversed position of Kerala only points to one of the strange paradoxes that occur in an under-developed economy. Ultimately, it is not so much the sectoral distribution of working force as the sectoral levels of productivity that are the determinants of growth. Productivity, in turn, is a function of the level of technology. Table 4 shows that the net output per worker in the secondary and tertiary sectors is lower than the average for all-India. As may be observed, low productivity is especially marked in the secondary sector which mostly covers the industries (Kerala—Rs. 539 ; all-India—Rs. 1,294). 433* [171]

Agriculture and Plantations

1.25 On the other hand, the primary sector in Kerala is comparatively better developed. This is a distinct feature of the State economy. Primary sector comprises agriculture, plantations, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries. As may be seen from Table 4, labour productivity in the primary sector of Kerala is roughly 433* 241

[2] [see pp. 270-271, category 11b --Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural [171] sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilized.

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS [171]

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[3] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

[3] [see p 272, category 11b -- Analysis]

511 [262] and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of [296] dress worn by the people of ~~Kerala is evident~~ even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

*433 241 262 1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

*433 1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

231 *Other Primary Activities*

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and [234] fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality 235 with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry [439] in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

313 1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

226 1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. 241 In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 171 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

* 433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

crops is about 8 per cent of the gross cropped area. A direct consequence of this type of cropping pattern is the high degree of commercialization which has been attained in the agricultural sector. This has important implications for the State economy. The State exports its commercial crops, and imports its foodgrain requirements. In this exchange the State stands to gain since cash crops yield far higher return per unit of area than the food crops. Secondly, quite a few of the commercial crops grown in the State are of a perennial nature and require large investments. This has led to the establishment of numerous large scale organized plantations and farms, although small farms also play an important role. 433* 241

2.6 A chronic food deficit is the third important feature of the agricultural sector, mentioned above (para 2.1). The current production of foodgrains is roughly 967,000 tons. Current requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs.[1] of foodgrains per day per adult (unit) work out to a figure of 24 lakh tons. The gap between food requirements and the current level of production thus works out to over 50 per cent of total requirements. This is higher than in any other State. However, this need not cause excessive anxiety. It is not necessary for every State in the Union to try and achieve self-sufficiency in food at the cost of other more valuable commercial crops. From the long run point of view, the aim should be to strike a balance between supply and demand for foodgrains at the national, rather than, strictly, at the level of the State. The psychological desire to attain a balance between local supply and demand for foodgrains in the State is a legacy of the lean period of 1940–50 when the State was hard hit by the severe food shortage prevailing in the country. 433* 241 262

Climate and Geographical Factors

2.7 The climate and rainfall in Kerala are excellently suited to the prevailing cropping pattern. The climate is cool and humid in the high ranges while it is humid and warm in the plains. The range of temperature variations during the year is very small, the maximum never going beyond 90°F and minimum rarely below 75°F. The humidity, however, is very high in the rainy season—about 90 per cent. The State is fortunate in respect of rainfall. The normal annual rainfall is 95 inches a year ; it may be as high as 150 inches in the high ranges, but nowhere it is less than 65 inches. Most of the precipitation occurs during May to September when the State receives the south-west monsoon. Taking the State as a whole, it may be said that it is one of the most wet areas in the country (Table 1).* Assam has about the same normal rainfall as Kerala. Only the Konkan coast (Bombay) and South Kanara (Mysore) exceed it. The annual deviation in rainfall is also comparatively low with the co-efficient of mean deviation at 6.5 per cent for Travancore-Cochin and 9.2 per cent for Malabar (Table 1). On the whole rains are more reliable in Kerala than in most other States. 132

2.8 Kerala has two distinct geographical divisions, namely, the Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar area. The soils of Travancore-Cochin area are generally 134

[1] The Nutritional Advisory Committee to the Government of India recommended 18 ozs. of foodgrains per adult unit per day as the desirable norm. We have used a slightly smaller figure (17 ozs. per day) in our calculations. [146]

* [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed – Analyst]

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951–59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).2 The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951–59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [239] [257]

2 [see p. 277, category 116 - - Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 26]

MAP 6

102
841
311

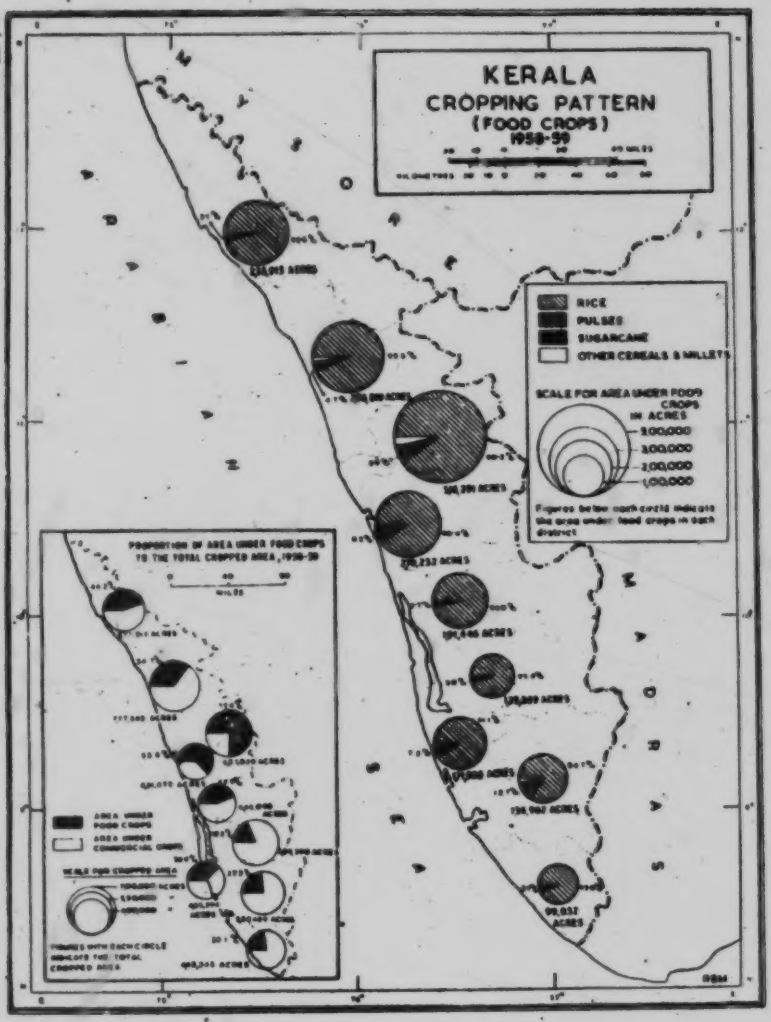

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 27]

MAP 7

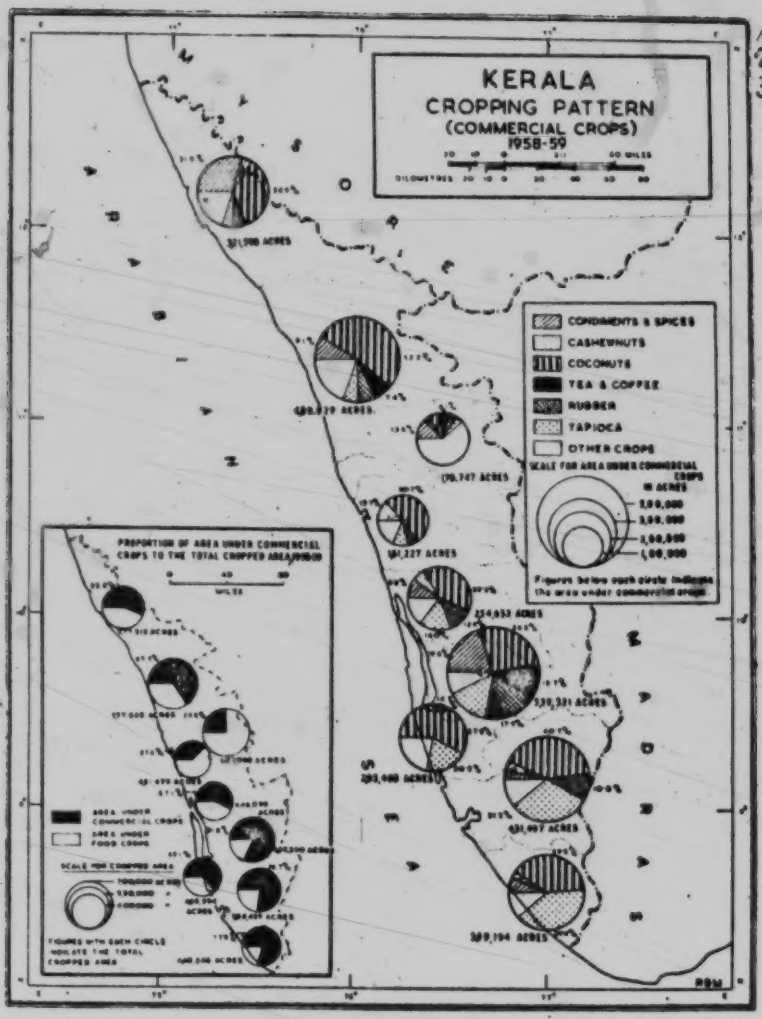

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

its success to the persevering efforts of the State Agriculture Department. The department has made a successful drive for pulse cultivation with a view to (*i*) raise the production of pulses in which the State is grossly deficit, (*ii*) to increase crop intensity, and (*iii*) to enrich soils by including a legume in the rotation.

2.16 During the same period the area under oilseeds rose by about 131 per cent. The area under all the millets, except ragi which rose by about 9 per cent, has registered a decline ; jowar area has declined by 33 per cent, and small millets by 53 per cent. Perhaps the increase in the area under some of the higher value crops such as oilseeds and sugarcane was at the expense of inferior and low value millet crops. This is another indication of the growing preference for high value crops. (Table 10)[1]

2.17 Land productivity is generally high in Kerala and compares very favourably with that in the other States of India. Yield of rice, the principal crop, was 1,108 lbs. per acre in 1958-59, which is about 20 per cent higher than the all-India average. Only the States of Madras and Andhra have higher yields. During 1951–59 the rice yield has increased by about 25 per cent (Table 11)[2] as a result of increased application of fertilizers, improved seeds and better agricultural practices. Similarly ragi is another high yielding crop with a yield of 1,290 lbs. per acre (1958-59)—the highest in India.

2.18 On the whole the yield rates for most of the crops have improved between the years 1951–59. For cotton and ragi, as in the case of paddy, the increase has been quite significant. On the other hand, there was a decline in the yield rate of jowar, groundnut and sugarcane. (Table 11)[2]

2.19 The latest districtwise disposition of area and production show that Palghat has the largest concentration of important food crops grown in the State. In 1958-59 it accounted for 29.2 per cent of the area under rice and one-third of rice production in the State. Palghat also leads in the production of millets and pulses. The district of Kottayam leads in plantation crops as well as in some of the other cash crops, for example, it had 32 per cent of area under ginger, 29 per cent of area under turmeric and 16.9 per cent of area under sugarcane.

2.20 There is a considerable degree of regional specialization in some of the minor field crops. For example, Palghat accounts for over 90 per cent of the area for the production of cotton and groundnut in Kerala. Similarly sesamum is concentrated in Alleppey (61%), tur (56%) and smaller millets (69%) in Palghat, and chillies (51%) and tobacco (95%) in Cannanore. This specialization is due to favourable conditions for the cultivation of these crops in the areas where they are being grown.

Future Development

2.21 It is generally known that agriculture aids economic development in three different ways. By providing a surplus of food requirements, it sustains a growing urban population. Secondly, agriculture is an important source of industrial raw materials and, in under-developed regions, generally forms the base for a large number of industries. This is particularly so in Kerala where over 70 per cent of the factory workers are employed in agro-based industries. Lastly, higher agricultural yields

[1] [see p. 276, category 116 -- Analyst]
[2] [see p. 277, category 116 -- Analyst]

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ensure a better return to the farmer. This creates an incentive for achieving a still higher level of production. And at the same time, the rise in agricultural income provides a substantial purchasing power for absorbing consumer goods output of the industrial sector. The need for an emphasis on agricultural development is, therefore, very much inter-related with steady industrial growth. 433* 241

2.22 Agricultural development in Kerala can follow two possible directions. First, the aim could be to raise the yield rate and output of the existing crops with a special emphasis on increasing the food production. Alternatively, the policy could be directed towards bringing about a modification in the existing cropping pattern by giving greater weightage to the commercial crops and thus ensuring better returns from the land. On the basis of available evidence, it seems that for Kerala the latter course of action would be the more appropriate one. It has already been pointed out that it is not necessary for each State to try to achieve complete self-sufficiency in foodgrains. 433*

2.23. A wide gap in food requirements of the extent which exists at present in the State, can be covered only through extension of area under paddy in addition to increase in the yield per acre. Whereas efforts at raising the yield rate are justified by all means, it would be unwise to divert land from commercial crops to the cultivation of paddy. Apart from direct importance of cash crops to the industrial growth of Kerala in the form of raw material supply, commercial crops make a substantial contribution to the industrial effort of India through the large amount of foreign exchange earnings they bring in annually. Export of commodities like tea, pepper, cardamom, cashewnutt and coconut products from Kerala earn foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 55 crores every year—roughly one-twelfth of overall foreign exchange earnings of the entire country. It would, therefore, be in the interest of the State economy to maximize returns from land by growing higher value crops in place of low value crops like tapioca and small millets in as much area as possible. This would require a reversal of the policy pursued so far in favour of attaining self-sufficiency in food within the State. The gap in food requirements which cannot be covered through intensive measures of paddy cultivation could continue to be met by imports from the other parts of India. Since the relative advantage lies in the cultivation of commercial crops, some of which can be grown only in Kerala, attention should be focussed on the development of cash crops whereas the problem of wiping out the food deficit can be relegated to a secondary place for the present. 433* 261 439

2.24 The extension of the area under commercial crops should be undertaken on a scientific and planned basis. Considerations such as gross value of product per unit area and demand for the crop and suitability of soil are some of the important aspects that have to be examined in this connection. It is not possible to state the exact extent and nature of substitution without an intensive land use potential survey of different regions. A survey of this type was being carried out by the State Agriculture Department. However, the future scope for some of commercial field crops is analysed below on the basis of whatever information is available. The possibilities of commercial plantation crops are discussed in the last part of this chapter. 433*

.11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

improved seeds would, therefore, be much larger in Kerala than elsewhere in the country. For full coverage of the area by improved seeds, it is estimated that by 1971, 120 new farms would have to be organized. Investment on each of these farms, including a seed store, would be about Rs. 75,000. Total investment on additional seed farms would, therefore, amount to about Rs. 90 lakhs. Assuming an increase of 10 per cent in yield, additional production due to full coverage from improved seeds by the end of the Fourth Plan would be about 75,000 tons of foodgrains alone. Similar increases may be achieved for other agricultural commodities also. 433* 242

Manures and Fertilizers

2.42 The soils of Kerala are not fertile. Being of lateritic origin they are highly porous. More than 50 per cent of the cultivated soils contain less than 15 per cent of clay complex. Continuous cropping accompanied by heavy leaching (a direct consequence of heavy rainfall) has made the soils extremely deficient in phosphates, nitrogen and potash, and also in calcium, magnesium and other minor elements. 134

2.43 Inspite of the poor fertility of soils, the crop yields are good. This is primarily due to the application of a large amount of organic manures to the fields. In addition to organic manures, the farmers also use fertilizers. Farmers of Kerala were among the first to realize benefits of fertilizers and put them to use. But the quantity used is small owing to inadequate supplies. Even a modest consumption target of 14,200 tons of fertilizers[1] per annum for the Second Plan had to be revised to 5,800 tons on account of this shortage. During 1958-59, the State consumed 5,000 tons of nitrogenous ferilizers mostly in the form of ammonium sulphate and potassic fertilizers. This works out to roughly 1.2 lbs. per acre of nitrogen and less than 0.1 lb. per acre of phosphate and potash. 433* 241

2.44 In future, the emphasis should be placed both on manures and on fertilizers. Organic manures, in addition to providing the plant nutrition, help in conditioning the soil, whereas fertilizers are necessary for supplementing nutritional needs which the organic manures are not able to provide fully. A joint and balanced application of organic manures and fertilizers is, therefore, necessary for getting the desired results.

2.45 All possible sources in the State should be fully exploited for increasing the supply of organic manures. There is scope for greater utilization of urban wastes and green leaves. There is also scope for fuller utilization of the existing production of press mud and for increasing the supply of green matter by raising green manure plants on the borders of fields and banks of river streams. The supply of organic manures may be further augmented by fuller utilization of fish waste and inedible or spoilt fish. Such possibilities should be investigated.

2.46 As emphasized above, a desired level of crop nutrition will not be possible unless manures are adequately supplemented by fertilizers. The supplementary dosage of fertilizers differs from crop to crop depending upon the nature of the crop, length of the growing period and the yield rates. The dosage is the highest for banana, with NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potash ratio at 150 : 150 : 300 lbs.

[1] 9,680 tons of N, 3,720 tons of P_2O_5 and 840 tons of K.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 per acre, while the same for paddy is only 40 :40 :30. It is very low for leguminous
241 crops—at 0 :20 :20 for pulses and 20 : 20 : 20 for groundnuts.[1] These dosages are not the optimum. These are just the average that may be considered adequate during a period of shortage of fertilizers. There are many farmers who apply as much as 80 lbs. of nitrogen per acre to rice while there are others who, on account of shortage of fertilizers apply only 15 lbs. per acre. Since fertilizer allocations are not made for individual crops, a dosage ratio of NPK 40 : 40 : 30 per acre may be considered as an average requirement for the State in the future. But in view of shortages in the country for phosphatic and potassic fertilizers, the dosage may be put at 40 : 20 : 15. The total annual requirements of crop fields on this basis would be 35,700 tons of nitrogen, 17,700 tons of P_2O_5 and 13,400 tons of K_2O.

2.47 In view of the peculiar soil conditions and reaction, attention will have to be paid to the correct choice of fertilizers. At present fertilizers are being used indiscriminately. For example, ammonium sulphate, the most popular fertilizer in the State, is being used even on high acidity soils. Such applications may do damage to the soil by increasing further the soil acidity. The selection of various types of fertilizers in the future should, therefore, be on rational and scientific basis, so that the fertilizers also help in correcting the soil deficiencies. Urea is, perhaps, eminently suited for Kerala. It is, however, not possible to make any specific suggestion on the requisite type of fertilizers for the State as adequate data on the performance of various types of fertilizers are not available. It is, therefore, suggested that a large number of trials should be conducted all over the State with a view to choosing the right type of fertilizer and dosages for various crops in different regions. The result of such trials should be made known to users through the extension machinery.

2.48 It is not possible to give a precise estimate of the increase in agricultural production from the proposed fertilizer consumption programme owing to difficulties in estimating the share of fertilizers for different crops. Knowledge about the rates of return from fertilizers for various crops, is also inadequate. Assuming, however, that roughly three-fourths of the proposed quantity is used for rice and other foodgrains, the additional production of cereals and pulses on the basis of available yardsticks may be expected to be 387,000 tons by 1970-71.

Irrigation

133 2.49 *Existing Position*: Irrigation resources of Kerala are very rich. In all, there are 44 rivers in the State. The run off of water from the west-flowing rivers is estimated to be of the order of 2,560,800 million cubic feet per annum, while that of east-flowing rivers is 196,000 million cubic feet.

241 2.50 The first irrigation project to be taken up in the State was the Kodayar
653 Extension Scheme which was completed by 1947. At the beginning of the First Plan

[1] Dosage for NPK (ratio in lbs. per acre for other crops) is

Tapioca	80 :80 :160	Ginger	30 :50 :100
Oilseeds	10 :20 : 20	Sugarcane	100 :60 :100
Cotton	30 :30 : 50	Fruits/ Vegetables	50 :50 :100

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

period, the State had three major irrigation projects, viz., Peechi and Chalakudy I, apart from the Kodayar Extension Scheme. During the First Plan, two more projects viz., Vazhani and Neyyar I were added to the list. At the time of the reorganization of States, Nanjinand area, served by the Kodayar Extension Scheme, got transferred to Madras but in return Kerala gained three projects through the annexation of Malabar area viz., Malampuzha, Walayar and Mangalam. During the Second Plan period, six more projects have been completed. By 1956-57 the total irrigated area had reached 8.29 lakh acres, that is, about 30 per cent of the net sown area under field crops. 241 653

2.51 Canals are the main source of irrigation in Kerala accounting for about 50 per cent of the gross irrigated area (Table 12).[2] Tanks and wells irrigate 9.28 per cent and 3.49 per cent respectively of the gross irrigated area. One interesting feature about irrigation in Kerala is that irrigation from the 'other sources' accounts for a particularly high percentage of area irrigated, viz., 37 per cent. These other sources include hill streams, small diversion works, water pumped from streams and rivers, etc. These are quite numerous in Kerala on account of the high rainfall received in the State. 241

2.52 The main beneficiary from existing irrigation facilities is paddy, accounting for over two-thirds of the gross irrigated acreage. The remaining irrigated area is shared by other food and non-food crops. The exact breakdown is not available but it is believed that banana and coconut account for much of what is left.

2.53 The benefit accruing from the 13 irrigation works which had been taken up till the end of the Second Plan and their relative importance are given in the following table.[1]

Benefit	*Area benefiting* (acres)	*Percentage*
One new crop	55,314	20.11
New conversion to double cropped paddy	63,786	22.98
Stabilization of one crop	25,300	9.11
Stabilization of two crops	120,660	43.48
Drainage, flood control, dewatering, etc.	12,000	4.32
TOTAL	*277,060*	*100.00*

2.54 It can be seen from the above table that the largest extent of benefit is received from the stabilization of two crops. Conversion of fresh areas to cultivation of paddy as a result of the new irrigation facilities is only 22 per cent of the total area benefited. A large proportion of benefit in the form of stabilization of existing crops rather than in the form of double or triple cropping is due to the fact that Kerala gets assured rainfall both from the south-western as well as the north-eastern monsoon. There are thus very few patches of land which are not able to grow paddy due to the absence of rainfall.

2.55 In terms of additional output of foodgrains, however, the benefit from new conversions is much greater than from stabilization, as can be seen from the [433]

[1] Based on figures supplied by the Department of Irrigation, Kerala.

[2] [see p. 278, category 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

following table.

Benefit	Additional output of food-grains per acre (in tons)
One new crop	0.5
New conversion to double cropped paddy	1.0
Stabilization of one crop	0.1
Stabilization of two crops	0.2

On the basis of these co-efficients, increase in output contributed by the 13 projects comes to 129,636 tons, giving a weighted average of 0.47 tons of additional output of paddy per acre.

2.56 *Future Development of Irrigation*: Due to a difficult and uneven terrain, the cost of digging canals and constructing dams is comparatively high in Kerala. The average capital cost per acre for irrigation from major and medium schemes is roughly Rs. 885 per acre as against the all-India average of roughly Rs. 500 per acre. The expensive nature of irrigation schemes and the high level of rainfall which Kerala receives, naturally set a limit to the development of irrigation works.

2.57 The proportion of new conversions out of the total area benefited is rather small. However, double and triple cropping can be made possible only by ensuring regular water supply through the irrigation schemes. Irrigation facilities are also essential for increased application of fertilizers to the second and third crops.

2.58 A Master Plan for the irrigation resources of Kerala was prepared by the Irrigation Branch of the Public Works Department. According to it, the additional irrigation potential available in the State is about 896,000 acres. Of this 822,000 acres would be for the existing area and only 74,000 acres for conversion of dry land to irrigated area. The cost of the above programme is estimated at Rs. 79.34 crores. Rice would be the main beneficiary from this irrigation programme. Additional annual production of rice from these schemes would be roughly 4.49 lakh tons valued at Rs. 17.9 crores. In addition, if other benefits such as raising the third crop of pulses and the extension of area under high value crops like coconut, sugarcane, banana, cotton, etc., are also taken into account, the benefits may amount to another Rs. 10.0 crores. This would give a capital output ratio of about 2.5.

2.59 In view of the particular conditions prevailing in Kerala, it seems desirable that a greater emphasis should be placed on minor rather than on major irrigation works. There is justification for adopting this point of view on a number of grounds. Major irrigation works are a necessity in those areas where vast areas of cultivable land can be opened up by construction of major irrigation projects. In Kerala, as pointed out above, the benefit lies mainly in providing irrigation facilities to those areas where one crop is already being raised. Since the size of investment required for major irrigation works is much larger is comparison to that required for minor work and capital resources are scarce, minor irrigation works are far more suitable for Kerala. The nature of terrain in Kerala also makes it difficult to lay a vast network of canals. Moreover, for major irrigation works, the State has to bear all the investment cost whereas minor irrigation works help in tapping localized investible resources available with the agriculturists.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.60 Minor irrigation works have other advantages as well. In the first place, the period of construction being much shorter than in the case of major works, the lag between investment and yield is comparatively short. Secondly, since the minor works are executed on a decentralized basis they have greater effectiveness in utilizing the pockets of surplus manpower. The problem of organizing manpower squads is likely to be less intractable. Thirdly, in Kerala there are a large number of irrigable tracts which do not occur in contiguous blocks. These scattered areas cannot get the canal water facilities provided by major irrigation dams but there are a number of streams which are conveniently situated for minor irrigation development.

2.61 Keeping these points in view, it is suggested that during the coming decade it is not necessary to develop the full potential of 8.96 lakh acres through major irrigation projects. However, the State should try to implement the schemes which have been suggested by the Master Plan for inclusion during the Third and Fourth Plans. The list of these schemes is given in Table 15. These would benefit an area of 4.33 lakhs at an investment of Rs. 39.3 crores. On the basis of current yardsticks, additional output of foodgrains from these major irrigation schemes is expected to be 2.16 lakh tons. The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 11.23 crores for major irrigation. The balance of Rs. 28.1 crores will have to be invested during the Fourth Plan. These figures only indicate the rough order of magnitude and will have to be changed, if the cost estimates given in the Master Plan are revised after further investigation.

2.62 *Minor Irrigation*: A Minor Irrigation Team, which was appointed by the Committee on Plan projects has submitted its report on Kerala. This report reveals many interesting features regarding the scope for various types of scheme. Some of its important recommendations, which should be implemented expeditiously, are discussed below.

2.63 *Spring-fed Tanks*: There are a large number of spring-fed tanks in Kerala, but the tanks are exposed to dangers of silting, breaching by storm water and heavy evaporation losses. In order to obviate these difficulties, the streams should be tapped underground by means of open jointed pipe drains placed in a reverse filter, cutting across the springs, in preference to traditional tanks.

2.64 *Diversion Weirs and Channels*: Construction of such channels is feasible on a large scale as the Kerala rivers carry a good flow from May to February due to the two heavy monsoons. Moreover, waters from the hydro-projects, now being planned for construction in the mountains, could be diverted for irrigating the coastal plains by means of diversion works. Since most of the river beds are covered by paddy fields, any increase in the water level due to afflux above diversion weirs is resented by the people whose fields get submerged. Therefore, weirs with control gates ought to be provided.

2.65 *Lift Irrigation*: The topographical and other features of the State are eminently suited for the development of lift irrigation as there are a large number of small blocks of field located on the fringe of the rivers, spread all over the State. Another factor in favour of lift irrigation is the availability of cheap electric power. Implementation of an extended programme of lift irrigation would, therefore, be highly desirable even though the operational cost of these schemes is higher.

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*433 2.66 *Surface Reservoirs*: Adequate provision should be made for silting capacity 241 in tanks and reservoirs. In the case of small tanks at least about 20 per cent of the 653 total capacity should be reserved for silting.

2.67 *Prevention of Ingress of Salt Water*: Large areas of cultivated land in Kerala are well below the mean sea level and are subject to flood by fresh water brought over by rivers in the monsoon season and salt water during other seasons. There is need for construction of suitable projects to prevent the onrush of salt water into the paddy fields. The scheme to dewater such areas should also form an important item in the minor irrigation programme.

2.68 No estimates are available for the likely area that could be irrigated from minor irrigation works. Nevertheless, it is considered to be quite substantial. It is learnt from discussions with the State Government authorities that the extent of such possibilities is around 300,000 acres. Of this, the share of lift irrigation and ground water utilization (wells, filter points, etc.) may be put at 100,000 acres. Lift irrigation and ground water utilization are works of a small size and, therefore, should be undertaken by the beneficiaries themselves with the help of Government aid.

2.69 In view of the emphasis laid on minor works, it is suggested that 200,000 acres of area (this also includes area benefited from flood control and drains) should be developed from minor irrigation sources. Of this, about half may be from lift irrigation and ground water sources. The average capital cost of providing minor irrigation would be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 1,000 per acre. Total investment for minor irrigation development schemes as suggested above would come to Rs. 20 crores. Of this Rs. 10 crores would be in the public sector and the rest will have to be provided by individual agriculturists.

2.70 The minor irrigation schemes proposed here would benefit not only rice, but also other crops such as arecanut, lemon grass and banana. For purpose of calculations it may be assumed that only half of proposed irrigation is used for rice. The additional production of rice on account of minor works would thus be about 50,000 tons annually by 1970-71.

Improved Agricultural Practices

*433 2.71 Agricultural practices in Kerala are relatively of advanced type. Rice, 242 the principal food crop of the State, is cultivated quite intensively. Transplanting is practised all over the State, even under the submerged type of cultivation. In case of dry seed bed crops like tapioca, ginger, groundnut, etc., the farmers generally take care to see that interculture and earthing operations are satisfactorily done.

2.72 However, there is further scope for increasing crop yields by improving the agricultural practices and techniques. Improved practices such as scientific crop rotation by including a legume crop as against the existing practice of successive rice crops, deep ploughing, adequate plant protection, etc., can increase the yields to some extent.

2.73 With the proposed increase in irrigated area it would be possible to raise a third crop of pulses either of black gram or green gram in succession to two crops

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and net value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise, both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 245 [439] 2.85 The country is deficit in the output of coconuts and annually imports about Rs. 15 crores worth of copra and coconut products. This is a heavy drain on foreign exchange resources of the country. Even after imports the total available supply of coconuts is not enough and the oil millers are, therefore, hard hit by this shortage. The demand for this commodity is increasing year after year while the production has been more or less stagnant at 3,100 million nuts. If this situation is allowed to drift unchecked, imports of coconuts will have to be increased progressively. In view of these factors, measures to increase productivity and the output of coconut are of extreme urgency.

2.86 Coconut cultivation in the State today faces a multitude of problems. The average yields are only about 40 nuts a tree per annum, that is, 3,000 nuts an acre, as against 60 to 100 nuts per tree in Philippines and some of the other Far Eastern countries. Moreover, the yield has shown no tendency to increase over the last 10 years. The focal point of coconut development programme, therefore, should be to break through the stagnant levels of productivity of coconut. The following discussion follows this line of argument.

*433 245 241 2.87 Poor yields are largely due to the absence of regular and adequate manuring. The crop needs large quantities of manure. But the farmers, majority of whom are poor, cannot afford to spend on fertilizers which in the case of coconuts show results only after two or three years. Farmers, therefore, prefer to invest whatever resources they have in manuring the field crops which bring in quicker returns. Coconuts thus get neglected. In addition to starving the coconut trees of fertilizers, many farmers grow exhaustive crops such as banana and tapioca as an understorey. This practice exhausts the soil and it needs large funds and a long period ranging from 3 to 5 years, to rehabilitate such gardens.

[647] 2.88 To raise the yields, an intensive application of fertilizers containing NPK has been recommended by the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The Committee is of the opinion that fertilizers are more suited to acidic soils on which coconut is generally grown in Kerala. It estimates the cost of requisite fertilizers to be of the order of Rs. 93 per acre per annum but that is beyond the means of a small farmer. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should arrange to advance loans for the purchase of fertilizers, and these loans may be recovered after three years. To start with, 30 per cent of the area may be brought under this programme. The annual requirement of fertilizers would be about 26,000 tons of superphosphate. The programme would cost Rs. 3 crores per year, that is, Rs. 9 crores for the first three years after which the loans may be granted out of the recoveries. The programme may be extended to cover 75 per cent of the area earmarked for coconut during the Fourth Plan. Better manuring coupled with the necessary cultural operations, can raise the yields from 40 nuts to 60 or 70 nuts per tree which would thus amount to an increase of 50 to 75 per cent over the present rate of production.

*433 245 242 2.89 Coconut crop is subject to a heavy incidence of diseases and pests. The diseases such as "leaf rot" and "root diseases" are rampant and widespread and have spread to six districts affecting over 50 per cent of the trees in the State. The annual loss of production due to these diseases is estimated at Rs. 2 to 3 crores. There is already a scheme in force to spray about 7 million trees in the infected pockets.

But mere treatment of infected trees is not enough. The healthy trees lying side by side, or trees exposed to infection, should also be sprayed as a preventive measure. The proposed plant protection programme should cover the whole State in progressive stages by the end of the Fourth Plan. This would cost about Rs. 5 crores during the next 10 years, but a part of this may be recovered from the farmers as spraying charges. 433* 245 242

2.90 Coconut is mostly grown as an unirrigated crop. During the summer months they are drought-affected in many parts of the State and drought has a telling effect on the trees. It is found that under irrigated conditions, the trees regularly give higher yields and there is very little premature shedding of buttons. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture should start popularizing irrigation of coconut gardens. Filter point tube-wells and pumping sets would be suitable as means of irrigation and the State should arrange for loans on easy terms for their installation. 433* 245 241

2.91 The average economic life of a coconut tree is about 60 years. It is estimated that over 50 per cent of the trees in the State are over 50 years old and, therefore, in about 10 years, these trees would be past their economic life. Unless immediate steps are taken to replace the aged trees, the production of nuts after a few years is bound to decline in spite of all the measures suggested so far. A campaign should, therefore, be launched to replace old trees by fresh plantings.

2.92 There is not much scope for extending the area under coconut since most of the suitable area has already been brought under the crop. This is particularly so in the former Travancore-Cochin area. However, there is some possibility of raising new coconut plantations in the interior strip of Malabar along the foot of the western ghats. The Indian Central Coconut Committee estimates this area to be of the order of 100,000 acres. It is suggested that Government should make all efforts to bring this area under coconut cultivation. There are some difficulties in the way of bringing about the extension of area, for example, lack of adequate funds with the small farmers, and their preference for rubber plantations because they do not fall within the purview of the Land Ceiling Bill, etc. Some of these hurdles could be overcome if the State offers long term loans to intending farmers for the purpose of raising fresh plantations. Assuming that loans at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per acre are distributed, the total loan fund required to plant 100,000 acres during the next decade would be around Rs. 10 crores.

2.93. Production of quality seedlings from approved stock in large numbers is also necessary for the programme of under-planting and raising new plantations. The State nurseries, at present, have a capacity of 2.2 lakh seedlings a year. This capacity would not be enough to meet the future needs. It is suggested that the nursery capacity should be doubled during the Third Plan by starting 15 new Government nurseries. This would require an outlay of about Rs. 600,000 during the next two Plans. However, as even these would not be able to meet the anticipated demand, private nurseries may also be encouraged to produce quality seedlings in the different regions of Kerala. As a result of the improvements suggested above, the output of coconuts may be expected to double by 1970-71. 433* 245 654

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therefore, does not look attractive to the growers. In addition, in some parts where rubber can be grown, cashew is being slowly replaced by rubber, the latter being more profitable. Under these circumstances, since there is no incentive for farmers either to resort to intensive methods of cultivation or to extend the area under cashewnuts, it may not be possible to achieve any significant increase in their output within Kerala. There may, however, be some scope in Cannanore district, for not more than 10,000 acres. Most of this area would be on Government lands under the jurisdiction of Forest and Land Revenue Departments. It is suggested that the proposed plantation should be from clonal progenies of selected parent trees. 433* 245

2.143 Assuming that 10,000 acres of land is available for cashew planting, total investment necessary to plant this area during 1961–71, at the rate of Rs. 100 per acre, would be Rs. 10 lakhs. The major extension of area under cashewnuts, however, will have to take place in the other States of India, mainly, Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Orissa.

Arecanut

2.144 Arecanut is an important cash crop of Kerala. The State possesses about 50 per cent of total arecanut area in the country. Arecanut is a high value as well as a labour intensive crop. [423]

2.145 The total production of arecanut in the country is about 25 lakh maunds, which falls short of requirements by about one-third. This is made good by imports from Pakistan, Malaya and other countries. The need for conserving foreign exchange resources of India brings out the importance of increasing the production of arecanut.

2.146 Short term as well as long term measures are necessary to raise the output of arecanut. Short term measures are needed to effect a quick increase in the production. Long term measures are necessary for sustaining the gains achieved through short term measures as well as for effecting a progressive increase in the output over a longer period. Adequate manuring, irrigation, and prevention and control of diseases are some of the short term measures, while under-planting or filling in and extending area under the crop are the long term measures. [242]

2.147 Considerable scope exists for raising the output of arecanut by providing irrigation in summer months. It is found that some of the well-managed irrigated gardens yield over Rs. 6,000 worth of produce annually as against Rs. 700 to 800 in unirrigated gardens. At present about 50 per cent of the arecanut area is solely dependent on monsoon rains and only about 25 per cent of the area receives adequate irrigation. Provision of irrigation facilities to arecanut gardens is, therefore, a prime necessity. Since the crop is grown scattered in the valleys and in patches on hill slopes and on small holdings, the irrigation development so far has not benefited the arecanut area to any extent. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should aid arecanut farms by granting long term loans for sinking wells and for the purchase of pumping sets. The gardens being mostly small, it may not be possible for individual garden owners to fully utilize the well and the machinery. This difficulty may perhaps be surmounted by organizing irrigation cooperatives for arecanut gardens. 433* 245 241

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 2.148 Manuring of arecanut gardens is grossly inadequate in Kerala. It is found 246 that when the gardens are adequately manured and intercultured, the yields are high 241 and there is much less of premature shedding. A combination of chemical (NPK) and organic manures has been found to give the best results. However, since arecanut is a tree crop like coconut, the benefit of manuring would accrue only from the third year of application of fertilizers. Most of the farmers are reluctant to wait for such a long time. Only cheap long term loans for manuring could bring a favourable change in attitude. In addition, as in the case of coconuts, a systematic replanting programme is also desirable.

*433 2.149 Knowledge regarding the scope for extension of area under arecanut is too 246 meagre to hazard any accurate estimate of possible future planting. However, there is a feeling that the area can be increased by at least 50 per cent, most of which will be in the Malabar region. But irrigation facilities are a pre-requisite for any fresh planting. It is suggested that 25,000 acres of new areca plantations may be raised during the next 10 years. The investment required up to the bearing stage is about Rs. 1,500 per acre. Total investment on 25,000 acres of new plantation would, therefore, be Rs. 3.75 crores.

2.150 Care should, however, be taken to see that all new plantings are done with improved seedlings. In order to meet the increased seedling requirements, it is proposed that five more State nurseries, apart from the present five, should be started during the first half of the Third Plan. This would need an additional investment of about Rs. 125,000. The strength of private nurseries could also be increased from the present level of 120 to 300 by the end of the Third Plan. Development programme for arecanut can, however, succeed only if it is backed by an efficient plant protection drive since diseases and pests are very common in arecanut gardens.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 2.151 The plantation sector, as a whole, faces a multitude of problems in Kerala. 241 Some of them are specific for particular crops such as devastating diseases in the case of coconut, arecanut and pepper. But many of the problems arising on account of inadequate replantation and under-plantation, low yield rates, lack of funds with growers for replantation and new plantations, inadequate supplies of inputs especially of fertilizers, wide fluctuations in prices and export markets are common to all crops. [654] The State and Central Governments as well as the respective commodity committees or Boards are earnestly taking appropriate measures to solve many of these difficulties. Measures such as the provision of technical guidance, long term and short term loans at easy terms for replanting and manuring, export promotion, market research, compulsory gardening, and supply of improved varieties of planting material, etc., have been in operation for quite some years. The effect of these efforts, however, has not been very significant owing to inadequate size of the programme. This is particularly so with regard to loans for planting, subsidies and fertilizer allocations. The State should help in procurement of the necessary credit facilities and fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen. It is suggested that at least a minimum of 350,000 tons

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

of fertilizers, 200,000 tons nitrogenous and 150,000 tons phosphatic should be allocated annually to plantation crops during the next decade. 433* 241

Investment and Output Implications

2.152 It is not possible to give any exact figure for total investment needed to carry out the programmes suggested above, as a good deal of investment will be in the nature of improvement of land, better agricultural techniques and shift in cropping pattern, all of which would have to be effected by the individual farmers. However, some rough estimates have been attempted here separately for the field crops and the plantation crops. On the basis of the rough estimates made for individual crops, the total public investment during 1961–71 in the agricultural sector comes to Rs. 142.3 crores, out of which Rs. 50.6 crores will be for plantations. The total private investment suggested is Rs. 185 crores, out of which Rs. 129 crores will be for plantations, and Rs. 56 crores for the other crops. The latter figure has been worked out on the basis of the ratio of private investment to public sector investment in agriculture, as given in the Draft Outline of the Third Five Year Plan of India. Total investment in agricultural sector during the coming decade, therefore, adds up to Rs. 287.3 crores.[1] 433* 454

2.153 It is even more hazardous to venture an estimate of additional returns from the proposed investment. It may, however, be broadly envisaged that as a result of the shift towards a more value-yielding cropping pattern as well as through increase in the physical yields and extension of area cultivable during the coming decade, the net value contributed by agricultural sector would rise by roughly 75 to 100 per cent. 433* 241

2.154 The output of foodgrains is expected to increase by 16.28 lakh tons from the present level of 9 lakh tons during the coming decade. By 1960-61, the net value of agricultural output is expected to reach Rs. 174.3 crores (at 1955-56 prices). On the basis of an assumed increase of 75 to 100 per cent during 1961–71, the output from the agricultural sector at 1955-56 prices would be roughly Rs. 300-350 crores. Since the investment required for generating this increase in income has been estimated to be of the order of Rs. 327.3 crores, the marginal capital output ratio in agricultural sector during the coming decade would be between 1.9 to 2.3, depending upon actual, increase in the output of agricultural produce.

[1] The Third Five Year Plan of Kerala, as finally approved by the Planning Commission has allotted Rs. 48.2 crores to the agricultural programmes covering agricultural production, major and minor irrigation, soil conservation, cooperation, community development, panchayats, warehousing, etc. According to NCAER calculations total public sector investment during the coming decade is envisaged to be Rs. 142.3 crores, leaving a balance of Rs. 94 crores for the Fourth Plan. If the targets laid in this Report are to be achieved, investment effort in agricultural sector during the Fourth Plan will have to be considerably stepped up.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

urban households and this is due to better management. Scientific goat-rearing should be encouraged in the State by educating the people about the techniques and economics of goat-rearing. For the sake of convenience and better implementation, goat development may form a part of the Key Village Programme. This would effect saving in costs and also reduce the need for additional personnel. Through this programme, the local stock can be upgraded with the desirable outside milk breeds as Bikaner or Jamunpari after studying their performance and suitability.

Rearing of Pigs

3.22 Pig-rearing is not popular in Kerala, even though conditions such as climate and rainfall are favourable. The pig population has even fallen by 3.6 per cent during the period 1951–56. Piggery development did not receive any attention during the First and Second Plans and this, perhaps, is partly responsible for the decline of interest in pig-rearing in Kerala.

3.23 Pig-rearing needs to be encouraged in the State, as it is the quickest means of increasing meat production. But there has not been any research or studies on pig-rearing which could be applicable to the conditions prevailing in Kerala. It is suggested that the State should undertake research on these problems without any delay. In the meantime, this avocation may be developed on the lines suggested by the Department of Animal Husbandry for the Third Plan through the creation of piggery development blocks. In addition, the State should also provide certain facilities such as the supply of feed, provision of processing, grading, storage and marketing facilities and supply of credit on easy terms.

Supply of Feed

3.24 As a result of measures proposed for agricultural development, the production of cereals, pulses and oilseeds would increase by about 100 per cent during the next decade. Since livestock, especially the bovines, are fed on byproducts of agriculture (stalk, straw, husk, bran, etc.), the availability of basic feeds would also increase. Rice straw, the principal roughage in the State even may be surplus. Concentrates will, however, continue to be in deficit despite the large likely increase in the output of pulses and cereals. The situation of course, would change if oilcake, the byproduct of oil-crushing industry, is not allowed to move out of the State. This is a matter of all-India policy as the coconut-oilcake is an important item that is marketed outside the State in large quantities and is even exported. Assuming, therefore, that situation regarding oilcakes does not alter, the State should do the needful towards making concentrates easily available to the farmers. This deficiency could partly be reduced by supplying concentrates (ready-to-feed mixtures) in dehydrated form. Different ready-to-feed mixtures should be evolved for cattle, poultry and other livestock. The composition and formulae for such mixtures should be worked out on the basis of nutritional experiments. In anticipation of demand for the mixtures, it is suggested that three ready-to-feed mixture factories of 200,000 tons capacity each, may be started in the State during the Third Plan.

11: India · G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas.

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities.

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations.

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951.

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.

[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

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TABLE 9

VALUE YIELDED PER ACRE

Name of commodity	*Percentage value contributed*	*Percentage of gross cropped area occupied*	*Average value of produce per acre* (in Rs.) (1956)
Paddy	23.0	35.8	211.9*
Pulses	0.2	2.3	33.0
Tapioca	4.3	10.2	140.0
Banana	4.7	2.1	732.8
Sugarcane	0.7	0.3	722.2
Pepper	4.0	3.9	331.7
Ginger	1.6	0.4	1077.0
Cardamom	1.7	1.3	434.8
Arecanut	5.5	2.6	687.5
Cashewnut	2.1	1.7	408.6
Coconut	27.5	20.2	446.2
Groundnut	0.5	0.6	242.4
Rubber	3.8	2.9	425.0
Coffee	0.9	0.8	390.2
Tea	7.9	1.5	1434.3
Others	11.8	13.2	294.0
	100	*100*	*Gross Average = Rs. 327*

TOTAL GROSS VALUE = Rs. 180 crores. TOTAL CROPPED AREA = 5466 thousand acres.

* Figures given in this column are average values produced per acre gross of costs of cultivation and hence are not comparable with the net average of Rs. 361 per acre mentioned previously.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 10

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA
(1950-51[a] AND 1958-59[b])

	Area under crops ('000 acres)		Percentage increase or decrease	Production of crops ('000 tons)		Percentage increase or decrease
	1950-51	1958-59		1950-51	1958-59	
Rice	1,901	1,894	— 0.36	715	939	+ 31.3
Jowar	6	4	— 33.3	3	7	+ 133.3
Ragi	11	12	+ 9.1	5	7	+ 40
Other millets	30	14	— 53.3	3	2	— 33.3
Total cereals	1,948	1,924	— 1.2	726	954	+ 31.4
Tur	7	21	+ 200	1	4	+ 300
Other pulses	23	89	+ 286.9	1	13	+1200
Total pulses	30	110	+ 266.6	2	17	+ 750
Cereals & pulses	1,978	2,034	+ 2.8	728	971	+ 33.3
Sugarcane	2	21	+ 950	4	35	+ 755
Ginger	30	22	— 26.7	10	7	— 30
Chillies	8	8		2	2	
Tobacco		1			..	
Groundnuts	28	33	+ 17.8	14	15	+ 7.1
Sesamum	8	50	+ 525	1	5	+ 400
Total oilseeds	56	83	+ 130.5	15	20	+ 33.3
Cotton	18	21	+ 16.6	6	7	+ 16.6
Tapioca	506	553	+ 11	1,500	1,569	+ 4.6
Total field crops	2,578	2,718	+ 5.4	2,265	2,869	+ 26.6
Black pepper	175	224	+ 29.5	18	24	+ 33.3
Cardamom	63	69	+ 9.5	1	1	
Rubber	132	246	+ 86.3	12,998	22,158	+ 70.4
Tea	92	98	+ 6.5	24,514	39,737	+ 62.0
Coffee	28	41	+ 46.4	2,951	6,961	+ 135.8

[113]

[a] *Agricultural Statistics of Reorganised States (1956)*, Government of India.
[b] Agricultural Department, Kerala.

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TABLE 11

PER ACRE YIELDS OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA

Crops	Yields Per Acre (Lbs.)		
	1950-51	1959-59	Per cent (+)/(—)
1	2	3	4
1. Rice	829	1,108	+ 33.6
2. Jowar	1,120	560	— 50.0
3. Ragi	1,008	1,307	+ 30.0
4. Small Millets	224	448	+ 100.0
5. Total Cereals	829	1,008	+ 21.5
6. Tur	314	1,403	+ 28.3
7. Other Pulses	90	336	+ 273.3
8. Total Pulses	157	358	+ 128.0
9. Cereals and Pulses	896	963	+ 7.5
10. Sugarcane	4,480	35,616	+ 695.0
11. Ginger	739	806	+ 9.1
12. Chillies	..	..	..
13. Tobacco	..	..	..
14. Groundnuts	1,120	1,008	— 10.0
15. Sesamum	291	269	— 7.6
16. Total Oilseeds	918	582	— 36.6
17. Cotton	131	157	+ 19.8
18. Tapioca	6,640	6,352	— 4.3
19. Total Field Crops			
20. Black Pepper	224	246	+ 9.8
21. Cardamom			
22. Rubber	221	273	+ 23.5
23. Tea	597	791	+ 32.5
24. Coffee	238	407	+ 72.5

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TABLE 12

AREA IRRIGATED ACCORDING TO SOURCES

(In '000 acres)

Source	*1956-57*	*Per cent to total*	*1958-59*	*Per cent to total*	*Per cent (+)/(—) (3)/(1)*
1	2	3	4	5	6
Government Canals	321	43.15	343	41.38	+ 6.8
Private Canals	68	9.14	71	8.57	+ 4.4
Total Canals	*389*	*52.29*	*414*	*49.95*	*+ 6.4*
Tanks	82	11.03	77	9.28	— 6.1
Wells	26	3.49	29	3.49	+11.5
Other sources	247	33.19	309	37.28	+25.1
TOTAL	*744*	*100.00*	*829*	*100.00*	*+11.4*

TABLE 13

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF RUBBER IN KERALA

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Year	*No. of estates on 31st December*	*Area abandoned during the year* (In acres)	*New extension during the year including re-planting included in areas abandoned in the previous year*	*Total area under rubber during the year* (In acres)	*Area that has been tapped during the year* (In acres)	*Quantity of dry rubber produced* (Tons)
1951	9,026	1,856	4,386	141,739	99,078	13,800
1952	9,186	2,130	3,819	143,448	105,762	16,568
1953	14,231	1,489	1,555	163,254	143,263	19,830
1954	14,336	460	1,769	163,834	17,711	18,768
1955	14,386	2,386	4,963	168,412	132,831	21,605
1956	18,082	4,381	13,785	177,826	150,005	21,079
1957	43,783	4,230	31,699	246,795	167,421	21,496
1958	5,005	2,726	26,558	270,625	169,492	22,159

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

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105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an [183] unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 ● 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February. 105 241

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves. 105 427 [423] [104]

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them. [104] [243] [466] [464]

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants [104]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodierthamana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavakasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
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below 70°, the annual range at Cochin is only 6° and the diurnal is about 10°. Apart from the high falls (180 ins. plus) in the hills, rainfall decreases from N to S (Calicut 119, Trivandrum 64 ins.) and the extreme S, around Comorin, falls below 40: here alone are there major irrigation works. But this decrease is balanced by a better seasonal distribution in the S: Trivandrum has 24·85 ins. in June–August, 21·32 in September–November, and 18·23 in December–May—28% in what is an almost completely dry season in nearly all the rest of the sub-continent. 132

Kerala as a whole (including the hills) has an area of about 15,500 sq mls, of which some 20% (mainly on the Travancore hills and foothills) is forested and 45% NSA. The TSA is about 15–20% greater than NSA in Cochin and Malabar. The question of 'culturable waste' is, as usual, difficult; but it seems that in the alluvial and lateritic zones respectively about 75–80 and 65–70% of the total area, or 90 and 80% of the 'cultivable', are in fact cultivated.[44] It is clear that what is left will be marginal and that there is very little room for expansion. 311

Rice is dominant, occupying about 260,000 out of a TSA of 550,000 cropped ac. in Cochin, 860,000 out of 1,790,000 in Malabar, but only 655,000 out of 2,200,000 in Travancore. The area under rubber, tea, and pepper in the Travancore hills accounts for this in part; but in Cochin and Malabar a good deal of rice is grown on the lateritic hills after burning the jungle; the heavier rainfall has probably a bearing on this. The local variations in cropping, analysed in detail in Kuriyan's 1942 paper, deserve summarising: 311 241

(i) In the extreme S rice is grown by canal- and in Shencottah taluk (E of the hills and really outside the region) by tank-irrigation. With intensive watering and careful transplanting crops can be obtained both in September–October and in February–March. In Chittur taluk—the Cochin outlier in Palghat—there is also a little irrigation by *anicuts* or weirs feeding canals, and here cotton and groundnuts are grown. These three areas are strongly influenced by Tamil methods. 311 312

(ii) Along the backwaters (*punja* and *cole* areas) the problem is not to get water on the land but to get it off. These areas are divided into blocks of up to 50 (exceptionally 100) ac., bounded by double dykes enclosing a channel. From July to September–October the ground is submerged, sometimes to a depth of several feet; after the rains the water is lifted into the bounding channels by Persian wheels; latterly oil-driven and still more recently electric pumps powered from Pallivasal have been introduced. The land lies three or four feet below the water-level in the channels, and sluices regulate various inundations during the growing season. Should the bunds be burst the half-drowned crop may be reaped from boats by cutting off the heads.

(iii) Along the backwaters on the Cochin-Malabar boundary the soil on areas liable to salt-water inundation is heaped up into mounds about one foot

[44] Kuriyan (1938), 133; (1942).

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

311 high and five feet round, on which the paddy is sown just before the rains.
312 When the monsoon bursts the surrounding water is freshened and transplanting takes place. This is a rather precarious method, illustrating the devices enforced by severe population pressure.

(iv) In the wet lowlands above the backwaters more normal methods prevail, but the early onset of the rains enables planting to take place in April–May and harvest in September; the continuance of the rains then often permits a poor second crop (not necessarily paddy) harvested in January; very occasionally a third is possible.

241 After rice, coconut is the chief crop, accounting for nearly 1 m. ac., typically, of course, in the sandy coastal strip but also on alluvial loams and (with more careful preparation) on laterites. In Travancore the coconut acreage is nearly equal to that of rice; in Quilon taluk, indeed, it covers 85% of cropped area. After rice as the essential food, the coconut palm is the basis of life in Kerala: "Apart from the several uses of the chief products, viz., coir, copra, coconut oil, oil-cake, the hollowed trunk serves as a canoe, the nut forms a staple article of diet, the leaves may be used for many of the purposes of paper, are frequently employed as thatch and for the manufacture of brooms, baskets, umbrellas, tattis [screens kept soaked to cool rooms], and fans, and utilised as crude torches in a dried form, or burnt as fuel, as it is [*sic*] or in the form of charcoal. In addition, the fresh or fermented
273 juice of the stem is consumed as a beverage, by evaporation it is made into jaggery and by subsequent treatment even sugar is obtainable. When distilled, the toddy becomes arrack and finally vinegar."[45] Of the "industrial" workers of Kerala—most of them, of course, cottage workers—about a third
[464] are in various processes connected with coconut products, and of these
[286] two-thirds are women. The coir 'yarn' is almost entirely cottage-produced, its working-up into mats and so on largely a small factory industry.

The most important other crops (apart from plantation rubber and tea
311 in the hills), are cassava (tapioca) and pepper, mainly in the foothills. The
241 former is grown as a food crop on poorer lateritic soils; pepper is perhaps the chief peasant-produced cash crop after coconut. Cereals other than paddy are negligible, as are oilseeds except for a little sesamum (gingelly), often as a third crop on the higher wet-rice lands. Nearly every homestead has its plantains and other fruit trees, and ginger and the betel vine, with its associated areca palm, are also grown widely but in tiny patches.

Tapioca deserves special mention. Introduced about 1920, it is grown on the lateritic soils ("about as attractive for agriculture as railway ballast") in tiny holdings by the poorest of the poor. As Gourou points out, there is a sort of social inversion: the better-off rice farmers in the valley-bottoms, and a hundred feet or so above them a very wretched (largely Christian) peasantry.

[45] Quoted in Kuriyan, 1937 (Vol. XI), 286. Cf. P. K. Paniker, "The Coconut—its Cultivation on the Malabar Coast", *IGJ* XVIII (1943), 78–88.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Tamil AW16
Kerala AW11

atypical. Much of it indeed revolves around the hill-station of Ootacamund, lying under the highest point of the plateau, Dodabetta (8760 ft). 'Ooty' and its satellites Wellington and Coonor have the usual hills layout of straggling bungalows; they are reached by a metre-gauge rack-railway with gradients of 1 in 12½. There is a little local industry of the kind associated with resort functions: breweries (now presumably under a cloud), sodawater factories, and so on; tea, quinine, and eucalyptus oil are processed, and at Wellington the Government cordite factory had one of the earliest hydro-electric installations in India. Of much greater importance is the power station at Pykara Falls, with an installed capacity of 38,750 kW; large extensions are planned, and in addition the utilisation of the Pykara tail-water over a 1200-ft drop in the Moyar Valley, to produce another 36,000 kW, forming a new link with Mettur. This is in the future; but already the leisure resort of S India has become one of the most vital nodes in its workaday life.

(b) *The Anaimalais, Palnis, and Cardamoms*

This remarkable group of hills (Figs. 121, 150) is more complex than the Nilgiris, and in Anaimudi itself they have the highest peak of the Peninsula, 8841 ft. The front to the Palghat Gap is remarkably steep and in the E remarkably straight; the SE flanks of the Palnis, overlooking the upper Vaigai re-entrant, are also remarkably abrupt, as are the Cardamoms and their protrusions (Varushanad Hills) S of the Vaigai. But to the NW the hills fray out into long SE–NW ridges; and indeed over much of the area this trend is most marked, the rivers (e.g. the Periyar) having longitudinal stretches of such straightness as to suggest control by faults, with transverse gorges producing a perfect trellis-pattern. Between 10° N and the Shencottah Gap the active streams of the exposed Arabian Sea front have pushed the watershed back to within 4 or 5 miles of the En edge of the hills: here the change from jungle-clad mountains to the tank-pitted Tamilnad Plain is very sudden (Fig. 150).

Again, apart from the shifting cultivation of tribes some of whom (e.g. Cochin Kadars) are hardly more than hunters and gatherers, the economy is atypical: forests, plantations, hydro-electricity. The most exploited forests, served by special light railways, are in the NW, the Cochin slopes of the Anaimalais. As for plantations, these are not confined to the Wn flanks but are more numerous there, where there is a broader plateau development than on the E. A little coffee and tea are grown in Cochin and in Madura Dt (Madras), but the major share of the plantations (78,000 ac. tea, *c.* 6000 coffee) is in Travancore, which is also by far the most important rubber-producing area of India, with nearly 100,000 ac. bearing against 13,000 in Malabar and 10,000 in Cochin (1945). It is grown on the lower slopes generally below 1000 and never above 2000 ft, with 80–120 ins.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Tamil AW16
Marathi AW12

K T 241 311

rain. Above the rubber, tea extends to nearly 6000 ft, and indeed more than half of it is grown above 4000 ft; rainfall is usually 100–150 ins. It is noteworthy that over half the rubber is produced on Indian-owned estates, but only a small fraction of the tea.

K T 377

As for hydro-electricity, the hills are dotted with falls and rainfall on the Wn flanks is everywhere high and reliable. So far the most important large development is at Pallivasal in Travancore (installed 21,000 kW, potential 36,000), which powers the aluminium smelters at Alwaye and also works pumps draining the flooded paddy-fields of Kerala. A project of great interest is that for utilising the great Periyar Reservoir (Fig. 150) for power. The Periyar headwaters have been impounded and are taken through the watershed by tunnel to irrigate the Suruli-Vaigai Valley in Madura; some 40,000 kW might be developed, and altogether the region has a potential of at least 200,000 kW.

K T 311 361

The Wn flanks of the hills are too rain-swept to have much settlement except on plantations, forest camps, and power installations. In the E Kodaikanal, lying at 7000 ft on the Palnis, is a minor hill-station, noted for its mission schools and an old-established physical observatory.

Maharashtra

M 133

Maharashtra, the Maratha country *par excellence*,[5] may be taken as roughly coterminous with the main mass of the Deccan Lavas above the Ghats. To the N the Tapti Valley, flanked by typical lava plateaus but floored by alluvium, forms a transition to the central Indian scarplands; in the S, along the Malaprabha, there is another belt where Archaeans and lavas interdigitate and where cultural allegiance is divided between the Marathi and Kannada (Kanarese) languages. But to the E, in Hyderabad especially, the boundary of Marathi speech shows a striking accordance with the edge of the Lavas (Fig. 127); hence the division of the state into Marathwara and Telangana, a rare instance of official recognition of regionalism. This great area thus includes all central Bombay, the NW third of Hyderabad, and SW Madhya Pradesh (CP) as far as Nagpur.

M 197 631

The Terrain

M 133

It is a region of extraordinary physical homogeneity, in the gross at least, although (as Deshpande points out) detailed study would undoubtedly reveal significant differences in erosional features, soils, vegetation, and farming practice depending on the varying petrology of the lavas. The general slope to the E and SE is gentle: Poona lies at 1800 ft, and it is over 100 miles down the Bhima to the 1500-ft contour. From the Ghat culminations long tongues of higher ground (over 2000 ft) run E and divide the plateau

[5] The etymological connection of Maratha or Mahratta and Maharashtra, if any, is still controversial.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII
231
241

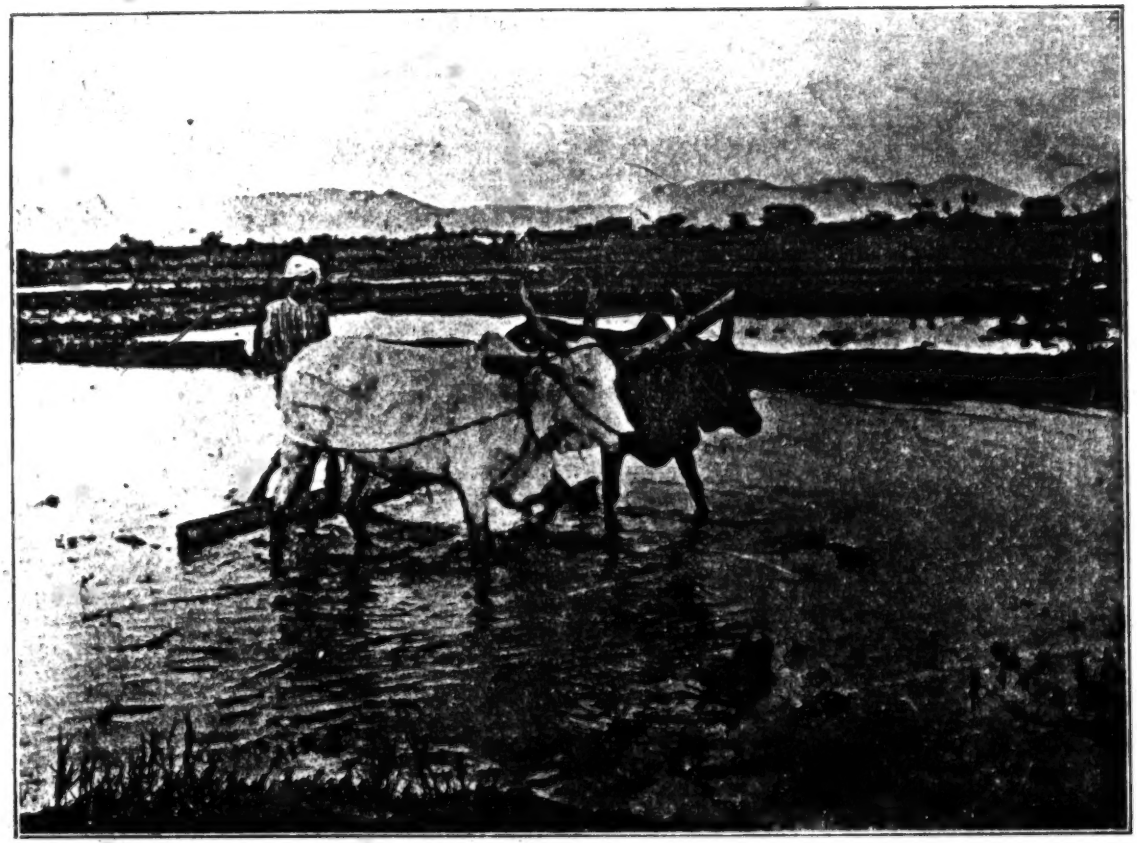

LEVELLING BOARD AT WORK.

Photo by Agricultural College.

[facing page 130]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWI

234 [804] castes very rarely use these products. The cows too are not brought up on a scientific basis, and are consequently of a weak build and generally yield from 4 nalis * to 6 or 8 nalis of milk per day.†

Male buffaloes are used in ploughing and sometimes to draw loaded carts. These too are of weak build.

Cow buffaloes are used mostly for milking, but sometimes in ploughing. The milk they yield is greater in quantity but inferior in quality to that of the cows.‡

231 Very little care is taken of the young of the above species. The young calf or calf-buffalo is not usually reared with the object of getting strong or vigorous oxen or buffaloes, but allowed to grow haphazardly. Some die off young, and especially the buffalo-calf since the buffalo can be milked without its young and not so the cows.§ The official figures in this respect (vide above) are instructive. The usual practice is to buy cows or buffaloes from a fair for milking purposes and to dispose of them, buffaloes especially, unless needed for ploughing, when the milk dries up.

The only use to which the horse is put is to drive jutkas, but as jutkas are rare in this village, horses are seldom seen here.

Donkeys and mules too are few.

Sheep and goats are used for their mutton which is in demand among the lower castes, but more for their milk, which is considered to be medicinal.

Pigs are reared for their flesh by the local Christians; the Muhammadans consider it to be a sacrilege even to utter the name.

Cows, oxen and buffaloes are made to stand in stalls, two or more being allowed to be in the same stall. Bundles of rice straw form the chief food, but green grass is used during the rainy season. Rice dust and poonac (copra from which the oil has been extracted) mixed in water is given. Cows are let loose during the daytime under care of a keeper to feed in the fields or near the hills.

241 Cattle-dung mixed with cattle urine is used as manure in the paddy fields. This is scattered in the fields during the hot season
237 (April-May). The percentage of cattle-dung will approximately be 25 per cent of the total manure used. Dung is also used as fuel. Women are becoming averse to making varatties and use more wood.

Sheep dung is sometimes used.

241 But green manure consisting of leaves of certain plants and trees is scattered in the fields after they have been well ploughed in the first fall of the monsoon rains. Green manure is never grown, but is obtained from the neighbouring hills.

351 Every house without exception has a compound big or small surrounding it in which there are coconut palms, arecanut palms, mango trees, jack fruit trees, plantains, etc., and sometimes pepper. During the hot months (March-April-May) vegetables

* [1 nali (nari or nazhi) = ¼ of a Madras measure and very nearly = 9 fluid ounces or nearly half a pint.—Ed.]

† I.e., one or two quarts of milk per day. A Madras cow yields up to five quarts per day.

‡ [I.e., it is less valued. Buffalo's milk is very rich.—Ed.]

§ [It is a fact that an Indian cow refuses to give milk without the calf. If the calf dies the dairyman stuffs the skin and makes an imitation calf. This serves the purposes. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

Labour cost of cultivation of one acre of paddy.

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For this area 8½ paras * of seed will be used.

Nature of work.	Rate of wages.	Total number of days.	Total amount of wages.	In kind or money.	Remarks.
			RS. A.		
Ploughing ...	3 as. or 3 ed. of paddy per half-day.	25	4 12	Both customery.	The ploughman works only during the first half of the day. He is expected to plough three times over an area of one para of seed capacity in a half day; and the land requires nine ploughings. [466]
Plucking for replanting.	5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	8	2 8	Do.	Women chiefly employed. One person plucks one para-seed-area per day and is paid 5 ed. of paddy. [462]
Replanting.	Earns 5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	4	1 4	Do.	Half the labour of plucking.
Weeding ...	4 as. or 4 ed. of paddy per para.		2 2	Do.	Only when transplantation does not take place.
Water-inspection.	4 as. per day ...	for 3 months.	1 13	Do.	One person can supervise 12½ acres.
Safe-keeping of matured paddy.	4 paras of paddy (Rs. 2) for 15 days.	15 to 20	2 0	Do.	At the period of harvest he is paid in kind.
Harvesting (including mowing, thrashing, etc.).	For every six paras of paddy gathered one para is paid.				Women chiefly engaged.

Note.—The yield per para is 10 to 20 fold †; and in specially favoured lands even more. In this table the price of 1 *edangali* of paddy is taken to be 1 anna (which was the market rate 1916–1917). [241]

435

Statement showing the prices of staple food-grains in the Cochin State for the year 1915–6.

Articles.	Prices per maund of 82⅔ lb. 1914-5. RS.	A.	P.	1915-6. RS.	A.	P.
Rice (husked)	6	8	11	6	5	10
Wheat	5	14	1	5	15	11
Peas	5	10	6	5	12	1
Dholl	6	8	11	7	5	2
Gram	3	8	0	3	10	7
Gingelly	9	9	7	8	6	1
Green peas	3	5	11	5	7	5
Bengal gram	5	15	2	5	15	9

* [Approximately 180 lb., an excessive quantity. "Transplanted, 20 lb. in 7 cents of land will plant up one acre. But this seed-rate is usually very largely exceeded, up to 150 lb. per acre being used" Wood, Notebook of Agricultural Facts, p. 52.—Ed.]

† [I.e., 16 to 32 cwt. per acre, worth about Rs. 50 to 100. With the lower yield the net return is Rs. 31 per acre, with the higher Rs. 75, from which cost of seed must be subtracted. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

[428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

(7) pestle and mortar for husking rice, 412

(8) (for coconut cultivation) a long broad knife with blade and handle each 1 foot long (this serves all purposes),

(9) an implement intermediate between an axe and mamoti, with a thick sharp blade, and a fairly long handle, used for cutting wood, etc.,

(10) a basket, with ropes attached at both sides, worked by two men, to transfer water from a tank or from one field to another,

(11) a form of picotah, worked by a man standing on a platform inside the well, with his hands,

(12) the ordinary bullock lift,

(13) a sharp rod fixed in the earth for removing the outer cover of the coconut,

(14) ropes tied circularly for the purpose of climbing the coconut tree.

Stock— 231

Working oxen	922*
Cows	220
Male buffaloes	503*
Cow "	221
Young stock	1,103
Horses	7
Donkeys and mules	...
Sheep and goats	1,305
Pigs	20

There are 112 carts.

The cattle are fed on dry paddy straw, coconut fodder, waste powdered rice mixed with water, and grass in the winter season. The feeding of cattle is very carelessly done. They keep their skins and bones only.

Manuring.—Cattle dung is used for three purposes :— 237

(1) For cleaning the whole house. Hindus believe that the sprinkling of cattle dung water purifies the house. Consequently, every day every house is thus cleaned.

(2) For fuel. Chaff mixed with straw and dung is dried and burnt for culinary purposes. All the dung from cows kept by the non-agricultural classes (nearly every family of means keeps a cow for milk) is used in the above ways.

(3) The dung produced among the agricultural classes is used for manure, not for paddy or coconut, but for the cultivation of vegetables. Very little dung is used for the cultivation of chief crops. The wastage is also large. Perhaps one-fourth of the total dung is used for manuring vegetables. All the rest is used as stated above or wasted. A small portion of the cattle urine is collected in pots and used as manure for vegetables, but nearly all is wasted. [241]

Fish and muddy water are used as manure for coconuts, but not to a very great extent, and only by the three rich kanomdars who themselves cultivate. Some also use salt for manure, when they plant coconut. This is very advantageous, and sometimes 241

* [This shows the very high proportion of one working ox or buffalo for each acre of cultivated land, a proportion accounted for by what is stated about the condition of the animals.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of otheir religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1½ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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423 The desam contains 130 survey fields in all. The settlemen
651 was first introduced in this desam in fasli 1313.

The following table shows the nature and extent of the holding and revenue as given in the 'A' register of the village:—

Holdings and Revenue.

Fasli.	Occupied area. Wet. Extent.	Wet. Assessment.	Garden. Extent.	Garden. Assessment.	Dry. Extent.	Dry. Assessment.	Total. Extent.	Total. Assessment.	Deduct waste remitted. Extent.	Deduct waste remitted. Assessment.	Remainder charge Actual cultivation.	Waste charged.	Total extent charged.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.			ACS.		ACS.
1313	445·27	2,226 5	209·43	502	197·16	157 14	851·86	2,886 3	...	...	851·86	...	851·86

Fasli—*cont.*	Second crop. Extent.	Second crop. Charge.	Miscellaneous revenue.	Total ryotwari demand excluding waste remitted.	Deduct remission other than waste already shown in column 11. Occasional remission other than for waste.	Other remissions and deductions.	Total.	Net demand for the year.	Amount collected wi year. Arrears.	Current.
	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25
	ACS.	RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS.
1313	8·96	13 11	96 5	2,996 3	...	851 12	851 12	2,144 7	...	2,14

312 The ryots mostly depend on the mercy of the monsoon for the watering of fields. But throughout the summer season beginning from the end of December to the end of July, watering is carried on from wells and tanks, especially in the case of garden cultivation. Tanks and wells are not sufficient and those existing are not deep enough and frequently dry up towards March.

241 The chief crops cultivated are coconut, arecanut, paddy, gingelly, pulses, horsegram, plantain and jack.

231 Pasturage is obtainable for the cattle on the unoccupied dry lands. Water for the cattle is obtained from channels, private tanks and wells.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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427 regulations in the sister states of Cochin* and Travancore, which have placed a decided check on the arbitrary dealings of the landlord over the tenant in those countries. The fear of governmental interference in the near future to regulate the relations of the landlord and the tenant (for it is well known that this problem is an old one in Malabar, and even as far back as 1885, the popular administration of Mr. Logan had made a draft regulation on the same subject which was only abandoned for want of adequate support by the country and which formed the basis on which Cochin and Travancore could afterwards proceed) has stimulated the process of converting kanom lands into verumpattam, i.e., tenure at will. By this the jenmi has a double advantage. The lands are under his direct ownership, and as they are given to cultivation by annual contracts, he can at any time refuse, withhold or do what he likes with his lands. The lands also being as it were put to auction, will produce a higher rate of income than would be the case by giving it on kanom tenure. There is also a recent tendency on the part of the jenmi to raise the kanom amounts because in Cochin and Travancore this is made the basis for the regulation of rent. Till now the policy was to give lands on a nominal kanom, the advantage being in the facility with which they might reclaim the lands at pleasure.

241 The Cherumas (the submerged class) are the agricultural labourers who neither own nor rent land. They work for their 465 masters who give them a meagre allowance of 2 edangalis, i.e., 1/5 para (the standard measure) of paddy. With this he supports his wife and family. They are attached to their masters and loath to leave them.

427 Rents are always paid in kind and are high enough particularly in the case of annual holdings. Eighty per cent of the produce will go as rent to the landowner. The sole advantage for which tenants take up lands are, they say, (1) a few days' maintenance after the harvest, (2) the possession of straw, and (3) employment. But sometimes they have to pay rent in money and this is chiefly in seasons of crop failure. This is met in these ways:—(1) Direct borrowing, (2) profit of garden cultivation and (3) the institution of chit-fund,† which is widely prevalent among them.

241 The barber and the washerman of the desam are illustrations 463 of how customary occupations are modified by practical necessity. These people, while they perform their traditional occupations to the society and receive for it the fixed remunerations, have long taken to agriculture as their chief source of income. And they are among the chief farmers. There are two manufacturers of

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* Vide p. 116.

[454] † [A chit-fund is similar to our Slate-clubs. The members meet periodically, usually every month, and each pays a defined sum into the fund. If it be an 'auction-chit,' the money so collected is given to the member who, not having received it previously, offers to give back the largest amount, e.g., if there be Rs. 100 in the chit, one member may offer to take Rs. 75 only. The remaining Rs. 25 is then divided among the other members. Security is then taken from the recipient of the Rs. 75 that he will continue to pay his monthly contributions till every member has had his turn. In the other variety of chit, the monthly sum is ballotted for. It is the same as Kuri, described on p. 124.—Ed.]

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241
463 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agriculturists.

651 The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. The assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira was Rs. 6,519-2-4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228-7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of the chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy and arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garden. The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Every household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of an antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They are kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are planted and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plants Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have to be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance from one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are at first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung and ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days in the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselves. When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and a shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of water. These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, small channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root of every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begun. This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are given a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of average showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for similar weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, they have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and third month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted in plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fifth and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is a second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediately after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop, the ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two months of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle of January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period of two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under single
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessments on each. (The information is taken from the village accounts.)
311 The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settlement.

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651 On registered double crop land, the charge for the second crop has been consolidated at one-quarter of the single crop assessment. For occasional second crop on land assessed as single crop, the charge will be one-half the single crop assessment.

231 The stock as ascertained by personal enquiry are as shown below. The account of the stock of Kothachira was not obtainable from the village officials, for it is lost. I have tried my best to make the statement complete and exhaustive. But this is a period of extreme fatality to the stock in these parts. Daily one or more are dying. In a single family there died twenty within forty-five days leaving only one or two pairs. The numbers are—

Bullocks	240	
Cows	403	
Buffaloes	287	
Young stock	374	under 4 years.
Goats	712	
[407] Ploughs	414	
Carts	5	
Oil mills	4	

A comparison with the figures for the census of 1899–1900 for the whole amsom of Kothachira (the three desams of Kothachira, Peringode and Mattur) shows an all-round decrease of about forty per cent. I believe the causes of this great reduction to be partly a succession of very bad seasons for stock, and partly selling off under pressure of poverty.

Cattle feeding.—Bullocks and working oxen and buffaloes, besides being left to graze on the unoccupied dry lands and on cultivable areas when they are lying fallow, are given straw and 'kanchi,' water mixed with the dusty part of rice and 'punac' or oil-cake. For cows and young stock only straw is given besides grazing. Goats are simply left to graze. Straw is given to the above working stock after they are housed in their sheds for the evening. The 'kanchi' water is given in the morning just before leading them into fields and in the afternoon after their work is over. They are led to be washed after field work. Bullocks and buffaloes are the working stock.

The breed.—The cattle are very second rate in their breed. The most healthy working oxen grow to a height of from three to three and a half feet and their strength is not half as much as the oxen employed by the firms of Madras. The cow is a pitiable thing ordinarily two to three feet high and milking on an average from a half to one Madras measure per day.* Comparison, it need hardly be said, with Madras cows is odious. They can be milked for only six months. The best come into milking again within a year, but many only within two years.

241 *Manure.*—Almost all the cattle dung is used for manure. One per cent perhaps goes for purposes of washing floors, etc. The cattle [237] urine is allowed in some places to flow into the dung-pit, but no systematic attempt is anywhere made to utilize it to the best advantage. Besides this, burnt ashes and green manure are in common

* [A Madras measure is 62·5 fluid ounces = 3¼ pints. A fair Madras cow in full milk yields about 3¼ Madras measures per day, i.e., 5 quarts.—Ed.]

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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

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311 The assessment under IV. Unoccupied dry is the potential amount, i.e., it would be levied if the whole area were cultivated. 651 About one-third or one-half of it may have been at one time or another under cultivation, but the area cultivated in any single year is very small.

[427] Rents are generally paid in kind, though of recent years there is a tendency in some cases (e.g., when the tenant lives at a distance) to commute it for money at current market rates.

The village is assessed for land revenue at a permanent charge of Rs. 3,759-3-0, to which must be added (to obtain the total revenue demanded upon the village, for the year) the charges on the 'unoccupied dry land' actually under cultivation in the year. This last will vary from year to year; the possible maximum is above Rs. 1,000. There is a local cess of 1¼ anna in the rupee of kist levied by the Taluk Board for roads, etc.

• 241 *Agriculture—Area under principal crops.*—The area under this head varies from year to year according as more or less of the 311 unoccupied dry land is taken into cultivation. For the year ending March 1916, the following figures are given in the village accounts but they are less exact than they appear, being partly estimates by the village officials.

Paddy—First crop, 847·20 acres; second crop, 460·51 acres.		
Pulses and grains		122·47 acres.
Oil-seeds, gingelly		155·89 "
" castor		12·59 "
Spices, etc.		87·23 "
Fuel and timber trees...		63·00 "
Betel leaves		5·00 "
Vegetables and garden products made up of—		
Vegetables	59·41	
Plantains and bananas	29·57	
Coconuts	17·00	
Mangoes	23·00	
Arecanuts	9·00	
Jack fruits	8·00	
	——	145·98

According to the 'A' Register the area of one crop wet land is 271 acres. In some years it appears that this area is smaller, because part of this is *potential* double-crop land, two crops can be raised on it under favourable conditions. But it may safely be said that some 150 acres of wet land yield only one crop. Such portion of the 'unoccupied dry' land which is cultivated in any year also yields but one crop—even that with difficulty, after lying fallow for one, two or more years.

The minimum available area of two-crop land is 409·73 acres. In some years (according to the weather and seasonal conditions) this may increase to some 525 acres. If irrigation could be extended more of the single crop area could be made to yield two crops.

243 Some fifteen to twenty-five acres may yield three crops, under favourable conditions.

All the wet land is utilized for paddy cultivation. Paddy is sown in May soon after the first rains. By the end of September or the beginning of October the first crop is harvested. The seed-

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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237 (called varatties) and used as fuel to supplement firewood, by the poorer classes, who go about picking the stray deposits of cattle-dung in the by-ways and streets. Perhaps a small percentage of cattle-dung is wasted. Yet it is the most important manure and an acre of land uses 100 to 150 baskets of it.

Cattle urine is not used, except by Brahman ladies to a very small extent, in growing kitchen vegetables in their backyards.

The refuse of goat-pens and of fowls (which are kept in most low-class and Nayar houses), as well as bone dust, is used in small quantities for growing garden vegetables.

241 All sorts of green manure are used. About fifty to seventy-five bales of green stuff are used on one acre of land. But green manure is not grown; it is obtained from the neighbouring woods, and the shrubby undergrowth which is commonly found on almost every hillside and in the compounds of houses.

Wood-ash is commonly used, especially in garden cultivation.

Salt is used in coconut plantations.

Chemical manures are unknown in the village.

Garden cultivation is an important item, and very profitable too, though it is not yet carried on very extensively. About 110 acres of land are used for this purpose. Water is obtained mostly from wells, of which there is one or more in every garden. The chief products are coconuts (selling at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per 100), arecanuts used for chewing, etc. (Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2 per 1,000), plantains or bananas (Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 per 1,000), jack-fruits (2 to 6 annas each), mangoes, yams and various kitchen vegetables like pumpkins, brinjals, etc. These are cultivated in almost all gardens. Pepper and ginger, betel leaves and turmeric, are also cultivated in all good gardens. Pepper is very valuable and gives a good profit.

[722] Coconuts being largely exported in the form of copra, have fallen 50 per cent in price, through shortage of freight, during the war. This has entailed great hardship on the large classes of coconut growers and workers in the Malabar Coast, this village suffering with the rest.

242 *Insect-pests.*—A kind of beetle sometimes does great damage to the crops—especially the new paddy crops and plantains. Small birds also carry away grains of corn. The usual method of combating them is to keep watch in the fields and drive them off—a very tedious and difficult operation. No help is got from the Agricultural Department, of whose very existence the village is unaware.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Hoof disease is the commonest and most dangerous. Kerosene oil mixed with lamp black is the popular remedy. There is another disease—a sort of suffocation. A cholera-like disease is also heard of, accompanied by bleeding, etc. Snake-poisoning is another danger, a bite on the nose being supposed to be fatal. The villagers have their traditional methods of combating these. Charms and incantations are used to supplement medicine. No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural Department.

313 *Wood* is obtained from the neighbouring forests, as well as from the clusters of trees in the village. Building timber is often

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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EXPENSES AND PROFITS OF A WORKING TENANT.

Estimates for 1 acre under paddy.

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Fertile two-crop land.—(On two-crop land the tenant pays the kanomdar the whole of the first crop, which is always more than the second crop, and averages about 60 per cent of the total of the two together, kanomdar paying kist.)

Cost of cultivation—

	Paddy. PARAS.		Money. RS.	A.	P.
Seed for first sowing	5				
Seed for second sowing	7				
Wages for sowing	15				
Manure, 125 baskets of cow-dung with ashes and green manure ...			3	8	0
Reaping and threshing wages (10 per cent)	13				
Allowances to village craftsmen ...	1½				
Allowances to labourers for festivals, child birth, etc.	1½				
Clothes to labourers			0	8	0
Use of oxen			5	0	0
Renewals of agricultural implements			1	2	0
Total ...	43	and	10	2	0

Estimated crop—190 paras—

Distribution of crop—

	PARAS.
Kanomdar's share, estimated at 60 per cent	114
Sub-tenant's share (gross)	76
	190

	PARAS.
Cultivation expenses in grain	43
Sub-tenant's grain surplus	33
	76

	RS.	A.	P.
Money value of 33 paras	22	0	0
Cultivation expenses in money	10	2	0
Sub-tenant's profit and wages of supervision ...	11	14	0

The working tenant also has the straw, and the wages that he may save by his own labour and that of his family.

Moderately good paddy land—

Costs—

	PARAS.		RS.	A.	P.
Seed for two sowings (7½ paras) ...	15				
Reaping and threshing wages	10				
Other expenses as before	18	and	9	6	0
	43	and	9	6	0

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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Product—150 *paras*—

	PARAS.	RS.	A.	P.
Kanomdar's share	90			
Tenant's share	60			
,, grain surplus, 17 paras, worth ..		11	6	0
,, money expenses		9	6	0
,, money profit		2	0	0

Good one-crop land—

	PARAS.			
Posts—				
Seed	8			
Wages for sowing	8			
Reaping and threshing wages	6			
Allowances	2			
Money expenses		6	0	0
Total ...	24 and	6	0	0

Product 88 paras, tenant's share being 44 paras.

Grain surplus 20 paras, worth Rs. 14, leaving a money profit of Rs. 8.

Inferior one-crop land.—Here the produce falls to about 72 paras, of which the sub-tenant may get 36 paras. The money profit is Rs. 2.

A small share of the straw is paid to the kanomdar, but the working tenant keeps about nine-tenths. This is not much more than sufficient to feed his oxen.

A small extra rent, in the large Malabar variety of banana, is paid to the kanomdar in the *Onam* festival by each sub-tenant, of an estimated value of eight or nine annas, irrespective of the size of holding.

511 *The annual budget of a typical well-to-do Nayar, a leading kanomdar.*

Income—

	PARAS.
The probable income from lands wet and dry together having an extent of 27 and 40 acres, respectively.	4,600 to 5,000

Expenses—

Food for the family of eight members, two male servants and one female servant	700
Cherumas' wages for the year	950
Seeds	400
Bran, oil-cake and other food for cattle purchased in addition to what is found in the house	75
Janmi's michavaram (rent)	600
Government assessment at two paras for a rupee ...	400
Extra expenses such as salts, oil, etc.	90
Feasts in the temple	60
Charity, such as giving alms and pujari's wages ...	50
The village festivals	10
Sradhas (six in all) (dead relations)	30
Seven kuris	710
Interest on loans (calculated as above) on Rs. 1,500 ...	270

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyin* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare. 771 177 [114]

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share. 241

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture. 242 245 [177]

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves. 245 471 [361]

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the market. 241 [438] [432]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

134 formed of gneissic debris by sub-aerial decomposition. The formation of coastal areas consists mostly of sands deposited by the sea. The soils are generally of poor fertility status. Some peculiar formations are found in the taluks of Ambalapuzha, [135] Kuttanad, Vaikom and Shertallai and go by the name *peaty* or Kari soils. These are black and heavy and contain plenty of potash and 10 to 30 per cent organic matter. However, the soils are highly acidic due to the decomposition of organic matter under anaerobic conditions, presence of iron and aluminium salts and absence of [242] nitrification. Attempts to reclaim the soils by liming and improvement of drainage have so far proved unsuccessful. In Trichur and Mukundapuram taluks there is yet another category known as *Kole* soils. These are fertile alluvial soils. The soils of Malabar area are quite different. They are mostly red soils formed *in situ* from the micaccons or granitic rocks below under the influence of weather and climatic conditions. The fertility of the red soil is poor. They contain very low proportions of organic matter and nitrogen. But these soils contain ferrous and aluminium ions in fairly large proportions and in the absence of humous this situation results in reversion of phosphate—a state where phosphorous when applied in the form of fertilizers, does not become readily assimilable by the plants.

Land Utilization

311 2.9 The fact that Kerala has drawn upon the margin of cultivable land much more than in the rest of India is borne out clearly by Table 8.[2] The net sown area in the State during 1956-57 was 4,525,000 acres, that is 47.16 per cent of the total area. This is about 8 per cent more than corresponding all-India proportion (39.1%). The proportion of fallow lands in Kerala is also very low. (Kerala 4.4% : all-India 7.5%). A higher proportion of total area devoted to cultivation becomes all the more significant in view of the fact that forests cover about 26 per cent of the total area of the State compared to the all-India average of 17.44 per cent.

2.10 During the period 1951–57, there has been an overall improvement in the pattern of land utilization in the State. There have been significant increases in the area under forests (15.8%), permanent pastures (19.8%), land under tree crops (18.1%), net area sown (29.8%), and the area sown more than once (24.9%). These increases were mostly at the expense of cultivable waste, which declined by about 40 per cent during the period. The next important decline (16.7%) was in the barren and uncultivable lands. The area sown more than once rose by about 25 per cent, but this was partly offset by an increase of 35 per cent in the area under current fallows. (Table 8)[2]

2.11 Another notable feature of the agricultural sector in Kerala is the high intensity of cropping.[1] During 1956-57, the gross sown area was 5.6 million acres and the net sown area was 4.7 million acres. This works out to a crop intensity of 119 per cent (all-India 113%; Punjab 130%; Maharashtra 120%). However, if the field crops alone are taken into account, crop intensity works out to as high a figure as 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which gives a more accurate idea of the

[text continues on p. 25]

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped and net cropped area.

[2] [see p. 274, category 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 249 2.37 The lemon grass oil industry in Kerala has good scope for expansion provided the prices are kept competitive. However, since the Second World War some of the Latin American countries have started cultivation of lemon grass on a commercial scale and extraction of oil with efficient methods of distillation. Compared to these countries both the yield of grass as well as its oil content are low in Kerala. Internal demand is also likely to increase considerably in view of the new synthetic chemical industries that are going to be set up within India in the near future. It is, therefore, suggested that the present level of output of lemon grass oil may be raised through measures such as manurial trials, evolution of high yielding and quick maturing strains, control of pests and diseases, designing of efficient stills of small capacity to suit the needs of small growers, etc.

MEASURES FOR INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY

*433 2.38 Replacement of some of the low value crops by high value ones, as indicated above, should be taken up side by side with raising the yield rate of different crops. There is good scope for increasing the yields which can be achieved through (*i*) greater coverage by improved seeds, (*ii*) larger application of manures and fertilizers, (*iii*) increase in irrigation facilities, and (*iv*) improved agricultural practices. These measures are discussed separately in the succeeding pages.

Improved Seeds

*433 242 2.39 Improved seeds are found to increase the yields by 10 to 15 per cent, on an average, while in case of certain crops like sugarcane, hill paddy, groundnut, etc., the output may even go up by 25 per cent. The area covered by improved seeds is very low in Kerala except in the case of paddy and sugarcane, where it is as high as 50 per cent and 90 per cent respectively of the area under these crops. Farmers in Kerala are aware of the benefits of higher productivity of improved seeds, but are unable to take advantage of it owing to inadequate supplies and delay in delivery. According to the Department of Agriculture, the improved strains available with them are suitable to cover about 60 per cent of area under paddy in the State.

2.40 Complete replacement of local seeds by improved seeds would require a large number of strains which can suit all conditions. Evolution of new strains either by breeding or by selection is a long term process requiring facilities and funds. A programme of full coverage is possible only when the number of seed farms to produce and multiply the necessary seeds is large enough. By the end of the Second Plan, the State was expected to have 24 seed farms in addition to a large number of certified growers who were to multiply the nucleus seeds.

2.41. During the next 10 to 15 years the State should aim at complete replacement of local seeds by improved seeds. For a programme of this size, the existing number of seed farms and certified private farms would have to be increased considerably. Due to difficult terrain and scarcity of land, the area of a seed farm in Kerala generally does not exceed 15 acres—of which only one-third may be suitable for wetland cultivation. The number of nucleus seed farms to cover a given area with

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

improved seeds would, therefore, be much larger in Kerala than elsewhere in the country. For full coverage of the area by improved seeds, it is estimated that by 1971, 120 new farms would have to be organized. Investment on each of these farms, including a seed store, would be about Rs. 75,000. Total investment on additional seed farms would, therefore, amount to about Rs. 90 lakhs. Assuming an increase of 10 per cent in yield, additional production due to full coverage from improved seeds by the end of the Fourth Plan would be about 75,000 tons of foodgrains alone. Similar increases may be achieved for other agricultural commodities also. 433* 242

Manures and Fertilizers

2.42 The soils of Kerala are not fertile. Being of lateritic origin they are highly porous. More than 50 per cent of the cultivated soils contain less than 15 per cent of clay complex. Continuous cropping accompanied by heavy leaching (a direct consequence of heavy rainfall) has made the soils extremely deficient in phosphates, nitrogen and potash, and also in calcium, magnesium and other minor elements. 134

2.43 Inspite of the poor fertility of soils, the crop yields are good. This is primarily due to the application of a large amount of organic manures to the fields. In addition to organic manures, the farmers also use fertilizers. Farmers of Kerala were among the first to realize benefits of fertilizers and put them to use. But the quantity used is small owing to inadequate supplies. Even a modest consumption target of 14,200 tons of fertilizers[1] per annum for the Second Plan had to be revised to 5,800 tons on account of this shortage. During 1958-59, the State consumed 5,000 tons of nitrogenous ferilizers mostly in the form of ammonium sulphate and potassic fertilizers. This works out to roughly 1.2 lbs. per acre of nitrogen and less than 0.1 lb. per acre of phosphate and potash. 433* 241

2.44 In future, the emphasis should be placed both on manures and on fertilizers. Organic manures, in addition to providing the plant nutrition, help in conditioning the soil, whereas fertilizers are necessary for supplementing nutritional needs which the organic manures are not able to provide fully. A joint and balanced application of organic manures and fertilizers is, therefore, necessary for getting the desired results.

2.45 All possible sources in the State should be fully exploited for increasing the supply of organic manures. There is scope for greater utilization of urban wastes and green leaves. There is also scope for fuller utilization of the existing production of press mud and for increasing the supply of green matter by raising green manure plants on the borders of fields and banks of river streams. The supply of organic manures may be further augmented by fuller utilization of fish waste and inedible or spoilt fish. Such possibilities should be investigated.

2.46 As emphasized above, a desired level of crop nutrition will not be possible unless manures are adequately supplemented by fertilizers. The supplementary dosage of fertilizers differs from crop to crop depending upon the nature of the crop, length of the growing period and the yield rates. The dosage is the highest for banana, with NPK (Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potash) ratio at 150 : 150 : 300 lbs.

[1] 9,680 tons of N, 3,720 tons of P_2O_5 and 840 tons of K.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

*433 241 653 2.66 *Surface Reservoirs*: Adequate provision should be made for silting capacity in tanks and reservoirs. In the case of small tanks at least about 20 per cent of the total capacity should be reserved for silting.

2.67 *Prevention of Ingress of Salt Water*: Large areas of cultivated land in Kerala are well below the mean sea level and are subject to flood by fresh water brought over by rivers in the monsoon season and salt water during other seasons. There is need for construction of suitable projects to prevent the onrush of salt water into the paddy fields. The scheme to dewater such areas should also form an important item in the minor irrigation programme.

2.68 No estimates are available for the likely area that could be irrigated from minor irrigation works. Nevertheless, it is considered to be quite substantial. It is learnt from dissussions with the State Government authorities that the extent of such possibilities is around 300,000 acres. Of this, the share of lift irrigation and ground water utilization (wells, filter points, etc.) may be put at 100,000 acres. Lift irrigation and ground water utilization are works of a small size and, therefore, should be undertaken by the beneficiaries themselves with the help of Government aid.

2.69 In view of the emphasis laid on minor works, it is suggested that 200,000 acres of area (this also includes area benefited from flood control and drains) should be developed from minor irrigation sources. Of this, about half may be from lift irrigation and ground water sources. The average capital cost of providing minor irrigation would be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 1,000 per acre. Total investment for minor irrigation development schemes as suggested above would come to Rs. 20 crores. Of this Rs. 10 crores would be in the public sector and the rest will have to be provided by individual agriculturists.

2.70 The minor irrigation schemes proposed here would benefit not only rice, but also other crops such as arecanut, lemon grass and banana. For purpose of calculations it may be assumed that only half of proposed irrigation is used for rice. The additional production of rice on account of minor works would thus be about 50,000 tons annually by 1970-71.

Improved Agricultural Practices

*433 242 2.71 Agricultural practices in Kerala are relatively of advanced type. Rice, the principal food crop of the State, is cultivated quite intensively. Transplanting is practised all over the State, even under the submerged type of cultivation. In case of dry seed bed crops like tapioca, ginger, groundnut, etc., the farmers generally take care to see that interculture and earthing operations are satisfactorily done.

2.72 However, there is further scope for increasing crop yields by improving the agricultural practices and techniques. Improved practices such as scientific crop rotation by including a legume crop as against the existing practice of successive rice crops, deep ploughing, adequate plant protection, etc., can increase the yields to some extent.

2.73 With the proposed increase in irrigated area it would be possible to raise a third crop of pulses either of black gram or green gram in succession to two crops

of paddy. This would not only give additional production of pulses which are deficit in the State, but also enrich the soil by leaving a nitrogen residue, and thereby constitute a better rotation. It may be possible to develop pulse crops on 250,000 acres. Assuming an yield of a quarter ton per acre, the additional production of pulses by crop intensification, as suggested here, would be roughly 62,500 tons per year. 433* 242

2.74 Better plant protection is another measure for getting a substantial increase in yields. It is estimated that yields increase approximately by about 10 per cent through this method. The Department of Agriculture should tackle this problem more effectively. This would only be possible by strengthening the Plant Protection Wing of the Department of Agriculture. [642]

Implements

2.75 Agricultural implements in use in the State are antiquated and inefficient. The wooden plough continues to be the master implement and is used for tillage operations of almost all the crops. Iron ploughs and other tillage implements are not popular. In fact the number of iron ploughs decreased by 22 per cent during 1951–56 and at present stands at 10,225. Tractors during the same period, however, increased from 59 to 187. Irrigation pumps too have shown an increase of 116 per cent. 407

2.76 The slow adoption of improved implements is mostly due to non-availability of implements and machinery suited to local conditions as well as due to their high cost. The topographical conditions and techniques of cultivation are unique in Kerala and there are no implements designed and developed to suit such conditions. There is, therefore, need for developing efficient implements for rice cultivation, plantation crops, soil conservation work and also for specialized implements such as ridgers and earthers for ginger and tapioca. It would be necessary to have a well equipped and adequately staffed agricultural engineering station to undertake the type of work suggested here. The proposed station may also do some work in designing of irrigation aids and may advise farmers on the selection of pumping sets and cane crushers. 433* 407

Soil Erosion

2.77 Soil erosion is a serious problem in Kerala. Conditions prevalent in the State such as lateritic soils, undulating to steep topography, the system of farming followed and heavy cloud burst—all these constitute towards excessive soil erosion. There is no reliable estimate regarding the extent of area affected or vulnerable to soil erosion, but it is estimated that about one-third of the cultivated area—approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres—is affected by it. It should be possible to protect at least one million acres through soil conservation measures by 1971. 134 185

2.78 Soil conservation work as carried out by the Department of Agriculture has become very popular with the farmers. The Department gives technical advice on soil conservation matters and undertakes operations in specified areas in water-shed units. [147]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 245 [439] 2.85 The country is deficit in the output of coconuts and annually imports about Rs. 15 crores worth of copra and coconut products. This is a heavy drain on foreign exchange resources of the country. Even after imports the total available supply of coconuts is not enough and the oil millers are, therefore, hard hit by this shortage. The demand for this commodity is increasing year after year while the production has been more or less stagnant at 3,100 million nuts. If this situation is allowed to drift unchecked, imports of coconuts will have to be increased progressively. In view of these factors, measures to increase productivity and the output of coconut are of extreme urgency.

2.86 Coconut cultivation in the State today faces a multitude of problems. The average yields are only about 40 nuts a tree per annum, that is, 3,000 nuts an acre, as against 60 to 100 nuts per tree in Philippines and some of the other Far Eastern countries. Moreover, the yield has shown no tendency to increase over the last 10 years. The focal point of coconut development programme, therefore, should be to break through the stagnant levels of productivity of coconut. The following discussion follows this line of argument.

*433 245 241 2.87 Poor yields are largely due to the absence of regular and adequate manuring. The crop needs large quantities of manure. But the farmers, majority of whom are poor, cannot afford to spend on fertilizers which in the case of coconuts show results only after two or three years. Farmers, therefore, prefer to invest whatever resources they have in manuring the field crops which bring in quicker returns. Coconuts thus get neglected. In addition to starving the coconut trees of fertilizers, many farmers grow exhaustive crops such as banana and tapioca as an understorey. This practice exhausts the soil and it needs large funds and a long period ranging from 3 to 5 years, to rehabilitate such gardens.

[647] 2.88 To raise the yields, an intensive application of fertilizers containing NPK has been recommended by the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The Committee is of the opinion that fertilizers are more suited to acidic soils on which coconut is generally grown in Kerala. It estimates the cost of requisite fertilizers to be of the order of Rs. 93 per acre per annum but that is beyond the means of a small farmer. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should arrange to advance loans for the purchase of fertilizers, and these loans may be recovered after three years. To start with, 30 per cent of the area may be brought under this programme. The annual requirement of fertilizers would be about 26,000 tons of superphosphate. The programme would cost Rs. 3 crores per year, that is, Rs. 9 crores for the first three years after which the loans may be granted out of the recoveries. The programme may be extended to cover 75 per cent of the area earmarked for coconut during the Fourth Plan. Better manuring coupled with the necessary cultural operations, can raise the yields from 40 nuts to 60 or 70 nuts per tree which would thus amount to an increase of 50 to 75 per cent over the present rate of production.

*433 245 242 2.89 Coconut crop is subject to a heavy incidence of diseases and pests. The diseases such as "leaf rot" and "root diseases" are rampant and widespread and have spread to six districts affecting over 50 per cent of the trees in the State. The annual loss of production due to these diseases is estimated at Rs. 2 to 3 crores. There is already a scheme in force to spray about 7 million trees in the infected pockets.

But mere treatment of infected trees is not enough. The healthy trees lying side by side, or trees exposed to infection, should also be sprayed as a preventive measure. The proposed plant protection programme should cover the whole State in progressive stages by the end of the Fourth Plan. This would cost about Rs. 5 crores during the next 10 years, but a part of this may be recovered from the farmers as spraying charges. 433* 245 242

2.90 Coconut is mostly grown as an unirrigated crop. During the summer months they are drought-affected in many parts of the State and drought has a telling effect on the trees. It is found that under irrigated conditions, the trees regularly give higher yields and there is very little premature shedding of buttons. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture should start popularizing irrigation of coconut gardens. Filter point tube-wells and pumping sets would be suitable as means of irrigation and the State should arrange for loans on easy terms for their installation. 433* 245 241

2.91 The average economic life of a coconut tree is about 60 years. It is estimated that over 50 per cent of the trees in the State are over 50 years old and, therefore, in about 10 years, these trees would be past their economic life. Unless immediate steps are taken to replace the aged trees, the production of nuts after a few years is bound to decline in spite of all the measures suggested so far. A campaign should, therefore, be launched to replace old trees by fresh plantings.

2.92 There is not much scope for extending the area under coconut since most of the suitable area has already been brought under the crop. This is particularly so in the former Travancore-Cochin area. However, there is some possibility of raising new coconut plantations in the interior strip of Malabar along the foot of the western ghats. The Indian Central Coconut Committee estimates this area to be of the order of 100,000 acres. It is suggested that Government should make all efforts to bring this area under coconut cultivation. There are some difficulties in the way of bringing about the extension of area, for example, lack of adequate funds with the small farmers, and their preference for rubber plantations because they do not fall within the purview of the Land Ceiling Bill, etc. Some of these hurdles could be overcome if the State offers long term loans to intending farmers for the purpose of raising fresh plantations. Assuming that loans at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per acre are distributed, the total loan fund required to plant 100,000 acres during the next decade would be around Rs. 10 crores.

2.93. Production of quality seedlings from approved stock in large numbers is also necessary for the programme of under-planting and raising new plantations. The State nurseries, at present, have a capacity of 2.2 lakh seedlings a year. This capacity would not be enough to meet the future needs. It is suggested that the nursery capacity should be doubled during the Third Plan by starting 15 new Government nurseries. This would require an outlay of about Rs. 600,000 during the next two Plans. However, as even these would not be able to meet the anticipated demand, private nurseries may also be encouraged to produce quality seedlings in the different regions of Kerala. As a result of the improvements suggested above, the output of coconuts may be expected to double by 1970-71. 433* 245 654

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 249 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951–56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

433 249 423 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

433 249 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)

[171] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

433 249 242 [471] [244] 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

per cent of over 200,000 acres planted from 1902 onwards belonged to non-selected and low yielding strains. The Board has also estimated that more than half the rubber area contains trees that have outlived their economic life. Therefore, about 164,000 acres need immediate replantation. The total area planted till 1958 was 45,194 acres and of this replanting accounted for only 7,060 acres. To tone up the yields as well as to keep the trees in a good condition, it is necessary to replant at least 20,000 acres annually. A programme of this magnitude would need an investment of Rs. 50 crores at the rate of Rs. 2,500 per acre. 433* 249 242

2.112 In certain well managed estates in Kerala, the yields are reported to be as high as 1,600 lbs. per acre. A large number of estates yield between 700 to 1,000 lbs. This shows the potentialities of raising the yields if the gardens are properly managed. There are also instances of estates, which yielded only 150 lbs. per acre, which have yielded 500 to 600 lbs. per acre after reorganization and improvement of the estates. 433* 249

2.113 India is the only country in the world which is a producer and at the same time an industrial consumer of natural rubber. The indigenous production of natural rubber in India at present meets about half the needs of the country, the other half being met by imports. The demand for rubber is increasing at a very fast rate and is estimated to be 55,000 tons by 1961, 82,000 tons by 1966 and 125,000 tons by 1971.[1] This means that by 1971 the demand for natural rubber would be about eight times the present level of production. It is, therefore, suggested that utmost possible effort should be put in to step up the production of natural rubber in Kerala. 433* 249 438 439

2.114 Rubber production can be raised by increasing the yields as well as by extending the area under the crop. An increase in the yields is a short term measure which can be realized, say, by the end of the Third Plan, provided the necessary measures are quickly implemented. Adequate annual application of fertilizer mixtures (NPK) coupled with soil conservation measures, working the soil and regulated tapping are some of the important measures that may be adopted. These measures can be undertaken more effectively and economically if the holdings are of larger size. Efforts at intensive cultivation should, therefore, be co-ordinated with increase in the size of small holdings—especially the small ones with less than 15 acres. This could be best achieved through the formation of cooperatives. The Government and the Rubber Board should initiate future development on these lines. 433* 249

2.115 In addition to replantation, as suggested above, a regular plantation programme is necessary for a sustained increase in output. Raising new plantations to the extent of 300,000 acres may be suggested as the target for the next two Plans. A higher target would be only too desirable. There may, however, be some difficulties in implementing the plantation programme owing to scarcity of land. The exact scope for extension of area under rubber is not known. Various sources put the likely extent of this area to be between 2.25 lakh and 7.5 lakh acres. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture and Forestry should conduct a joint survey to make an accurate estimate of the extent of such land in the State. However, it is necessary to emphasise that the proposed plantations should consist of

[1] NCAER estimates.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

therefore, does not look attractive to the growers. In addition, in some parts where rubber can be grown, cashew is being slowly replaced by rubber, the latter being more profitable. Under these circumstances, since there is no incentive for farmers either to resort to intensive methods of cultivation or to extend the area under cashewnuts, it may not be possible to achieve any significant increase in their output within Kerala. There may, however, be some scope in Cannanore district, for not more than 10,000 acres. Most of this area would be on Government lands under the jurisdiction of Forest and Land Revenue Departments. It is suggested that the proposed plantation should be from clonal progenies of selected parent trees. 433* 245

2.143 Assuming that 10,000 acres of land is available for cashew planting, total investment necessary to plant this area during 1961–71, at the rate of Rs. 100 per acre, would be Rs. 10 lakhs. The major extension of area under cashewnuts, however, will have to take place in the other States of India, mainly, Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Orissa.

Arecanut

2.144 Arecanut is an important cash crop of Kerala. The State possesses about 50 per cent of total arecanut area in the country. Arecanut is a high value as well as a labour intensive crop. [423]

2.145 The total production of arecanut in the country is about 25 lakh maunds, which falls short of requirements by about one-third. This is made good by imports from Pakistan, Malaya and other countries. The need for conserving foreign exchange resources of India brings out the importance of increasing the production of arecanut.

2.146 Short term as well as long term measures are necessary to raise the output of arecanut. Short term measures are needed to effect a quick increase in the production. Long term measures are necessary for sustaining the gains achieved through short term measures as well as for effecting a progressive increase in the output over a longer period. Adequate manuring, irrigation, and prevention and control of diseases are some of the short term measures, while under-planting or filling in and extending area under the crop are the long term measures. [242]

2.147 Considerable scope exists for raising the output of arecanut by providing irrigation in summer months. It is found that some of the well-managed irrigated gardens yield over Rs. 6,000 worth of produce annually as against Rs. 700 to 800 in unirrigated gardens. At present about 50 per cent of the arecanut area is solely dependent on monsoon rains and only about 25 per cent of the area receives adequate irrigation. Provision of irrigation facilities to arecanut gardens is, therefore, a prime necessity. Since the crop is grown scattered in the valleys and in patches on hill slopes and on small holdings, the irrigation development so far has not benefited the arecanut area to any extent. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should aid arecanut farms by granting long term loans for sinking wells and for the purchase of pumping sets. The gardens being mostly small, it may not be possible for individual garden owners to fully utilize the well and the machinery. This difficulty may perhaps be surmounted by organizing irrigation cooperatives for arecanut gardens. 433* 245 241

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neigh-
[435] bouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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423 his neighbour seeing the improvements resorts to bribery in ord to get the land.

242 Further this system results in the disregard of agricultur principles. Supposing only ten coconut palms should be plant in a certain portion of land, the possessor actually plants fifteen sixteen because at the end of twelve years he will get the value fifteen or sixteen trees according to the Tenants Improvements A If he is content with planting only ten according to agricultur principles, he gets only the value of ten. For many years pa there has been no attempt towards scientific cultivation, as a cons quence of this, in the whole of Malabar. It is impossible to do s Disregard of science means gain; regard for it means loss. The is an evident deterioration in the production of the land in Malab due to absence of security, and disregard of science. Lan which brought a gain of Rs. 1,000 do not now bring even Rs. 400 Rs. 500. An improvement in this system of land tenure by mea of legislation would evidently increase the fertility of Malabar.

Population.—Total population 7,596.*

162 Castes and individuals in each caste—

Name of caste.	Families.	Members.
Nambudri or Malabar Brahmans	36	146
East Coast Brahmans or Brahmans who have emigrated to Malabar from the east ...	107	653
Nayars and their sub-sects	382	1,305
Tiyyas and their sub-sects	437	2,461
Muhammadans	331	2,307
Christians	118	592
Artisan castes, etc.	17	117
Total ...	1,428	7,581

163 Number of children under ten in families—Living 3,490, de 928.

165 Number of homesteads—1,290.

	1915.	
	Births.	Deaths.
Boys	178	76
Girls	158	80
Total ...	336*	156*

165 The following table of deaths may be useful:—

Children between ages	0—10	87*
Between ages	10—20	2
"	21—25	8
"	26—30	8
"	31—35	6
"	36—40	4

[Birth-rate ... ... 44·2 per thousand.
Death-rate ... ... 20·5 "
Death-rate for children 0—10 ... 259 per thousand births.
Density of population ... ... 3,231 per square mile.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of other religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1½ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

237 (called varatties) and used as fuel to supplement firewood, by the poorer classes, who go about picking the stray deposits of cattle-dung in the by-ways and streets. Perhaps a small percentage of cattle-dung is wasted. Yet it is the most important manure and an acre of land uses 100 to 150 baskets of it.

Cattle urine is not used, except by Brahman ladies to a very small extent, in growing kitchen vegetables in their backyards.

The refuse of goat-pens and of fowls (which are kept in most low-class and Nayar houses), as well as bone dust, is used in small quantities for growing garden vegetables.

241 All sorts of green manure are used. About fifty to seventy-five bales of green stuff are used on one acre of land. But green manure is not grown; it is obtained from the neighbouring woods, and the shrubby undergrowth which is commonly found on almost every hillside and in the compounds of houses.

Wood-ash is commonly used, especially in garden cultivation.

Salt is used in coconut plantations.

Chemical manures are unknown in the village.

Garden cultivation is an important item, and very profitable too, though it is not yet carried on very extensively. About 110 acres of land are used for this purpose. Water is obtained mostly from wells, of which there is one or more in every garden. The chief products are coconuts (selling at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per 100), arecanuts used for chewing, etc. (Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2 per 1,000), plantains or bananas (Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 per 1,000), jack-fruits (2 to 6 annas each), mangoes, yams and various kitchen vegetables like pumpkins, brinjals, etc. These are cultivated in almost all gardens. Pepper and ginger, betel leaves and turmeric, are also cultivated in all good gardens. Pepper is very valuable and gives a good profit.

[722] Coconuts being largely exported in the form of copra, have fallen 50 per cent in price, through shortage of freight, during the war. This has entailed great hardship on the large classes of coconut growers and workers in the Malabar Coast, this village suffering with the rest.

242 *Insect-pests.*—A kind of beetle sometimes does great damage to the crops—especially the new paddy crops and plantains. Small birds also carry away grains of corn. The usual method of combating them is to keep watch in the fields and drive them off—a very tedious and difficult operation. No help is got from the Agricultural Department, of whose very existence the village is unaware.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Hoof disease is the commonest and most dangerous. Kerosene oil mixed with lamp black is the popular remedy. There is another disease—a sort of suffocation. A cholera-like disease is also heard of, accompanied by bleeding, etc. Snake-poisoning is another danger, a bite on the nose being supposed to be fatal. The villagers have their traditional methods of combating these. Charms and incantations are used to supplement medicine. No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural Department.

313 *Wood* is obtained from the neighbouring forests, as well as from the clusters of trees in the village. Building timber is often

241 Large plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and
313 cinnamon have been developed, chiefly by British, in the highlands in the past hundred years, and in the forests teak provides a basic industry.

132 The rainfall is very heavy, especially in the north where the mountains encroach nearer to the sea. Through most of the area it varies between 75" and 170"; in the extreme south it drops to 32". Most of the rain comes with the southwest monsoon between May and September; lighter rains occur with the northeast monsoon in late November and December. Humidity is
[243] always very high. In most areas two wet paddy crops are taken in a year, in February and September. The temperature varies from 70° to 90°, and is hottest in April just before the monsoon breaks.

[4] (2) Political Divisions

631 From the establishment of British supremacy in 1792, until July 1949, the Malabar Coast was divided into three political areas. In the north is the Malabar District of Madras State, in area 5,790 square miles. It is governed in internal affairs by the legislative assembly of Madras, and is under a Collector (of land revenue) who lives in Calicut, the capital of the district. The port of Cochin is also administered as part of Malabar District. In the centre was Cochin State, in area 1,493 square miles. It was governed internally by the Maharaja of Cochin, assisted by the Cochin legislative assembly, whose headquarters was in Ernakulam, the capital. In the south was Travancore State with an area of 7,625 square miles, under the Maharaja

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

776 821 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal [184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three 241 days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, [243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one [132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there [776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 241 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their 252 own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar 241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

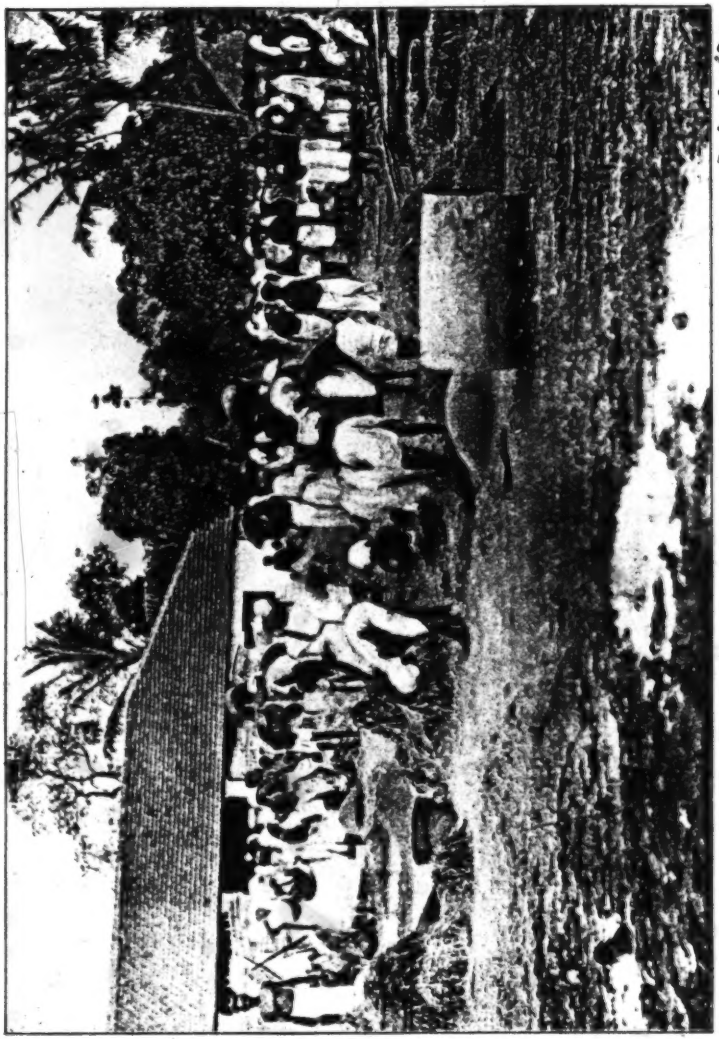

NAYAR WOMEN THRESHING CORN.

243
576
291
342
137

[facing p. 98]

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951-59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).[1] The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951-59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [239] [257]

[1] [see p. 277, category 116 -- Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

EXTENSION OF CULTIVABLE AREA

Cotton

*433 248 2.25 Prior to 1956, Kerala was considered unsuitable for the cultivation of cotton. In that year an experiment was made on a pilot scale and the results were so encouraging that the area under Sea Island (long staple) cotton rose from 126 acres in 1956 to about 3,500 acres in 1959-60.

2.26 Sea Island cotton yields superior lint which can be spun into high count expensive yarn. The latter finds a good market within the country and at present has even got to be imported. The extension of area under this crop will help in saving valuable foreign exchange and it would also provide scope for development of such industries as ginning, baling, spinning and cotton seed oil extraction.

2.27 In view of the above factors it is desirable to undertake further extension of area under cotton. A part of this increase can take place at the expense of acreage under tapioca, which is a low yielding crop. About 0.2 to 0.3 million acres out of 0.56 million acres under tapioca can be diverted in this way during the next decade. Efforts should, however, be made to keep the output of tapioca at the existing level by raising its yield which is at a very low level. [244]

2.28 There is also scope for diverting some highland area under single cropped paddy to Sea Island cotton since such a diversion would yield high returns in terms of value. The exact scope for such a diversion can, however, be ascertained only after the proposed land-use survey has been conducted. [243]

2.29 Assuming 0.3 million acres are brought under Sea Island cotton, as suggested above, additional production of long staple cotton may be expected to reach a level of 192,000 bales by 1970-71.

Sugarcane

*433 249 2.30 Sugarcane is a high value crop, and, therefore, is quite popular with the farmers. But it is one of those crops whose future extension of area is very much dependent upon the growth of sugar manufacturing industry. Its exact scope will, therefore, depend upon the growth of sugar factories.

[171] 2.31 The yield per acre of sugarcane in Kerala is very good (Kerala 40,000 lbs. per acre ; U.P. and Bihar 25,000 lbs. per acre ; all-India 28,000 lbs. per acre) and can be raised to 55,000 lbs. per acre. This factor favours the extension of sugarcane cultivation and the setting up of new sugar mills. At present there are about 25,000 acres under this crop in Thiruvella area, mostly concentrated around the Pampa river sugarcane factory. There is scope for a large increase in sugarcane acreage in the districts of Palghat, Trivandrum and Ernakulam which possess the requisite irrigation facilities. By 1971, the area under sugarcane may be doubled to about 50,000 acres.

Ginger

2.32 Ginger is a very high value yielding crop (Rs. 1,077 per acre). In view of good demand prospects for ginger in both internal and external markets, the production of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February. 105 241

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves. 105 427 [423] [104]

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them. [104] [243] [466] [464]

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants [104]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodierthamana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p. 199]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

427 Munsifs and District Judges with summary jurisdiction in the matter." The provisions in the regulation apply only to "Kanam
423 tenants who, by themselves or through their predecessors in interest, have uninterruptedly held the holding for a period of not less than thirty years prior to the coming into force of this Regulation," and provide some restrictions on the part of the landlord in matters of renewal of kanam holdings, and ejection of kanam tenants; and dispense altogether with the right of *Melkanam*. The Puravaka janmis in Watakancheri number 54, of whom a few are Nambudri Brahmans, the others being of various castes. The Nambudris are the big landlords.

423 These janmis also are in some cases the custodians of "devaswoms" (literally "wealth of the gods"), lands belonging to the local temples; these are treated by them just like their janmam lands, but they keep separate accounts for the same. The Sirkar also manages devaswom lands and there is a department in the State which manages the affairs of the temples and the property belonging to them.

Of the total number of landowners (about 150), only 34 with an area of 194·44 acres cultivate their own lands. The rest sublet.

Of the non-cultivating landowners a few are big janmis like the Nambudri Brahmans and the Paliath Atchan. The Nambudri Brahmans pursue no occupation but that of living in strict conformity with the duties of a Brahman. They study the Vedas and live a pious and cleanly life. Western civilization and ideas have not
[428] penetrated to them. They maintain the joint-property system in which the whole property descends to the eldest male member.
[837] Only the eldest male is allowed to enter into legal marriage, but he can marry two or three women; the rest keep Nayar females as their mistresses.*

The "Paliath Atchan" possesses much land in the State. The head of the family lives in a place near Cranganore. He manages his estates through departments and officials like the Sirkar. He is the biggest landlord in the State, and a powerful hereditary chief.

The small landowners who do not cultivate their lands pursue occupations like retail trade, Government service, law, etc. These generally sublet their lands to tenants who own no lands and try to exact from these latter as much rent as possible. There are also agricultural workers who neither own nor rent land; the caste of "Cherumas" belongs to this class. Also a few of the low
[465] castes, the Mappilas and in some cases the Christians,—male and female—engage themselves in such work. They are low paid. Formerly these wages were in kind, but money wages have begun to prevail; but for harvesting work wages are invariably paid in kind, the worker receiving one para of paddy for every six gathered in.

The rents of paddy lands are paid in kind.

243 *Agriculture.*—Paddy is grown on all the wet lands. Out of the seasons, the cultivators also grow to a small extent such grains as gram and peas in the paddy lands. Area under paddy—653·24 acres.

* [This phrase must not be understood to mean that such Nayar women are maintained in any way by their Nambudri paramours. They depend on their own family property, which descends in the female line. The children of Nambudri Brahmans and Nayar women are reckoned Nayars, and are members of the joint family of the mother, and entitled to maintenance from that family property.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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243 Area yielding one crop—205·23 acres.
Area yielding two crops—448·01 acres.

There are a few acres yielding three crops, but only two crops are assessed.

There are different kinds of paddy, each having different periods of growth, and specially suited to particular soils. The fields are manured and in some cases slightly ploughed just before the rains in summer. The south-west monsoon usually begins in June and lasts for four months. As soon as the rain comes, lands are ploughed and paddy is sown in particularly favourable areas. Then all the fields of the farmer are well ploughed and manured; the seedlings are replanted over the whole area after a growth of twenty-eight days. Some kinds of paddy grow for sixty days, others eighty and ninety days. The system in which no replantation takes place is also in much vogue. The fields are protected from animal or bird pests; after a period of at most three months the paddy is mown by agricultural workers who separate the paddy from the stalks.

Another crop is also generally sown during the north-east monsoon season (October and November) which usually gives rain for about one month.

[407] The ploughs used are primitive and old-fashioned. The furrowing is done in this wise:—a flat piece of iron sharpened at one end is attached to a wooden frame with a handle; this handled frame is attached by means of a pole to a yoke which is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen or buffaloes; the worker then holds the handle and drives the oxen round and round the field until the whole field is well furrowed over. This is done *before* the heavy rain, when the ground is softened, but not under water. The sod is then crushed by means of sticks, this being generally done by females. The women walk in a row, beating the sod to and fro with heavy sticks held in one hand. After the field has been well watered by rains it is once more worked over by means of a log of wood (levelling board) drawn by oxen.

[412] The other agricultural implements used are the sickle, a big knife and spades.

231 *Stock.*—The following is the official census of the stock:—

Working oxen ...	245
Cows ...	289
Male buffaloes ...	361
Cow buffaloes ...	20
Young stock—	
Calves ...	169
Young buffaloes ...	7
Horses ...	2
Donkeys and mules ...	22
Sheep and goats ...	583

Oxen are used to drag carts, and for ploughing the fields. Most of the oxen here appear to be lean and weak; especially those used in ploughing. Cart-drawing oxen are better.

234 Cows are used for milking only, though the Muhammadans of the locality are not averse to eating beef now and then. The milk, buttermilk and ghee of the cow are in great demand especially among the Brahmans who cannot do without them; the lower

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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243
291

HARVESTING PADDY IN NORTH MALABAR, FIELDS STILL WET. Photo by Agricultural College.

[facing p. 168]

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241
463 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agricu turists.

651 The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. Th assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira wa Rs. 6,519-2-4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228-7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of th chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy an arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garde The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Ever household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of a antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They ar kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are plante and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plant Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have t be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance fro one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung an ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days i the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselve When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of wate These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, sma channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begu This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

• 243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are give a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of averag showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for simil weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, the have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and thi month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fif and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediate after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop, t ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two montl of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under sing
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessmen on each. (The information is taken from the village account
311 The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settl ment.

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311 The assessment under IV. Unoccupied dry is the poten
651 amount, i.e., it would be levied if the whole area were cultivat
About one-third or one-half of it may have been at one time
another under cultivation, but the area cultivated in any single y
is very small.

[427] Rents are generally paid in kind, though of recent years th
is a tendency in some cases (e.g., when the tenant lives at a distan
to commute it for money at current market rates.

The village is assessed for land revenue at a permanent cha
of Rs. 3,759-3-0, to which must be added (to obtain the to
revenue demanded upon the village, for the year) the charges
the 'unoccupied dry land' actually under cultivation in the ye
This last will vary from year to year; the possible maximum
above Rs. 1,000. There is a local cess of 1¼ anna in the rupee
kist levied by the Taluk Board for roads, etc.

241 *Agriculture—Area under principal crops.*—The area under t
head varies from year to year according as more or less of
311 unoccupied dry land is taken into cultivation. For the year endi
March 1916, the following figures are given in the village accou
but they are less exact than they appear, being partly estima
by the village officials.

Paddy—First crop, 847·20 acres; second crop, 460·51 acres.			
Pulses and grains		122·47	acres.
Oil-seeds, gingelly		155·89	,,
,, castor		12·59	,,
Spices, etc.		87·23	,,
Fuel and timber trees...		63·00	,,
Betel leaves		5·00	,,
Vegetables and garden products made up of—			
Vegetables	59·41		
Plantains and bananas	29·57		
Coconuts	17·00		
Mangoes	23·00		
Arecanuts	9·00		
Jack fruits	8·00		
		145·98	

According to the 'A' Register the area of one crop wet land
271 acres. In some years it appears that this area is small
because part of this is *potential* double-crop land, two crops can
raised on it under favourable conditions. But it may safely
said that some 150 acres of wet land yield only one crop. Su
portion of the 'unoccupied dry' land which is cultivated in a
year also yields but one crop—even that with difficulty, after lyi
fallow for one, two or more years.

The minimum available area of two-crop land is 409·73 acr
In some years (according to the weather and seasonal conditio
this may increase to some 525 acres. If irrigation could be extend
more of the single crop area could be made to yield two crops.

● 243 Some fifteen to twenty-five acres may yield three crops, unc
favourable conditions.

All the wet land is utilized for paddy cultivation. Paddy
sown in May soon after the first rains. By the end of Septem
or the beginning of October the first crop is harvested. The see

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lings for the second crop are then planted and will be ready for harvest in December or January. In double-crop wet lands both crops are as a rule paddy. But a small area may be used for growing garden vegetables, and this is invariably the case in the three crop lands. Only one crop is raised in the dry lands actually tilled and this crop is determined by a rotation of crops, consisting of paddy, other grains and pulses, gingelly, etc. There is great variety in rotation. Usually the field lies fallow once in three years, often for two or three years continuously, according to the fertility of the soil. The importance of rain in due season for paddy cultivation cannot be over-estimated, the whole prospects of the village for the year may be altogether changed by even a slight failure of the monsoon at the critical stages in cultivation. In that case the local prices of paddy go up very suddenly, as now (August 1917). 243

Only one type of plough is seen—the usual old fashioned country plough, which merely scratches the ground. It lasts only for a year or two and costs only from ten to twelve annas. 407

Other implements are the levelling board, harrow (a long wooden hammer used by the hand), spade, kuzhi kutti (i.e., burrowing tool), jack-knife, etc. The levelling board costs about Rs. 2½ and lasts from 6 to 8 years; the spade costs Re. 1 and is worn out in a year. It has a blade set at right angles to the handle and is swung like a pick-axe.

Stock.— 231

	1914.	1910.
(*a*) Working oxen	296	250
(*b*) Cows	350	382
(*c*) Male buffaloes	256	286
(*d*) Cow buffaloes	6	10
(*e*) Young stock of above species ...	266	221
(*f*) Riding horses	2	...
(*g*) Donkeys and mules...	...	..
(*h*) Sheep	...	...
(*i*) Goats	201	285
(*j*) Pigs	...	...

The 1914 figures are approximately true in 1916.

Working oxen and buffaloes are better fed than others. They are given enough straw or grass, and hot conjee (gruel) mixed with oil-cake, bran, atc. Occasionally working oxen are given flesh (fowls). Cows and cow-buffaloes are given straw and conjee and bran water. They are led out to graze on the hill sides and pastures during the day. Their young follow them. The goats are allowed to stray and feed themselves as best they can. Their milk is used for medicinal purposes and is considered very nutritious.

There is no good pasture in the village, and the cattle are lean and bony. After harvest cattle stray over the stubbles, finding what food they can. The fields are often quite small, say 100 by 75 feet, and frequently there are considerable differences of level between adjoining fields, which is a difficulty in the way of proper irrigation.

Manuring.—About seventy-five per cent of the cattle dung is used as manure. The rest is dried in the form of thick cakes 237

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951-59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).[1] The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951-59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [439] [257]

[1] [see p. 277, category 116 -- Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

EXTENSION OF CULTIVABLE AREA

Cotton

*433 241 2.25 Prior to 1956, Kerala was considered unsuitable for the cultivation of cotton. In that year an experiment was made on a pilot scale and the results were so encouraging that the area under Sea Island (long staple) cotton rose from 126 acres in 1956 to about 3,500 acres in 1959-60.

2.26 Sea Island cotton yields superior lint which can be spun into high count expensive yarn. The latter finds a good market within the country and at present has even got to be imported. The extension of area under this crop will help in saving valuable foreign exchange and it would also provide scope for development of such industries as ginning, baling, spinning and cotton seed oil extraction.

2.27 In view of the above factors it is desirable to undertake further extension of area under cotton. A part of this increase can take place at the expense of acreage under tapioca, which is a low yielding crop. About 0.2 to 0.3 million acres out of [244] 0.56 million acres under tapioca can be diverted in this way during the next decade. Efforts should, however, be made to keep the output of tapioca at the existing level by raising its yield which is at a very low level.

2.28 There is also scope for diverting some highland area under single cropped [243] paddy to Sea Island cotton since such a diversion would yield high returns in terms of value. The exact scope for such a diversion can, however, be ascertained only after the proposed land-use survey has been conducted.

2.29 Assuming 0.3 million acres are brought under Sea Island cotton, as suggested above, additional production of long staple cotton may be expected to reach a level of 192,000 bales by 1970-71.

Sugarcane

*433 246 2.30 Sugarcane is a high value crop, and, therefore, is quite popular with the farmers. But it is one of those crops whose future extension of area is very much dependent upon the growth of sugar manufacturing industry. Its exact scope will, therefore, depend upon the growth of sugar factories.

[171] 2.31 The yield per acre of sugarcane in Kerala is very good (Kerala 40,000 lbs. per acre ; U.P. and Bihar 25,000 lbs. per acre ; all-India 28,000 lbs. per acre) and can be raised to 55,000 lbs. per acre. This factor favours the extension of sugarcane cultivation and the setting up of new sugar mills. At present there are about 25,000 acres under this crop in Thiruvella area, mostly concentrated around the Pampa river sugarcane factory. There is scope for a large increase in sugarcane acreage in the districts of Palghat, Trivandrum and Ernakulam which possess the requisite irrigation facilities. By 1971, the area under sugarcane may be doubled to about 50,000 acres.

Ginger

2.32 Ginger is a very high value yielding crop (Rs. 1,077 per acre). In view of good demand prospects for ginger in both internal and external markets, the production of

*433 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation
249 in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951–56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

*433 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since
249 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were
423 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

*433 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in
249 Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)*

[171] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

*433 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific
249 manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of
242 these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control
[471] of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter
[244] tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

*[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

433 249 large estates. The small holdings, as explained before, are not economical and have low yields. It is, therefore, necessary to make adequate safeguards against the creation of small units.

2.116 Moreover, care should be taken to see that all future plantings are done with improved clones. This can be much better ensured if departmental planting and working of the estates by Forest Department is undertaken instead of leasing the land under Government ownership to individual growers. It may be assumed that out of 3 lakh acres of proposed plantations, 2 lakh acres would be under Government management and the rest would be planted by private growers. The programme may be phased at the rate of 30,000 acres per year. The total investment for the whole programme would thus be Rs. 75 crores.

2.117 In well-managed estates, the trees begin to yield after seven years. Assuming that the new plantings yield at an average rate of 700 lbs. of rubber per acre, the output of rubber from these would increase progressively from 9,380 tons to 37,520 tons in 1971. Full results from the proposed 3 million acres of new plantings would be visible only from 1978 onwards at the rate of additional 93,800 tons per annum.

Pepper

433 244 2.118 The cultivation of pepper in India is almost entirely concentrated in this State which produces over 95 per cent of the country's total output. During 1958 India produced about 27,000 tons of pepper, approximately 45 per cent of the overall [439] world production. Before World War II, Indonesia was the leading producer and exporter of pepper, but since then India has assumed that role. Between 1939 and 1951 production of pepper in the country increased by 16 per cent.

2.119 Large scale cultivation of pepper is confined only to the submountain tracts on or below the Western Ghats. It is also grown in the plains but as a protected garden crop in the compounds of houses and not as a plantation crop. Pepper is a perennial climbing crop and lasts for 20 to 30 years. There are on an average 300 to 400 standards (pepper bushes) per acre. On an average, each standard under plantation conditions yields 1 to 2 lbs.; but it is not uncommon to find standards in house compounds yielding even 40 to 50 lbs.

2.120 As in the case of coconut, it is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate of the area under pepper. The estimate prepared by the Directorate of Statistics in [659] Kerala is of the order of 224,658 acres for 1957-58. Of this, Malabar region accounted for 136,854 acres and the rest were in Travancore-Cochin area. The output of pepper during the same year was 26,020 tons in the whole of Kerala, of which the share of Malabar region was 42 per cent. Malabar with over 60 per cent of the area under pepper produces only 42 per cent of the output.

2.121 Per acre yield was the highest in Alleppey and Quilon (402 lbs. per acre) followed by the districts of Trichur, Ernakulam, Trivandrum and Kottayam (375 to 381 lbs. per acre). Malabar region has comparatively very low yields (180 lbs. per acre). This may, perhaps, be due to cultivation of pepper in Malabar on extensive rather than on intensive lines.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.122 The development of pepper has not been receiving adequate attention. The crop was practically neglected during the First Plan. However, the high price of pepper which prevailed during early fifties provided a good incentive for extension of the area under pepper. The main work during the Second Plan was directed towards establishment of nurseries, extending the area under the crop and replacement of unthrifty vines with better ones. A total of 2,000 acres have been replanted so far. 433* 244

2.123 It is possible to increase the yield of pepper from the present level of above one lb. to 2 or 3 lbs. per standard through intensive cultivation, better manuring, better varieties, and plant protection measures, especially against *pollu* disease. Manuring of pepper has been a neglected field and with the application of fertilizer mixtures (3 cwts. of ammonium sulphate + 4.5 cwts. of super phosphate + 1 cwt. of muriate of potash per acre) the existing yields could be almost doubled within a year. Moreover, some extension of area under pepper vines can also take place in house compounds, as an inter-crop in small holdings and in tea and rubber plantations on land unsuited for the main crop.

2.124 Since pepper is primarily an export commodity, 75 per cent of the produce being annually sent out of India, its future scope is very much dependent on the foreign markets. After the last war, India emerged as a major exporter of pepper in the world. The USA was our largest importer, accounting for over 70 per cent of our exports. But, of late, other countries such as Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya have begun to export larger quantities and as a consequence, the USA, now accounts for only about 20 per cent of our exports. The prices have also fallen from a peak of Rs. 4,158 per candy during 1951 to Rs. 677 in 1959. 433* 244 439

2.125 The above evidence points to an increasing degree of competitiveness in the world markets for pepper, and India is fast losing ground to the new entrants. So far India has been able to maintain the volume of exports because of large off-take by USSR and other East European countries. However, demand from these countries cannot be expected to fully compensate for the likely fall in future exports to the USA and other Western countries. It may, therefore, be seen that for maintaining the existing level of exports, not to speak of increasing it, it is essential that Indian prices should be competitive.

2.126 Prospects for internal demand, on the other hand, seem quite bright. Between 1952 and 1958, internal demand rose by about 25 per cent from a level of 5,000 tons. In view of rising population and fast developing food processing industry, future internal demand is likely to maintain this trend. 433* 244 [438]

2.127 Oleorisin, a pharmaceutical product, is extracted from pepper. A considerable amount of pepper in the western countries is used for extraction of this alkaloid. Oleorisin could be extracted in Kerala and an export trade developed out of this. This aspect needs further investigation. [278]

Cardamom

2.128 Cardamom is the most expensive as well as the most delicious of all the spices. India produces about 70 per cent of the world output of cardamom. The 433* 245

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard-[356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow-[532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyan* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

771 177 [114]

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share. 241

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture. 242 245 [177]

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves. 245 471 [361]

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the market. 241 [438] [432]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

This is mostly due to two reasons: 434

First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum. [187] [245]

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis. 511 [613] [182]

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings: 262

> "*Kaial vizhakkā Kari yunteru vaku*
> *Bhatu Bhojana matu Kootilla.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference. 264 262

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the richer classes go in for Benares silk. 291 184 [439]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilized.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

ginger should be stepped up. The proposed phyto-chemical plant at Munnar would also consume large quantities of raw ginger. The area under ginger cultivation can be extended by 20,000 acres and attempts should be made to raise productivity to one ton per acre through better cultivation techniques, seed selection and use of higher dosage of fertilizers. The likely annual increase in output from these measures is expected to be of the order of 33,000 tons in terms of dry ginger. 433* 249

Oilseeds

2.33 Oilseeds, other than coconut, account for only a very small proportion of the cropped area, but there is scope for raising the yields and extending the area under these crops as a substitute crop in tapioca fields and in young coconut gardens. In addition, castor cultivation may be introduced in the State along field borders which are considerably wide on the banks of rivers and streams and on the borders of gardens and plantations. Assuming that the measures for increased production are reasonably well implemented, the additional production of edible oilseeds by 1971 would be of the order of 20,000 tons annually.

Banana

2.34 Since bananas need frequent irrigation, cultivation of this crop is quite popular in Kerala, especially on the banks of the rivers and near other sources of water. In view of the very high calorific value of bananas as well as good future demand prospects, the production of bananas should be increased. It is not possible to give an exact idea of the extent to which the area under this crop can be increased but there is scope for growing the crop more intensively in compounds attached to residential houses and in areas which receive the benefits of perennial irrigation. 433* 245

Pineapple

2.35 There is quite a large demand for pineapples from Kerala, as they are good both in size and in quality. Location of a few additional canning units in the State is likely to add further to the demand. Steps should, therefore, be taken to increase pineapple production. There is scope for fresh plantings in the hilly slopes of Malabar, which at present contain only wild growth.

Lemon Grass

2.36 Lemon grass owes its importance to lemon grass oil which is extracted from the grass. Kerala produces over 88 per cent of the world output of lemon grass oil, most of which is exported. It is a good foreign exchange earner. The output of lemon grass oil has been increasing year after year in spite of unsteady and fluctuating market conditions. From a mere nine tons in 1920, the output rose to 1,400 tons in 1957. 433* 249 439

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and not value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

*433 245 [439] 2.85 The country is deficit in the output of coconuts and annually imports about Rs. 15 crores worth of copra and coconut products. This is a heavy drain on foreign exchange resources of the country. Even after imports the total available supply of coconuts is not enough and the oil millers are, therefore, hard hit by this shortage. The demand for this commodity is increasing year after year while the production has been more or less stagnant at 3,100 million nuts. If this situation is allowed to drift unchecked, imports of coconuts will have to be increased progressively. In view of these factors, measures to increase productivity and the output of coconut are of extreme urgency.

2.86 Coconut cultivation in the State today faces a multitude of problems. The average yields are only about 40 nuts a tree per annum, that is, 3,000 nuts an acre, as against 60 to 100 nuts per tree in Philippines and some of the other Far Eastern countries. Moreover, the yield has shown no tendency to increase over the last 10 years. The focal point of coconut development programme, therefore, should be to break through the stagnant levels of productivity of coconut. The following discussion follows this line of argument.

*433 245 241 2.87 Poor yields are largely due to the absence of regular and adequate manuring. The crop needs large quantities of manure. But the farmers, majority of whom are poor, cannot afford to spend on fertilizers which in the case of coconuts show results only after two or three years. Farmers, therefore, prefer to invest whatever resources they have in manuring the field crops which bring in quicker returns. Coconuts thus get neglected. In addition to starving the coconut trees of fertilizers, many farmers grow exhaustive crops such as banana and tapioca as an understorey. This practice exhausts the soil and it needs large funds and a long period ranging from 3 to 5 years, to rehabilitate such gardens.

[647] 2.88 To raise the yields, an intensive application of fertilizers containing NPK has been recommended by the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The Committee is of the opinion that fertilizers are more suited to acidic soils on which coconut is generally grown in Kerala. It estimates the cost of requisite fertilizers to be of the order of Rs. 93 per acre per annum but that is beyond the means of a small farmer. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should arrange to advance loans for the purchase of fertilizers, and these loans may be recovered after three years. To start with, 30 per cent of the area may be brought under this programme. The annual requirement of fertilizers would be about 26,000 tons of superphosphate. The programme would cost Rs. 3 crores per year, that is, Rs. 9 crores for the first three years after which the loans may be granted out of the recoveries. The programme may be extended to cover 75 per cent of the area earmarked for coconut during the Fourth Plan. Better manuring coupled with the necessary cultural operations, can raise the yields from 40 nuts to 60 or 70 nuts per tree which would thus amount to an increase of 50 to 75 per cent over the present rate of production.

*433 245 242 2.89 Coconut crop is subject to a heavy incidence of diseases and pests. The diseases such as "leaf rot" and "root diseases" are rampant and widespread and have spread to six districts affecting over 30 per cent of the trees in the State. The annual loss of production due to these diseases is estimated at Rs. 2 to 3 crores. There is already a scheme in force to spray about 7 million trees in the infected pockets.

11: India G-4.5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

But mere treatment of infected trees is not enough. The healthy trees lying side by side, or trees exposed to infection, should also be sprayed as a preventive measure. The proposed plant protection programme should cover the whole State in progressive stages by the end of the Fourth Plan. This would cost about Rs. 5 crores during the next 10 years, but a part of this may be recovered from the farmers as spraying charges. 433* 245 242

2.90 Coconut is mostly grown as an unirrigated crop. During the summer months they are drought-affected in many parts of the State and drought has a telling effect on the trees. It is found that under irrigated conditions, the trees regularly give higher yields and there is very little premature shedding of buttons. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture should start popularizing irrigation of coconut gardens. Filter point tube-wells and pumping sets would be suitable as means of irrigation and the State should arrange for loans on easy terms for their installation. 433* 245 241

2.91 The average economic life of a coconut tree is about 60 years. It is estimated that over 50 per cent of the trees in the State are over 50 years old and, therefore, in about 10 years, these trees would be past their economic life. Unless immediate steps are taken to replace the aged trees, the production of nuts after a few years is bound to decline in spite of all the measures suggested so far. A campaign should, therefore, be launched to replace old trees by fresh plantings.

2.92 There is not much scope for extending the area under coconut since most of the suitable area has already been brought under the crop. This is particularly so in the former Travancore-Cochin area. However, there is some possibility of raising new coconut plantations in the interior strip of Malabar along the foot of the western ghats. The Indian Central Coconut Committee estimates this area to be of the order of 100,000 acres. It is suggested that Government should make all efforts to bring this area under coconut cultivation. There are some difficulties in the way of bringing about the extension of area, for example, lack of adequate funds with the small farmers, and their preference for rubber plantations because they do not fall within the purview of the Land Ceiling Bill, etc. Some of these hurdles could be overcome if the State offers long term loans to intending farmers for the purpose of raising fresh plantations. Assuming that loans at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per acre are distributed, the total loan fund required to plant 100,000 acres during the next decade would be around Rs. 10 crores.

2.93. Production of quality seedlings from approved stock in large numbers is also necessary for the programme of under-planting and raising new plantations. The State nurseries, at present, have a capacity of 2.2 lakh seedlings a year. This capacity would not be enough to meet the future needs. It is suggested that the nursery capacity should be doubled during the Third Plan by starting 15 new Government nurseries. This would require an outlay of about Rs. 600,000 during the next two Plans. However, as even these would not be able to meet the anticipated demand, private nurseries may also be encouraged to produce quality seedlings in the different regions of Kerala. As a result of the improvements suggested above, the output of coconuts may be expected to double by 1970-71. 433* 245 654

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Tea

*433 245 [439] 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

[132] 2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees. [133] The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is [171] higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution. [452] The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245 [427]

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas ; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government.

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

2.122 The development of pepper has not been receiving adequate attention. The crop was practically neglected during the First Plan. However, the high price of pepper which prevailed during early fifties provided a good incentive for extension of the area under pepper. The main work during the Second Plan was directed towards establishment of nurseries, extending the area under the crop and replacement of unthrifty vines with better ones. A total of 2,000 acres have been replanted so far. 433* 244

2.123 It is possible to increase the yield of pepper from the present level of above one lb. to 2 or 3 lbs. per standard through intensive cultivation, better manuring, better varieties, and plant protection measures, especially against *pollu* disease. Manuring of pepper has been a neglected field and with the application of fertilizer mixtures (3 cwts. of ammonium sulphate + 4.5 cwts. of super phosphate + 1 cwt. of muriate of potash per acre) the existing yields could be almost doubled within a year. Moreover, some extension of area under pepper vines can also take place in house compounds, as an inter-crop in small holdings and in tea and rubber plantations on land unsuited for the main crop.

2.124 Since pepper is primarily an export commodity, 75 per cent of the produce being annually sent out of India, its future scope is very much dependent on the foreign markets. After the last war, India emerged as a major exporter of pepper in the world. The USA was our largest importer, accounting for over 70 per cent of our exports. But, of late, other countries such as Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya have begun to export larger quantities and as a consequence, the USA, now accounts for only about 20 per cent of our exports. The prices have also fallen from a peak of Rs. 4,158 per candy during 1951 to Rs. 677 in 1959. 433* 244 439

2.125 The above evidence points to an increasing degree of competitiveness in the world markets for pepper, and India is fast losing ground to the new entrants. So far India has been able to maintain the volume of exports because of large off-take by USSR and other East European countries. However, demand from these countries cannot be expected to fully compensate for the likely fall in future exports to the USA and other Western countries. It may, therefore, be seen that for maintaining the existing level of exports, not to speak of increasing it, it is essential that Indian prices should be competitive.

2.126 Prospects for internal demand, on the other hand, seem quite bright. Between 1952 and 1958, internal demand rose by about 25 per cent from a level of 5,000 tons. In view of rising population and fast developing food processing industry, future internal demand is likely to maintain this trend. 433* 244 [438]

2.127 Oleorisin, a pharmaceutical product, is extracted from pepper. A considerable amount of pepper in the western countries is used for extraction of this alkaloid. Oleorisin could be extracted in Kerala and an export trade developed out of this. This aspect needs further investigation. [278]

Cardamom

2.128 Cardamom is the most expensive as well as the most delicious of all the spices. India produces about 70 per cent of the world output of cardamom. The 433* 245

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*433 total area under cardamom in the State during 1957-58 was 69,658 acres, i.e., 245 about 54 per cent of total acreage under the crop in India. It is grown in high ranges at altitudes varying from 2,000 to 5,000 feet under the shade of trees as an under-storey. The crop requires more or less the same natural conditions for growth as pepper or tea.

2.129 Production of cardamom in the State during 1957-58 (1,242 tons of dry pods), however, was about 65 per cent of the total output of the country, which shows a higher per acre yield in Kerala than in the rest of India. Even within Kerala, [438] cultivation of cardamom is highly localized, Kottayam accounting for over 80 per cent of the area under cardamom in the State. The major cardamom growing areas in the State are: the *Cardamom Hills*, Nelliampathi, Wynad, and Vembanad.

2.130 There has been a noticeable increase in the rate of yield in Kerala during the last decade. It rose from 30 lbs. per acre in 1952 to 40 lbs. per acre in 1958. This increase has been largely due to better cultivation practices and manuring.

2.131 There was no plan for cardamom development prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan period research and development schemes for improvement of cardamom were initiated. It was proposed to evolve high yielding varieties and also to devise ways and means of controlling and eradicating pests and diseases which do harm to the crop. These are comparatively long term measures. To help further intensification of work on cardamom development, it is suggested that 10 additional nurseries should be established for raising and distribution of disease-free plants as well as for studying the local problems. Five to eight of these nurseries may be established in Kottayam and the rest in other cardamom growing areas. Cardamom yields could be raised by at least 100 per cent during the coming decade, provided the crop is adequately manured and reasonably protected against diseases and pests. There is a disease locally known as *Kattee* which does great damage to the crop. More vigorous steps should be taken to control and prevent this disease through intensification of efforts as well as through widening the scale of operations.

2.132 There is scope for extending the area under cardamom within the existing rubber and tea plantations, since some parts of unoccupied area in these plantations are suitable for cardamom. There are also some lands suitable for cultivation of cardamom under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, mostly in the Silent Valley. It is suggested that the State should start cardamom plantations in such lands and, 20,000 acres may be put as the target for the area to be covered during the Third and Fourth Plans. At the rate of Rs. 200 per acre, the total investment for covering 20,000 acres with cardamom would be Rs. 40 lakhs.

Coffee

2.133 Kerala is the third largest coffee producing area in the country. With 41,123 acres and 3,000 tons of output per annum in 1957-58 it accounted for about 15 per cent of the area and 17 per cent of coffee production in the country. Coffee thrives in the tropical belt lying between 25°S and 30°N of equator. It requires a [132] rainfall of 60 to 90 inches per annum with a distinct rainy and dry season and an average temperature of 70°F. The conditions required for coffee growth are present

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to a considerable degree in Malabar and Nelliampathi (Travancore-Cochin) areas. The major concentration of area occurs in the Kozhikode district of Malabar. It had 89 per cent of the total coffee area in the State during 1957-58. Between 1955 and 1958, coffee production in Malabar rose (18%) while that in Travancore-Cochin declined (16%). Similarly, the area under coffee during the same period registered an increase in Malabar (28.3%) but declined in Travancore-Cochin region (15.0%). 433* 245 [438]

2.134 The average yield per acre of coffee in Kerala is rather low. It has been lower than the all-India average and is far below the average yield in Mysore, the principal coffee growing State in India, (1955-56 Kerala, 285 lbs. per acre; all-India, 369 lbs. per acre; and Mysore 395 lbs. per acre). Moreover, while the yields elsewhere in India, especially in Mysore, have been rising, in Kerala they have fallen from 368 to 285 lbs. per acre during 1951–58. Within Kerala, the yields are the highest in Kozhikode district which is largely due to the better management of estates in this district. [171]

2.135 One of the characteristics of coffee plantations in Kerala is the overwhelmingly large number of small estates. In 1958, there were 14,475 registered estates with a total area of 47,675 acres. Of these, 12,412 were of less than five acres in size. There were only 99 estates out of 14,475 with an area over 50 acres. (Table 14) 433* 245 423

2.136 There is a distinct relationship between the size of coffee estates and the output per acre. It is noticed that yields increase progressively as the size of the estates increases. The yield per acre of *Arabica* variety in estates in the size group of 5-10 acres was 0.68 cwts. per acre, while for the estates with 200 acres or more, it was 2.26 cwts. Moreover, the quality of coffee produced on small plantations is also inferior and fetches only 65 per cent of the price of coffee produced on big estates. It is difficult to ascertain the most economic size but it is believed that for effective and profitable functioning, the minimum size would be 50 acres. If this is accepted, then only less than one per cent of coffee estates in Kerala are economic. The question of making these plantations economic through consolidation or extension of area under coffee plantations should, therefore, receive serious attention. Two more points need attention. First, new areas should be planted with coffee *Arabica* rather than coffee *Robusta* since the former gives higher yields. Secondly, as in the case of tea, replantation is also over-due in the coffee plantations. Remedies on the same lines as suggested for tea hold good for coffee also. 433* 245

2.137 Unlike tea, the major portion of which is exported, coffee plantations are substained largely by the demand for internal consumption. Internal demand, however, has not been keeping pace with rise in the output of coffee. At present India has quite a large surplus in coffee and efforts are being made to export the surplus. In spite of an enormous surplus of coffee in South America, efforts in India have yielded good results as shown by an increase in exports from 3,000 tons in 1952-53 to 15,228 tons in 1956-57.[1] Most of our exports go to East European countries. There is scope for stepping up the exports further, in spite of the world 433* 245 439 [438]

[1] Source: Coffee Board, Bangalore.

2 [see p. 279, category 11b -- Analysis]

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*433 glut since the better type of plantation coffee, for which India is well known, is in
245 demand at a premium in the continental markets. At the same time internal market,
[439] about half of which is in North India is yet to be explored. This should also be developed.

2.138 Higher production can be achieved both through higher yields and through the extension of area under coffee. Increase in cultivated area under coffee is possible by fuller utilization of the estate areas. It is estimated that there were about 21,000 acres of land at the end of 1957-58 attached to the estates which were not being utilized for coffee cultivation. These could be planted with coffee. The cost of planting coffee and bringing it to the bearing stage is about the same as that in the case of tea, that is, Rs. 2,500 per acre. The total investment required, therefore, comes to Rs. 5.2 crores, which may be provided to the growers in the form of loans and the Government and the Central Coffee Board should help farmers in securing the necessary credit. The productivity per acre can be raised to 400 lbs. per acre by better manuring, larger application of fertilizers and efficient management of the estates. Efficient management, however, could become effective only after the size of the farms has been increased to a basic minimum.

Cashewnut

[258] 2.139 Cashewnut forms the main raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala. The cashewnut industry stands in importance next only to that of coir in the Kerala economy. In view of current shortage of raw nuts, which is adversely affecting the local cashew industry, measures to supplement indigenous supply are of great importance.

2.140 Cashew is grown on a wide variety of soils—ranging from coastal sandy to laterite hill top soils. It is hardy and drought-resistant but very susceptible to frost. In 1957-58, the total area under cashew in Kerala was 109,000 acres which is about 44 per cent of the total area under cashew in the country. Of this, the former Travancore-Cochin area alone accounted for over 71 per cent (77,481 acres), the rest being in the Malabar region. The production of raw cashewnuts in 1957-58 was 68,000 tons as against 54,000 tons in 1952-53, showing an increase of 26 per cent. The area under cashewnuts during the same period increased by only 1.8 per cent.

2.141 Cashewnut, at present, is rarely grown on a plantation scale. It is grown in compounds of houses, inter-spersed with coconuts, mangoes and arecanuts, and in outlying areas which are considered unsuitable for the growth of any other crop. When grown on plantation scale, about 60 to 70 trees can be planted in an acre, but it is not rare to find as many as 200 trees per acre in certain areas of Kerala. Such congestion, however, has adverse effect on output. Consequently, current yield per acre of cashewnuts (1,400 lbs. per acre) is much lower than what it could have been, had cashewnuts been grown on plantation scale. Under good conditions and in good season an acre may even yield up to one ton.

2.142 The scope for increase in the output of cashewnuts, through increase in yields or through extension of area, seems to be rather limited in Kerala. Raw nut is a low value commodity. Manuring the trees and spending on their maintenance,

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therefore, does not look attractive to the growers. In addition, in some parts where rubber can be grown, cashew is being slowly replaced by rubber, the latter being more profitable. Under these circumstances, since there is no incentive for farmers either to resort to intensive methods of cultivation or to extend the area under cashewnuts, it may not be possible to achieve any significant increase in their output within Kerala. There may, however, be some scope in Cannanore district, for not more than 10,000 acres. Most of this area would be on Government lands under the jurisdiction of Forest and Land Revenue Departments. It is suggested that the proposed plantation should be from clonal progenies of selected parent trees. 433* 245

2.143 Assuming that 10,000 acres of land is available for cashew planting, total investment necessary to plant this area during 1961–71, at the rate of Rs. 100 per acre, would be Rs. 10 lakhs. The major extension of area under cashewnuts, however, will have to take place in the other States of India, mainly, Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Orissa.

Arecanut

2.144 Arecanut is an important cash crop of Kerala. The State possesses about 50 per cent of total arecanut area in the country. Arecanut is a high value as well as a labour intensive crop. [423]

2.145 The total production of arecanut in the country is about 25 lakh maunds, which falls short of requirements by about one-third. This is made good by imports from Pakistan, Malaya and other countries. The need for conserving foreign exchange resources of India brings out the importance of increasing the production of arecanut.

2.146 Short term as well as long term measures are necessary to raise the output of arecanut. Short term measures are needed to effect a quick increase in the production. Long term measures are necessary for sustaining the gains achieved through short term measures as well as for effecting a progressive increase in the output over a longer period. Adequate manuring, irrigation, and prevention and control of diseases are some of the short term measures, while under-planting or filling in and extending area under the crop are the long term measures. [242]

2.147 Considerable scope exists for raising the output of arecanut by providing irrigation in summer months. It is found that some of the well-managed irrigated gardens yield over Rs. 6,000 worth of produce annually as against Rs. 700 to 800 in unirrigated gardens. At present about 50 per cent of the arecanut area is solely dependent on monsoon rains and only about 25 per cent of the area receives adequate irrigation. Provision of irrigation facilities to arecanut gardens is, therefore, a prime necessity. Since the crop is grown scattered in the valleys and in patches on hill slopes and on small holdings, the irrigation development so far has not benefited the arecanut area to any extent. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should aid arecanut farms by granting long term loans for sinking wells and for the purchase of pumping sets. The gardens being mostly small, it may not be possible for individual garden owners to fully utilize the well and the machinery. This difficulty may perhaps be surmounted by organizing irrigation cooperatives for arecanut gardens. 433* 245 241

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*433 2.148 Manuring of arecanut gardens is grossly inadequate in Kerala. It is found 246 that when the gardens are adequately manured and intercultured, the yields are high 241 and there is much less of premature shedding. A combination of chemical (NPK) and organic manures has been found to give the best results. However, since arecanut is a tree crop like coconut, the benefit of manuring would accrue only from the third year of application of fertilizers. Most of the farmers are reluctant to wait for such a long time. Only cheap long term loans for manuring could bring a favourable change in attitude. In addition, as in the case of coconuts, a systematic replanting programme is also desirable.

*433 2.149 Knowledge regarding the scope for extension of area under arecanut is too 246 meagre to hazard any accurate estimate of possible future planting. However, there is a feeling that the area can be increased by at least 50 per cent, most of which will be in the Malabar region. But irrigation facilities are a pre-requisite for any fresh planting. It is suggested that 25,000 acres of new areca plantations may be raised during the next 10 years. The investment required up to the bearing stage is about Rs. 1,500 per acre. Total investment on 25,000 acres of new plantation would, therefore, be Rs. 3.75 crores.

2.150 Care should, however, be taken to see that all new plantings are done with improved seedlings. In order to meet the increased seedling requirements, it is proposed that five more State nurseries, apart from the present five, should be started during the first half of the Third Plan. This would need an additional investment of about Rs. 125,000. The strength of private nurseries could also be increased from the present level of 120 to 300 by the end of the Third Plan. Development programme for arecanut can, however, succeed only if it is backed by an efficient plant protection drive since diseases and pests are very common in arecanut gardens.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 2.151 The plantation sector, as a whole, faces a multitude of problems in Kerala. 241 Some of them are specific for particular crops such as devastating diseases in the case of coconut, arecanut and pepper. But many of the problems arising on account of inadequate replantation and under-plantation, low yield rates, lack of funds with growers for replantation and new plantations, inadequate supplies of inputs especially of fertilizers, wide fluctuations in prices and export markets are common to all crops. [154] The State and Central Governments as well as the respective commodity committees or Boards are earnestly taking appropriate measures to solve many of these difficulties. Measures such as the provision of technical guidance, long term and short term loans at easy terms for replanting and manuring, export promotion, market research, compulsory gardening, and supply of improved varieties of planting material, etc., have been in operation for quite some years. The effect of these efforts, however, has not been very significant owing to inadequate size of the programme. This is particularly so with regard to loans for planting, subsidies and fertilizer allocations. The State should help in procurement of the necessary credit facilities and fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen. It is suggested that at least a minimum of 350,000 tons

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%). 137 311

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth. 137 [245]

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging. 313 434 313 414

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well 137 132

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

Artificial Plantations

4.10 As mentioned already, in addition to the natural forests, Kerala also ranks high among the Indian States in respect of artificially raised plantations of valuable species. In fact the teak plantations were first raised in Nilambur as far back as 1842. The planting work had been regularly carried out with the result that there were about 75,000 acres under this species at the end of 1959. 245

4.11 Although Kerala can claim to have been a pioneer in the matter of teak plantations, a beginning with the other plantations has been made only very recently with the onset of the era of planning in the State. During the First Plan period forestry could be paid little attention. Effective beginning may, therefore, be said to have been made only during the Second Plan. Some of the plantations which have been recently started in the State are:

(i) *Cashewnut plantations*: Covering an area of 1,100 acres.
(ii) *Softwood plantations*: An area of 9,220 acres had been covered by the end of the Second Plan.
(iii) *Wattle plantations*: A beginning for raising this very valuable tanbark tree has been made recently in the Hamilton Plateau of the Devicolam range.
(iv) *Eucalyptus grandis*: Plantations of this species were started in the high ranges in Peermade and Munnar and have been showing very encouraging results. They form the raw materials for making pulp, which is used for manufacturing newsprint and rayon.

It will thus be seen that Kerala has made considerable progress in its plantation programmes and leads the other States, especially in respect of its teak plantations.

Forest Produce—Its Extraction and Utilization

4.12 Total quantity of major forest produce extracted from the forests of Kerala during 1958-59 through Government Agency as well as through purchasers is given below: 313

MAJOR FOREST PRODUCE EXTRACTED FROM KERALA, 1958-59

	Government Agency (cu. feet)	*Purchasers*
Rough logs	3,950,567	3,08,079 c.ft.
Rough poles	410,202	1,088 c.ft.
Sawn and Squared timber	144,802	—
Fuel	22,791	25,576 tons
Miscellaneous	1,626	Rs. 1,224,460 worth

The gross revenue through actual sales amounted to Rs. 2.44 crores and royalties on coupes sold to purchasers earned another Rs. 0.64 crores. 434

4.13 Extraction and stocking in the depots are undertaken by contractors but the actual disposal is done departmentally by means of auction. Standing coupes are also

313 be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means [654] of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

137 4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious [654] menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilizers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

*433 4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing 162 rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide 464 them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of [245] population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

*433 4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A 313 beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. 654 An amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

[Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [311]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

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Second Plan, 9,220 acres had been covered by artificial plantations of these species. In view of the current shortage, it is proposed that another 45,000 acres be added to these plantations. 3,000 acres out of these may be kept apart for the matchwood species.

Sandalwood Plantations

4.43 During the Third Plan period, it is proposed to take up 1,000 acres of this plantation at Nachivayal, Marayr, and Maunanthura, in the Devicolom range. The general prospects for sandalwood in the State are not very bright but if some additional suitable areas could be located, they may be taken up for plantation during the Fourth Plan period.

Bamboo Plantations

4.44 The existing resources (para 4.32) are largely being consumed for local uses leaving only one-third of the overall supply as surplus for industrial utilization. In order to augment the existing supplies, it is proposed to raise Burma bamboo over an area of 1,000 acres during the Third Plan, by under-planting it in teak plantations in Nilambur area. During the Fourth Plan another 2,000 acres may be taken up.

PLANTATIONS OF FAST-GROWING SPECIES

4.45 So far, the trend of thinking has favoured an emphasis on the growth of plantations of hardwood species like teak and rosewood which find a ready demand but have got a long rotation period. Attention has only recently been focussed on the fast-growing species. In view of the growing pace of industrialization and the consequent steep rise in demand for forest materials, it would be desirable to supplement the long rotation species with fast-growing types which give the yields much more quickly. The three main species of this type which can be grown in Kerala are *Eucalyptus Grandis*, cashewnut and wattle.

4.46 The whole of the area under *shola* grass is suitable for conversion into *Eucalyptus Grandis* and wattle plantations. The productivity of these grasslands will be very much enhanced if these economic species are planted there. The success which has already attended the planting of eucalyptus promises a bright future for this species. These plantations can be extended over 25,000 acres during the next 10 years. The State Government proposes an allocation of Rs. 75 lakhs for the purpose of raising this plantation during the Third Plan period. The economic importance of eucalyptus plantations arises from the fact that they form the raw material for mechanical pulp and rayon industry.

4.47 The seeds for these plantations were first obtained from Australia. It is suggested that the advice of an Eucalyptologist may be sought through the Colombo Plan and the State officers may also be sent to Australia for training. This will help in perfecting the technique of raising these valuable plantations all over the grasslands in the State.

4.48 Compared to the eucalyptus plantations, the area over which wattle can grow is rather limited. This tree can only grow in the high ranges at elevations above 4,000 feet. The Hamilton Plateau in the Devicolom range is a suitable locality and there is a proposal to afforest, 5,200 acres during the Third Plan. The cost of afforestation is between Rs. 120 to Rs. 150 per acre. This plantation would supply the raw material for wattle bark extract industry. There does not appear to be much scope for extension of area under this species after the Third Plan period. 433* 245

4.49 As these plantations are to be raised in the high ranges, it will be desirable to establish regular labour colonies and employ labour on a more or less permanent basis. Some agricultural occupation will also have to be provided to the labour force. It is, therefore, proposed that the establishment of regular forest villages in the grasslands should be seriously considered by the Government. They will also provide the much needed labour for raising and upkeep of the plantations and later for manning the newsprint mills which will be established at the end of 10 years. The exact employment potential is difficult to work out but it is estimated that the plantations will be able to support about 500 families, each family providing two able-bodied workers. [168]

4.50 Cashewnut trees can be raised in the barren forest areas which are considered unsuitable for any other type of forest growth. In Trichur and Malayathur divisions, where these plantations are located, there are further tracts of barren unproductive reserves. Attempts at raising useful forest species having failed, these areas may be put under cashewnut plantations. If Malabar forests are acquired promptly, another 5,000 acres could be planted with cashewnuts during the next decade.

4.51 The technique of cashewnut afforestation is still in an experimental stage, but the highest success obtained so far has been with dribbling seed to a depth of 3 inches at a spacing of 30 ft. × 30 ft. which gives 49 plants per acre. Plantations raised at a spacing of 18 ft. × 18 ft. (125 trees per acre) have also given good results. Experiments on spacing should continue and the optimum spacing in different types of soil may be determined. The cost has been worked out at Rs. 35 per acre plus another Rs. 5 per acre as establishment charges.

Rubber Plantations

4.52 Rubber is one of the chief plantation crops of Kerala. The present area under rubber is roughly 2·5 lakh acres. Since rubber plantations provide a valuable raw material and a good source of employment in the primary sector, it is proposed to raise rubber plantations over a fairly large area of secondary forests. So far as protective functions of a forest area is concerned, this would be a change for the better, as areas under rubber are better protected than a forest and trespasses are not allowed. Other aspects of the problem are discussed in the Chapter 2 on Agriculture and Plantations. 433* 249

4.53 The targets for additional acreage to be brought under different type of plantations, discussed above and the figures for investment required are summarized 433* 245

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 in the following table :

Type of Plantation	Third Plan Physical targets (acres)	Third Plan Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Fourth Plan Physical targets (acres)	Fourth Plan Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Fifth Plan Physical targets (acres)	Fifth Plan Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)
Teak	20,000	15.0	40,000	30.0	60,000	45.0
Softwood	15,000	15.0	30,000	30.0	50,000	50.0
Grassland Sholas[a] (Eucalyptus grandis)	10,000	75.0	15,000	102.5	—	—
Burma Bamboo[b]	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Cashewnut	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Casurina and Matchwood on Coastal Perrumbavur	1,000	2.0	2,000	4.0	3,000	6.0
Wattle	5,200	7.8	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	53,200	115.8	91,000	168.0	119,000	104.0

[a] All grassland sholas would be afforested by the end of the Fourth Plan.
[b] Most of these plantations in the Fourth and Fifth Plans will be in the private forests acquired in Malabar.

SOME TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS

4.54 The existing logging techniques and modes of extraction entail a lot of wastage of timber. Since there is a general shortage of timber, supply of timber from the forest areas could be enhanced by incorporating some of the improvements disscussed below.

Proper Seasoning Facilities

4.55 A large amount of timber at present goes waste or is used as fuel. This could be more economically utilized if proper seasoning and preservation facilities are introduced. Seasoning and preservation plants should be encouraged in all areas where there is a concentration of saw mills. This would make possible utilization of a large variety of secondary timber through upgrading them and making them commercially profitable. Government departmental rules may have to be modified to insist on the use of seasoned timber in place of the more valuable teak timber in all Government construction works.

Better Logging Techniques

4.56 The present methods of logging need to be mechanized, especially as a good network of roads exists through which mechanical saws, etc., can be taken to the actual coupes. The techniques currently employed are antiquated and involve a lot of wastage. With improved techniques, the extent of wastage could be reduced. The extraction of timber by elephants in Malabar should be continued as it has proved to be cheap and quite efficient.

TABLE 14

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED COFFEE ESTATES ACCORDING TO SIZE AND AREA AS ON THE 31ST JULY 1958

(Area in acres)

District	Below 5 acres		5 to 10		10 to 25		25 to 50		50 to 100		100 to 200		150 to 200		200 to 250		250 and above		Total	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Malabar	9,121	16,187	1,123	4,936	515	4,956	62	2,272	46	2,965	10	1,218	8	1,293	6	1,336	14	5,650	10,905	40,813
Kottayam	3,130	3,596	185	56	58	57	14	343	5	323	1	129	1	150	..		1	703	3,395	5,367
Cochin	5	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	125	3	561	2		1	330	15	1,016
Quilon	147	N.A.	2	N.A.	..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149	30

Source: *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1957-58*, Vol. IV., Coffee Board.

[113]

245
423
184

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the [245] garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

sitional areas—Comorin, Shencottah, Palghat, parts of Malabar. The 361
importance of food-producing trees (coconut, areca, plantain, jackfruit) fits [245]
in with this: they are grown in the house compounds, so that the actual
dwelling-space subtracts hardly anything from the cultivation-space, while

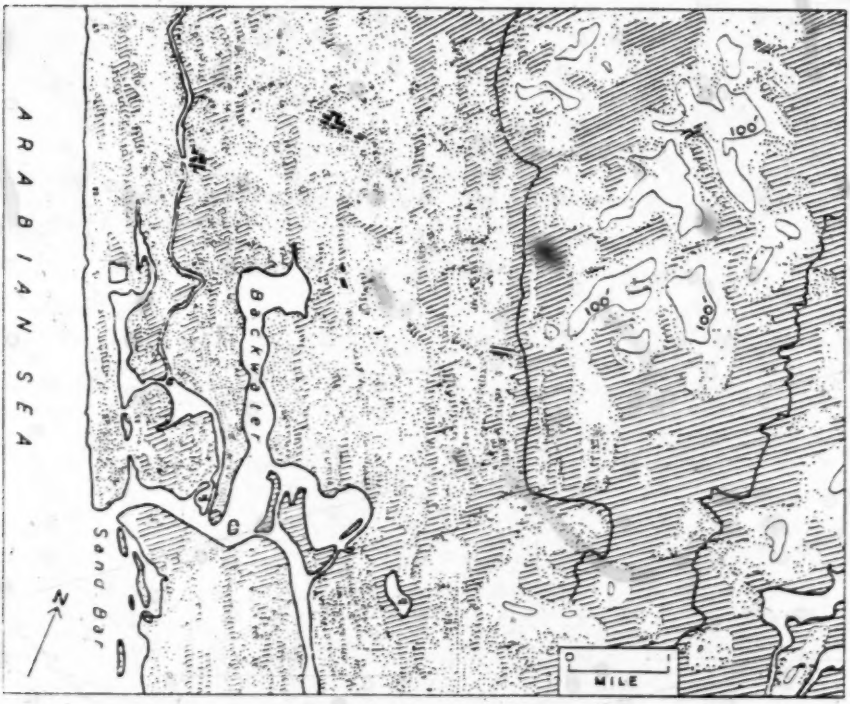

361
135

Fig. 122.—KERALA: COASTAL SETTLEMENT. 40 mls N of Cochin town. Dots, habitations; shaded, paddy. Note contrast between linear settlement on beach-ridges (under coconut) in W and ring settlement around lateritic rises in E. SOI 58 B/2; courtesy SOI.

at the same time the compounds ensure that the 'village' is loosely built, 361
and may indeed spill all over the village lands. (Fig. 122.)[50]

Along the coast there is a marked linear tendency, houses and coconuts 361
on the sandy ridges with their fresh ground-water, paddy in the lows. 311
Inland the lateritic topography exercises a marked effect, settlement being strung out along valley-flanks or interfluves or forming a complete ring around the rises. (Fig. 123.)

[50] The 14th and the 20th centuries tell the same tale. "Mulaybar, which is the pepper country, extends for two months' journey along the coast. . . . there is not a foot of ground but what is cultivated. Every man has his own orchard, with his house in the middle and a wooden palisade all round it." (Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (1929), 231–32). Along the 40 miles from Quilon to Trivandrum one is never out of sight of habitations or foot-travellers; G. Slater, *op. cit.*, 172.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AWII

Between ages	41—50	11
"	51—60	9
"	61—70	9
"	71—80	10
84 years of age		1
92 "		1
		156

It is to be noted that infant deaths are more than half the total deaths and number 87 out of 156 last year.

This information is not fully accurate because the people do not report births and deaths generally to the village officials and consequently they have to ascertain the facts by inquiring and it is possible that some births or deaths escape their notice. The ignorance of the people and the unnecessary fear of post-mortem examination in the case of deaths explain their silence. Probably a considerable number of infant deaths escape report.

Paracheri.—Three families, 15 members.—7 women, 8 men.

Number of dead for the last ten years—

Family No. 1	7
" " 2	5
" " 3	4

The village lana—

	ACS.
Garden lands	792½
Wet lands	360¾
Dry "	135⅝
Government lands	14⅛
Inam lands	201¾
Total	1,504 17/24

There are no waste lands.

The principal fruit trees are mangoes, jacks, plantains, and there are not many though sufficient for the village consumption.

There are tanks and wells in plenty. Drinking water is got from wells; and the tanks are used for bathing and for agricultural purposes.

Occupation of land and Agriculture.—The number of kanomdars in the village is 385. The large kanomdars do not generally cultivate the land themselves.

The land is divided into small strips, each strip containing from 50 to 1,000 coconut palms. The large kanomdar takes his residence on one of these strips, and he himself cultivates the particular strip where he is, and gives to small tenants the remaining strips belonging to him. Consequently only about 180 acres of the whole village are cultivated by the large kanomdars. In addition to these lands three kanomdars cultivate all of their land. Two are Muhammadans and one a Tiyya. The area belonging to these three kanomdars is about 134 acres. The remaining land, 1,200 odd acres, is given to tenants to cultivate. There are also between 200 and 300 small kanomdars belonging to the agricultural classes, who hold land insufficient for their maintenance and also cultivate the lands of big kanomdars. A number of the big

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

286 yard in width and 1½ or 2 yards long. They find it difficult to maintain themselves with this work and also rent small plots of land, and some possess land. They use the unimproved hand-loom. There is no co-operation among them. They sell their cloth in the adjoining market of the village and do not care to send it to other villages. At times they take orders. They do not spin but buy inferior yarn from the market which gets its supply from Bombay through Cochin and Calicut and at times Ponnāni.

463 *Other crafts.*—

Sawyers	4 families.
Carpenters	11 "
Copper workers	1 family.
Iron workers	2 families.
Goldsmiths	7 "
Masons	10 "

These give their whole time to the craft.

Native umbrellas and baskets are made by all Pariahs.

[283] Rope-making—thick as well as thin—is carried on by nearly all the women of the Tiyyas and their sub-sects. Some women are wholly engaged in this work and they sell their ropes in the market themselves. The Pariahs make a peculiar kind of rope from grass, which is used for tying calves, and as reins for bulls. The rope is good and strong. They sell a rope for a measure of rice.

Leather work is done by one family which also practises agriculture.

These craftsmen have existed from times long past with no change in their condition or tools. There is no co-operation among them. Their capital is only their tools. They get sufficient work for their maintenance. There is no improvement with regard to their designs except in the case of the goldsmiths whose work is daily increasing and who are the only craftsmen who invent designs. The condition of blacksmiths is getting worse on account of the importation of foreign iron goods. His only work now-adays is to fit things, not to make them as of yore. He does not now make the nails, screws, iron bars, locks, knives, etc. These are bought from the bazaar and he fits them. But he makes all the tools necessary for other crafts and for agriculture. The same is the case with the coppersmith, but he gets sufficient work as people desire to get valuable vessels made in their presence. But his condition may be regarded as precarious. There is no change in the other craftsmen.

[283] Coir rope-making is the chief source of income for all the low caste women. They beat the soft cover of the coconut, after it is well soaked, into fibre, and twist it into strands, and the strands into ropes, in their hands. The rope is sold to the local shop-keepers daily. Some women themselves take the rope to the local fairs. Their work is increasing.

245 The other industry followed by a great many people is coconut oil-pressing. The whole Christian community with some others subsists on that work. They become tenants to big kanomdars and sometimes buy coconuts from others and extract the oil and sell it in the local market. Some big shopkeepers collect the oil and send it in large quantities to Cochin whence it is exported. One machine mill is already at work in a place

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

245 eight miles from the village, but the primitive oil mill is chiefly used, worked by two oxen. It is very cheap. Perhaps two rupees would be enough excepting for the oxen.

438 *The village trade.*—The chief articles consumed are rice, fish, vegetables, cereals and spices. The price of the total quantity consumed in the village may be estimated at Rs. 2,50,000, the total sales of the shop being Rs. 3,50,000, of which one lakh is to outsiders.

The quantity of produce taken to the market is not very great. The rice and cereals and spices necessary for consumption come from Palghat and consequently must be bought from the bazaar All other articles that are necessary, e.g., vegetables, fish, salt, chillies, oil, straw, fodder, fuel, etc., are brought to the house by petty traders or by the actual producers. In addition to this there is a weekly fair where local produce to the value of about Rs. 1,000 is sold weekly. A smaller quantity, which may be estimated at Rs. 36,000 per annum, is sold to shopkeepers and they sell to other villages. The people sell to shopkeepers only when they cannot sell in any other way, for the shopkeepers offer only a low price.

491 The main road comes from the Cochin State and passes through the northern and the western side of the village and bends and passes through the southern side. One branch road runs from the west and passes through the centre and ends at the eastern extremity of the village. The road system is not satisfactory. Other branch roads are wanted and those that are made have not been repaired at all for many years, though tolls are collected. People once complained of this to the Taluk Board but to no effect, although thousands of pilgrims visit this place every year on account of the sanctity of the temple. There are numerous by-ways.

498 The nearest railway stations are Pattambi, Trichur, and Watak-
505 kancheri, each twenty miles away. People go to Trichur by boat through the backwaters, and the steam boat that runs from Ponnāni to Tirur is availed of by many and it is cheap. There is backwater communication to Ponnāni and Cochin.

438 Copra, coir, etc., are taken or sent to Cochin and the people get in return rice, cloth, and cereals and other luxuries. Fish can be got from the sea, which is very near the village. The fishermen go every day in the morning and return in the evening.

465 *Economic condition of the village.*—Wages for artisans are always paid in money; for agricultural work both in kind and in money.

Money wages.—The ordinary labourers are always paid in money. In short all those kinds of labour which do not immediately bring fruit to the owner are paid in money. A labourer, for a full day's work, is now paid four annas; five or six years ago three annas. For short work such as carrying weights, etc., the wage is fixed for the moment and will vary according to the distance they have to go, etc. Generally two annas must be paid for one mile as an average. For carrying a bag of rice a high wage is demanded because of high weight.* Woman's labour costs three annas per day now, formerly 2½ annas, a boy's labour 2½ annas now, formerly 2 annas.

Carpenters get six annas a day, boy carpenters three annas, formerly four annas and two annas. Other artisans such as black-

[160 lb.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

241
463 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agriculturists.

651 The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. The assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira was Rs. 6,519-2-4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228-7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of the chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy and arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garden. The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Every household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of an antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They are kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are planted and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plants Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have to be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance from one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are at first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung and ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days in the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselves. When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and a shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of water. These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, small channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root of every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begun. This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are given a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of average showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for similar weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, they have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and third month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted in plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fifth and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is a second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediately after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop, the ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two months of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle of January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period of two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under single
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessments on each. (The information is taken from the village accounts.)
311 The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settlement.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

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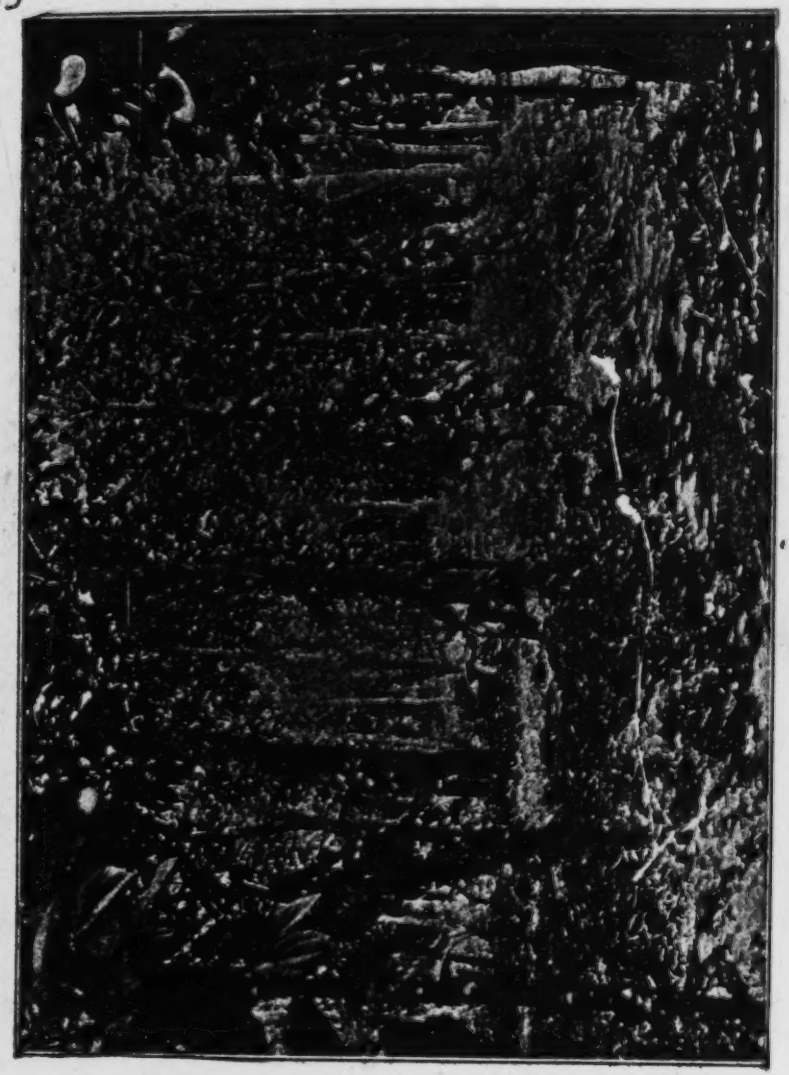

Photo by Agricultural College.

PEPPER GARDEN IN MALABAR

[facing p. 188]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 3.25 The supply of succulent green fodder throughout the year also needs to be 246 improved. The farmers should be induced to grow leguminous and perennial fodders like elephant and napier grass in the field corners or on waste lands. Distribution of seeds and cuttings to the farmers and demonstration of fodder cultivation on the fields of cultivators would go a long way in improving the production of green fodder. Municipalities and panchayats may also organize fodder farms for utilizing sewage and city compost.

*433 3.26 The development measures and aids proposed here, when implemented, 234 would increase the output of animal husbandry products. Proper feeding of cattle and buffaloes can bring about an immediate increase of about 50 per cent in the production of milk.[1] Egg production may increase by over 100 per cent of the present output. Similar increases may be expected in other items too. This would give rise to the problem of suitable utilization of the additional output. Surprisingly enough, even the existing production is not being suitably utilized. For instance, even though milk output in the State is very low and there is an acute scarcity of fluid milk in the urban areas, as much as 41 per cent of the milk is processed into ghee.[2] In a State like Kerala which has a shortage of milk, it would have been more appropriate to consume the maximum possible amount of milk in a fluid state rather than in the form of milk products, since fluid milk is more wholesome and the processing of [442] milk partly destroys its vital nutritional content. This situation is due to lack of purchasing power with the rural people together with absence of facilities to market the milk in the urban areas. Since milk is a highly perishable commodity, the next best course for producers to follow in such a situation is to process it into the comparatively non-perishable ghee. But this is a wasteful process and the profits are also low.

*433 3.27 It is also gathered that 15 to 25 per cent of the total egg production in the 235 State is wasted by breakage and spoilage due to defective and inadequate marketing 442 facilities. Unless adequate and prompt measures are taken to remove drawbacks in the marketing system, the measures proposed here cannot be expected to yield full benefits and the producers cannot be expected to take a sustained interest in these. The solution to this problem lies in providing at least some of these facilities, the most urgent being the organization of marketing and processing facilities and services for dairy and poultry products.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

*433 3.28 Dairy development on scientific lines is a pressing need. This was a neglected 234 field prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan, however, dairy development received some attention. Two schemes for processing 150 maunds of milk per day, one each in Trivandrum and Calicut, were taken up during the Second Plan. Each

[113] [1] *Third Five Year Plan, Draft Outline*, Government of Kerala, 1960.

[2] In 1956 the total production of milk in Kerala was 4,940 thousand maunds, of this 2,332 thousand maunds (47%) were consumed in the fluid state and 2,020 thousand maunds (41%) converted into ghee.

[113] (SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*: Issued by the Economic and Statistical Adviser, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

EXTENSION OF CULTIVABLE AREA

Cotton

*433 2.25 Prior to 1956, Kerala was considered unsuitable for the cultivation of cotton. In that year an experiment was made on a pilot scale and the results were so encouraging that the area under Sea Island (long staple) cotton rose from 126 acres in 1956 to about 3,500 acres in 1959-60.

2.26 Sea Island cotton yields superior lint which can be spun into high count expensive yarn. The latter finds a good market within the country and at present has even got to be imported. The extension of area under this crop will help in saving valuable foreign exchange and it would also provide scope for development of such industries as ginning, baling, spinning and cotton seed oil extraction.

2.27 In view of the above factors it is desirable to undertake further extension of area under cotton. A part of this increase can take place at the expense of acreage under tapioca, which is a low yielding crop. About 0.2 to 0.3 million acres out of 0.56 million acres under tapioca can be diverted in this way during the next decade. Efforts should, however, be made to keep the output of tapioca at the existing level by raising its yield which is at a very low level.

2.28 There is also scope for diverting some highland area under single cropped paddy to Sea Island cotton since such a diversion would yield high returns in terms of value. The exact scope for such a diversion can, however, be ascertained only after the proposed land-use survey has been conducted.

2.29 Assuming 0.3 million acres are brought under Sea Island cotton, as suggested above, additional production of long staple cotton may be expected to reach a level of 192,000 bales by 1970-71.

Sugarcane

*433 2.30 Sugarcane is a high value crop, and, therefore, is quite popular with the farmers. But it is one of those crops whose future extension of area is very much dependent upon the growth of sugar manufacturing industry. Its exact scope will, therefore, depend upon the growth of sugar factories.

2.31 The yield per acre of sugarcane in Kerala is very good (Kerala 40,000 lbs. per acre ; U.P. and Bihar 25,000 lbs. per acre ; all-India 28,000 lbs. per acre) and can be raised to 55,000 lbs. per acre. This factor favours the extension of sugarcane cultivation and the setting up of new sugar mills. At present there are about 25,000 acres under this crop in Thiruvella area, mostly concentrated around the Pampa river sugarcane factory. There is scope for a large increase in sugarcane acreage in the districts of Palghat, Trivandrum and Ernakulam which possess the requisite irrigation facilities. By 1971, the area under sugarcane may be doubled to about 50,000 acres.

Ginger

2.32 Ginger is a very high value yielding crop (Rs. 1,077 per acre). In view of good demand prospects for ginger in both internal and external markets, the production of

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilised.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

EXTENSION OF CULTIVABLE AREA

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Sugarcane

*433 2.30 Sugarcane is a high value crop, and, therefore, is quite popular with the farmers. But it is one of those crops whose future extension of area is very much dependent upon the growth of sugar manufacturing industry. Its exact scope will, therefore, depend upon the growth of sugar factories.

2.31 The yield per acre of sugarcane in Kerala is very good (Kerala 40,000 lbs. per acre; U.P. and Bihar 25,000 lbs. per acre; all-India 28,000 lbs. per acre) and can be raised to 55,000 lbs. per acre. This factor favours the extension of sugarcane cultivation and the setting up of new sugar mills. At present there are about 25,000 acres under this crop in Thiruvella area, mostly concentrated around the Pampa river sugarcane factory. There is scope for a large increase in sugarcane acreage in the districts of Palghat, Trivandrum and Ernakulam which possess the requisite irrigation facilities. By 1971, the area under sugarcane may be doubled to about 50,000 acres.

Ginger

2.32 Ginger is a very high value yielding crop (Rs. 1,077 per acre). In view of good demand prospects for ginger in both internal and external markets, the production of

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

ginger should be stepped up. The proposed phyto-chemical plant at Munnar would also consume large quantities of raw ginger. The area under ginger cultivation can be extended by 20,000 acres and attempts should be made to raise productivity to one ton per acre through better cultivation techniques, seed selection and use of higher dosage of fertilizers. The likely annual increase in output from these measures is expected to be of the order of 33,000 tons in terms of dry ginger. 433* 249

Oilseeds

2.33 Oilseeds, other than coconut, account for only a very small proportion of the cropped area, but there is scope for raising the yields and extending the area under these crops as a substitute crop in tapioca fields and in young coconut gardens. In addition, castor cultivation may be introduced in the State along field borders which are considerably wide on the banks of rivers and streams and on the borders of gardens and plantations. Assuming that the measures for increased production are reasonably well implemented, the additional production of edible oilseeds by 1971 would be of the order of 20,000 tons annually.

Banana

2.34 Since bananas need frequent irrigation, cultivation of this crop is quite popular in Kerala, especially on the banks of the rivers and near other sources of water. In view of the very high calorific value of bananas as well as good future demand prospects, the production of bananas should be increased. It is not possible to give an exact idea of the extent to which the area under this crop can be increased but there is scope for growing the crop more intensively in compounds attached to residential houses and in areas which receive the benefits of perennial irrigation. 433* 245

Pineapple

2.35 There is quite a large demand for pineapples from Kerala, as they are good both in size and in quality. Location of a few additional canning units in the State is likely to add further to the demand. Steps should, therefore, be taken to increase pineapple production. There is scope for fresh plantings in the hilly slopes of Malabar, which at present contain only wild growth.

Lemon Grass

2.36 Lemon grass owes its importance to lemon grass oil which is extracted from the grass. Kerala produces over 88 per cent of the world output of lemon grass oil, most of which is exported. It is a good foreign exchange earner. The output of lemon grass oil has been increasing year after year in spite of unsteady and fluctuating market conditions. From a mere nine tons in 1920, the output rose to 1,400 tons in 1957. 433* 249 [439]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 249 2.37 The lemon grass oil industry in Kerala has good scope for expansion provided the prices are kept competitive. However, since the Second World War some of the Latin American countries have started cultivation of lemon grass on a commercial scale and extraction of oil with efficient methods of distillation. Compared to these countries both the yield of grass as well as its oil content are low in Kerala. Internal demand is also likely to increase considerably in view of the new synthetic chemical industries that are going to be set up within India in the near future. It is, therefore, suggested that the present level of output of lemon grass oil may be raised through measures such as manurial trials, evolution of high yielding and quick maturing strains, control of pests and diseases, designing of efficient stills of small capacity to suit the needs of small growers, etc.

MEASURES FOR INCREASING PRODUCTIVITY

*433 2.38 Replacement of some of the low value crops by high value ones, as indicated above, should be taken up side by side with raising the yield rate of different crops. There is good scope for increasing the yields which can be achieved through (*i*) greater coverage by improved seeds, (*ii*) larger application of manures and fertilizers, (*iii*) increase in irrigation facilities, and (*iv*) improved agricultural practices. These measures are discussed separately in the succeeding pages.

Improved Seeds

*433 242 2.39 Improved seeds are found to increase the yields by 10 to 15 per cent, on an average, while in case of certain crops like sugarcane, hill paddy, groundnut, etc., the output may even go up by 25 per cent. The area covered by improved seeds is very low in Kerala except in the case of paddy and sugarcane, where it is as high as 50 per cent and 90 per cent respectively of the area under these crops. Farmers in Kerala are aware of the benefits of higher productivity of improved seeds, but are unable to take advantage of it owing to inadequate supplies and delay in delivery. According to the Department of Agriculture, the improved strains available with them are suitable to cover about 60 per cent of area under paddy in the State.

2.40 Complete replacement of local seeds by improved seeds would require a large number of strains which can suit all conditions. Evolution of new strains either by breeding or by selection is a long term process requiring facilities and funds. A programme of full coverage is possible only when the number of seed farms to produce and multiply the necessary seeds is large enough. By the end of the Second Plan, the State was expected to have 24 seed farms in addition to a large number of certified growers who were to multiply the nucleus seeds.

2.41. During the next 10 to 15 years the State should aim at complete replacement of local seeds by improved seeds. For a programme of this size, the existing number of seed farms and certified private farms would have to be increased considerably. Due to difficult terrain and scarcity of land, the area of a seed farm in Kerala generally does not exceed 15 acres—of which only one-third may be suitable for wetland cultivation. The number of nucleus seed farms to cover a given area with

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas ; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government. [427]

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation 249 in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951–56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

433 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since 249 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were 423 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

433 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in 249 Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)

[171] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

433 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific 249 manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires 242 manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large [471] fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted [244] to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

per cent of over 200,000 acres planted from 1902 onwards belonged to non-selected and low yielding strains. The Board has also estimated that more than half the rubber area contains trees that have outlived their economic life. Therefore, about 164,000 acres need immediate replantation. The total area planted till 1958 was 45,194 acres and of this replanting accounted for only 7,060 acres. To tone up the yields as well as to keep the trees in a good condition, it is necessary to replant at least 20,000 acres annually. A programme of this magnitude would need an investment of Rs. 50 crores at the rate of Rs. 2,500 per acre. 433* 249 242

2.112 In certain well managed estates in Kerala, the yields are reported to be as high as 1,600 lbs. per acre. A large number of estates yield between 700 to 1,000 lbs. This shows the potentialities of raising the yields if the gardens are properly managed. There are also instances of estates, which yielded only 150 lbs. per acre, which have yielded 500 to 600 lbs. per acre after reorganization and improvement of the estates. 433* 249

2.113 India is the only country in the world which is a producer and at the same time an industrial consumer of natural rubber. The indigenous production of natural rubber in India at present meets about half the needs of the country, the other half being met by imports. The demand for rubber is increasing at a very fast rate and is estimated to be 55,000 tons by 1961, 82,000 tons by 1966 and 125,000 tons by 1971.[1] This means that by 1971 the demand for natural rubber would be about eight times the present level of production. It is, therefore, suggested that utmost possible effort should be put in to step up the production of natural rubber in Kerala. 433* 249 430 439

2.114 Rubber production can be raised by increasing the yields as well as by extending the area under the crop. An increase in the yields is a short term measure which can be realized, say, by the end of the Third Plan, provided the necessary measures are quickly implemented. Adequate annual application of fertilizer mixtures (NPK) coupled with soil conservation measures, working the soil and regulated tapping are some of the important measures that may be adopted. These measures can be undertaken more effectively and economically if the holdings are of larger size. Efforts at intensive cultivation should, therefore, be co-ordinated with increase in the size of small holdings—especially the small ones with less than 15 acres. This could be best achieved through the formation of cooperatives. The Government and the Rubber Board should initiate future development on these lines. 433* 249

2.115 In addition to replantation, as suggested above, a regular plantation programme is necessary for a sustained increase in output. Raising new plantations to the extent of 300,000 acres may be suggested as the target for the next two Plans. A higher target would be only too desirable. There may, however, be some difficulties in implementing the plantation programme owing to scarcity of land. The exact scope for extension of area under rubber is not known. Various sources put the likely extent of this area to be between 2.25 lakh and 7.5 lakh acres. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture and Forestry should conduct a joint survey to make an accurate estimate of the extent of such land in the State. However, it is necessary to emphasise that the proposed plantations should consist of

[1] NCAER estimates.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 large estates. The small holdings, as explained before, are not economical and 249 have low yields. It is, therefore, necessary to make adequate safeguards against the creation of small units.

2.116 Moreover, care should be taken to see that all future plantings are done with improved clones. This can be much better ensured if departmental planting and working of the estates by Forest Department is undertaken instead of leasing the land under Government ownership to individual growers. It may be assumed that out of 3 lakh acres of proposed plantations, 2 lakh acres would be under Government management and the rest would be planted by private growers. The programme may be phased at the rate of 30,000 acres per year. The total investment for the whole programme would thus be Rs. 75 crores.

2.117 In well-managed estates, the trees begin to yield after seven years. Assuming that the new plantings yield at an average rate of 700 lbs. of rubber per acre, the output of rubber from these would increase progressively from 9,380 tons to 37,520 tons in 1971. Full results from the proposed 3 million acres of new plantings would be visible only from 1978 onwards at the rate of additional 93,800 tons per annum.

Pepper

433 2.118 The cultivation of pepper in India is almost entirely concentrated in this 244 State which produces over 95 per cent of the country's total output. During 1958 India produced about 27,000 tons of pepper, approximately 45 per cent of the overall [439] world production. Before World War II, Indonesia was the leading producer and exporter of pepper, but since then India has assumed that role. Between 1939 and 1951 production of pepper in the country increased by 16 per cent.

2.119 Large scale cultivation of pepper is confined only to the submountain tracts on or below the Western Ghats. It is also grown in the plains but as a protected garden crop in the compounds of houses and not as a plantation crop. Pepper is a perennial climbing crop and lasts for 20 to 30 years. There are on an average 300 to 400 standards (pepper bushes) per acre. On an average, each standard under plantation conditions yields 1 to 2 lbs.; but it is not uncommon to find standards in house compounds yielding even 40 to 50 lbs.

2.120 As in the case of coconut, it is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate of the area under pepper. The estimate prepared by the Directorate of Statistics in [659] Kerala is of the order of 224,658 acres for 1957-58. Of this, Malabar region accounted for 136,854 acres and the rest were in Travancore-Cochin area. The output of pepper during the same year was 26,020 tons in the whole of Kerala, of which the share of Malabar region was 42 per cent. Malabar with over 60 per cent of the area under pepper produces only 42 per cent of the output.

2.121 Per acre yield was the highest in Alleppey and Quilon (402 lbs. per acre) followed by the districts of Trichur, Ernakulam, Trivandrum and Kottayam (375 to 381 lbs. per acre). Malabar region has comparatively very low yields (180 lbs. per acre). This may, perhaps, be due to cultivation of pepper in Malabar on extensive rather than on intensive lines.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

4.48 Compared to the eucalyptus plantations, the area over which wattle can grow is rather limited. This tree can only grow in the high ranges at elevations above 4,000 feet. The Hamilton Plateau in the Devicolom range is a suitable locality and there is a proposal to afforest, 5,200 acres during the Third Plan. The cost of afforestation is between Rs. 120 to Rs. 150 per acre. This plantation would supply the raw material for wattle bark extract industry. There does not appear to be much scope for extension of area under this species after the Third Plan period. 433* 245

4.49 As these plantations are to be raised in the high ranges, it will be desirable to establish regular labour colonies and employ labour on a more or less permanent basis. Some agricultural occupation will also have to be provided to the labour force. It is, therefore, proposed that the establishment of regular forest villages in the grasslands should be seriously considered by the Government. They will also provide the much needed labour for raising and upkeep of the plantations and later for manning the newsprint mills which will be established at the end of 10 years. The exact employment potential is difficult to work out but it is estimated that the plantations will be able to support about 500 families, each family providing two able-bodied workers. [168]

4.50 Cashewnut trees can be raised in the barren forest areas which are considered unsuitable for any other type of forest growth. In Trichur and Malayathur divisions, where these plantations are located, there are further tracts of barren unproductive reserves. Attempts at raising useful forest species having failed, these areas may be put under cashewnut plantations. If Malabar forests are acquired promptly, another 5,000 acres could be planted with cashewnuts during the next decade.

4.51 The technique of cashewnut afforestation is still in an experimental stage, but the highest success obtained so far has been with dribbling seed to a depth of 3 inches at a spacing of 30 ft. × 30 ft. which gives 49 plants per acre. Plantations raised at a spacing of 18 ft. × 18 ft. (125 trees per acre) have also given good results. Experiments on spacing should continue and the optimum spacing in different types of soil may be determined. The cost has been worked out at Rs. 35 per acre plus another Rs. 5 per acre as establishment charges.

Rubber Plantations

4.52 Rubber is one of the chief plantation crops of Kerala. The present area under rubber is roughly 2.5 lakh acres. Since rubber plantations provide a valuable raw material and a good source of employment in the primary sector, it is proposed to raise rubber plantations over a fairly large area of secondary forests. So far as protective functions of a forest area is concerned, this would be a change for the better, as areas under rubber are better protected than a forest and trespasses are not allowed. Other aspects of the problem are discussed in the Chapter 2 on Agriculture and Plantations. 433* 249

4.53 The targets for additional acreage to be brought under different type of plantations, discussed above and the figures for investment required are summarized 433* 245

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 12

AREA IRRIGATED ACCORDING TO SOURCES

(In '000 acres)

Source	*1960-61*	*Per cent to total*	*1966-67*	*Per cent to total*	*Per cent (+)/(—) (5)/(1)*
1	2	3	4	5	6
Government Canals	321	43.15	343	41.38	+ 6.8
Private Canals	68	9.14	71	8.57	+ 4.4
Total Canals	*389*	*52.29*	*414*	*49.95*	*+ 6.4*
Tanks	82	11.03	77	9.28	— 6.1
Wells	26	3.49	29	3.49	+11.5
Other sources	247	33.19	309	37.28	+25.1
TOTAL	*744*	*100.00*	*829*	*100.00*	*+11.4*

249
483

TABLE 13

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF RUBBER IN KERALA

Year	*No. of estates on 31st December*	*Area abandoned during the year* (In acres)	*New extension during the year including re-planting included in areas abandoned in the previous year*	*Total area under rubber during the year* (In acres)	*Area that has been tapped during the year* (In acres)	*Quantity of dry rubber produced* (Tons)
1951	9,026	1,856	4,386	141,759	99,078	13,800
1952	9,186	2,130	3,819	143,448	105,762	15,568
1953	14,231	1,489	1,555	163,254	143,263	19,430
1954	14,336	460	1,769	165,834	17,711	18,768
1955	14,386	2,386	4,963	168,412	152,831	21,605
1956	18,082	4,381	13,785	177,826	150,005	21,079
1957	43,783	4,230	31,699	246,793	167,421	21,496
1958	5,005	2,726	26,558	270,625	169,492	22,159

Nayar 2-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space *(mittam)* in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

564 other temple servant castes might come from
794 other villages to assist at special annual cere-
monies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi tem-
[781] ples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brah-
man, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the
temple and periodically became possessed by
the goddess and declared her will to the people.
[793] In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest
was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by
the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition
a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi
[782] temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri
temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal
sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and
[252] temple servants took no part. Consistent with
these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambu-
diris and all temple servants were vegetar-
ians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat.
The matrilineal castes of temple servants were
otherwise almost identical in general culture
to Nayars, and historically were probably once
Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars,
Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for
ritual rank and would not interdine or inter-
marry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to
the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few
social relations and did not interdine) and above
the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food
from them but not give food to them. Marars
ranked below the other temple servant castes
and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few
social relations outside the temple, and did not
interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

776 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men
821 do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal
[184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three
241 days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar,
[243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one
[132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there
[776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food
241 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their
252 own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake—
262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these
262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if
466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar
241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

464 The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as
564 regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population be-
[212] long to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning
[357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worship-
[515] ping in the temple close at hand. Their meals
[771] are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between
262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice
264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of
[272] the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for
[556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation
[562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged
556 to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by
[357] the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

252 556

the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

574 564 252

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

564

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

[264] [574] [796] [576] [262] [271] [793] [783]

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

291

[293]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

463

3. Goldsmith.
4. Leathersmith.
5. Carpentry.
6. Masonry.
7. Oil pressing.
8. Making of bamboo mats, baskets, etc.
9. Trade in rice.
10. Butter and milk trade.

In arrack preparation two men (Tiyyas) are engaged, but they are also agriculturists and not more than two hours are spent on an average by them on their particular profession. They cut two or three trees daily and from the toddy thus got jaggery or arrack is made. The profit according to their own version is not more than three annas per day. The ironsmith, goldsmith, leathersmith, carpenter and stone mason are whole-time workmen. The ironsmith finds employment in making or repairing agricultural implements. Nothing above this is known to him. The goldsmith's work consists mainly of making ornaments for the jenmis. He is an expert as far as such ornaments are concerned. But beyond these customary works his genius does not go. The leathersmith gets hardly any orders for his work, but his wife supplies chunam* to the country whereby the family maintains a precarious existence. Carpenters and stone masons have work in some seasons. For example, in the ploughing time or the beginning of the watering season, the former has busy calls from every family for the repair of a plough, a water lift or the like. The stone mason wanders to other parts of the country in search of work. He has no work here. The average rate of wages for these is four annas a day and one meal. Goldsmiths' and ironsmiths' remuneration is based on the quality and quantity of their work. None of these have continuous employment for the whole year. Owing to this cause, out of the two families of carpenters consisting of ten members of workable age, eight migrate usually to Calicut where they get twelve annas wages per day. They pay occasional visits to their homes, stay there for a fortnight or so, and then again go.

[166]

The oil presses find ten or twelve days' work each year after a gingelly crop is cut.

285

Mat and basket making is the indoor industry of the Cheruma women. They help their husbands in the fields in minor works but sometimes are also employed on independent wages especially during harvest and sowing time. Their spare time is employed in this industry. These mats and baskets are made of split bamboo. They are rough productions.

•252

There is a curious industry carried on by some Nayar men and women which illustrates the plight they are in. Each of them has a capital of two rupees. They go out with this ten or sometimes fifteen miles away and purchase paddy for this sum where it is sold cheaper by four nazhis (one-tenth para) a rupee. Next day it is boiled, dried and made into rice. On the third day it is carried to Kunnankulam or Guruvayoor, villages eight or ten miles to the

* [Slaked lime for chewing. It is spread thinly on betel leaves, which are folded when put in the mouth.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. Twelve families subsist on this trade. 252

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth. 234

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding. 438 426

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around the waist. Hence little clothing is required. 438 443 [271]

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year. [435]

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes. 491

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams. [476]

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks. 511

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

be entrusted to Fishermen's Cooperatives. This can be done either on lease or on royalty basis. The Department should, however, provide the necessary technical guidance for exploitation work.

5.42 Effective exploitation of the reservoirs may present some problems on account of the depth of water and presence of obstrcutions at the bottom. In reservoirs still under construction or planned for the future, all the obstructions like tree stumps, boulders, etc., should be removed before the water is impounded.

GENERAL MEASURES

5.43 An increase in the output of fish or for that matter of any other commodity is not an end in itself. Adequate measures have to be taken to distribute these to the final consumers. A proper distribution system assumes a much greater importance in case of a perishable commodity like fish. The three important aspects of the distribution system viz., refrigeration, transport and marketing are discussed in what follows.

Refrigeration

5.44 The provision of adequate refrigeration facilities is important for the preservation and marketing of fish. The present production of ice in Kerala is about 100 tons. The bulk of this production is consumed in restaurants and other similar establishments ; the quantity available for the fishery industry is far from adequate. The State Fisheries Department has established four ice and cold storage plants, two of them having ice and cold storage equipment only, and the remaining two having freezing facilities as well. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has a freezing plant at Vizhinjom. The Indo-Norwegian Project also runs an ice plant, and the ice produced there is utilized for the marketing of fish undertaken by the Project as well as by the fishermen of the Project area. Nearly 814 tons of ice were produced at this plant in 1958-59. Two more ice plants, one each at Chowghat and Azhikode, with a capacity of 5 tons of ice per day and ice and storage capacity of about 40 tons, are expected to be established shortly.

5.45 The existing refrigeration facilities in Kerala will have to be expanded considerably during the Third and Fourth Plans. It will be desirable to set up ice and cold storage plants at all production centres, especially at the proposed Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where the bulk of the sea fish will be landed. Important consumption centres like Kottayam, Trivandrum, etc., will also require these facilities. It is estimated that about 10 ice and cold storage plants will be required during the Third Plan and another 15 during the Fourth Plan. The total capital expenditure for the installation of these 25 ice and cold storage plants will be of the order of Rs. 75 lakhs of which about Rs. 30 lakhs will be in the Third Plan. It is worthwhile considering the grant of some subsidy to the prospective operators for the installation of such plants. Cooperative societies should also be encouraged to set up and operate these plants.

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951–59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11). The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951–59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [439] [257]

[see p. 277, category 116 -- Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 glut since the better type of plantation coffee, for which India is well known, is in
245 demand at a premium in the continental markets. At the same time internal market,
[439] about half of which is in North India is yet to be explored. This should also be developed.

2.138 Higher production can be achieved both through higher yields and through the extension of area under coffee. Increase in cultivated area under coffee is possible by fuller utilization of the estate areas. It is estimated that there were about 21,000 acres of land at the end of 1957-58 attached to the estates which were not being utilized for coffee cultivation. These could be planted with coffee. The cost of planting coffee and bringing it to the bearing stage is about the same as that in the case of tea, that is, Rs. 2,500 per acre. The total investment required, therefore, comes to Rs. 5.2 crores, which may be provided to the growers in the form of loans and the Government and the Central Coffee Board should help farmers in securing the necessary credit. The productivity per acre can be raised to 400 lbs. per acre by better manuring, larger application of fertilizers and efficient management of the estates. Efficient management, however, could become effective only after the size of the farms has been increased to a basic minimum.

Cashewnut

[258] 2.139 Cashewnut forms the main raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala. The cashewnut industry stands in importance next only to that of coir in the Kerala economy. In view of current shortage of raw nuts, which is adversely affecting the local cashew industry, measures to supplement indigenous supply are of great importance.

2.140 Cashew is grown on a wide variety of soils—ranging from coastal sandy to laterite hill top soils. It is hardy and drought-resistant but very susceptible to frost. In 1957-58, the total area under cashew in Kerala was 109,000 acres which is about 44 per cent of the total area under cashew in the country. Of this, the former Travancore-Cochin area alone accounted for over 71 per cent (77,481 acres), the rest being in the Malabar region. The production of raw cashewnuts in 1957-58 was 68,000 tons as against 54,000 tons in 1952-53, showing an increase of 26 per cent. The area under cashewnuts during the same period increased by only 1.8 per cent.

2.141 Cashewnut, at present, is rarely grown on a plantation scale. It is grown in compounds of houses, inter-spersed with coconuts, mangoes and arecanuts, and in outlying areas which are considered unsuitable for the growth of any other crop. When grown on plantation scale, about 60 to 70 trees can be planted in an acre, but it is not rare to find as many as 200 trees per acre in certain areas of Kerala. Such congestion, however, has adverse effect on output. Consequently, current yield per acre of cashewnuts (1,400 lbs. per acre) is much lower than what it could have been, had cashewnuts been grown on plantation scale. Under good conditions and in good season an acre may even yield up to one ton.

2.142 The scope for increase in the output of cashewnuts, through increase in yields or through extension of area, seems to be rather limited in Kerala. Raw nut is a low value commodity. Manuring the trees and spending on their maintenance,

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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bearers.* The Sūdra clan supplies female servants in the [564] houses of Nambūdiris. The Vattakkād (or Chakkingal : [258] chakku, oil press) clan, whose proper *métier* is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with tne oil-mill, is the lowest of all, excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in [553] North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nāyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkād to be Nāyars, and say that they have adopted the honorary affix Nāyar to their names quite recently." There is some obscurity as regards the sub-divisions of the Vattakkād clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranād, they are divided into the Undiātuna, or those who pull (to work the oil-machine by hand), and the Murivechchu-ātune, or those who tie or fasten bullocks, to work the oil-machine. Yet further north, at Tellicherry and thereabouts, there are no known sub-divisions, while in Ernād, to the eastward, the clan is divided into the Veluttātu (white) and Karuttātu (black). The white have nothing to do with the [258] expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary [264] occupation of the black. The white may eat with Nāyars of any clan; the black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The black sub-clan is strictly endogamous; the other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their women may marry men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be named, is permissible between most of the other clans, the rule by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior being always observed. She may unite herself with a man of her own clan, or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambūtiri, an Embrāntiri, or any other Brāhman,

* A manchil is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, and more like a hammock slung on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palanquin. [493]

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[6] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. 794 564 [782]

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin. [262] [613]

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine. 564

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages. 564 794 [613]

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine. 564 613

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men- 564

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain. [643] [333] [323]

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originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, [776]
bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, [613]
and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign [586]
that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their
554 lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
554 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

796 the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he
777 happens to fix his eyes upon on this particular morning. According to Nair and even general Hindu Mythology there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance ashes, firewood, oil and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as, reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold and such like ones on the morning of the next New Year. Whereas wholesome and favourable consequences can be produced by the sight of auspicious objects like those just enumerated. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sight-worthy objects on the New Year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known, in native phraseology, as a *kani*. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A Grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed clothe, some "unprofitably gay" flowers of the *Konna* tree, a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps filled with cocoanut oil "clear as diamond sparks" are kept intensely burning and a small plank of wood or some other seat is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house and takes them blindfolded so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the Kani. The members are seated one after another in the seat and are then and not till then asked to open their eyes and carefully look at this Kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers which they have bought
[735] and stored for the occasion. The Kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the carelessly confused noise of the crackers the morning breaks and preparations are begun for the morning
[264] meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice-kanji with a grand appendage of other eatable substances and in others to
[262] ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on grand scales.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
262 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake—the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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564
for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of 262
murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a 466
Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with 241
a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. 342
As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every [351]
garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four- 342
sided house, which may be taken as representative of the 556
houses of the rich:

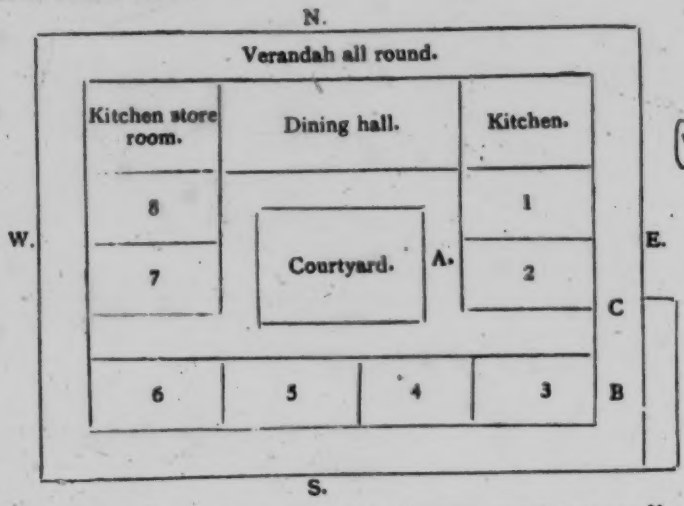

[778]

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon. [115]

754 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic
789 hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan.
754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who
564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there-
[262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have
[673] heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those [262] stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention [783] to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual [834] desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in*
613 *genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *kāranavan*. This man is
564 usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but par-
602 ticularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoid-
[586] ance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru-Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week : [262] [828]

> "*Ezuzcha Kulichalum*
> *Vyāzcha Kulikkarutu.*"

784 777 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this : "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

This is mostly due to two reasons:

First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vizhakkō Kari yuntoru vaka*
> *Bhaim Bhojana matu Kootōttillō.*"
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *táli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pán supíri*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries,
[262] *páyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called 536
Attakkathas (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a [873] high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only the- [532] atrical property known in those days were figures clumsily [534] drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon intro- [176] duced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, [534] which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for [262] an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock [203] they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of [345] mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two [354] bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled [534] cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkákarappan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *kárnavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nenthranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*,

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvátira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvátira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Káma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvátira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and
[431] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

(3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national
[804] festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam
[777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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464 The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as
564 regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population be-
[212] long to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning
[357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worship-
[515] ping in the temple close at hand. Their meals
[771] are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between
262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice
264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular
[272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for
[556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation
[562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged
556 to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by
[357] the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

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against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3 [see p 272, category 11b -- Analysis]

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511 and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily [262] on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher [296] percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

*433 1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. 241 In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is 262 estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

*433 1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

231 *Other Primary Activities*

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and [234] fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality 235 with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry [433] in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

313 1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

226 1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

crops is about 8 per cent of the gross cropped area. A direct consequence of this type of cropping pattern is the high degree of commercialization which has been attained in the agricultural sector. This has important implications for the State economy. The State exports its commercial crops, and imports its foodgrain requirements. In this exchange the State stands to gain since cash crops yield far higher return per unit of area than the food crops. Secondly, quite a few of the commercial crops grown in the State are of a perennial nature and require large investments. This has led to the establishment of numerous large scale organized plantations and farms, although small farms also play an important role. 433* 241

2.6 A chronic food deficit is the third important feature of the agricultural sector, mentioned above (para 2.1). The current production of foodgrains is roughly 967,000 tons. Current requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs.[1] of foodgrains per day per adult (unit) work out to a figure of 24 lakh tons. The gap between food requirements and the current level of production thus works out to over 50 per cent of total requirements. This is higher than in any other State. However, this need not cause excessive anxiety. It is not necessary for every State in the Union to try and achieve self-sufficiency in food at the cost of other more valuable commercial crops. From the long run point of view, the aim should be to strike a balance between supply and demand for foodgrains at the national, rather than, strictly, at the level of the State. The psychological desire to attain a balance between local supply and demand for foodgrains in the State is a legacy of the lean period of 1940-50 when the State was hard hit by the severe food shortage prevailing in the country. 433* 241 262

Climate and Geographical Factors

2.7 The climate and rainfall in Kerala are excellently suited to the prevailing cropping pattern. The climate is cool and humid in the high ranges while it is humid and warm in the plains. The range of temperature variations during the year is very small, the maximum never going beyond 90°F and minimum rarely below 75°F. The humidity, however, is very high in the rainy season—about 90 per cent. The State is fortunate in respect of rainfall. The normal annual rainfall is 95 inches a year ; it may be as high as 150 inches in the high ranges, but nowhere it is less than 65 inches. Most of the precipitation occurs during May to September when the State receives the south-west monsoon. Taking the State as a whole, it may be said that it is one of the most wet areas in the country (Table 1).[2] Assam has about the same normal rainfall as Kerala. Only the Konkan coast (Bombay) and South Kanara (Mysore) exceed it. The annual deviation in rainfall is also comparatively low with the co-efficient of mean deviation at 6.5 per cent for Travancore-Cochin and 9.2 per cent for Malabar (Table 1). On the whole rains are more reliable in Kerala than in most other States. 132

2.8 Kerala has two distinct geographical divisions, namely, the Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar area. The soils of Travancore-Cochin area are generally 134

[1] The Nutritional Advisory Committee to the Government of India recommended 18 ozs. of foodgrains per adult unit per day as the desirable norm. We have used a slightly smaller figure (17 ozs. per day) in our calculations. [146]

[2] [Table 1, appearing on p. 269 of the text, has not been processed – Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

ensure a better return to the farmer. This creates an incentive for achieving a still higher level of production. And at the same time, the rise in agricultural income provides a substantial purchasing power for absorbing consumer goods output of the industrial sector. The need for an emphasis on agricultural development is, therefore, very much inter-related with steady industrial growth. 433* 241

2.22 Agricultural development in Kerala can follow two possible directions. First, the aim could be to raise the yield rate and output of the existing crops with a special emphasis on increasing the food production. Alternatively, the policy could be directed towards bringing about a modification in the existing cropping pattern by giving greater weightage to the commercial crops and thus ensuring better returns from the land. On the basis of available evidence; it seems that for Kerala the latter course of action would be the more appropriate one. It has already been pointed out that it is not necessary for each State to try to achieve complete self-sufficiency in foodgrains. 433*

2.23. A wide gap in food requirements of the extent which exists at present in the State, can be covered only through extension of area under paddy in addition to increase in the yield per acre. Whereas efforts at raising the yield rate are justified by all means, it would be unwise to divert land from commercial crops to the cultivation of paddy. Apart from direct importance of cash crops to the industrial growth of Kerala in the form of raw material supply, commercial crops make a substantial contribution to the industrial effort of India through the large amount of foreign exchange earnings they bring in annually. Export of commodities like tea, pepper, cardamom, cashewnutt and coconut products from Kerala earn foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 55 crores every year—roughly one-twelfth of overall foreign exchange earnings of the entire country. It would, therefore, be in the interest of the State economy to maximize returns from land by growing higher value crops in place of low value crops like tapioca and small millets in as much area as possible. This would require a reversal of the policy pursued so far in favour of attaining self-sufficiency in food within the State. The gap in food requirements which cannot be covered through intensive measures of paddy cultivation could continue to be met by imports from the other parts of India. Since the relative advantage lies in the cultivation of commercial crops, some of which can be grown only in Kerala, attention should be focussed on the development of cash crops whereas the problem of wiping out the food deficit can be relegated to a secondary place for the present. 433* 262 439

2.24 The extension of the area under commercial crops should be undertaken on a scientific and planned basis. Considerations such as gross value of product per unit area and demand for the crop and suitability of soil are some of the important aspects that have to be examined in this connection. It is not possible to state the exact extent and nature of substitution without an intensive land use potential survey of different regions. A survey of this type was being carried out by the State Agriculture Department. However, the future scope for some of commercial field crops is analysed below on the basis of whatever information is available. The possibilities of commercial plantation crops are discussed in the last part of this chapter. 433*

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [171] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [464] [511] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25). Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ans.]

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 199 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [874] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

Chapter 8

Transport

IN THE CONTEXT of a developing economy, the transport system has a special role to fulfil. Apart from opening up the country and linking all areas with each other, it has to meet the growing movement of raw materials on account of more rapid development of industry and rising levels of consumption and distribution. The particular relations of production, consumption and distribution obtaining in the State and changing, according to the emphasis of the Plans, entail certain characteristic tasks for the transport system of the State. In Kerala, for example the persistent food deficit of the State, necessitates movements of rice and other cereals by road and rail from adjacent States,[1] and foreign or coastal imports[2] through ports such as Cochin, Calicut or Trivandrum. Fish and fish-products are distributed from the ports by road, rail and waterways in local and inter-State interchange. From her fields and plantations orginate exports of coconuts, copra, pepper, ginger, cardamom, cashew kernels, tapioca, tea, coffee and rubber. The State's forests covering about a fourth of its area, furnish varieties of timber for clearance from one of the biggest timber markets in the world ; countryside distribution and foreign exports take place from Kallayi and Calicut. Exports of mineral ores, such as ilmenite, have to be handled from ports like Quilon or Chavra. The transport media serve continually, except for the interruption of the monsoon, in the carriage of raw materials, fuels, and essential construction and other goods such as cement, iron and steel, sugar and textiles. In particular, the transport network has to cater daily to the needs of industrial establishments, e.g., rubber and titanium factories at Trivandrum ; cashew industry at Quilon, the aluminium and ceramic industries at Kundara, paper and plywood factories at Trichur ; the coir and coir products of Alleppey ; the cement and sugar factories at Kottayam, the rayon factory at Perumbavoor ; the industrial complex at Alwaye comprising fertilizer, chemical, textile, glass and aluminium industries ; the saw mills and timber-based industries, soap, etc., in the Calicut area ; the big plywood factory at Baliapatam; the tile industry at Quilon, Trichur, Feroke, Calicut and other centres.

8.2 As regards passenger traffic, the Southern Railway carried 16.2 million passengers in 1959, the pressure of traffic being notable at Calicut, Quilon, Ernakulam, Alwaye and Trivandrum Central. The nationalized road transport services carried 65.3 million passengers in 1959. The passenger motor-boat services operating on the inland waterways carry 27,700 passengers daily. About 1,100 passengers

[1] Over 600,000 tons.

[2] About 80,000 tons in a recent year.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

mentioned in vernacular books, are Kiriyam, Illam, Svarupam, Itacheri or Idacheri, Pallichan, Ashtikkurichchi, Vattakātan, Otatu, Pulikkal, Vyapari, Vilakkitalavan, and Veluthetan. Of these Ashtikkurichchi and Pulikkal are divisions of Mārān, Vyapari is a division of Chettis, and Vilakkitalavan and Veluthetan are barbers and washermen respectively.

"The chief divisions of Nāyars, as now recognised, are as follows:—

1. Kiriyam, a name said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit griha, meaning house. This represents the highest class, the members of which were, in former times, not obliged to serve Brāhmans and Kshatriyas.

2. Illakkar.—The word illam indicates a Nambūtiri Brāhman's house, and tradition has it that every illam family once served an illam. But, in mediæval times, any Nāyar could get himself recognised as belonging to the Illam division, provided that a certain sum of money, called adiyara, was paid to the Government. The Illakkar are prohibited from the use of fish, flesh, and liquor, but the prohibition is not at the present day universally respected. In some parts of Malabar, they have moulded many of their habits in the truly Brāhmanical style.

3. Svarupakkar.—Adherents of the Kshatriya families of Travancore. The members of the highest group, Parūr Svarupam, have their purificatory rites performed by Mārāns. It is stated that they were once the Illakkar servants of one Karuttetathu Nambutiri, who was the feudal lord of Parūr, and afterwards became attached to the royal household which succeeded to that estate, thus becoming Parūr Svarupakkar.

4. Padamangalam and Tamil Padam were not originally Nāyars, but immigrants from the Tamil

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWl India
Kerala AWll

465 Wages are paid both in money and in kind; more often in kind since they find it more to their immediate advantage. The rate of wages is two annas six pies or its equivalent in corn at the standard price, for an unskilled labourer; and four and at times five annas for skilled artisans.

435 The price of paddy varies in different seasons. In the harvest season and sometimes after it, the price ranges between 2½ and 2 paras a rupee. But towards June and July the price goes up to between 1 and 1½ paras a rupee. This is the only food which [262] can be called staple. In times of scarcity the poorer people depend on jack fruits, mango and fish, of which the latter alone need be purchased, and that is cheaper than other foods.

454 Excepting the jenmis who are large zamindars, there are but six houses which have made savings. The bulk of the families are unable to liberate themselves from the grasp of the creditors.

The capital saved by these families is employed in lending to the needy agriculturists. A microscopically small amount has gone on jewellery among these middle class families, but with the jenmi the case is different. It looks as though the capitalist knows no way to employ his capital except lending to neighbours.

426 *Debt.*—The extent of indebtedness cannot be definitely ascertained by enquiry. But from what I have been able to gather from the accounts of two capitalist families, I have been able to make an almost correct estimate of the state of things with the agriculturist. Ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 800 one family account consists of the names of thirty debtors from Kothachira. These are all standing debts and the interest on these varies from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Twelve per cent is the current rate of "polite" interest, as people call it. But there are capitalists who lend money even at 24 and 30 per cent in the neighbourhood. The capital thus employed, however, is not the result of direct saving but is ancestral property bequeathed by their fathers, who were the heads of a jenmi family.

511 Thus we find that capitalists who have money at all to lend, have got the money by other sources and not by saving. The 426 agriculturist has many difficulties to meet with. He has no land and not enough stock and implements. His family is large and the expense is ordinarily far beyond his income. From his field cultivation, after all expenses have been deducted, he gets very little for himself. The rents are very high. The capital employed in stock is vital to him and yearly his lot is to lose by death of cattle either by disease or by wild beasts. Last year there were two cases of the latter. Those who have garden cultivation have this profit to utilize. But the majority own no gardens. The population has grown but not the means of subsistence, and no family except the few named find it possible to maintain their family purely from the proceeds of their toil. Thus they incur debt, but debt once incurred hangs heavy on the debtor. Not only is he unable to find means to pay the high rate of interest on the previous year's debt, but he must borrow at all costs again if he is to avoid absolute starvation of his family. This is regularly continued. Litigation follows and an additional and unprofitable expense is thus laid on his head. Law interferes and whatever property he has is lost. But the law does not kill the people, and

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is
322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine
326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for
325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo
285 by the Parials. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation
293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring
[276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti*. Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvátira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvátira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Káma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvátira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and
[431] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam
[777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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241 the gate of the houses, he is met by a woman with a lighted lamp and some leaves on which is placed the rice. This is carried into the yard in procession, while those assembled cry out, 'Fill, fill, increase, fill the house, fill the basket, fill the stomach of the children'. Three times is it carried on a plantain leaf placed on a wooden plank while the lighted lamp is [782] placed on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and stalks of paddy with ears of grain in them are stuck [776] with cow-dung to the various parts of the house, to the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous breakfast brings the ceremony to a close.

Puthari:—The next ceremony is the formal cooking and eating of the new rice (*Puthari*). It sometimes takes place on the *Nira* day, but generally it is an independent festival. An [777] auspicious day is chosen as soon as the first crop is harvested and threshed—a day which must be before the *Onam*. The [263] rice is cooked and eaten with a special curry made of *tagara* (Cassia tora) peas, the fruit of *puthari chunda* (Swertia Cherata), brinjals (Solanum Melongena) and green pumpkin.

Ucharal:—At the end of Makaram (January-February), when the second crop has been harvested, the year's agricultural operations are supposed to be over, and Mother Earth, *Bhúmi Dévi*, is considered to rest during the hot weather until the [776] first shower begins. At the beginning of this period the Malayali observes a festival in honour of the Goddess' menstruation, which, like the *Roman Februria*, is supposed to take place at this time. On the last three days during this festival, all granaries are closed, paddy is not sold, and no implement of agriculture is touched, while even the rice to be eaten during these three days is pounded before-hand. On the first day before sunset the granaries are closed, some thorns and shrubs of broom are fixed to the door and cow-dung and ashes are spread in front of it. The next two days are holidays for all; the house must not be swept, nor the floors smeared with cow-dung, and the garden even may not be swept or watered. On the fourth day the granaries are opened, and a basketful of leaves is taken to the field and burnt with a little manure perhaps to indicate that the cultivator remains in possession.

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
525 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[244] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
[611] "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
[783] ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandrv, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[437] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
564 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, [431] to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. [595] Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with [851] others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [613] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493] * A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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VATTAKKÂD NÂYARS.

There is some obscurity in the sub-divisions of this clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranâd, they are divided into the Undiâtuna, or "those who pull" (to work the oil machine by hand) and the "Muri-Vechchu-â tune," or "those who tie or fasten bullocks" (to work the oil machine by means of bullocks and not by hand); yet farther north, Tellicherry and thereabouts there are no known sub-divisions; while in Ernâd, to the eastward, these names are quite unknown, and the clan is divided into the "Veluttâtu," the White, and the "Karuttâtu," the Black. It has been remarked already (page 82) that the Vattakkâd (those who turn round) are not always admitted to be true Nâyars. In the extreme north of Malabar they are called Vaniyan—oil monger. The "White" have nothing to do with expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary occupation of the Black. The "White" may eat with Nâyars of any clan; the Black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The Black sub-clan is strictly endogamous. The other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their woman may marry with men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. But not *vice versâ*. The men must marry within their own sub-clan. I think, but am not sure a man of this clan may marry a woman of the Pallichchan clan; but even if such an alliance is permissible anywhere, I do not think it ever takes place. It may be taken as accurate that men of the clan always marry within their own sub-clan, and that women of the superior sub-clan very often mate with Nâyars of superior clans. 564* [264]

In taking the measures I made no distinction between the sub-clans; it was only just before completion that the existence of the sub-clans was discovered. Had the important fact been discovered earlier, the sub-clans would have been separated. Though scarcely enough for scientific accuracy, it is tolerably certain that most, if not all, of those examined were of the superior sub-clan, which is exogamous as regards the women. The inferior section of the clan—the Black—is not to be found north of the Korapuzha river in North Malabar. One quarter of my subjects were measured in North Malabar—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Badagara; and for the rest, in some cases it is noted that the individuals are of the superior section. This accounts pretty correctly for rather more than half. I am tolerably certain that the other half also belonged to it. 128 141 564*

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RELIGION.

It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and women can scarcely wear less than they do in compatibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

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411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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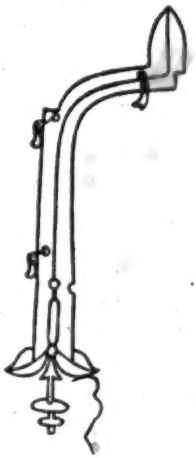

But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

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796 the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he
777 happens to fix his eyes upon on this particular morning. According to Nair and even general Hindu Mythology there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance ashes, firewood, oil and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as, reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold and such like ones on the morning of the next New Year. Whereas wholesome and favourable consequences can be produced by the sight of auspicious objects like those just enumerated. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sight-worthy objects on the New Year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known, in native phraseology, as a *kani*. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A Grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed clothe, some "unprofitably gay" flowers of the *Konna* tree, a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps filled with cocoanut oil "clear as diamond sparks" are kept intensely burning and a small plank of wood or some other seat is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house and takes them blindfolded so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the Kani. The members are seated one after another in the seat and are then and not till then asked to open their eyes and carefully look at this Kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers which they have bought
[735] and stored for the occasion. The Kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the carelessly confused noise of the crackers the morning breaks and preparations are begun for the morning
[264] meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice-kanji with a
[262] grand appendage of other eatable substances and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on grand scales.

796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which
262 being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayngam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

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264 626 564 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were persuaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

621 178 The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it [425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar 351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called 613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women. [564] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns 421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family, [177] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

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as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother, and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister. She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

Enangar.—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

Marriage Restrictions.—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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This is mostly due to two reasons: 434
First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [182] without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245] on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511 fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613] the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182] their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262 beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Kotal vizhakkā Kari yuntoru vaku*
> *Bhatu Bhojana matu Kootāttilō.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264 people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262 as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291 2½ yards long, 1¼ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184 Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439] richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illams*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patindluvittukar* and *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chàrnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[357]

4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chàrna Nayars or Chàrnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[167] [582] [264]

5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

[451]

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564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

14. *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and [264] Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of [582] *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks.

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, 554 Titles. the origin and significance of which are given below:—

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur [551] Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha.

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613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things 592 has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured 178 customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. 592 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large num- 613 ber of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening.

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before.

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and
[431] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam
[777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

564 771 776 **Religion.** The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-cháttan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kávus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, ánd require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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464 564 [212] The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population belong to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning [357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

● 264 [515] [771] **Food.** The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worshipping in the temple close at hand. Their meals are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between 262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice 264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular [272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for [556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation [562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 556 [357] In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Social status.

[264] [574] [796] [576] [262] [271] [793] [783]

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life 291
of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar [293]
always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

Dress.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nayadis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every individual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be considered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

bearers.* The Sūdra clan supplies female servants in the [564] houses of Nambūdiris. The Vattakkād (or Chakkingal : [258] chakku, oil press) clan, whose proper *métier* is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with tne oil-mill, is the lowest of all, excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in [553] North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nāyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkād to be Nāyars, and say that they have adopted the honorary affix Nāyar to their names quite recently." There is some obscurity as regards the sub-divisions of the Vattakkād clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranād, they are divided into the Undiātuna, or those who pull (to work the oil-machine by hand), and the Murivechchu-ātune, or those who tie or fasten bullocks, to work the oil-machine. Yet further north, at Tellicherry and thereabouts, there are no known sub-divisions, while in Ernād, to the eastward, the clan is divided into the Veluttātu (white) and Karuttātu (black). The white have nothing to do with the [258] expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary [264] occupation of the black. The white may eat with Nāyars of any clan ; the black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The black sub-clan is strictly endogamous ; the other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their women may marry men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be named, is permissible between most of the other clans, the rule by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior being always observed. She may unite herself with a man of her own clan, or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambūtiri, an Embrāntiri, or any other Brāhman,

* A manchil is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, and more like a hammock slung on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palanquin. [493]

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. ~~Balakrishnan~~ Nāyar. " A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his 593

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

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526 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
535 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
[524] the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

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4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

796
411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

796
564

But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families [273] [465] only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day [264] during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly [834] at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot [841] cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. [782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular 796 pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in 564 it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

173
laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the *ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess*, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and
[423] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as
[464] to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state.
564 Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[427] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[293] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[963] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[464] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aborigipals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
454 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

*595 We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very [574] hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

*595 601 He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

427 This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the 273 [463] introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles [656] within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this regulation.

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the 177
introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, 438
cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by [656]
the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the [293]
ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of [564]
work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial 177
productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the 433
population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density [161]
to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially [439]
grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not [464]
sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their [167]
families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in 177
Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any 631
longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of 177
their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the 564
ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the [491]
new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist [665]
Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

mentioned in vernacular books, are Kiriyam, Illam, 564
Svarupam, Itacheri or Idacheri, Pallichan, Ashtikkurichchi, Vattakātan, Otatu, Pulikkal, Vyapari, Vilakkitalavan, and Veluthetan. Of these Ashtikkurichchi and Pulikkal [463] are divisions of Mārān, Vyapari is a division of Chettis, and Vilakkitalavan and Veluthetan are barbers and washermen respectively.

"The chief divisions of Nāyars, as now recognised, are as follows:—

1. Kiriyam, a name said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit griha, meaning house. This represents the highest class, the members of which were, in former times, not obliged to serve Brāhmans and Kshatriyas.

2. Illakkar.—The word illam indicates a Nambūtiri Brāhman's house, and tradition has it that every illam family once served an illam. But, in mediæval times, any Nāyar could get himself recognised as belonging to the Illam division, provided that a certain sum of money, called adiyara, was paid to the Government. The [262] Illakkar are prohibited from the use of fish, flesh, and [273] liquor, but the prohibition is not at the present day universally respected. In some parts of Malabar, they [178] have moulded many of their habits in the truly Brāhmanical style.

3. Svarupakkar.—Adherents of the Kshatriya families of Travancore. The members of the highest group, Parūr Svarupam, have their purificatory rites performed by Mārāns. It is stated that they were once the Illakkar servants of one Karuttetathu Nambutiri, who was the feudal lord of Parūr, and afterwards became attached to the royal household which succeeded to that estate, thus becoming Parūr Svarupakkar.

4. Padamangalam and Tamil Padam were not originally Nāyars, but immigrants from the Tamil

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

in equally loud and profuse strains. This is continued 788
right up till the beginning of their homeward journey. 796
Nobody whom they come across on the way can successfully escape the coarse Billingsgate of these religious zealots. Even women are not spared. Perhaps it is in their case that the pilgrims wax all the more eloquently vulgar. A number of cock's feathers are stuck or tied upon the tip of a stick, and with this as a wand they begin to dance and pipe in a set style, which is extremely revolting to every sense of decency. Some of the pilgrims walk all the distance to the temple, while others go by boat or other conveyance; but in neither case do they spare any passer-by. Hundreds of gallons of arrack and [273]
toddy are consumed during the festival. The pilgrims reach the temple in their dirty attire. The temple premises are crowded to overflowing. The worship of 788
the goddess is then commenced. The offerings consist 796
of the sacrifice of cocks at the temple altar, turmeric 782
powder, but principally of pepper, as also some other objects of lesser importance. A particular spot inside the temple is set apart for the distribution of what is called manjal prasadam (turmeric powder on which divine blessings have been invoked). The work of doling it out is done by young maidens, who are during the process subjected to ceaseless volleys of vile and vulgar abuse. Now, leaving out of account the minor ceremonies, we come to the principal one, viz., the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea is that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed, the greater is the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence men vie with one another in the number of cocks that they carry on the journey. The sacrifice is begun, and then there takes place a regular scramble for the sanctified spot reserved for this butchering ceremony. One man holds a cock by the

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

311 high and five feet round, on which the paddy is sown just before the rains.
312 When the monsoon bursts the surrounding water is freshened and transplanting takes place. This is a rather precarious method, illustrating the devices enforced by severe population pressure.

(iv) In the wet lowlands above the backwaters more normal methods prevail, but the early onset of the rains enables planting to take place in April–May and harvest in September; the continuance of the rains then often permits a poor second crop (not necessarily paddy) harvested in January; very occasionally a third is possible.

241 After rice, coconut is the chief crop, accounting for nearly 1 m. ac., typically, of course, in the sandy coastal strip but also on alluvial loams and (with more careful preparation) on laterites. In Travancore the coconut acreage is nearly equal to that of rice; in Quilon taluk, indeed, it covers 85% of cropped area. After rice as the essential food, the coconut palm is the basis of life in Kerala: "Apart from the several uses of the chief products, viz., coir, copra, coconut oil, oil-cake, the hollowed trunk serves as a canoe, the nut forms a staple article of diet, the leaves may be used for many of the purposes of paper, are frequently employed as thatch and for the manufacture of brooms, baskets, umbrellas, tattis [screens kept soaked to cool rooms], and fans, and utilised as crude torches in a dried form, or burnt as fuel, as it is [*sic*] or in the form of charcoal. In addition, the fresh or fermented
●273 juice of the stem is consumed as a beverage, by evaporation it is made into jaggery and by subsequent treatment even sugar is obtainable. When distilled, the toddy becomes arrack and finally vinegar."[45] Of the "industrial" workers of Kerala—most of them, of course, cottage workers—about a third
[464] are in various processes connected with coconut products, and of these
[286] two-thirds are women. The coir 'yarn' is almost entirely cottage-produced, its working-up into mats and so on largely a small factory industry.

The most important other crops (apart from plantation rubber and tea
311 in the hills), are cassava (tapioca) and pepper, mainly in the foothills. The
241 former is grown as a food crop on poorer lateritic soils; pepper is perhaps the chief peasant-produced cash crop after coconut. Cereals other than paddy are negligible, as are oilseeds except for a little sesamum (gingelly), often as a third crop on the higher wet-rice lands. Nearly every homestead has its plantains and other fruit trees, and ginger and the betel vine, with its associated areca palm, are also grown widely but in tiny patches.

Tapioca deserves special mention. Introduced about 1920, it is grown on the lateritic soils ("about as attractive for agriculture as railway ballast") in tiny holdings by the poorest of the poor. As Gourou points out, there is a sort of social inversion: the better-off rice farmers in the valley-bottoms, and a hundred feet or so above them a very wretched (largely Christian) peasantry.

[45] Quoted in Kuriyan, 1937 (Vol. XI), 286. Cf. P. K. Paniker, "The Coconut—its Cultivation on the Malabar Coast", *IGJ* XVIII (1943), 78–88.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [514] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	.	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	.	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry. The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the
435 land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād.

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the
[574] men and women are separate; at different ends of the house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior
613 woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
602 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu, Thiruvathira she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire.
[302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of
[276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips.
[526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made
[262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and
[593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on
[586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa-
[132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [514] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	.	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is 322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine 326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs. 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for 325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo 285 by the Pariahs. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation 293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring • [276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

Village trade.—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti.* 438 Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry. The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the
435 land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

771 From
824 the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being
[778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck.
[301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-
[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus
[278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 **Folk-tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

2.122 The development of pepper has not been receiving adequate attention. The crop was practically neglected during the First Plan. However, the high price of pepper which prevailed during early fifties provided a good incentive for extension of the area under pepper. The main work during the Second Plan was directed towards establishment of nurseries, extending the area under the crop and replacement of unthrifty vines with better ones. A total of 2,000 acres have been replanted so far. 433* 244

2.123 It is possible to increase the yield of pepper from the present level of above one lb. to 2 or 3 lbs. per standard through intensive cultivation, better manuring, better varieties, and plant protection measures, especially against *pollu* disease. Manuring of pepper has been a neglected field and with the application of fertilizer mixtures (3 cwts. of ammonium sulphate + 4.5 cwts. of super phosphate + 1 cwt. of muriate of potash per acre) the existing yields could be almost doubled within a year. Moreover, some extension of area under pepper vines can also take place in house compounds, as an inter-crop in small holdings and in tea and rubber plantations on land unsuited for the main crop.

2.124 Since pepper is primarily an export commodity, 75 per cent of the produce being annually sent out of India, its future scope is very much dependent on the foreign markets. After the last war, India emerged as a major exporter of pepper in the world. The USA was our largest importer, accounting for over 70 per cent of our exports. But, of late, other countries such as Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya have begun to export larger quantities and as a consequence, the USA, now accounts for only about 20 per cent of our exports. The prices have also fallen from a peak of Rs. 4,158 per candy during 1951 to Rs. 677 in 1959. 433* 244 439

2.125 The above evidence points to an increasing degree of competitiveness in the world markets for pepper, and India is fast losing ground to the new entrants. So far India has been able to maintain the volume of exports because of large off-take by USSR and other East European countries. However, demand from these countries cannot be expected to fully compensate for the likely fall in future exports to the USA and other Western countries. It may, therefore, be seen that for maintaining the existing level of exports, not to speak of increasing it, it is essential that Indian prices should be competitive.

2.126 Prospects for internal demand, on the other hand, seem quite bright. Between 1952 and 1958, internal demand rose by about 25 per cent from a level of 5,000 tons. In view of rising population and fast developing food processing industry, future internal demand is likely to maintain this trend. 433* 244 [438]

2.127 Oleorisin, a pharmaceutical product, is extracted from pepper. A considerable amount of pepper in the western countries is used for extraction of this alkaloid. Oleorisin could be extracted in Kerala and an export trade developed out of this. This aspect needs further investigation. [278]

Cardamom

2.128 Cardamom is the most expensive as well as the most delicious of all the spices. India produces about 70 per cent of the world output of cardamom. The 433* 245

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

Feeling That
124 I would obtain more detailed information concerning the children from Nani than from Panju or his brother, Narayana, I proposed one day to interrogate her rather than her husbands. After some initial difficulties, the principal one being that men did not like to let her out of their sight, I did, nevertheless, manage to interview her in the yard of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. Even then, I could see that Panju was uneasy about it. I noticed that all the time he was apparently playing with his favourite son, Kumaran, he cast suspicious and displeased glances in our direction, and attempted to overhear what one of the intrepreters was saying. The other volunteered to help, and took to talking with Panju during these interviews, in order to entertain him and keep him occupied elsewhere. But this was never entirely successful and it was obvious that Panju fundamentally disapproved of my speaking to his wife directly instead of through his or Narayana's intermediary.

I have already remarked how much more pleasant and rewarding I had found it to question the women of Kerala rather than their menfolk. Nani was no exception, and she proved to be much more intelligent and willing in her answers than Panju ever was. Perhaps an explanation of her husband's distaste for my speaking directly to her is to be found in this: he vaguely feared that she would tell me things which she "ought not to", and which he confusedly thought wrong to let me have. Narayana was the same, and although he, too, pretended to play with young Sridaran, it was only an excuse, I think, to remain in the courtyard, to watch us and try and overhear what was being said.

862 Nani was still suckling the two year old Raghavan, her last child. I asked her when and how she would wean it, and she answered that she would do so when she would be two months pregnant again. She [278] would then apply *nux vomica* to her breast nipples and the bitter taste would make the child stop wanting her milk. She said that she obtained the product in the bazaar as a pharmaceutical drug, not as a natural product of the country. Some children were not put off by this method, she added, and for Kumaran she had had to put chicken dung on her nipples and tell him what it was that he was about to eat. In other cases, some mothers beat their children till they stop suckling, but Nani did not like to do this, although she knew that others did.

291 Loin cloths were not put on children until they were in their third [855] year. Before that they were allowed to run about naked. In Nani's [864] opinion, they began to realise that there was a difference of sex only when they were five. (This appeared to me to be somewhat in contradiction with the fact that children received their first clothes two years

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans
Kolla-kurups

428 564 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

429 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 564 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise [305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather [282] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-
349 kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the [487] south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated [351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, [291] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 206]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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286 yard in width and 1½ or 2 yards long. They find it difficult to maintain themselves with this work and also rent small plots of land, and some possess land. They use the unimproved hand-loom. There is no co-operation among them. They sell their cloth in the adjoining market of the village and do not care to send it to other villages. At times they take orders. They do not spin but buy inferior yarn from the market which gets its supply from Bombay through Cochin and Calicut and at times Ponnāni.

463 *Other crafts.*—

Sawyers	4 families.
Carpenters	11 "
Copper workers	1 family.
Iron workers	2 families.
Goldsmiths	7 "
Masons	10 "

These give their whole time to the craft.

Native umbrellas and baskets are made by all Pariahs.

[283] Rope-making—thick as well as thin—is carried on by nearly all the women of the Tiyyas and their sub-sects. Some women are wholly engaged in this work and they sell their ropes in the market themselves. The Pariahs make a peculiar kind of rope from grass, which is used for tying calves, and as reins for bulls. The rope is good and strong. They sell a rope for a measure of rice.

Leather work is done by one family which also practises agriculture.

These craftsmen have existed from times long past with no change in their condition or tools. There is no co-operation among them. Their capital is only their tools. They get sufficient work for their maintenance. There is no improvement with regard to their designs except in the case of the goldsmiths whose work is daily increasing and who are the only craftsmen who invent designs. The condition of blacksmiths is getting worse on account of the importation of foreign iron goods. His only work now-adays is to fit things, not to make them as of yore. He does not now make the nails, screws, iron bars, locks, knives, etc. These are bought from the bazaar and he fits them. But he makes all the tools necessary for other crafts and for agriculture. The same is the case with the coppersmith, but he gets sufficient work as people desire to get valuable vessels made in their presence. But his condition may be regarded as precarious. There is no change in the other craftsmen.

[283] Coir rope-making is the chief source of income for all the low caste women. They beat the soft cover of the coconut, after it is well soaked, into fibre, and twist it into strands, and the strands into ropes, in their hands. The rope is sold to the local shop-keepers daily. Some women themselves take the rope to the local fairs. Their work is increasing.

245 The other industry followed by a great many people is coconut oil-pressing. The whole Christian community with some others subsists on that work. They become tenants to big kanomdars and sometimes buy coconuts from others and extract the oil and sell it in the local market. Some big shopkeepers collect the oil and send it in large quantities to Cochin whence it is exported. One machine mill is already at work in a place

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285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil [791] and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

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3. Goldsmith.
4. Leathersmith.
5. Carpentry.
6. Masonry.
7. Oil pressing.
8. Making of bamboo mats, baskets, etc.
9. Trade in rice.
10. Butter and milk trade.

In arrack preparation two men (Tiyyas) are engaged, but they are also agriculturists and not more than two hours are spent on an average by them on their particular profession. They cut two or three trees daily and from the toddy thus got jaggery or arrack is made. The profit according to their own version is not more than three annas per day. The ironsmith, goldsmith, leathersmith, carpenter and stone mason are whole-time workmen. The ironsmith finds employment in making or repairing agricultural implements. Nothing above this is known to him. The goldsmith's work consists mainly of making ornaments for the jenmis. He is an expert as far as such ornaments are concerned. But beyond these customary works his genius does not go. The leathersmith gets hardly any orders for his work, but his wife supplies chunam* to the country whereby the family maintains a precarious existence. Carpenters and stone masons have work in some seasons. For example, in the ploughing time or the beginning of the watering season, the former has busy calls from every family for the repair of a plough, a water lift or the like. The stone mason wanders to other parts of the country in search of work. He has no work here. The average rate of wages for these is four annas a day and one meal. Goldsmiths' and ironsmiths' remuneration is based on the quality and quantity of their work. None of these have continuous employment for the whole year. Owing to this cause, out of the two families of carpenters consisting of ten members of workable age, eight migrate usually to Calicut where they get twelve annas wages per day. They pay occasional visits to their homes, stay there for a fortnight or so, and then again go.

[166]

The oil presses find ten or twelve days' work each year after a gingelly crop is cut.

285

Mat and basket making is the indoor industry of the Cheruma women. They help their husbands in the fields in minor works but sometimes are also employed on independent wages especially during harvest and sowing time. Their spare time is employed in this industry. These mats and baskets are made of split bamboo. They are rough productions.

252

There is a curious industry carried on by some Nayar men and women which illustrates the plight they are in. Each of them has a capital of two rupees. They go out with this ten or sometimes fifteen miles away and purchase paddy for this sum where it is sold cheaper by four nazhis (one-tenth para) a rupee. Next day it is boiled, dried and made into rice. On the third day it is carried to Kunnankulam or Guruvayoor, villages eight or ten miles to the

* [Slaked lime for chewing. It is spread thinly on betel leaves, which are folded when put in the mouth.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is 322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine 326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for 325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo 285 by the Parials. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation 293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring [276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti*. Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
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311 high and five feet round, on which the paddy is sown just before the rains.
312 When the monsoon bursts the surrounding water is freshened and transplanting takes place. This is a rather precarious method, illustrating the devices enforced by severe population pressure.

(iv) In the wet lowlands above the backwaters more normal methods prevail, but the early onset of the rains enables planting to take place in April–May and harvest in September; the continuance of the rains then often permits a poor second crop (not necessarily paddy) harvested in January; very occasionally a third is possible.

241 After rice, coconut is the chief crop, accounting for nearly 1 m. ac., typically, of course, in the sandy coastal strip but also on alluvial loams and (with more careful preparation) on laterites. In Travancore the coconut acreage is nearly equal to that of rice; in Quilon taluk, indeed, it covers 85% of cropped area. After rice as the essential food, the coconut palm is the basis of life in Kerala: "Apart from the several uses of the chief products, viz., coir, copra, coconut oil, oil-cake, the hollowed trunk serves as a canoe, the nut forms a staple article of diet, the leaves may be used for many of the purposes of paper, are frequently employed as thatch and for the manufacture of brooms, baskets, umbrellas, tattis [screens kept soaked to cool rooms], and fans, and utilised as crude torches in a dried form, or burnt as fuel, as it is [*sic*] or in the form of charcoal. In addition, the fresh or fermented
273 juice of the stem is consumed as a beverage, by evaporation it is made into jaggery and by subsequent treatment even sugar is obtainable. When distilled, the toddy becomes arrack and finally vinegar."[45] Of the "industrial" workers of Kerala—most of them, of course, cottage workers—about a third
[464] are in various processes connected with coconut products, and of these
[286] two-thirds are women. The coir 'yarn' is almost entirely cottage-produced, its working-up into mats and so on largely a small factory industry.

The most important other crops (apart from plantation rubber and tea
311 in the hills), are cassava (tapioca) and pepper, mainly in the foothills. The
241 former is grown as a food crop on poorer lateritic soils; pepper is perhaps the chief peasant-produced cash crop after coconut. Cereals other than paddy are negligible, as are oilseeds except for a little sesamum (gingelly), often as a third crop on the higher wet-rice lands. Nearly every homestead has its plantains and other fruit trees, and ginger and the betel vine, with its associated areca palm, are also grown widely but in tiny patches.

Tapioca deserves special mention. Introduced about 1920, it is grown on the lateritic soils ("about as attractive for agriculture as railway ballast") in tiny holdings by the poorest of the poor. As Gourou points out, there is a sort of social inversion: the better-off rice farmers in the valley-bottoms, and a hundred feet or so above them a very wretched (largely Christian) peasantry.

[45] Quoted in Kuriyan, 1937 (Vol. XI), 286. Cf. P. K. Paniker, "The Coconut—its Cultivation on the Malabar Coast", *IGJ* XVIII (1943), 78–88.

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241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of otheir religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1½ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region 133 208 182 —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence [367] of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala 133 would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the [509] coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

133 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed [23.1] available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. [312] Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, [339] jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 6]

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural [171] sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most 249 important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is 438 highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilized.

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed ●288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	593
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and net value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

162 464 The fall in the participation ratio between 1931–51[1] may be attributed to three factors:

(i) Rise in the sex ratio in favour of females.
(ii) Increase in the school-going population.
(iii) Slow growth in employment opportunities.

11.17 The force of the first two factors, however, is not sufficient to explain the steep [161] decline in the participation rate. A fall of the magnitude, as shown in the above [433] table, primarily indicates that the increase in opportunities for gainful employment has not been keeping pace with the growth of population which had increased by over 40 per cent between 1931 and 1951 without any corresponding growth of industries or development in other sectors.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN POPULATION DENSITY AND MANPOWER

[161] 11.18 Kerala is the most thickly populated State of India having an average density of 1,125 persons to a square mile according to the Census of 1961. The population, however, is not uniformly spread out as may be noticed from the district density figures in Table 58.[3] Malabar is less thickly populated than the Travancore-Cochin area. But the proportion of working force to total population, that is, the participation rate is also lower in the Malabar area. Generally, it is expected that participation rate would be lower in the more congested areas, because an over-crowded agricultural sector naturally offers limited scope for employment. The comparison of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, however, seems to belie this conclusion. The [288] reason for this contrast perhaps lies in the fact that the major part of the coir industry, the most labour-intensive industry of Kerala, is concentrated mostly in the Travancore-Cochin region.[2]. Absence of this industry on a large scale in Malabar seems to account for a lower participation rate in that area.

Occupational Distribution

162 464 433 11.19 Occupational pattern generally gives a broad idea as to the stage of economic development attained by a country or a region. The distribution of working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, is given separately for the rural and urban sectors, in Table 59.[4] A comparison with the all-India occupational distribution brings out a marked contrast in the case of Kerala. Whereas 71.8 per cent of the working force was engaged in agricultural occupations in the whole of India, in case of Kerala the proportion was only 51.4 per cent. In fact in Kerala the proportion of its population dependent upon non-agricultural activities turns out to be the highest in the whole of India.

[1] The difference in the concepts used in 1931 and 1951 Censuses perhaps exaggerates the extent of decline in the participation rates, but it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years.

[2] Both these aspects have also been dealt with in Chapter 1.

3,4 [see p 310, category 116 -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas.

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities.

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations.

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951.

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.
[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	58,347	..	..
Koshikode	20,045	61,479	14,733	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,336	20,988	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,654	2,890	5,586
Nemmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,467*	*172,878*	*84,100*	*143,353*

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Kerala.

4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

4.36 (ii) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

4.37 (iii) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

PL. VII.

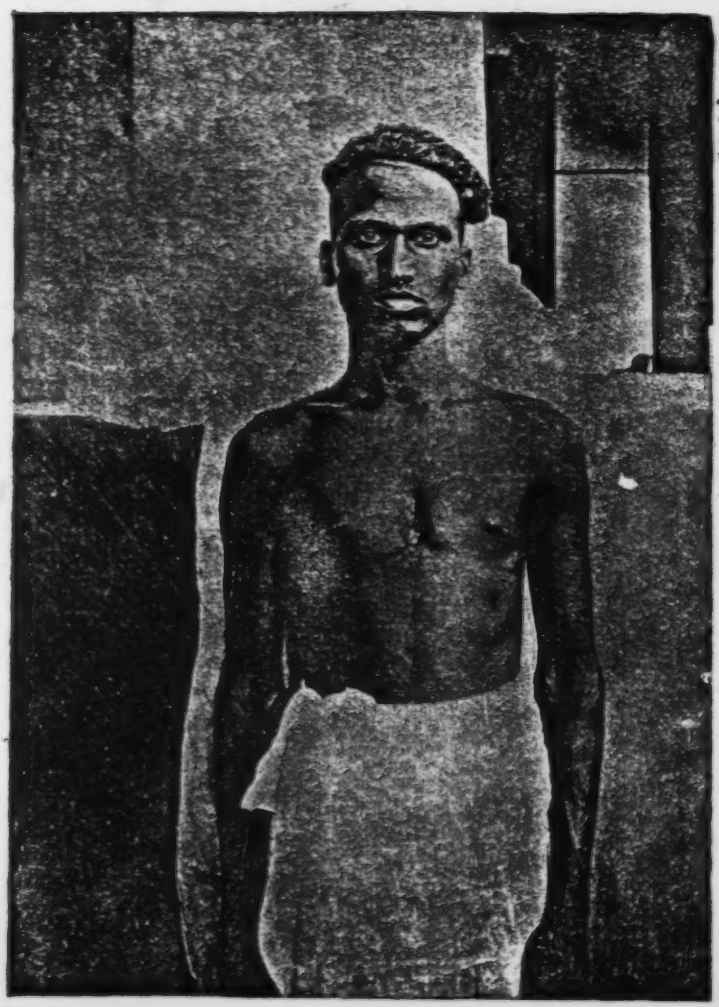

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 196]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

legend "made in Austria." The Nâyars wear none but the gold, "mounted" as they call it (the mounting being much as the upper portion of one section of the necklace, in the plate), strung together through the mounting just as the necklace: a very effective ornament for the neck. The brass imitations of the sequin are worn by the women of the inferior races of whom we shall have some description hereafter. If one asks the ordinary Malayali, say a Nâyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rama and Sita; between them a cocoanut tree! 301 177 564*

Turkish coins, French half louis, and German 10 mark pieces are also used in the same way, each one being known by a distinctive vernacular name, and no corruption of its nomenclature in European coinage, so that it is always easy to identify one of these coins by its vernacular name. For instance, every Malayali knows what an "Amâda" is: it is what we know to be a real or imitation Venetian sequin.* The half louis of the empire is known as the "pakshikkas," probably from the eagle on the reverse. And so on.†

Ornaments are never worn on the ankles or on the waist, as is the rule in other parts of Southern India. 564* 301

Dress, men.—This is very simple; ordinarily one cloth round the loins, the ends overlapping a foot or two in front. It is not tucked between the legs, which is the fashion practically all over India, but hangs straight to the ground. It should touch the ground, or very nearly do so. Wearing a cloth in such fashion carries with it dignity to the wearer. A Tlyan, or a man of any inferior 291 564*

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* I have never heard any explanation of the word Amâda in Malabar. The following comes from Tinnevelly: "Amâda was the consort of Bhagavati and he suddenly appeared one day before a Shânár (the caste devoted to climbing the palms and drawing off the juice) and demanded food. The Shânár said he was a poor man with nothing to offer but toddy, which however he gave in a palmyra leaf. Amâda drank the toddy and performing a mantram over the leaf it turned into gold coins which bore on one side the pictures of Amâda, the Shânár and the tree; and these he gave the Shânár on a reward for his willingness to assist him. This explains the two names—Shânár caste (as they are called in Tinnevelly, but where they are not very common), and Amâda." [773]

† It is scarcely right to say any of these coins, even the sequin, is not current. The value of each is known everywhere to a nicety. It must be remembered that throughout Malabar copper coins of the English and Dutch East India Companies, of Mysore, and of almost every former dynasty of South India are to be found amongst the coins actually current with the people, while in the rural parts reckoning is always in fanams: not in annas. [436]

*291 *564 caste, is not supposed to wear his cloth below his knees. Now-a-days, when there is a general levelling up, the inferior races occupying a position they never held before, when people speak of caste as if it were a fanciful arrangement of the social fabric which it would be an excellent thing to destroy, forgetting that, fundamentally, it rests on racial differentiation, we see those of castes inferior to the Nâyar wearing their cloths to the ground—in the towns that is, where the sway of modern officialdom and education is felt. But, were a man of inferior caste to wear his cloth to the ground, away out in the district where the old order has not changed much, he would soon be made to repent having done what is believed to be an infringement of the privileges of the Nâyar. He would probably be well beaten, and might have his house burnt. The single cloth (mundu) constitutes the ordinary dress. No turban is worn. It is wrong for a [293] Nâyar to cover his head. But he may use an umbrella, and invariably does so when walking in the sun, for he is very susceptible to its rays. The cloth must be fastened at the waist in a certain way. Those of every caste tie or fasten their cloth round the loins in a certain way; people of no two castes tie the cloth alike.

Women.—A short cloth is worn somewhat tight round the loins, and over it is worn another cloth from the waist to below the knee. Nothing is worn above waist. When one sees women of the Nâyar caste on the roads (they are *never* to be seen in the towns), or at the festivals or other large gatherings, they are wearing a cloth loosely covering the upper portion of the body. In Malabar, where there is prevalent the idea that no respectable woman covers her breast, there has crept in lately, chiefly amongst those who have travelled, a feeling of shame in respect of this custom of dress. Dress is, of course, a conventional affair, and it will be matter for regret should false ideas of shame supplant those of natural dignity such as one sees expressed in the carriage and bearing of the well-bred Nâyar lady.

121 It will be most convenient to deal with the Nâyars as a body under such heads as marriage, customs, etc. Here we are concerned mainly with physical measures and general appearance, under which come dress and ornament. What has been said about dress may be taken as *[291] *[564] descriptive of all the clans. Before leaving the Kiriattil Nâyars it will be well to note the names of some of those actually measured.
[115]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

PL. VIII.

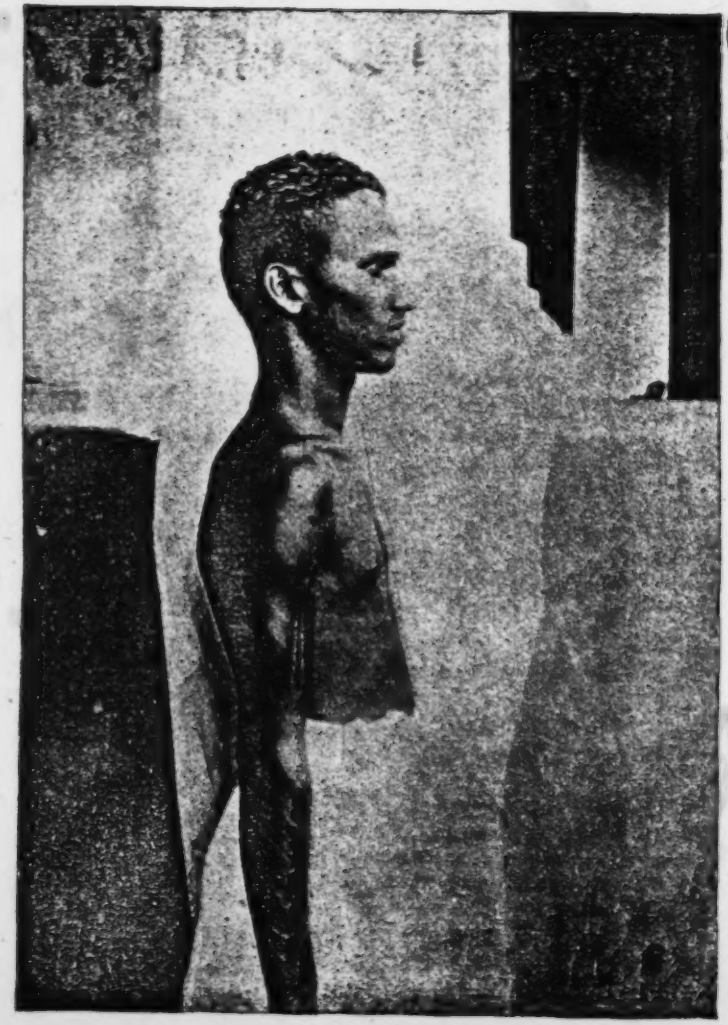

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 198]

141 Some individuals were described in my notes—
*564 (1) Nasal bones wide and thick. Teeth project.

(2) Lips thick and somewhat projecting. Chin receding. The flesh on the chin is thick, giving it a rounded lump like appearance. Inion appears to be in a projecting ridge round the back of the head. (Cephalic length 19·7.)

(3) Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight. Lips slightly everted. Teeth in upper jaw project forwards. Eyes deep set. Inner corner of eyes a trifle oblique.

The last two specimens are uncommon; not typical. The thick lips and projecting teeth are not usually noticeable as in their case. The long oval face is the common type. The fashion of wearing no hair on the face, [302] shaving the head at the back and at the sides and a little [291] over the forehead, leaving but the oval patch on the vertex, no head covering being worn, gives the face an appearance of length. But while the average of the measure vertex to chin, for all the Nâyars,* reduced to stature equals 100, is 11·9, the same for 21 of the 30 different castes † examined in Malabar is greater. The Mukkuvan is as high as 13·4, while on the other hand the Nambûtiri is less, being but 11·7.

Figure.—One out of 25 is recorded as "stout." One-third were "slight." Nearly two-thirds were medium or thereabouts; and this seems to represent the average.

142 *Hair.*—More than half are noted as having whiskers, *564 that is, growth of hair on the cheeks. In two-thirds of the subjects the hair on the head was thick and wavy; in a few cases it was very thick. Individuals aged respectively 25, 32, and 52 were noted as being a little grey. In one-quarter of the total number the hair was thin to moderately thick. One individual of this clan is marked as having hair a little grey.

Hair on the chest.—Rather more than a quarter of the whole had thick to moderately thick hair. In the case of one man hair was thick all over the body, even on the back: everywhere except over the ribs, the front of the upper arm and shoulder. In another the hair on the small of the back was *thick*. In the greater number of individuals it was marked slight, and moderate, and in a few it was absent.

* Group A included.
† Counting each clan of the Nâyars separately.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

PL. IX.

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NAYAR WOMEN (SOUTH MALABAR), AGED 20 AND 17.

[Facing P. 210]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

PL. XI.

A PALNI PILGRIM, WITH HIS KAVADI.

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[Facing P. 230]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

RELIGION.

It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and women can scarcely wear less than they do in compatibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettukn*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[241] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book
[114] on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

This is mostly due to two reasons: 434
First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [182] without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245] on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511 fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613] the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182] their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262 beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vizhakkā Kari yunnorn vaka*
> *Bhata Bhojana matu Kootiltillā.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264 people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262 as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291 ● 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184 Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439]
richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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Nayar

291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 611 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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THE NAVAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

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[facing p.5]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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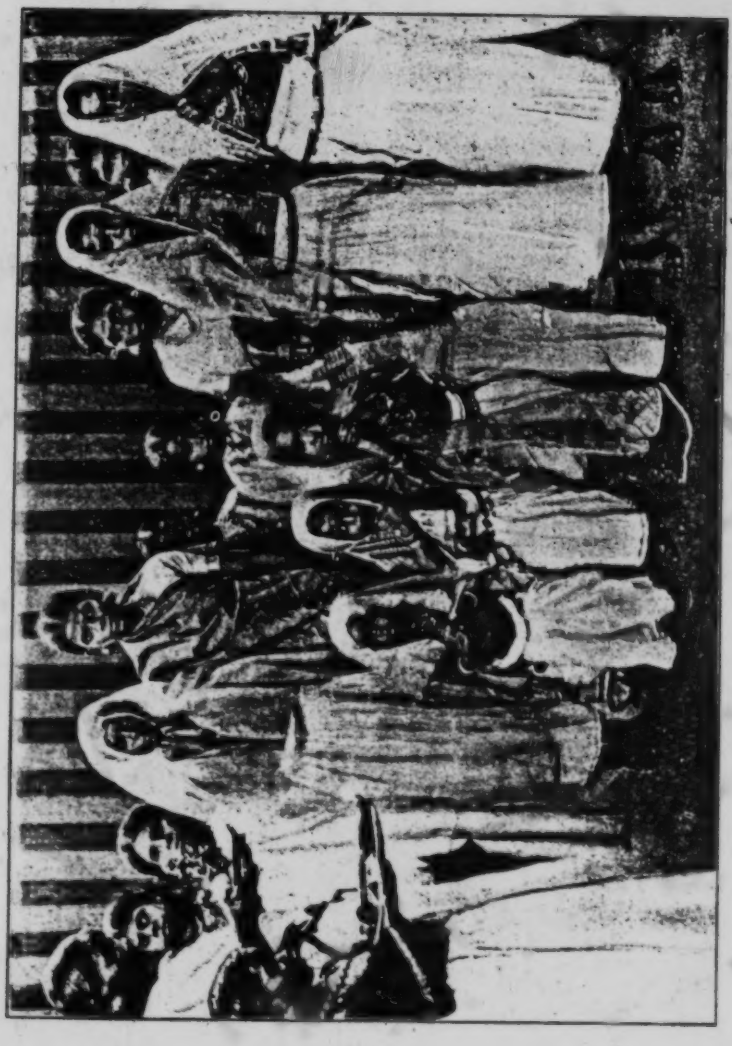

A TALLTYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

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[facing p. 24]

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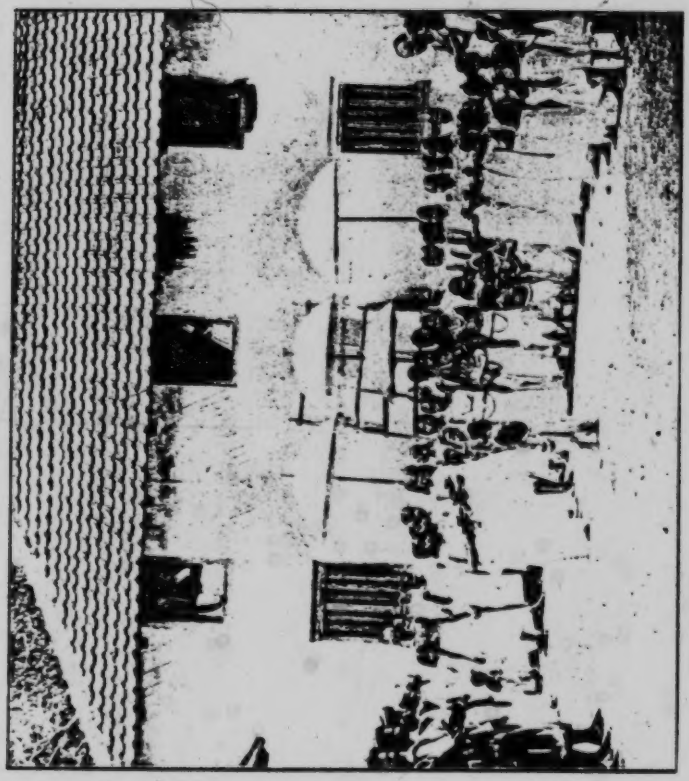

A NAYAR GIRL RETURNING HOME IN PROCESSION AFTER BATH ON THE FOURTH DAY AFTER THE FIRST MENSES.

[facing p. 29]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 136.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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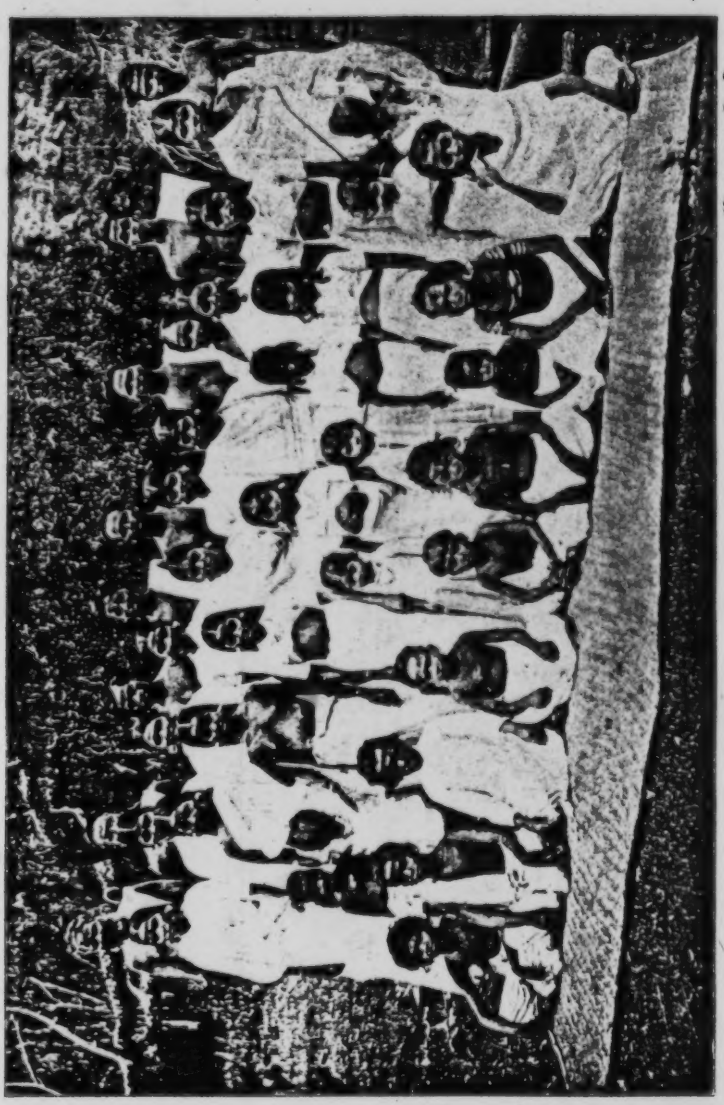

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY

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[facing p. 47]

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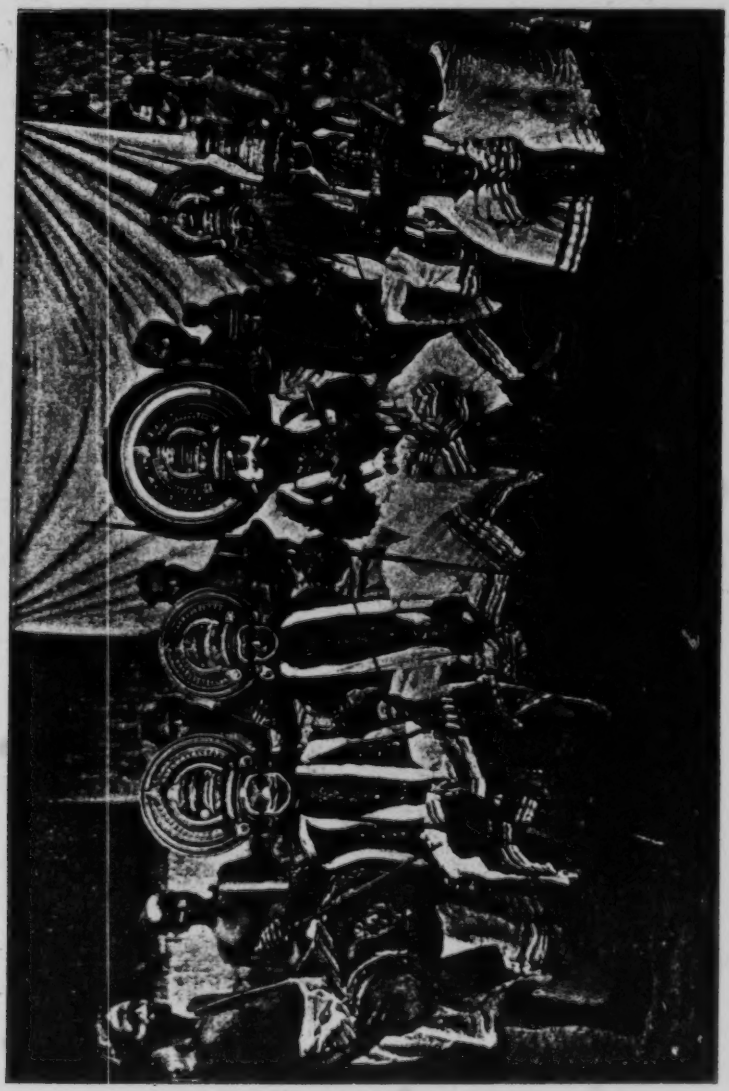

CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p. 65]

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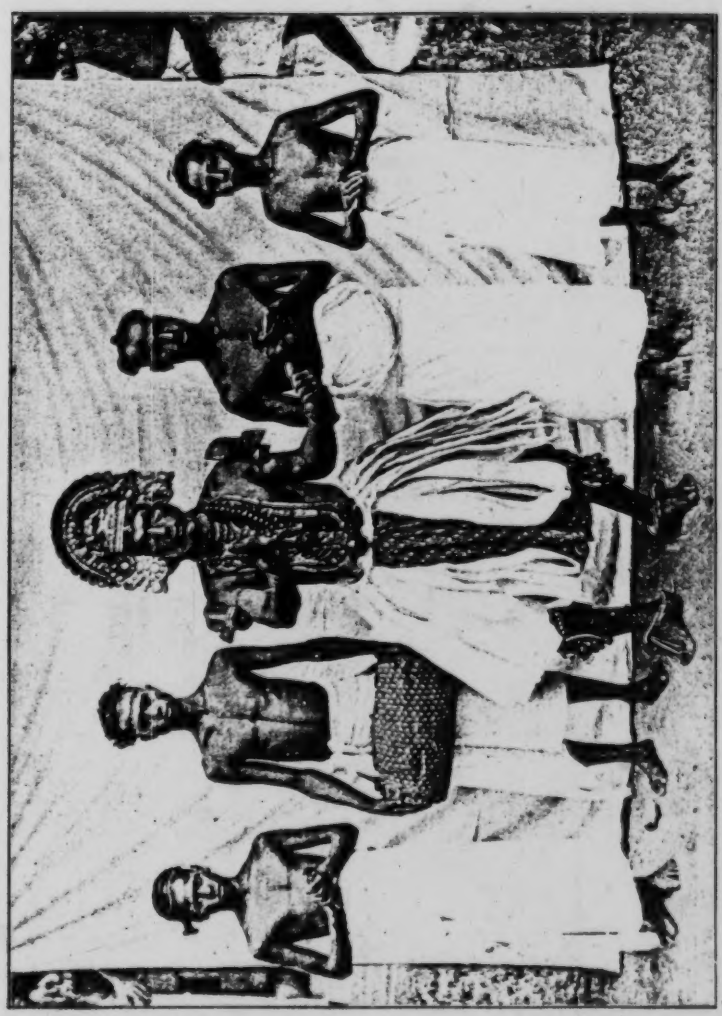

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[facing p.66]

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A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[facing p. 71]

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Nayar

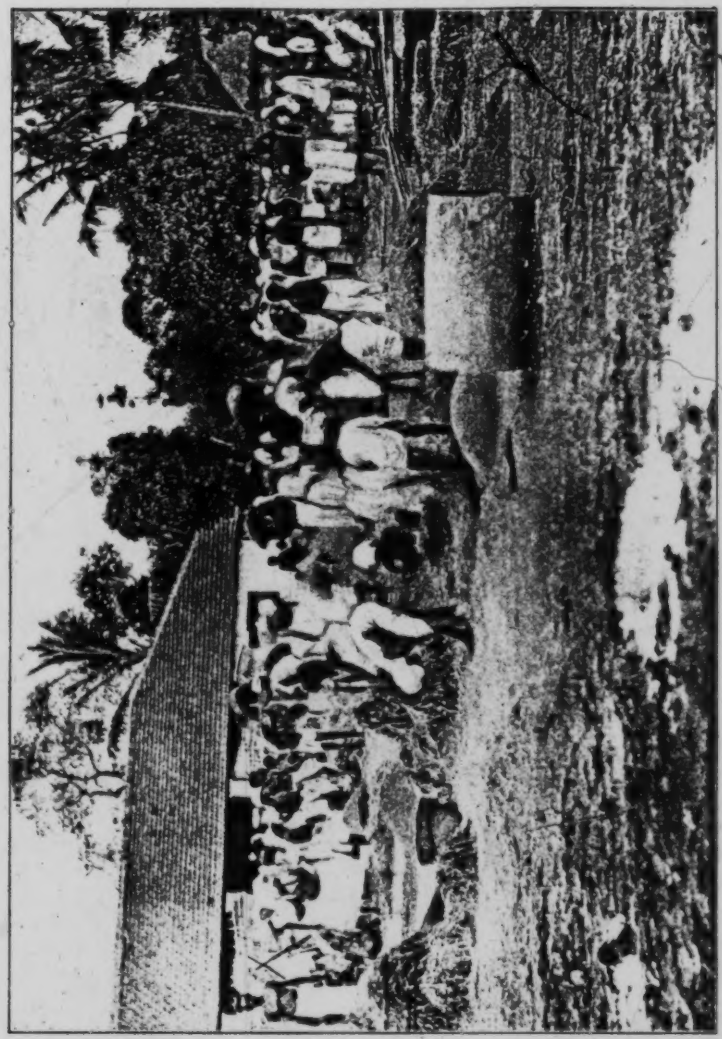

NAYAR WOMEN THRESHING CORN.

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[facing p. 98]

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Nayar

the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone. 252 556

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them. 574 564 252

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class. 564 [264] [574] [796] [576] [262] [271] [793] [783]

Social status.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home. A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head. 291 [293]

Dress.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pévu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars [177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats: others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambu- [178] thiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

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Nayar

below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *mukkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

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Nayar

301 There are various ornaments for the neck, of which the one called *addiyal* is the commonest. Other ornaments for the neck are the so-called *yanthram*, *poothdli*, *avil mdla* and *pulinakham*. The latter is worn by children, and *pálikka-móthiram* is the ornament which is worn by maidens. Gold and silver belts are worn round the loins. Grown-up women do not wear anklets, while the younger ones use *káppu* and *golusu*. Rings of all kinds are worn on the fingers. [291]

[pp 103 ff. not processed]

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

Respect towards a superior, towards a God, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans
Kolla-kurups

428 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could
564 inherit if there were no male heirs.

427 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the
564 Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise
[305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather
[482] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-
342 kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the
[487] south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated
[351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister,
[291] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 206]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

Feeling That
124 I would obtain more detailed information concerning the children from Nani than from Panju or his brother, Narayana, I proposed one day to interrogate her rather than her husbands. After some initial difficulties, the principal one being that men did not like to let her out of their sight, I did, nevertheless, manage to interview her in the yard of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. Even then, I could see that Panju was uneasy about it. I noticed that all the time he was apparently playing with his favourite son, Kumaran, he cast suspicious and displeased glances in our direction, and attempted to overhear what one of the intrepreters was saying. The other volunteered to help, and took to talking with Panju during these interviews, in order to entertain him and keep him occupied elsewhere. But this was never entirely successful and it was obvious that Panju fundamentally disapproved of my speaking to his wife directly instead of through his or Narayana's intermediary.

I have already remarked how much more pleasant and rewarding I had found it to question the women of Kerala rather than their menfolk. Nani was no exception, and she proved to be much more intelligent and willing in her answers than Panju ever was. Perhaps an explanation of her husband's distaste for my speaking directly to her is to be found in this: he vaguely feared that she would tell me things which she "ought not to", and which he confusedly thought wrong to let me have. Narayana was the same, and although he, too, pretended to play with young Sridaran, it was only an excuse, I think, to remain in the courtyard, to watch us and try and overhear what was being said.

862 Nani was still suckling the two year old Raghavan, her last child. I asked her when and how she would wean it, and she answered that she would do so when she would be two months pregnant again. She [278] would then apply *nux vomica* to her breast nipples and the bitter taste would make the child stop wanting her milk. She said that she obtained the product in the bazaar as a pharmaceutical drug, not as a natural product of the country. Some children were not put off by this method, she added, and for Kumaran she had had to put chicken dung on her nipples and tell him what it was that he was about to eat. In other cases, some mothers beat their children till they stop suckling, but Nani did not like to do this, although she knew that others did.

291 Loin cloths were not put on children until they were in their third [855] year. Before that they were allowed to run about naked. In Nani's opinion, they began to realise that there was a difference of sex only [864] when they were five. (This appeared to me to be somewhat in contradiction with the fact that children received their first clothes two years

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.) 291 864

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them. 853

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog. 863 [854] [861]

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there. 865 [513]

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani [856]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayars

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Fig. 7. Parbhatiama, the Nayar woman and her sister Kunyimaluama.

Fig. 8. Kunyimaluama and her brother Krishnanayar.

[P. 238-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Thandans
Tiyas

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Fig. 9. Thandan women bathing in the Ponani river of south Malabar, near Lakkidi, in the Walluvanad taluk.

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Fig. 10. Kaladiwalapil household of Perumpillav village in north Cochin. From left to right, standing: Kandapan, Mundon, Chaki and Raman; seated in front: Lakshmi, her son and Kunyu.

[P. 238-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kolla-kurups
Kammalans
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Fig. 11. Kalyani standing at the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *kalarikel* household gate (the others are curious onlookers)

Fig. 12. Kunji of the *Karuwan* Mudrikelparampil household.

[P.238-D]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kolla-kurups
Toi-Kollans

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[516]

Fig. 13 While Kunji, aged twelve, of the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *Kalarikel* sings, the rest of the family sits around her

[504]

Fig. 14 Old Kurundla, seventy six, of the *Tolkollan* household of Palakatampil village, near Ottappalam. Note the enlarged holes in her ear lobes

[P. 238-E]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Panans

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Fig. 15. Sita of the *Panan* Villarkaden household, Kundilpadam *tarawad*. At her breast, Kumaran, then Chami and Narayana.

[P. 238-F]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Cheruma

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Fig.16. A handsome girl labourer of the Cheruma caste.

[P 238-G]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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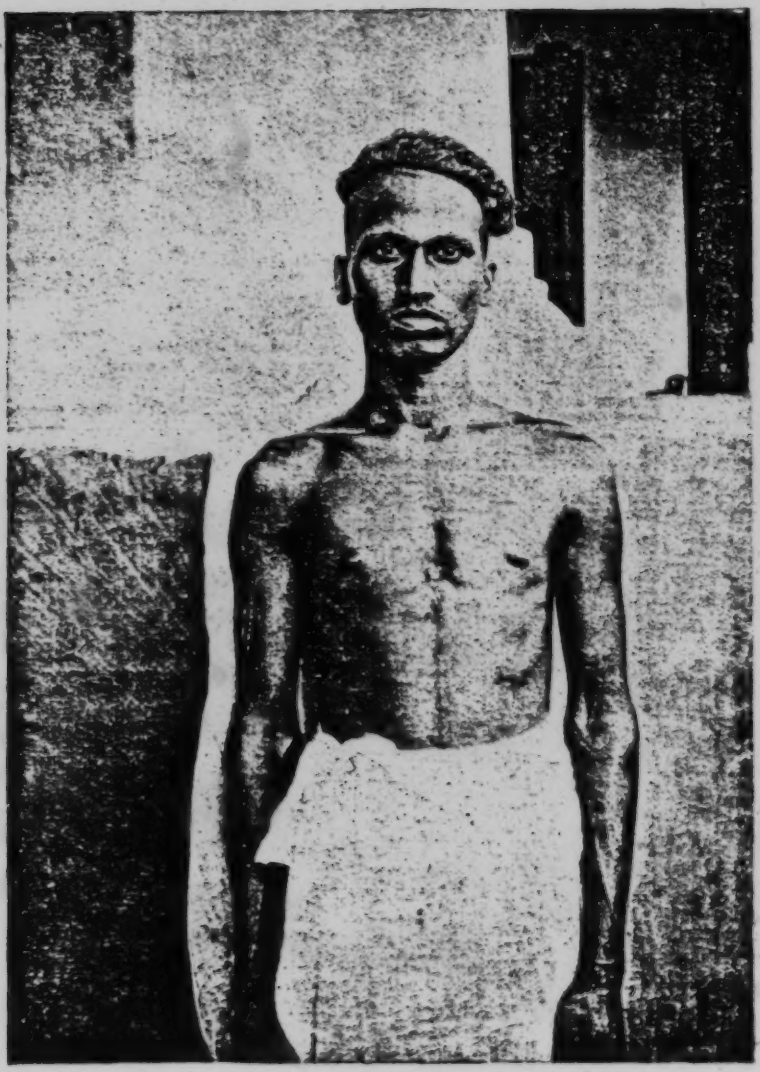

AKATTUCHARNA NĀYAR

[Facing p. 305]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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NĀYAR FEMALES.

[facing P. 312]

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

291 [177] [564] [564] [184] [576] [643]

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous disorders are never observed except among slaves and
[302] the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

chelakkamotiram, amatāli, arumpumani, and kumilatāli are fast vanishing. The kuttu-minnu is worn on the neck for the first time by a girl when her tāli-kettu is celebrated. This ornament is also called gnali. Prior to the tāli-kettu ceremony, the girls wear a kāsu or sovereign. The inseparable neck ornament of a Nāyar woman in modern days is the addiyal, to which a patakkam is attached. The only ornament for the ears is the takka or toda. After the lobes have been dilated at the karnavedha ceremony, and dilated, a big leaden ring is inserted in them. The nose ornament of women is called mukkuthi, from which is suspended a gold wire called gnattu. No ornament is worn in the right nostril. The wearing of gold bangles on the wrists has been long the fashion among South Indian Hindu females of almost all high castes. Round the waist Nāyar women wear chains of gold and silver, and, by the wealthy, gold belts called kachchapuram are worn. Anklets were not worn in former times, but at the present day the kolusu and padasaram of the Tamilians have been adopted. So, too, the time-honoured toda is sometimes set aside in favour of the Tamil kammal, an ornament of much smaller size. Canter Visscher (who was Chaplain at Cochin in the eighteenth century) must have been much struck by the expenditure of the Nāyar women on their dress, for he wrote* 'there is not one of any fortune who does not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of robes made of silver and other valuable materials, for it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same dress two or three days in succession'."

It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way to Malabar in the days

* Letters from Malabar.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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PALNI PILGRIM AND KAVADI.

[facing p. 39]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

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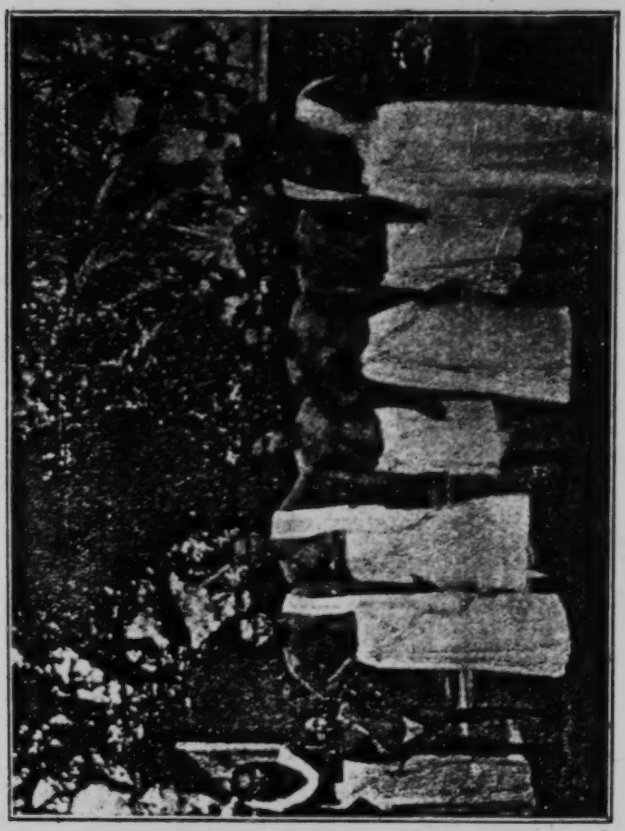

GROUP OF NAMBUDRI BRAHMANS. Photo by G. Slater.

[facing p. 128]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

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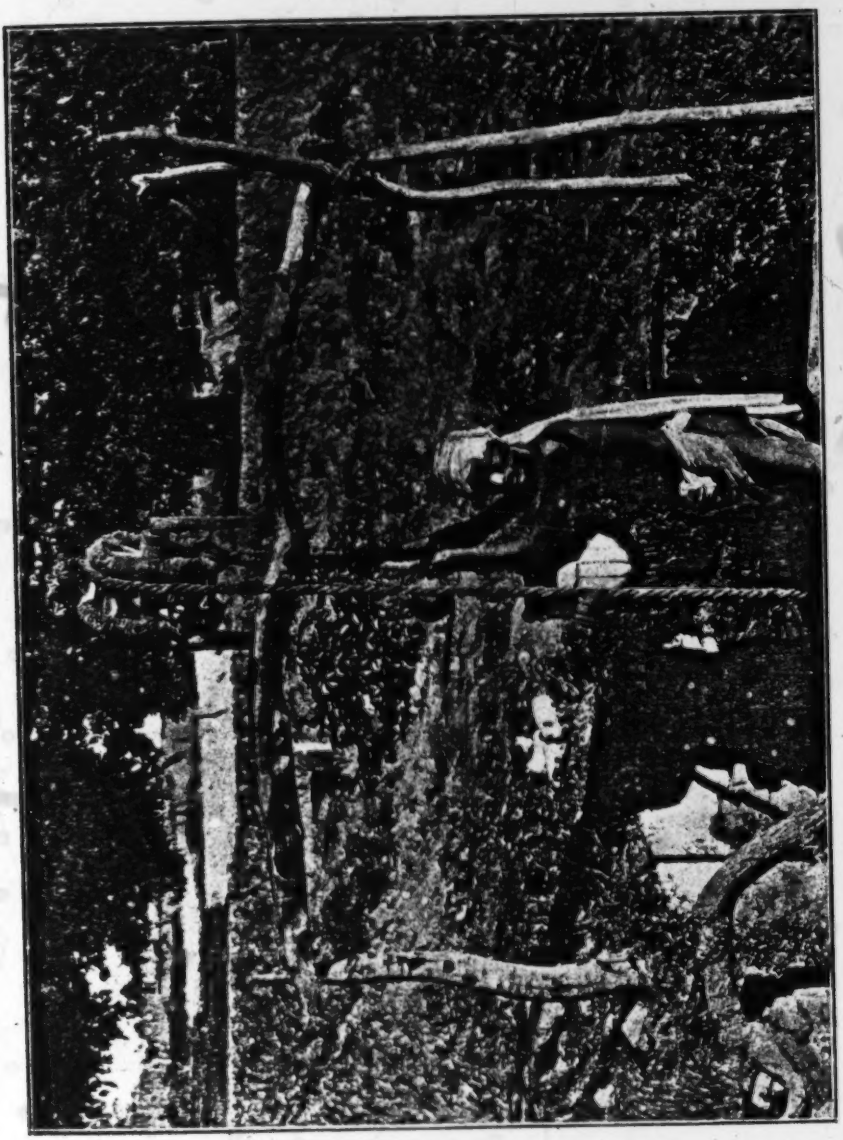

"RATANAM", A FORM OF WATER-LIFT (TIRUVALLUR). Photo by Agricultural College.

[facing p. 152]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII
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HARVESTING PADDY IN NORTH MALABAR, FIELDS STILL WET.

Photo by Agricultural College.

[facing p. 168]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and [291] cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to [435] five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476] along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

*141 *564 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated. Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 *564 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspicuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one (293) starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees (177) replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman 292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater, 751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour typ[illegible] being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 30 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [189]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

PL. XII.

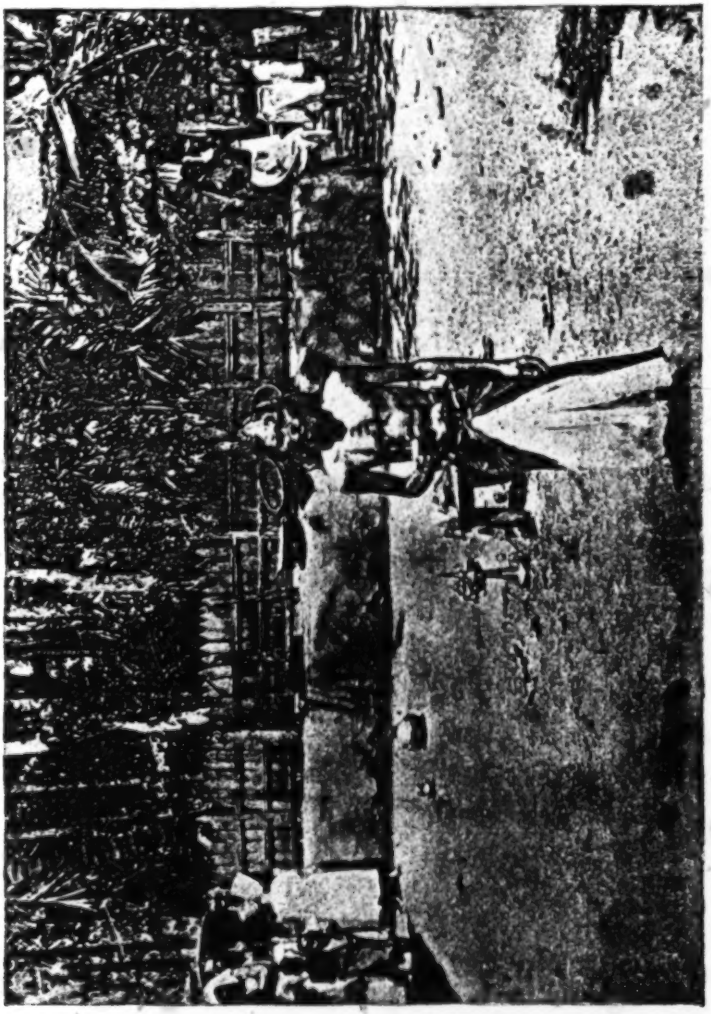

A VELICHCHAPPAD.

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[Facing P. 242]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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HIS HIGHNESS SIR RAMA VARMA, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., F.M.U.,
RAJA OF COCHIN.

[frontispiece]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

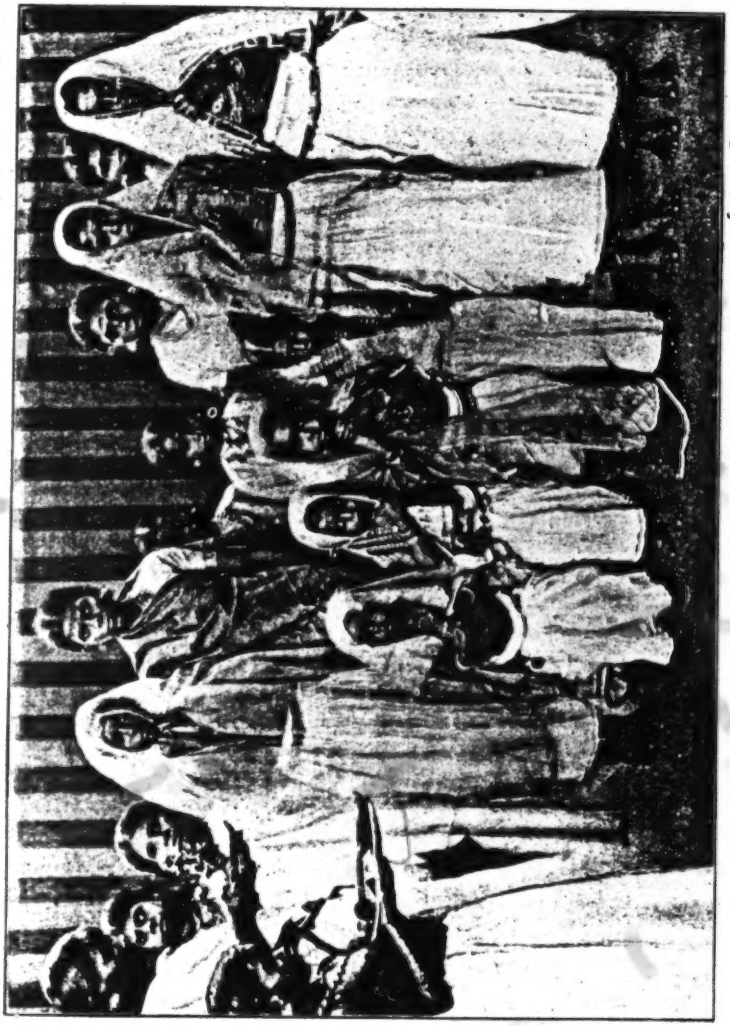

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A TALI-TYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

[facing p. 24]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

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A NAIR GIRL FOR SAMBANDHAM (MARRIAGE) WITH HER BRIDESMAIDS.

[facing p. 31]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

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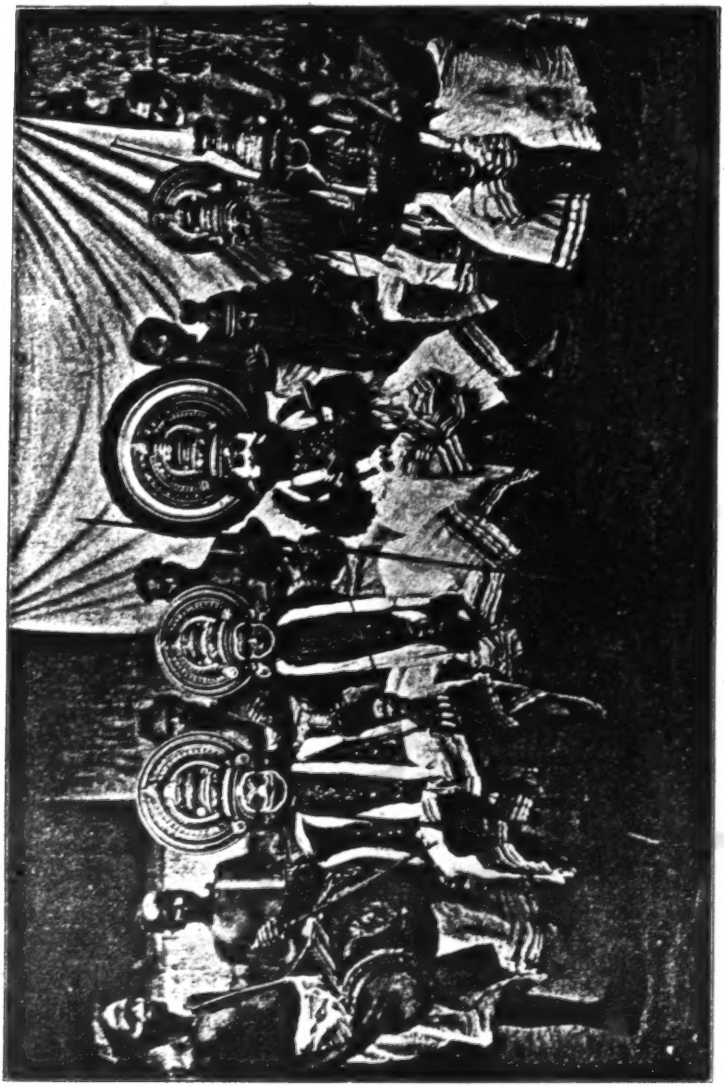

CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p. 65]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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A VELICHAPADU

[facing p. 84]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pívu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars [177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
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301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavaḷasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*291 *564 caste, is not supposed to wear his cloth below his knees. Now-a-days, when there is a general levelling up, the inferior races occupying a position they never held before, when people speak of caste as if it were a fanciful arrangement of the social fabric which it would be an excellent thing to destroy, forgetting that, fundamentally, it rests on racial differentiation, we see those of castes inferior to the Nâyar wearing their cloths to the ground—in the towns that is, where the sway of modern officialdom and education is felt. But, were a man of inferior caste to wear his cloth to the ground, away out in the district where the old order has not changed much, he would soon be made to repent having done what is believed to be an infringement of the privileges of the Nâyar. He would probably be well beaten, and might have his house burnt. The single cloth (mundu) constitutes the ordinary dress. No turban is worn. It is wrong for a [293] Nâyar to cover his head. But he may use an umbrella, and invariably does so when walking in the sun, for he is very susceptible to its rays. The cloth must be fastened at the waist in a certain way. Those of every caste tie or fasten their cloth round the loins in a certain way; people of no two castes tie the cloth alike.

Women.—A short cloth is worn somewhat tight round the loins, and over it is worn another cloth from the waist to below the knee. Nothing is worn above waist. When one sees women of the Nâyar caste on the roads (they are *never* to be seen in the towns), or at the festivals or other large gatherings, they are wearing a cloth loosely covering the upper portion of the body. In Malabar, where there is prevalent the idea that no respectable woman covers her breast, there has crept in lately, chiefly amongst those who have travelled, a feeling of shame in respect of this custom of dress. Dress is, of course, a conventional affair, and it will be matter for regret should false ideas of shame supplant those of natural dignity such as one sees expressed in the carriage and bearing of the well-bred Nâyar lady.

121 It will be most convenient to deal with the Nâyars as a body under such heads as marriage, customs, etc. Here we are concerned mainly with physical measures and general appearance, under which come dress and orna- [291] ment. What has been said about dress may be taken as *[564] descriptive of all the clans. Before leaving the Kiriattil [115] Nâyars it will be well to note the names of some of those actually measured.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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NAYAR WOMEN (SOUTH MALABAR), AGED 20 AND 17.

[Facing P. 210]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*141 *564 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated. Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 *564 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspicuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one [293] starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees [177] replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman 292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater, 751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new 796
cloths to women after menstruation, but my information 564
on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the gold- [294]
smith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work [326]
as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only.

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple ; Vannân bring- [293] ●
ing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day.

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans 796
(fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 326
'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith 226
comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, 564
but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful ; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword.

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called 796
the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of 564
his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their should- [1782]
ers three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate [482]
offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. [326]
Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the

796
564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[346] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See Plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to 556
the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large 574
number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those 564
served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given 252
when I deal with them.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the 564
polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may some- [264]
times eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is [574]
curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occa- [796]
sions, good many formalities have to be observed in the [576]
allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The [262]
consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water [271]
from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes [793]
their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give [783]
punnyáham (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Social status.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life 291
of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar [293]
always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

Dress.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595* Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601 to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repeti- [115] tion of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [551] helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582] matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 420 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465 ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 79 went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast- feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

13;Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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NĀYAR FEMALES.

[facing P. 312]

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [422] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[782] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their
[481] girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is
322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine
326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for
325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo
285 by the Parialas. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation
293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring
[276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, ***kuzhi kutti.*** Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre,

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new 796
cloths to women after menstruation, but my information 564
on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the gold- [294]
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ing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day.

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(fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 326
'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith 226
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but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword.

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6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet,

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washer-man's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding. 613 462 [296] [243]

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast. 613 566 357

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law. 613 592 [692]

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries. [423]

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and 613 592 681 [687]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous
[302] disorders are never observed except among slaves and the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 502 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.* It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

[see plate I, facing p 220 -- An.]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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legend "made in Austria." The Nâyars wear none but the gold, "mounted" as they call it (the mounting being much as the upper portion of one section of the necklace, in the plate), strung together through the mounting just as the necklace: a very effective ornament for the neck. The brass imitations of the sequin are worn by the women of the inferior races of whom we shall have some description hereafter. If one asks the ordinary Malayali, say a Nâyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rama and Sita; between them a cocoanut tree!

301 177 564*

Turkish coins, French half louis, and German 10 mark pieces are also used in the same way, each one being known by a distinctive vernacular name, and no corruption of its nomenclature in European coinage, so that it is always easy to identify one of these coins by its vernacular name. For instance, every Malayali knows what an "Amâda" is: it is what we know to be a real or imitation Venetian sequin.* The half louis of the empire is known as the "pakshikkas," probably from the eagle on the reverse. And so on.†

Ornaments are never worn on the ankles or on the waist, as is the rule in other parts of Southern India.

564* 301

Dress, men.—This is very simple; ordinarily one cloth round the loins, the ends overlapping a foot or two in front. It is not tucked between the legs, which is the fashion practically all over India, but hangs straight to the ground. It should touch the ground, or very nearly do so. Wearing a cloth in such fashion carries with it dignity to the wearer. A Tiyan, or a man of any inferior

291 564*

* I have never heard any explanation of the word Amâda in Malabar. The following comes from Tinnevelly: "Amâda was the consort of Bhagavati and he suddenly appeared one day before a Shânár (the caste devoted to climbing the palms and drawing off the juice) and demanded food. The Shânár said he was a poor man with nothing to offer but toddy, which however he gave in a palmyra leaf. Amâda drank the toddy and performing a mantram over the leaf it turned into gold coins which bore on one side the pictures of Amâda, the Shânár and the tree; and these he gave the Shânár on a reward for his willingness to assist him. This explains the two names—Shânár caste (as they are called in Tinnevelly, but where they are not very common), and Amâda." [773]

† It is scarcely right to say any of these coins, even the sequin, is not current. The value of each is known everywhere to a nicety. It must be remembered that throughout Malabar copper coins of the English and Dutch East India Companies, of Mysore, and of almost every former dynasty of South India are to be found amongst the coins actually current with the people, while in the rural parts reckoning is always in fanams: not in annas. [436]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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In another, the alæ of the nose appear to have become enlarged through taking snuff. 141 564*

In another, the point of the ear (noticed by Darwin) in the helix $\frac{1}{3}$ from the top, was very marked.

One individual of 29 looked at least 40. He had suffered severely from small-pox. [145]

Figure.—The average is slight to medium. One is noted as stout, and another as very strongly built.

Hair.—It has been noticed already (see Nambûtiris. Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I) that the growth of hair on the cheeks is a racial characteristic. In some of the lower races it is entirely absent, while in the Nambûtiris it is constant. About half the Urâli Nâyars examined had a regular growth of hair on the cheeks. 142 564*

On the head.—In all but one the hair on the head, invariably black and glossy, was thick and wavy; in a few, it was very thick or fairly so; and, in the case of three individuals, it was noted as curly. A few grey hairs were noticed in four individuals aged respectively 25, 29, 30, 45; and one young fellow of 20 had a small patch of white hair over the right eyebrow.

Hair on the chest was slight to moderate as a rule, but in 4 individuals it was thick.

Hair on the arms was observed to be slight in 13, and moderate or thick in 12.

In all, the hair on the legs varied between moderate and thick, excepting that in 2 the growth was very thick. One man had shaved his feet, and another had shaved the backs of his hand and his wrists. In a few there was a tolerably thick growth of hair in the small of the back. This is common to all the Nâyars.

Colour of the skin.—In 22 cases in which this was recorded the darkest was No. 43 (Broca's colour types) and the fairest No. 40. Twelve individuals were of No. 29 or fairer, and this (a little fairer than 29) seems to be about the average. A little darker than the Kiriattil.

Colour of the eyes.—8 individuals were of No. 2 (Broca); 6 individuals were of No. 1; 6 individuals between 1 and 2.

Ornaments.—A few of those examined said that men of the clan never wore earrings, though their ears were pierced. There may be some section of the clan who do not; but, as a rule, earrings are worn by those who can afford them. One man indeed said he never wore them, fearing thieves might steal them. Another wore 301 564*

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
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301
*564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—
[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami-
*564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
*564 Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

142 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest
*564 was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings
*564 (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one
[304] case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

(4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper
[515] rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face
[789] with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29
*564 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
615 551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [771] [782]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [779]

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*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil	Krishnan	Cultivator	52
Paritbil	Achutan	Do.	27
613 Malabitil	Sivarâman	Do.	22
Cholale	Râman	Do.	20
551 Muthira	Narrâyanan	Teacher	26
Kanakath	Kunhi Krishnan* ...	Unemployed ...	22
463 Mannareth	Shangaran	Trader	30
Kûmbiyal	Kannan	Peon	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan	Do.	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, be having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

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PL. IX.

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301
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293

NAYAR WOMEN (SOUTH MALABAR), AGED 20 AND 17.

[Facing P. 210]

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from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 301 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [789]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

*142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the [789] other of silver and iron. The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of [237] the right hand. An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my [789] collection) on a string round the waist. The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from [776] fever. Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musaliar—a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

*142 564 The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

[302] [613] The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.	1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
" " "	1 to 2	"	6	"
" " "	2	"	7	"
" " "	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

*141 564 *Weight* of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In the 8 recorded instances the average number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

● 301 *564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears are always pierced, and the usual Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

(1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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PL. X.

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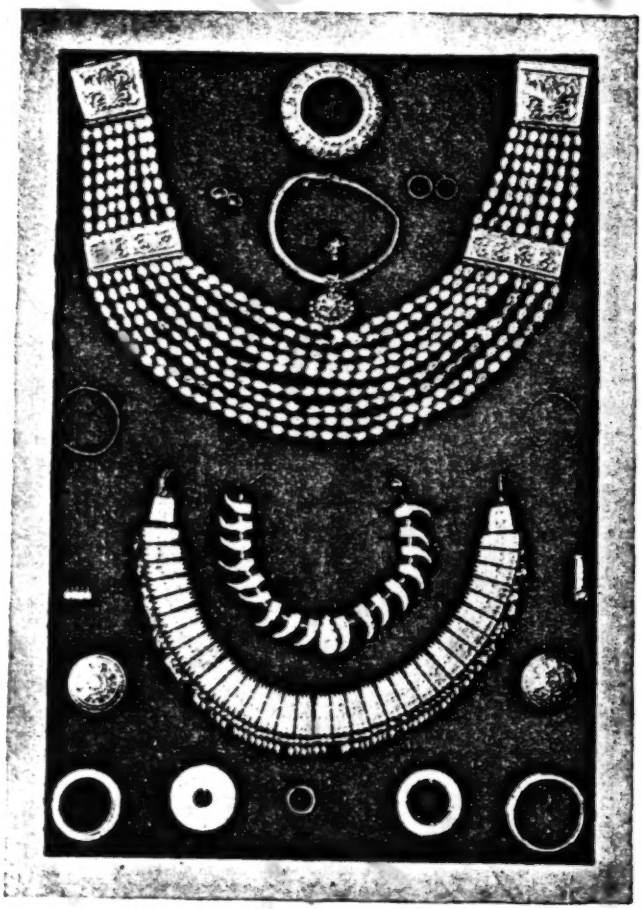

JEWELLERY WORN BY NAYAR WOMEN.

[Facing P. 220]

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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	23
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

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In two individuals (out of 8) the cephalic length was over 20 cm. In three the nasal height was 5 cm. and over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on two subjects are—

(1) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches distinctly developed. Very deep nasal notch. Nasal point elevated above the line of the nose.

(2) Supraciliary arches not apparent. Nasal point slightly elevated.

Figure.—The greater number are noted as slight; about one-third as medium to stoutly built.

Hair.—Much as those of the other clans. The man who said he was 72, but who looked 58, showed no sign of baldness; his hair was but moderately grey. Another, aged 36, a very strongly-built man, was becoming bald. Baldness at his age is, I should say, rare. 142 564*

Colour of the skin.—The average is a trifle darker than 29 (Broca). The fairest was fairer than 29, and the darkest was No. 43.

Colour of the eyes.—The average colour of those examined is between 1 and 2 (Broca).

Ornaments call for no remark; they are much as those worn by other Nâyars. Ears are always pierced and earrings worn. 301 564* 304

It would be profitless to deal separately with the measures of the individuals comprising the group A in the same way as the others which are more or less complete, with the exception of the Kurup clan. As said already in the group A consists of— 141 564*

2 of the	Nelliôden clan.	3 of the	Pallichan clan.
2 „	Viyyûr clan.	1 „	Muppattinâyiran clan.
1 „	Vangilôth clan.	2 „	Vyâpâri clan.
1 „	Kitâvu clan.	1 „	Attikkurissi clan.

and their measures taken collectively have been quoted. The Attikkurissi are endogamous, and the Kitâvu do not wear earrings. [301]

At page 60, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where, speaking of the Nambûtiri Brâhmans, it was said that possibly it may be found that marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son may be found to produce the finest issue; to be the best for preservation of the race. This kind of marriage of first cousins, but never of progeny of sisters or of brothers, is in a general way the rule throughout Southern India, and it obtains amongst the 582 [564]*

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846
613 event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to
553 the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar
[574] and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

853 "*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the
852 Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, [787] of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

[301] "Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

844 "*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman
352 is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurisis (Chēdigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13¾ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-Rite. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11¼ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

588 to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets
[114] to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent
[613] people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the
[787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the
[791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Tālikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar*
[301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the
[576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The
[605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (*i.e.*, her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
● 301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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THE NAYAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

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[facing p.5]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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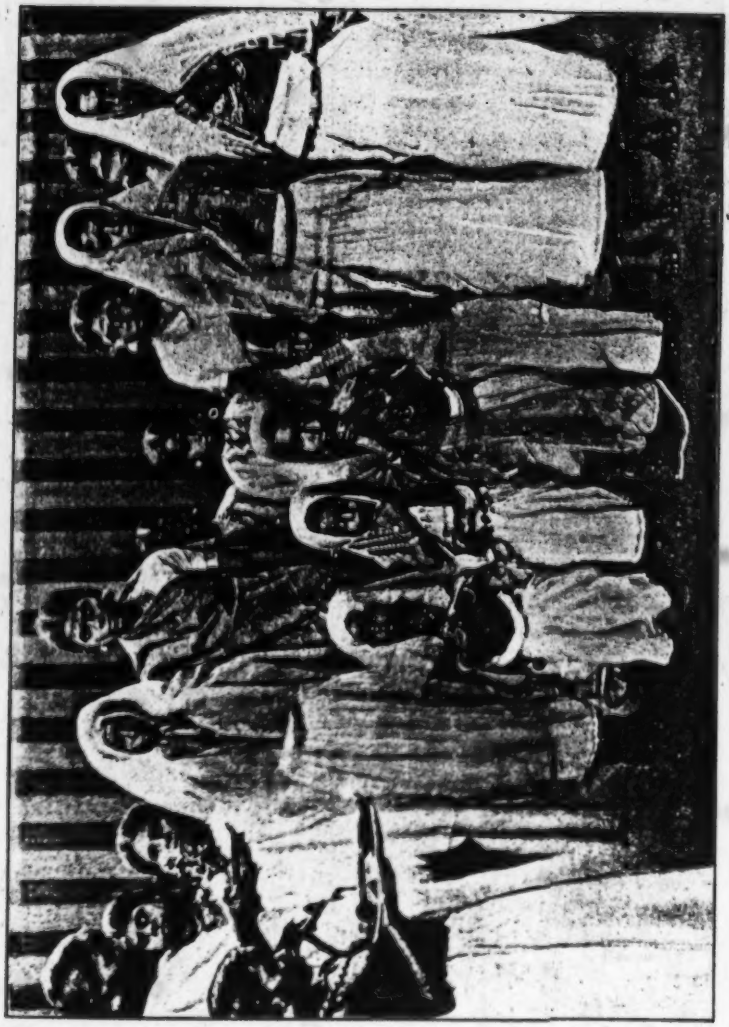

A TALI-TYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

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[facing p. 24]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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771 824 From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 **Folk-tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
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301 There are various ornaments for the neck, of which the one called *addiyal* is the commonest. Other ornaments for the neck are the so-called *yanthram*, *poothdli*, *avil mdla* and *pulinakham*. The latter is worn by children, and *pálikha-móthiram* is the ornament which is worn by maidens. Gold and silver belts are worn round the loins. Grown-up women do not wear anklets, while the younger ones use *káppu* and *goluu*. Rings of all kinds are worn on the fingers.

[291]

[pp. 103 ff. not processed]

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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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OLD ORNAMENTS OF NAYAR LADIES.

[facing p.102]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Cheruma

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Fig.16. A handsome girl labourer of the Cheruma caste.

[P 238-G]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

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Fig. 17. An aboriginal Parayan woman with her child, in the Zamorin's colony at Chunangad, south Malabar.

[P 238-H]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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NĀYAR FEMALES.

[facing P. 312]

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Nayar

consider a coral necklace an essential. In her right hand she holds a vālkannādi (brass hand mirror), and in her left a charakkal (a highly ornate arrow). In front of the girl are placed, in addition to the five-wicked lamp and nirachaveppu, a metal dish or talam of parched rice, and the eight lucky things known as ashtamangalyam. A woman, termed Brahmini or Pushpini, usually of the Nambissan caste, sits facing her on a three-legged stool (pidam), and renders appropriate and lengthy songs, at the close of which she scatters rice over her. About midday there is a feast, and in the evening songs in the macchu are repeated. Next morning, the ceremonial in the macchu is repeated for the third time, after which the paraphernalia are removed to the nearest tank or to the east of the household well, where the Pushpini sings once more, goes through the form of making the girl's toilet, and ties a cocoanut frond round each of her wrists (kappōla). The girl has then to rise and jump over a kindi (vessel) of water with an unhusked cocoanut placed on the top, overturning it the third time. The party then proceed to the pandal, two men holding a scarlet cloth over the girl as a canopy, and a Chāliyan (weaver) brings two cloths (kōdi vastiram), which the girl puts on. In the evening, the previous day's ceremonial is repeated in the macchu. The third day is the most important, and it is then that the central act of the ceremony is performed. For this the girl sits in the inner pandal richly adorned. In some cases she is carried from the house to the pandal by her karnavan or brother, who makes a number of pradakshinams round the pandal (usually 3 or 7) before he places her in her seat. Before the girl are the various objects already specified, and the hymeneal ditties of the Pushpini open the proceedings. At the auspicious moment the

588 184 [301] [533]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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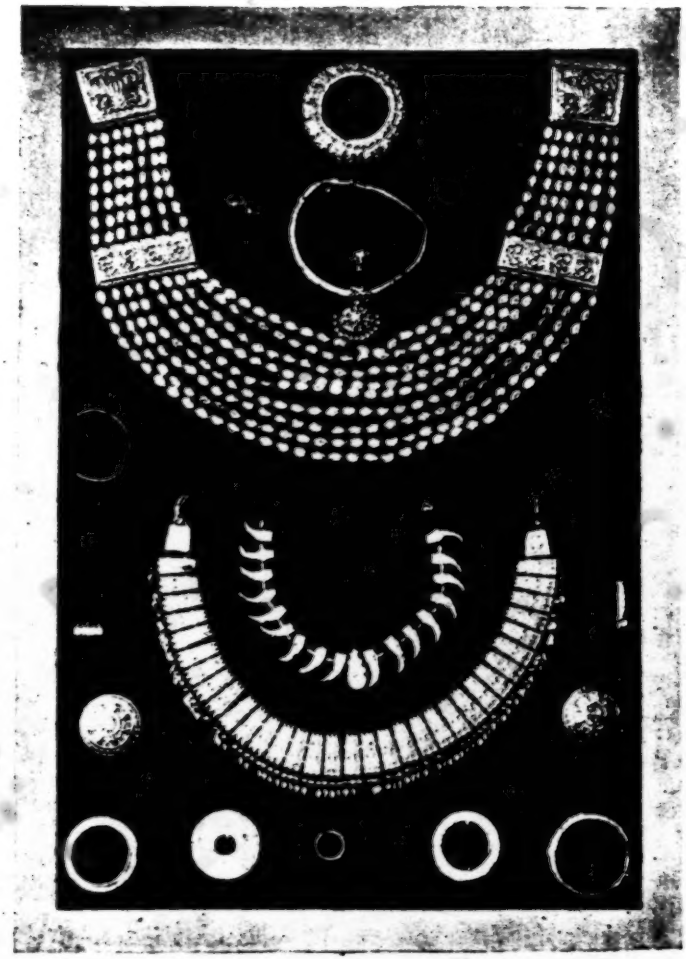

NĀYAR JEWELRY.

[Facing p. 320]

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous
[302] disorders are never observed except among slaves and the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

chelakkamotiram, amatāli, arumpumani, and kumilatāli 301
are fast vanishing. The kuttu-minnu is worn on the [588]
neck for the first time by a girl when her tāli-kettu is celebrated. This ornament is also called gnali. Prior to the tāli-kettu ceremony, the girls wear a kāsu or sovereign. The inseparable neck ornament of a Nāyar woman in modern days is the addiyal, to which a patakkam is attached. The only ornament for the ears is the takka or toda. After the lobes have been dilated [304]
at the karnavedha ceremony, and dilated, a big leaden ring is inserted in them. The nose ornament of women is called mukkuthi, from which is suspended a gold wire called gnattu. No ornament is worn in the right nostril. The wearing of gold bangles on the wrists has been long the fashion among South Indian Hindu females of almost all high castes. Round the waist Nāyar women wear chains of gold and silver, and, by the wealthy, gold belts called kachchapuram are worn. Anklets were not [177]
worn in former times, but at the present day the kolusu and padasaram of the Tamilians have been adopted. So, too, the time-honoured toda is sometimes set aside in favour of the Tamil kammal, an ornament of much smaller size. Canter Visscher (who was Chaplain at Cochin in 291
the eighteenth century) must have been much struck by the expenditure of the Nāyar women on their dress, for he wrote* 'there is not one of any fortune who does not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of robes made of silver and other valuable materials, for it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same dress two or three days in succession'."

It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the Venetian sequin, 177
which probably first found its way to Malabar in the days 301

* Letters from Malabar.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[426] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings
525 by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts subscribed by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of persons agree that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by periodical instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, should take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all being returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some
[301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* [i.e., on the death of a man his property is equally divided among his sons.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

agricultural classes but only to the well-to-do and that in a lump sum, such as Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 or even Rs. 10,000. The chief purposes for which the well-to-do borrow are (1) to displace tenants by paying off the cost of improvement as explained in the introduction on land, (2) in the case of Brahmans for marriage of their daughters, (3) to rich debauchees, and they are not very few, on mortgage of their lands, thus in the end taking away the mortgaged land, (4) to big merchants who carry on the export trade in oil and coconuts and others who are engaged in trade. 452

The passion for jewellery which in former days was present only among Brahmans in Malabar—not so in other districts—is unfortunately spreading among other classes too, and a large amount of money is yearly spent on it. At the present time every man of means will have at least Rs. 200 worth of ornaments and, in a rich man's house, Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000 is the usual amount. The total amount of jewellery may be estimated at Rs. 1,00,000. This is the much talked of 'hoarded wealth' of the village, though the jewels are in daily use and not hidden. Nobody has hidden anything. 301 454

It is not possible to get the exact amount of agricultural indebtedness. I have already stated that the landowners and other rich persons do not lend to the agricultural classes. But who lends to the agricultural classes? The sowcar or the professional money-lender, the middle class man who is not rich but just earns enough for maintenance and some small saving. The number of professional money-lending shops is twelve, and a large number of persons of the middle class are also engaged in the same occupation. A rough estimate of the amount of money lent by the people may be made by a reference to the account books of these money-lenders. They have together lent about Rs. 1,50,000. The money lent by others must amount to more, since they are more lenient than the sowcars, and only when the poor cannot get money from others do they apply to the sowcar. It has been probably estimated at two lakhs. 452

A little explanation of how money is lent may not be out of place here. Suppose a man wants to borrow Rs. 50. The interest that is demanded is 2½ per cent per mensem; there is deducted from the amount lent an allowance called the bank allowance, generally 10 per cent, and also six months' interest or Rs. 6-4-0. So the amount actually paid to the borrower is only Rs. 38-12-0 and he executes a promissory-note for Rs. 50. If a man actually wants Rs. 50 he must incur a debt of Rs. 65. By the third year the man must pay the whole amount and the interest. By that time the total amount would have reached nearly Rs. 90. The poor man is not able to pay the money since the very purpose for which he borrowed is to maintain himself and not for productive purposes. He rewrites the note. For what amount? Rs. 65 plus interest for 2½ years plus compound interest plus bank allowance plus six months' further interest plus a commission (which is a new innovation since last year) mounts up to nearly Rs. 125, i.e., nearly double the original amount. In three years he has paid six months' interest and yet he has to pay double the amount he borrowed. This is an ordinary case, but interest at the rate of 3 or 3½ per cent per mensem is not uncommon. 426

Very few of the poor once in debt ever release themselves. On the other hand the number who are in debt is increasing from year to year. Any amount of money that is in the possession of the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

● 301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād.

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological

141 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of
*564 one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so.
In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

142 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains;
302 the rest of the head, the face and body are always
*564 shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

142 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.
*564 A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head
[827] profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

*[564] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval
[302] patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide
[305] where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest, abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

* During the rains.

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 302 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

PL. VII.

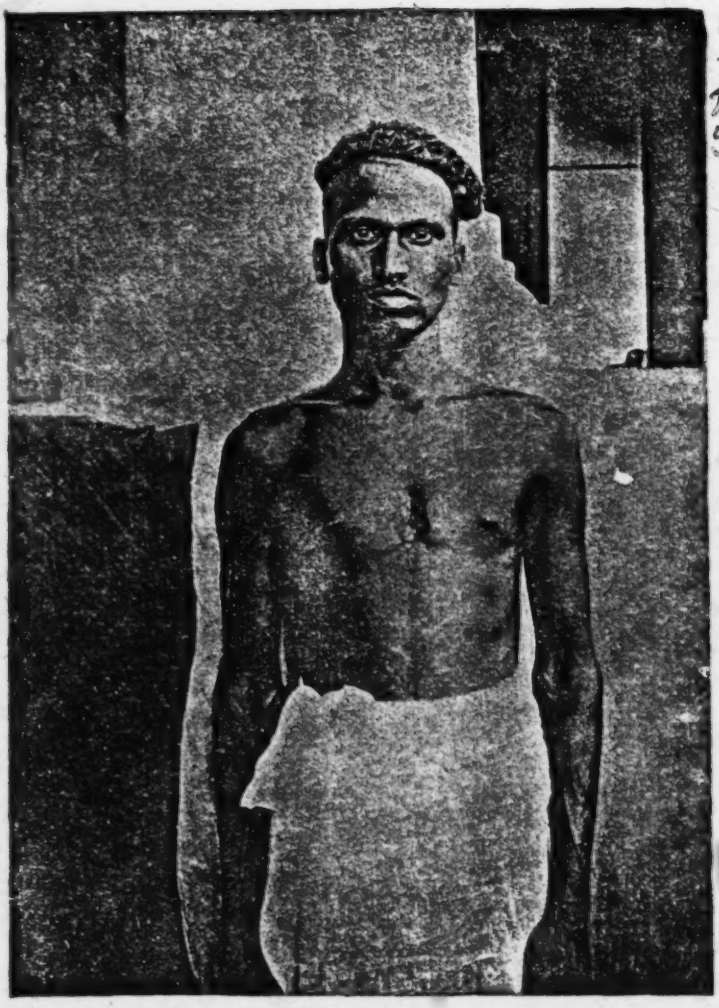

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 196]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

PL. VIII.

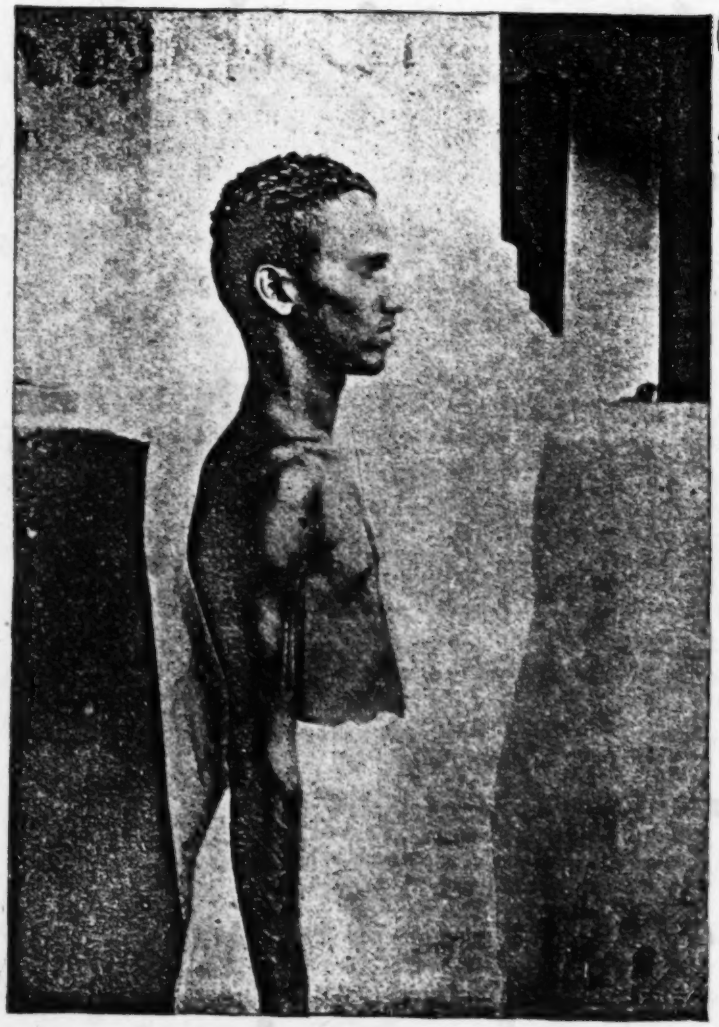

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AKATTU CHARNA NAYAR. FATHER A NAMBUTIRI.

[Facing P. 198]

301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami- *564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
613 *564 Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallitbotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

141 Some individuals were described in my notes—
*564 (1) Nasal bones wide and thick. Teeth project.

(2) Lips thick and somewhat projecting. Chin receding. The flesh on the chin is thick, giving it a rounded lump like appearance. Inion appears to be in a projecting ridge round the back of the head. (Cephalic length 19·7.)

(3) Supraciliary arches slight. Nasal notch. Nose straight. Lips slightly everted. Teeth in upper jaw project forwards. Eyes deep set. Inner corner of eyes a trifle oblique.

The last two specimens are uncommon; not typical. The thick lips and projecting teeth are not usually noticeable as in their case. The long oval face is the common type. The fashion of wearing no hair on the face, shaving the head at the back and at the sides and a little over the forehead, leaving but the oval patch on the vertex, no head covering being worn, gives the face an appearance of length. But while the average of the measure vertex to chin, for all the Nâyars,* reduced to stature equals 100, is 11·9, the same for 21 of the 30 different castes † examined in Malabar is greater. The Mukkuvan is as high as 13·4, while on the other hand the Nambûtiri is less, being but 11·7.

Figure.—One out of 25 is recorded as "stout." One-third were "slight." Nearly two-thirds were medium or thereabouts; and this seems to represent the average.

142 *Hair.*—More than half are noted as having whiskers,
*564 that is, growth of hair on the cheeks. In two-thirds of the subjects the hair on the head was thick and wavy; in a few cases it was very thick. Individuals aged respectively 25, 32, and 52 were noted as being a little grey. In one-quarter of the total number the hair was thin to moderately thick. One individual of this clan is marked as having hair a little grey.

Hair on the chest.—Rather more than a quarter of the whole had thick to moderately thick hair. In the case of one man hair was thick all over the body, even on the back: everywhere except over the ribs, the front of the upper arm and shoulder. In another the hair on the small of the back was *thick*. In the greater number of individuals it was marked slight, and moderate, and in a few it was absent.

* Group A included.
† Counting each clan of the Nâyars separately.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

PL. IX.

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NAYAR WOMEN (SOUTH MALABAR), AGED 20 AND 17.

[Facing P. 210]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

length was 5 cm. or over. In one individual the iliac 141
bone was much higher at the right side than on the left. 564*

Face.—A few individuals were noted thus—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Nasal point slightly elevated. Helix of ear very thin; the Darwin's point in the centre of the curve on the left and high up on the right.

(2) Deep nasal notch. Chin receding. Lips thick.

(3) Slight nasal notch. Supraciliary arches developed at outer edges. Chin recedes.

(4) Supraciliary arches and glabella in one marked ridge. Nasal point somewhat raised. Nasal notch.

(5) Very deep nasal notch. Very wide and thick eyebrows.

Figure.—More than half are marked as slight—a few of them "very slight"; the rest "medium." None "stout."

Hair.—As a rule, to which exceptions are very few, 142
hair on the head is thick and wavy: curly in the case of 564*
one individual. The hair of a man of 70 was noted as "very thin and grey." A man of 31 also had hair which was "thin and grey," but he was exceptional. The growth of hair on the cheeks—whiskers—was observed in almost every subject.

Hair on the chest.—The average is "moderate."

On the arms.—The growth of hair in half of the subjects was "slight to very slight"; in the other half, "moderate to thick."

On the legs.—It was noted as "moderate" to "thick" in more than three-fourths of those examined; in a few, "slight."

The growth of hair of a few individuals is here specified—

(1) Aged 54. Hair on the head moderately thick and grey. Hair on the face white. Growth of hair on the cheeks. Hair all over chest grey. Very long thick hair on the back. Hair on the legs and arms thick.

(2) Aged 36. Hair on the head moderately thick and wavy. Glossy black. On chest and middle line of abdomen, moderate. On the arms and legs moderately [302] thick. Shaves the head (except the crown), face, chest, abdomen, wrists and hands, about every 15 days.

(3) Aged 28. Hair on the head thick and wavy. Growth of hair on cheeks; on the chin it is very thick. On the chest, moderate; on the arms, very slight; on the legs, thick. Does not shave his chest, as doing so [302] would make him weak; on the other hand, if he does [753] not shave his head and face, he will become sick. [826]

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

142 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour. 564

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

301 564 *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. [304] Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the other of silver and iron. [789] The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of the right hand. [237] An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my collection) on a string round the waist. [789] The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. [776] Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

In three the cephalic length was 20 cm. or over. In nine the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on a few individuals will be set down here. In most cases the supraciliary arches were well marked, and the nasal notch was deep. Nose generally straight, or nasal point slightly raised. Prognathism rare. Lips, especially the lower lip, often very thick.

(1) Very well bred looking. Eyebrows fleshy and thickly marked. Supraciliary arches very slight. Deep nasal notch. Nose straight; nasal point raised very slightly—and very well shaped. In the left ear a very small hole above the usual one in the lobe; I have not noted why it was made.

(2) Supraciliary arches rather prominent. Upper portion of forehead somewhat protuberant. Deep nasal notch. Nasal point raised. Lower lip thick. This man's father was a Nambûtiri. He appears in the plate.

(3) Forehead high. Deep nasal notch. Slight prognathism. Lower lip very thick.

(4) Supraciliary arches not marked. Nasal notch moderate. Lips thin.

Two out of the twenty-five were deeply pitted with small-pox, the Malabar goddess of small-pox, Bhânnâramûrti, having hurt them. In one man the broadest part of the head was above the ears, a little in front. [164] [776]

Figure.—The number of those put down as slight and those put down as medium are about equal.

Hair.—Worn in the usual Malayali fashion which has been described already and, as a rule, plentiful and wavy; treated with gingelly oil, which is sometimes perfumed. The number of individuals whose hair (on the head) was noted as "very thick and wavy" is abnormally large. A young man aged 24 had some white hairs here and there on his head; a man of 35 was a little grey; a man of 39 also; and one of 44 was quite grey. Whiskers or growth of hair on the cheeks were observed in more than half the number of subjects. In several there was hair, fairly thick in some, in the small of the back, and one man had thick hair all over the back. 142 564* [302]

Hair on the chest was "moderate" or "thick" in more than half.

Hair on the arms was "moderate to thick" in about half; in the other half "slight."

Hair on the legs was, as a rule, thick: rarely less than moderately thick. The legs of one man were like those of a bear.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

*142 564 The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

[302] [613] The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.			1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
"	"	"	1 to 2	"	6	"
"	"	"	2	"	7	"
"	"	"	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

Weight of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb. *564

Prolificness.—In the 8 recorded instances the average 163 number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be *564 remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

Ornaments.—Ears are always pierced, and the usual 301 Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as *564 many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus— [304]

(1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

PL. XII.

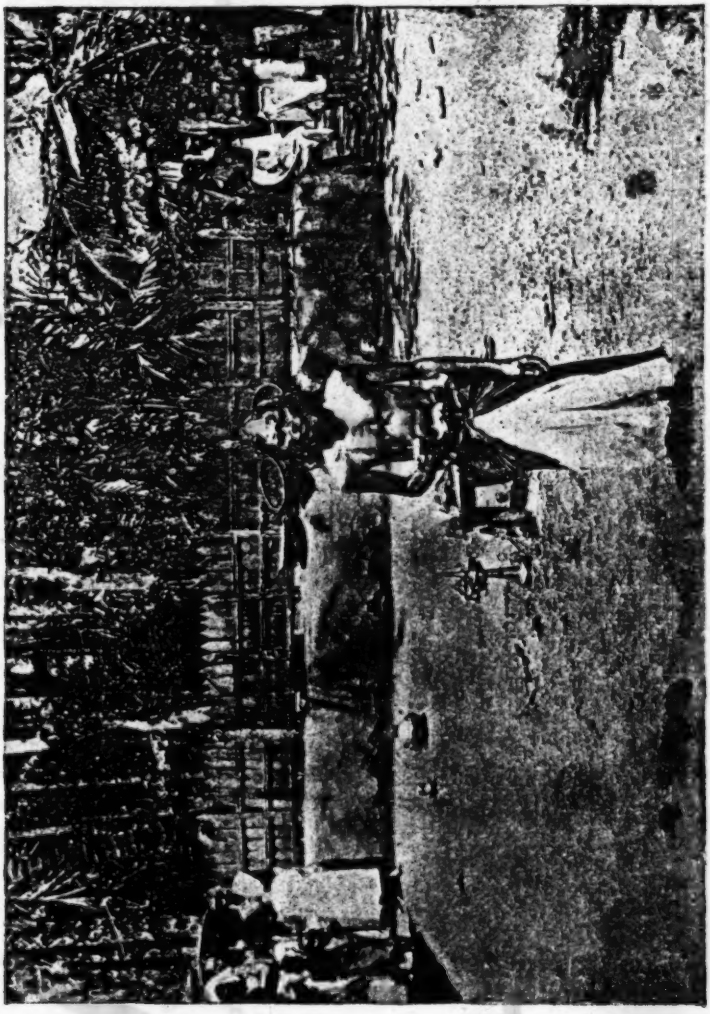

A VELICHCHAPPAD.

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[Facing P. 242]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîkṣha for a [604] year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [302] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the deceased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîkṣha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for 765 the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîkṣha is one of festivity. After 800 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

796 778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 788 782 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows [765] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a [302] year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate* shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the [776] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

* [See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood
302 paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made
412 of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver.
326 The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge
178 into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny
611 undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste
564 war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

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A NAIR GIRL FOR SAMBANDHAM (MARRIAGE) WITH HER BRIDESMAIDS.

[facing p. 31]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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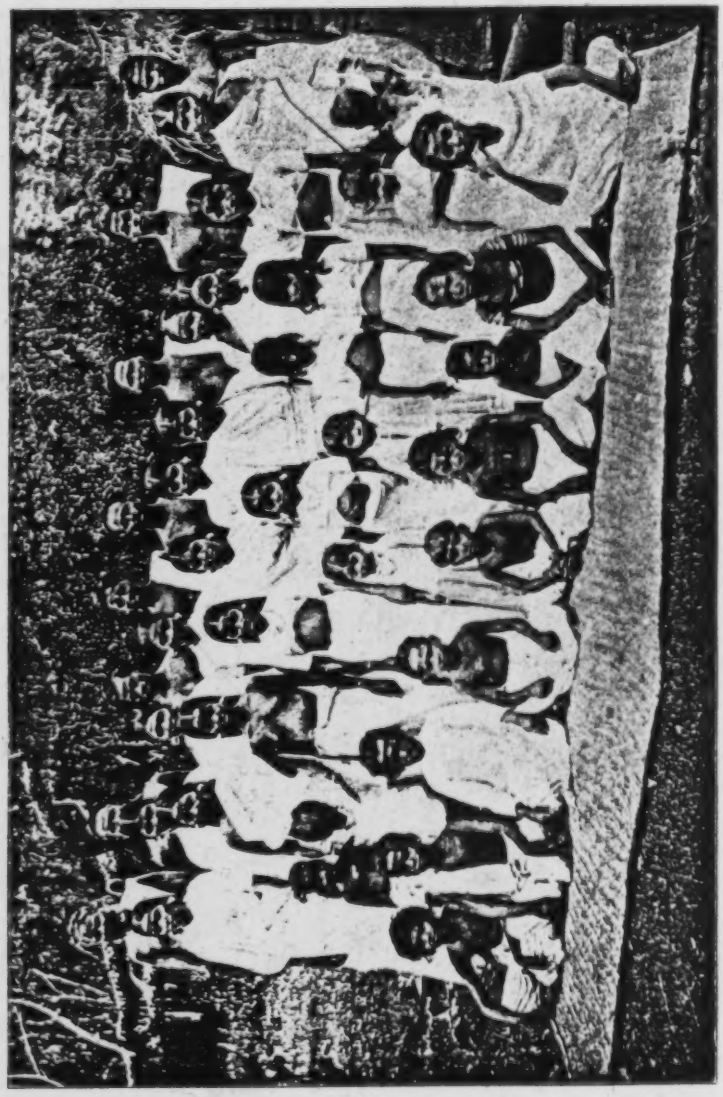

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY

[facing p. 47]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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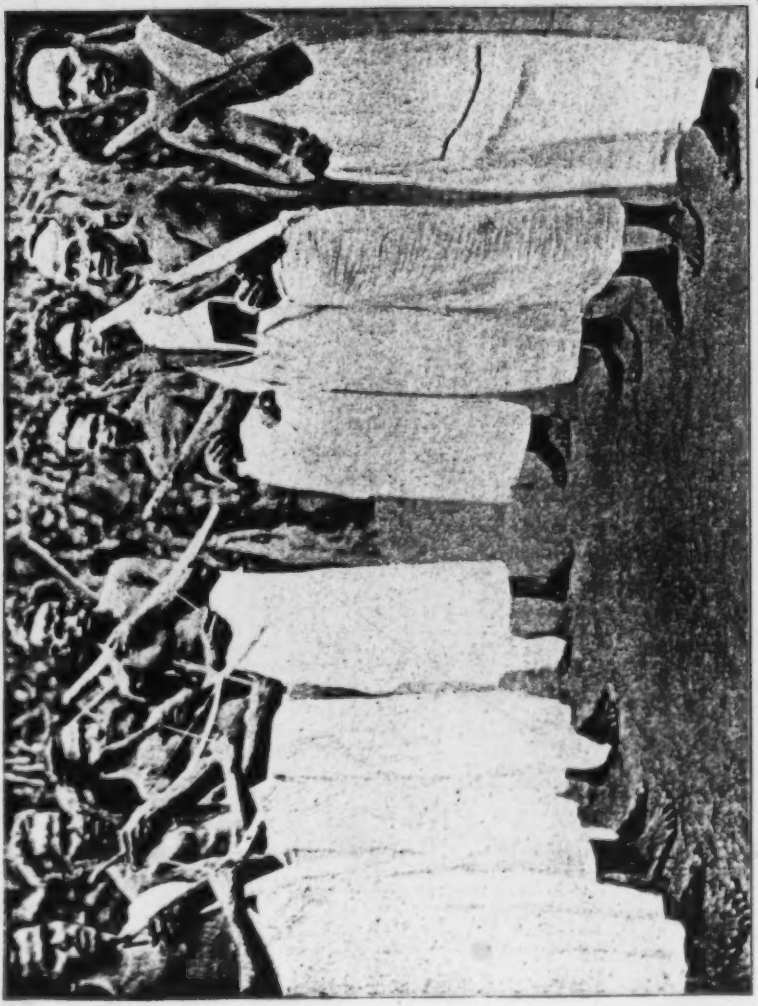

A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[facing p. 71]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pávu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well [177] as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

● 382 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 564 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [587] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

*[i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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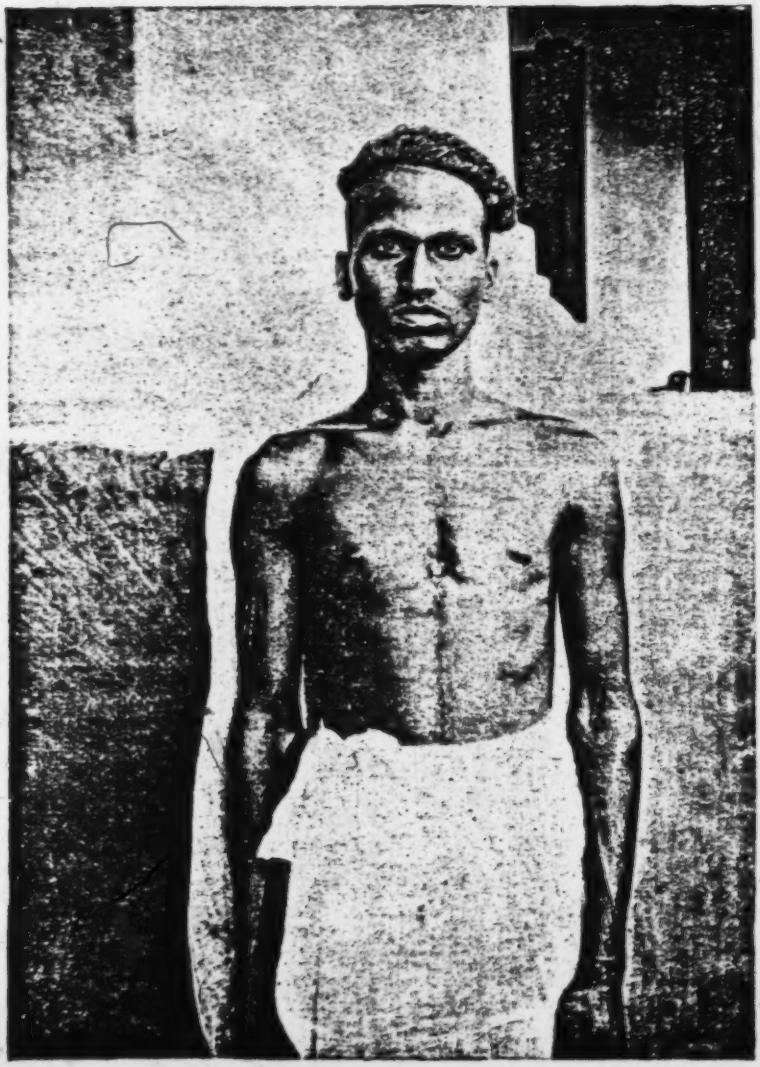

AKATTUCHARNA NĀYAR.

[Facing p. 305]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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NĀYAR FEMALES.

[facing P. 312]

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766
613 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from
765 tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the
[784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-
[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the
[564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus
[793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they
[782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other
[465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the
[302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite.
[825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of
[775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous disorders are never observed except among slaves and
[302] the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

796
788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 502 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.* It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

[see plate X, facing p. 220 -- An.]

*301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami-*564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613 *564 Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 564 *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:— [304]

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

(4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer. [515] [789]

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 *564 463 115 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [771] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [789]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 301 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [189]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [151]

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

*142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the [789] other of silver and iron. The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of [237] the right hand. An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my [789] collection) on a string round the waist. The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from [776] fever. Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

*142 564 The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

[302] [613] The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.	1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
" " "	1 to 2	"	6	"
" " "	2	"	7	"
" " "	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

*141 564 *Weight* of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb.

Prolificness.—In the 8 recorded instances the average 163 *564 number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

301 *564 *Ornaments.*—Ears are always pierced, and the usual Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

[304] (1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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In two individuals (out of 8) the cephalic length was over 20 cm. In three the nasal height was 5 cm. and over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on two subjects are—

(1) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches distinctly developed. Very deep nasal notch. Nasal point elevated above the line of the nose.

(2) Supraciliary arches not apparent. Nasal point slightly elevated.

Figure.—The greater number are noted as slight; about one-third as medium to stoutly built.

Hair.—Much as those of the other clans. The man who said he was 72, but who looked 58, showed no sign of baldness; his hair was but moderately grey. Another, aged 36, a very strongly-built man, was becoming bald. Baldness at his age is, I should say, rare. 142 564*

Colour of the skin.—The average is a trifle darker than 29 (Broca). The fairest was fairer than 29, and the darkest was No. 43.

Colour of the eyes.—The average colour of those examined is between 1 and 2 (Broca).

Ornaments call for no remark; they are much as those worn by other Nâyars. Ears are always pierced and earrings worn. 301 564* 304

It would be profitless to deal separately with the measures of the individuals comprising the group A in the same way as the others which are more or less complete, with the exception of the Kurup clan. As said already in the group A consists of— 141 564*

2 of the Nelliôden clan.		3 of the Pallichan clan.	
2 „ Viyyûr clan.		1 „ Muppattinâyiran clan.	
1 „ Vangilôth clan.		2 „ Vyâpâri clan.	
1 „ Kitâvu clan.		1 „ Attikkurissi clan.	

and their measures taken collectively have been quoted. The Attikkurissi are endogamous, and the Kitâvu do not wear earrings. [301]

At page 60, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where, speaking of the Nambûtiri Brâhmans, it was said that possibly it may be found that marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son may be found to produce the finest issue; to be the best for preservation of the race. This kind of marriage of first cousins, but never of progeny of sisters or of brothers, is in a general way the rule throughout Southern India, and it obtains amongst the 582 [564]*

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The King of Kochin riding on an Elephant attended by his Nayars

231
714
411
291
301
304

THE NAYAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

[facing p.5]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kolla-kurups
Tol-Kollans

147
291
[516]

Fig. 13. While Kunji, aged twelve, of the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *Kalarikel* sings, the rest of the family sits around her

[304]

Fig. 14. Old Kurumma, seventy six, of the *Tolkollam* household of Palakarampil village, near Ottappalam. Note the enlarged holes in her ear lobes.

[P. 238-E]

553
613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shântikâran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pûja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambûdri, or another Nâyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his
[576] right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kâthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pâla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Nayar

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

chelakkamotiram, amatāli, arumpumani, and kumilatāli 301
are fast vanishing. The kuttu-minnu is worn on the [588]
neck for the first time by a girl when her tāli-kettu is
celebrated. This ornament is also called gnali. Prior
to the tāli-kettu ceremony, the girls wear a kāsu or
sovereign. The inseparable neck ornament of a Nāyar
woman in modern days is the addiyal, to which a
patakkam is attached. The only ornament for the ears
is the takka or toda. After the lobes have been dilated [304]
at the karnavedha ceremony, and dilated, a big leaden
ring is inserted in them. The nose ornament of women
is called mukkuthi, from which is suspended a gold wire
called gnattu. No ornament is worn in the right nostril.
The wearing of gold bangles on the wrists has been
long the fashion among South Indian Hindu females of
almost all high castes. Round the waist Nāyar women
wear chains of gold and silver, and, by the wealthy, gold
belts called kachchapuram are worn. Anklets were not [177]
worn in former times, but at the present day the kolusu
and padasaram of the Tamilians have been adopted. So,
too, the time-honoured toda is sometimes set aside in
favour of the Tamil kammal, an ornament of much smaller
size. Canter Visscher (who was Chaplain at Cochin in 291
the eighteenth century) must have been much struck by
the expenditure of the Nāyar women on their dress, for
he wrote* 'there is not one of any fortune who does
not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of
robes made of silver and other valuable materials, for
it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same
dress two or three days in succession'."

It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the Venetian sequin, 177
which probably first found its way to Malabar in the days 301

* Letters from Malabar.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar 301 789
wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who
died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which
a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be 304
favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only
practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon.
Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore [177]
by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it
has become rare. The operation is performed by women [564]
of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the
twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. 776
Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the
proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear
the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely
meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and
Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Saṅka-
racharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities,
the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several
minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan,
Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of [532]
these have granite representations, or at least such [778]
emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with
a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met [775]
with accidental death, and girls who have died before [766]
their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped
under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannich-
chavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic [791]
amulets are attached to the waist by members of both [789]
sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar,
is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits [782]
are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of
Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
• [305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet.

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washer-man's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

141 *564 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so.

In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

142 302 *564 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains; the rest of the head, the face and body are always shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

142 *564 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.

A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head [827] profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

*[564] [302] [305] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest, abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

* During the rains.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 502 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍinâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *drsavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdurari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil [693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans
Kolla-kurups

428 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could 564 inherit if there were no male heirs.

429 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the 564 Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise [305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather [384] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-
348 kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the [487] south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated [351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, [391] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 206]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

113, 311, 651, 652, 623 Kerala AW11

/For data on Forest Panchayats and their finances, see 26: Rao, AW1 India, Tables 21-24, pp. 214-218, category 116.

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS [171]

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[3] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3 [see p. 272, category 11b -- Analysis]

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 241 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 171 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

*433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

134 formed of gneissic debris by sub-aerial decomposition. The formation of coastal areas consists mostly of sands deposited by the sea. The soils are generally of poor fertility status. Some peculiar formations are found in the taluks of Ambalapuzha, Kuttanad, Vaikom and Shertallai and go by the name *peaty* or Kari soils. These are 1135 black and heavy and contain plenty of potash and 10 to 30 per cent organic matter. However, the soils are highly acidic due to the decomposition of organic matter under anaerobic conditions, presence of iron and aluminium salts and absence of 242 nitrification. Attempts to reclaim the soils by liming and improvement of drainage have so far proved unsuccessful. In Trichur and Mukundapuram taluks there is yet another category known as *Kole* soils. These are fertile alluvial soils. The soils of Malabar area are quite different. They are mostly red soils formed *in situ* from the micaccons or granitic rocks below under the influence of weather and climatic conditions. The fertility of the red soil is poor. They contain very low proportions of organic matter and nitrogen. But these soils contain ferrous and aluminium ions in fairly large proportions and in the absence of humous this situation results in reversion of phosphate—a state where phosphorous when applied in the form of fertilizers, does not become readily assimilable by the plants.

Land Utilization

311 2.9 The fact that Kerala has drawn upon the margin of cultivable land much more than in the rest of India is borne out clearly by Table 8.[2] The net sown area in the State during 1956-57 was 4,525,000 acres, that is 47.16 per cent of the total area. This is about 8 per cent more than corresponding all-India proportion (39.1%). The proportion of fallow lands in Kerala is also very low. (Kerala 4.4% : all-India 7.5%). A higher proportion of total area devoted to cultivation becomes all the more significant in view of the fact that forests cover about 26 per cent of the total area of the State compared to the all-India average of 17.44 per cent.

2.10 During the period 1951–57, there has been an overall improvement in the pattern of land utilization in the State. There have been significant increases in the area under forests (15.8%), permanent pastures (19.8%), land under tree crops (18.1%), net area sown (29.8%), and the area sown more than once (24.9%). These increases were mostly at the expense of cultivable waste, which declined by about 40 per cent during the period. The next important decline (16.7%) was in the barren and uncultivable lands. The area sown more than once rose by about 25 per cent, but this was partly offset by an increase of 35 per cent in the area under current fallows. (Table 8)[2]

2.11 Another notable feature of the agricultural sector in Kerala is the high intensity of cropping.[1] During 1956-57, the gross sown area was 5.6 million acres and the net sown area was 4.7 million acres. This works out to a crop intensity of 119 per cent (all-India 113%; Punjab 130%; Maharashtra 120%). However, if the field crops alone are taken into account, crop intensity works out to as high a figure as 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which gives a more accurate idea of the

[text continues on p. 25]

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped and net cropped area.

[2] [see p. 274, category 116 -- Analyst]

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[P. 23]

MAP 5

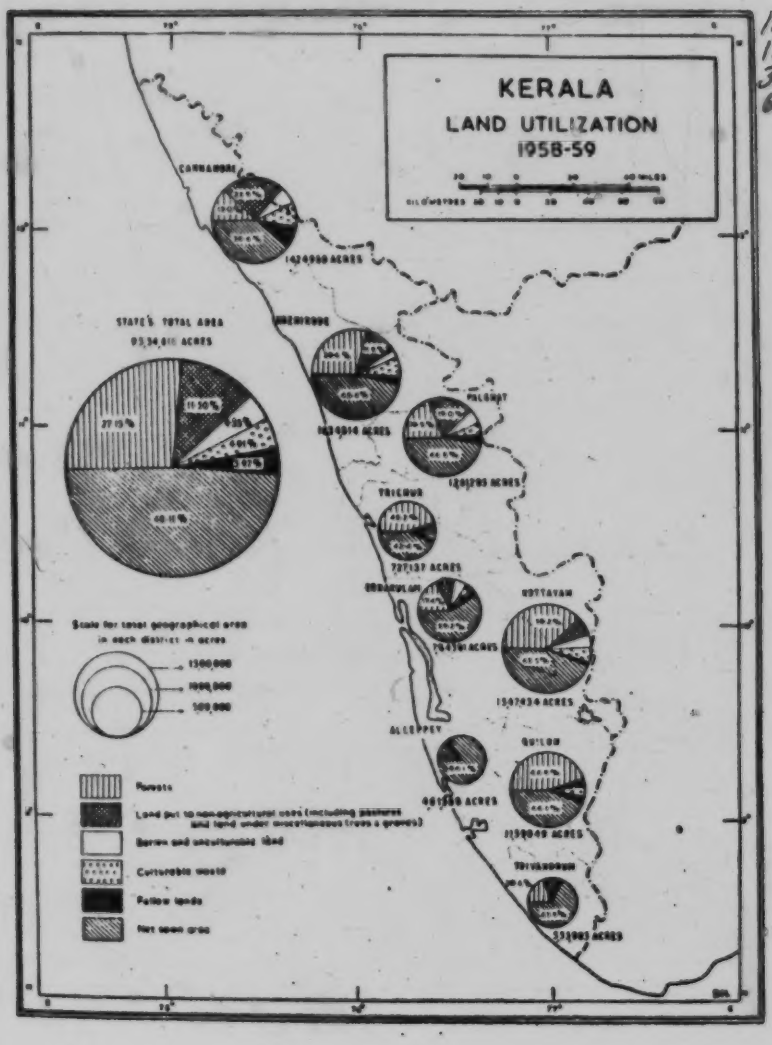

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CHART 1

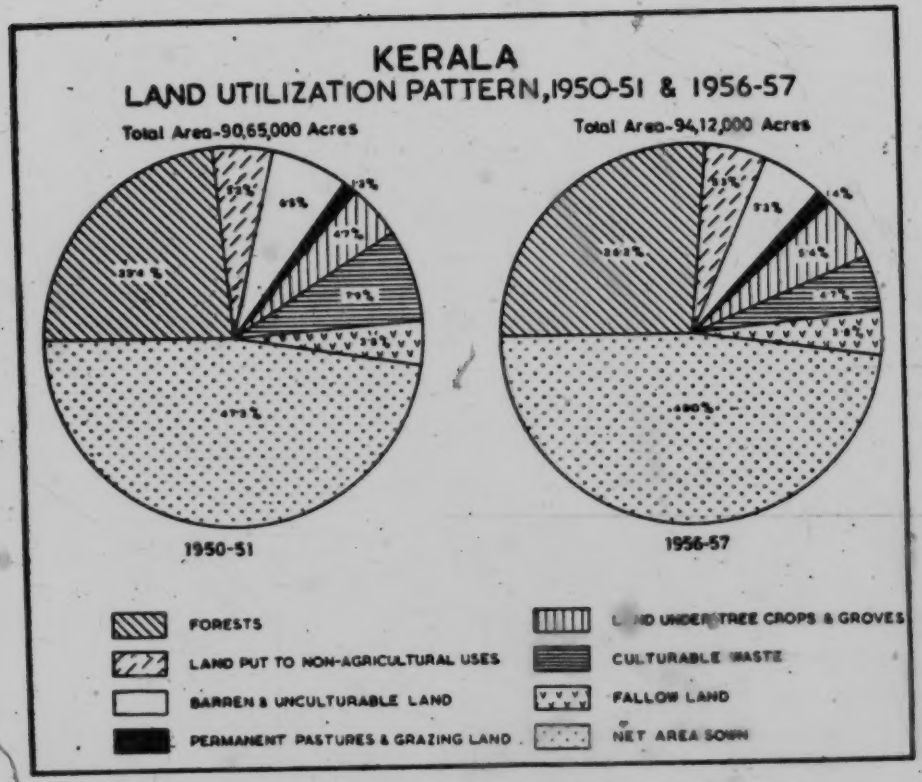
KERALA
LAND UTILIZATION PATTERN, 1950-51 & 1956-57
Total Area-90,65,000 Acres
Total Area-94,12,000 Acres
1950-51
1956-57
FORESTS
LAND PUT TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USES
BARREN & UNCULTURABLE LAND
PERMANENT PASTURES & GRAZING LAND
LAND UNDER TREE CROPS & GROVES
CULTURABLE WASTE
FALLOW LAND
NET AREA SOWN

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951-59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).* The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951-59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [439] [257]

* [see p. 277, category 116 - - Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 26]

MAP 6

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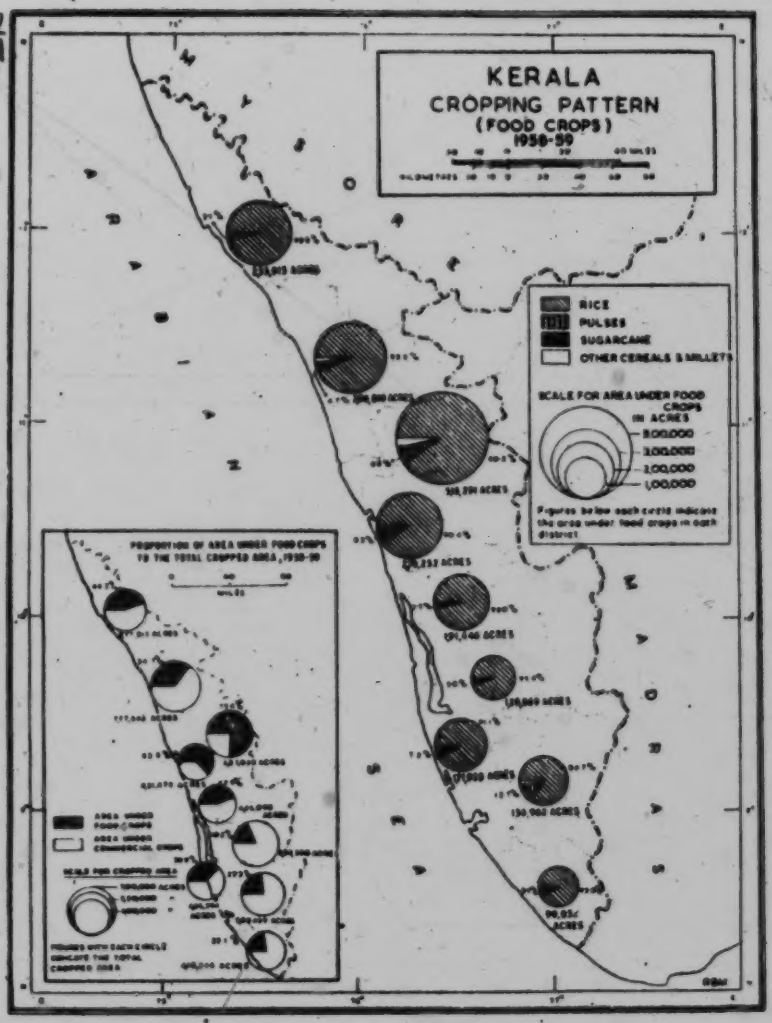

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[P. 27]

MAP 7

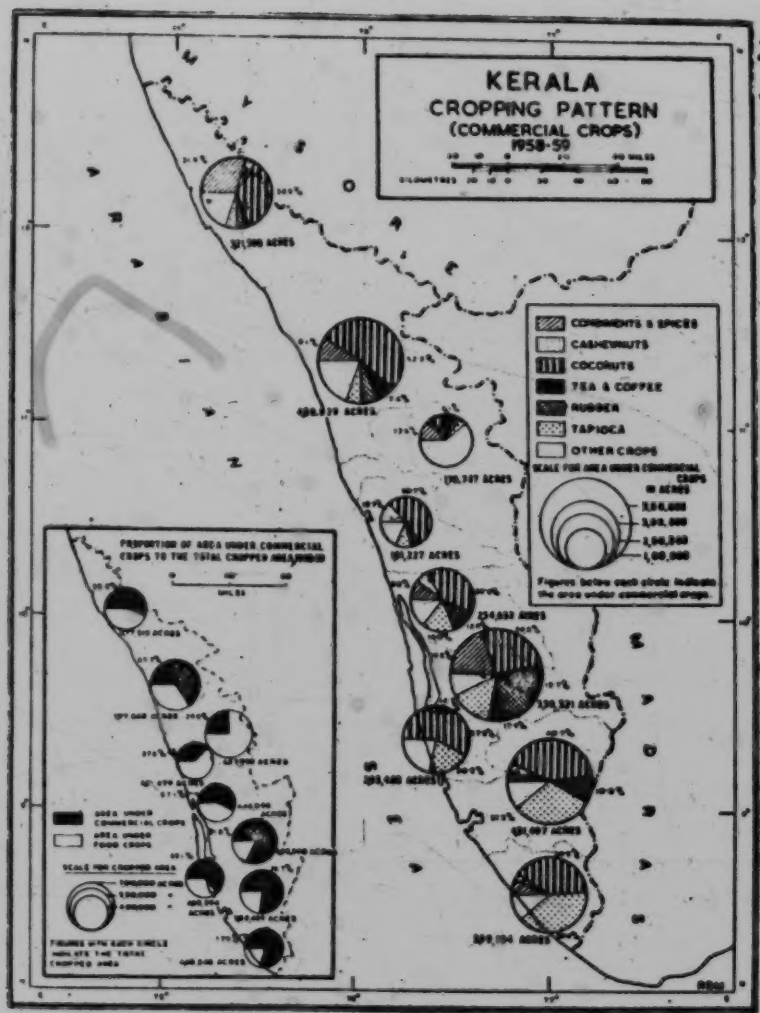

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Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%). 137 311

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth. 137 [245]

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging. 313 434 313 464

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well 137 132

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

137 distributed over the year. The high degree of rainfall, old geological formation and
132 maritime climate have largely been responsible for the luxuriant forest growth in Kerala. Trees get the full benefit of moisture, depth of soil and protection from frost and drought. For these reasons, forests in Kerala also possess the advantage of a long growing season.

137 4.5 Most of the forest area lies in the high ranges on the eastern border of the
311 State and in the area adjacent to these. Only a few strips are found in the coastal plain. The forest area is, however, distributed over all the districts of the State. Since the forests run across the whole of eastern border while the districts in the State occur almost longitudinally, all districts, except Alleppey have a good proportion of their area under forests. The districts of Quilon and Trichur have as high as 45.2 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively of their area under forests. (Table 23) 1

137 4.6 The wide variations in climatic and topographical conditions in the State have resulted in a large variety of forests. With the exception of the desert, the truly temperate and the alpine types, all classes of forests are found in Kerala. In addition to the natural forests, Kerala has also got artificial plantations of valuable species. The State has been a pioneer in this sphere.

4.7 Among the natural forests, deciduous forests comprise 80 per cent of the growth. The rest is of the evergreen type. The evergreens are found mostly in the higher ranges above a height of 2,500 feet since they require a cool climate for their growth. The various types of forests found in the State are given below:

(1) *Evergreen Type*

(a) Southern tropical wet evergreen forests,
(b) Southern tropical semi-evergreen forests,
(c) Mountain wet sub-tropical evergreen forests, and
(d) The temperate Shola-Grasslands.

(2) *Deciduous Type*

(a) Southern tropical wet Deciduous forests and
(b) Tropical dry Deciduous Forests.

3/3 4.8 Among the evergreen types, most of the species are utilized in the manufacture
[322] of plywood and packing cases, which is a flourishing industry in the State. Pali Kulamavn and Vellapine are some of the well known plywood species. Anjali, which is used for boat-building and mahagony utilized for furniture, are two other important economic species found among the evergreens. Of late, a number of other evergreen species have sprung into prominence and are now finding economic uses. Since markets for these are growing, it is planned to extract these newer species also on a commercial scale.

4.9 Teak and rosewood are the most important species found among the deciduous forests. Vanteak, Rosewood, Poola and Charopine are some of the other important species belonging to this category. These species are chiefly useful in making furniture and in building and construction work. A detailed list of the trees and other major produce found in Kerala along with their present uses is given in Appendix 5.1 A list of minor produce is given in Appendix 6.2

1 [Table 23, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed -- Ana]
2, 3 [see pp. 329-333, category 11b -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

SOME FORESTRY PROBLEMS

Acquisition of Private Forests

4.20 It has been mentioned that forests of Kerala are one of the best managed ones. But this is true only of the reserved forests under Government jurisdiction. In the Malabar area there are about 5 lakh acres of private forests which are maintained very unsatisfactorily. Unlike the reserved forests, there is no adequate protective staff for the care of these forests and no attention is paid to their regeneration or management on scientific lines. This has naturally resulted in an unwarranted depletion of forest wealth in the private forest areas. In the interests of adequate preservation of forest wealth, immediate steps are necessary to acquire the private forests and bring them within unified forest management under the control of the Forest Department. A provision for acquiring the private forests was made during the Second Plan but their acquisition could not be carried out. This must be effected during the Third Plan period.

The Problem of Encroachment

4.21 There is one other disquitening feature about forests in Kerala. Such is the pressure of population in the State that inroads are being made into the forest areas, especially where forests occur in the midland region. This has taken the form of Government deforestation of forest areas in the interests of Grow More Food Campaign. In addition, there have also been illicit encroachments and these areas are still under cultivation, although the State Government have declared them to be revertible. The extent of these areas is not very large compared to the total area under forests. About 9,750 acres fall within the former category and 16,500 acres belong to the category of revertible areas. The gravity of the encroachment situation arises from the fact that in case a lenient view is taken, these will prove a serious menace to proper maintenance of forest potential in the long run.

Regeneration of Evergreen Forests

4.22 The problems referred to above were of an administrative nature; but forestry in Kerala is faced with one or two urgent technical problems as well. One of these is to find out some way of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen species.

4.23 Of late a number of evergreen species have found new uses in the manufacture of plywood logs, railway sleepers, telegraph poles, etc., and these species have all come into prominence. Full potential of the existing evergreen forests cannot, however, be tapped since their natural regeneration takes time. The forest department has, therefore, got to keep control over the working of these forests.

4.24 In case of some species because of difficulties connected with regeneration, there has been a shortage of supply. The problem of regeneration of these forests is intimately connected with the problem of light. Regeneration requires light to

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [311]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 8

LAND UTILIZATION PATTERN IN KERALA

Particulars of area	*1950-51*	*1956-57*	*Per cent (+)(—)*	*Percentage of area according to professional survey 1956-57*
1	2	3	4	5
Area According to Professional Survey	9,343*	9,593	+2.7	..
1. Area according to Village Papers	9,065	9,412	+3.8	..
2. Forest	2,121	2,458	+15.8	25.62
3. Land put to non-agriculture uses	466	503	+7.9	5.24
4. Barren and Unculturable land	596	497	+16.7	5.18
5. Total (not available for cultivation) (3+4)	1,062	1,000	—5.8	10.42
6. Permanent Pastures & other Grazing lands	101	121	+19.8	1.26
7. Land under tree crops and groves not included in N.A.S.	430	508	+18.1	5.29
8. Culturable waste	720	437	—39.4	4.55
9. Total (other uncultivated and ex-fallow land) (6+7+8)	1,251	1,066	—14.8	11.11
10. Fallow lands other than current fallow	227	207	—8.8	2.16
11. Current Fallow	115	155	+34.8	1.62
12. Total Fallow land (10+11)	342	362	+2.9	3.77
13. Net Area Sown	4,289	4,525	+28.8	47.16
14. Total Cropped Area	4,975	5,382	+ 8.2	56.10
15. Area Sown more than once	686	857	+24.9	8.93

* Corresponds to 1951-52 figures.

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below 70°, the annual range at Cochin is only 6° and the diurnal is about 10°. Apart from the high falls (180 ins. plus) in the hills, rainfall decreases from N to S (Calicut 119, Trivandrum 64 ins.) and the extreme S, around Comorin, falls below 40: here alone are there major irrigation works. But this decrease is balanced by a better seasonal distribution in the S: Trivandrum has 24·85 ins. in June–August, 21·32 in September–November, and 18·23 in December–May—28% in what is an almost completely dry season in nearly all the rest of the sub-continent. 132

Kerala as a whole (including the hills) has an area of about 15,500 sq mls, of which some 20% (mainly on the Travancore hills and foothills) is forested and 45% NSA. The TSA is about 15–20% greater than NSA in Cochin and Malabar. The question of 'culturable waste' is, as usual, difficult; but it seems that in the alluvial and lateritic zones respectively about 75–80 and 65–70% of the total area, or 90 and 80% of the 'cultivable', are in fact cultivated.[44] It is clear that what is left will be marginal and that there is very little room for expansion. 311

Rice is dominant, occupying about 260,000 out of a TSA of 550,000 cropped ac. in Cochin, 860,000 out of 1,790,000 in Malabar, but only 655,000 out of 2,200,000 in Travancore. The area under rubber, tea, and pepper in the Travancore hills accounts for this in part; but in Cochin and Malabar a good deal of rice is grown on the lateritic hills after burning the jungle; the heavier rainfall has probably a bearing on this. The local variations in cropping, analysed in detail in Kuriyan's 1942 paper, deserve summarising: 311 241

(i) In the extreme S rice is grown by canal- and in Shencottah taluk (E of the hills and really outside the region) by tank-irrigation. With intensive watering and careful transplanting crops can be obtained both in September–October and in February–March. In Chittur taluk—the Cochin outlier in Palghat—there is also a little irrigation by *anicuts* or weirs feeding canals, and here cotton and groundnuts are grown. These three areas are strongly influenced by Tamil methods. 311 312

(ii) Along the backwaters (*punja* and *pole* areas) the problem is not to get water on the land but to get it off. These areas are divided into blocks of up to 50 (exceptionally 100) ac., bounded by double dykes enclosing a channel. From July to September–October the ground is submerged, sometimes to a depth of several feet; after the rains the water is lifted into the bounding channels by Persian wheels; latterly oil-driven and still more recently electric pumps powered from Pallivasal have been introduced. The land lies three or four feet below the water-level in the channels, and sluices regulate various inundations during the growing season. Should the bunds be burst the half-drowned crop may be reaped from boats by cutting off the heads.

(iii) Along the backwaters on the Cochin-Malabar boundary the soil on areas liable to salt-water inundation is heaped up into mounds about one foot

[44] Kuriyan (1938), 133; (1942).

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311 high and five feet round, on which the paddy is sown just before the rains.
312 When the monsoon bursts the surrounding water is freshened and transplanting takes place. This is a rather precarious method, illustrating the devices enforced by severe population pressure.

(iv) In the wet lowlands above the backwaters more normal methods prevail, but the early onset of the rains enables planting to take place in April–May and harvest in September; the continuance of the rains then often permits a poor second crop (not necessarily paddy) harvested in January; very occasionally a third is possible.

241 After rice, coconut is the chief crop, accounting for nearly 1 m. ac., typically, of course, in the sandy coastal strip but also on alluvial loams and (with more careful preparation) on laterites. In Travancore the coconut acreage is nearly equal to that of rice; in Quilon taluk, indeed, it covers 85% of cropped area. After rice as the essential food, the coconut palm is the basis of life in Kerala: "Apart from the several uses of the chief products, viz., coir, copra, coconut oil, oil-cake, the hollowed trunk serves as a canoe, the nut forms a staple article of diet, the leaves may be used for many of the purposes of paper, are frequently employed as thatch and for the manufacture of brooms, baskets, umbrellas, tattis [screens kept soaked to cool rooms], and fans, and utilised as crude torches in a dried form, or burnt as fuel, as it is [*sic*] or in the form of charcoal. In addition, the fresh or fermented
273 juice of the stem is consumed as a beverage, by evaporation it is made into jaggery and by subsequent treatment even sugar is obtainable. When distilled, the toddy becomes arrack and finally vinegar."[45] Of the "industrial" workers of Kerala—most of them, of course, cottage workers—about a third
[464] are in various processes connected with coconut products, and of these
[286] two-thirds are women. The coir 'yarn' is almost entirely cottage-produced, its working-up into mats and so on largely a small factory industry.

The most important other crops (apart from plantation rubber and tea
311 in the hills), are cassava (tapioca) and pepper, mainly in the foothills. The
241 former is grown as a food crop on poorer lateritic soils; pepper is perhaps the chief peasant-produced cash crop after coconut. Cereals other than paddy are negligible, as are oilseeds except for a little sesamum (gingelly), often as a third crop on the higher wet-rice lands. Nearly every homestead has its plantains and other fruit trees, and ginger and the betel vine, with its associated areca palm, are also grown widely but in tiny patches.

Tapioca deserves special mention. Introduced about 1920, it is grown on the lateritic soils ("about as attractive for agriculture as railway ballast") in tiny holdings by the poorest of the poor. As Gourou points out, there is a sort of social inversion: the better-off rice farmers in the valley-bottoms, and a hundred feet or so above them a very wretched (largely Christian) peasantry.

[45] Quoted in Kuriyan, 1937 (Vol. XI), 286. Cf. P. K. Paniker, "The Coconut—its Cultivation on the Malabar Coast", *IGJ* XVIII (1943), 78–88.

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161 Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore respectively 14, 23, and 27% in 1921–31, 11, 18, and 19% in 1931–41. The decrease in rate seems to be associated with later marriage. Females outnumber males in Cochin (1042:1000) and in both Cochin and Travancore the proportion of unmarried females over 15 years old is several times greater than that of India as a whole—in 1941 Cochin had 172 per mille and Travancore 107 against an All-India rate of 36. In Cochin also the proportion of children under 10 had been stable in the last two Censuses.[47] The rate of increase, however, turned upwards again in 1941–51, which added to Travancore-Cochin 1,772,264 souls—an increase of 23·6% compared with an *Indian* average of 13·4. Population is now **9,280,425** with a density of **1015** on 9155 sq mls.

161 311 The situation is grave; on the 1931 figures Kuriyan calculated that taking a liberal view of the potentialities of 'culturable waste' only another 2,000,000 souls could be supported. Holdings are extremely small—96% under 10 ac., 87% under 5, 38% less than 1; and 5 ac. is regarded as the minimum for a family to live in reasonable comfort.[48] In Cochin the total area per person in 1941 was 0·67 of an acre, of cultivable land 0·36, of land actually cultivated 0·29; and the rice grown is sufficient to feed the people for only 7 out of 12 months.[49] During the war the Cochin and Travancore governments prided themselves, with some justice, on the efficiency of their procurement and rationing, but the ration was minimal even by Indian standards. As we have seen, agriculture is in many respects extremely intensive; yet in many areas there is a slack season from May through August, and this coincides with the slack season in sea-fishing owing to the stormy monsoon.

Diversification and expansion of agriculture are thus urgently necessary. But the density on cultivated area in the lowland is now at least 2250, and there is here very little land available for expansion on the most optimistic view imaginable. Various plans exist for irrigating perhaps 100,000 ac., mainly in the foothills; but these will not go very far, and it is difficult to see where the 15,000 ac. allotted to jute in 1950 can be fitted in. Even in the foothills there are well over **1000** persons to the cultivated square mile. Here, however, there is perhaps some room for diversification by expansion—perhaps of poorer crops on the poorer soils. Gram, soya, and other pulses, fodder crops, and buckwheat are suggested by Kuriyan, together with more tapioca and fruit. Other occupations may play an ancillary role in relieving pressure, but their scope is limited.

361 As for settlement patterns, the extreme density of population (as in Bengal) produces a close stipple of habitations; there are no grouped villages (other than mere thickening of homesteads) except in the tran-

[47] 1941 Census, Vol. XIX (Cochin), 18–24; the discussion is largely based on Cochin figures since this, by exception in 1941, is an excellent report.
[48] *Ibid.*, 31; Kuriyan (1938), 140, where 8–10 ac. is given as the 'economic' holding.
[49] 1941 Census, Vol. XIX, 31.

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sitional areas—Comorin, Shencottah, Palghat, parts of Malabar. The 361
importance of food-producing trees (coconut, areca, plantain, jackfruit) fits [245]
in with this: they are grown in the house compounds, so that the actual
dwelling-space subtracts hardly anything from the cultivation-space, while

361
135

Fig. 122.—KERALA: COASTAL SETTLEMENT. 40 mls N of Cochin town. Dots, habitations; shaded, paddy. Note contrast between linear settlement on beach-ridges (under coconut) in W and ring settlement around lateritic rises in E. SOI 58 B 2; courtesy SOI.

at the same time the compounds ensure that the 'village' is loosely built, 361
and may indeed spill all over the village lands. (Fig. 122.)[50]

Along the coast there is a marked linear tendency, houses and coconuts 361
on the sandy ridges with their fresh ground-water, paddy in the lows. 311
Inland the lateritic topography exercises a marked effect, settlement being strung out along valley-flanks or interfluves or forming a complete ring around the rises. (Fig. 123.)

[50] The 14th and the 20th centuries tell the same tale. "Mulaybar, which is the pepper country, extends for two months' journey along the coast. . . . there is not a foot of ground but what is cultivated. Every man has his own orchard, with his house in the middle and a wooden palisade all round it." (Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (1929), 231–32). Along the 40 miles from Quilon to Trivandrum one is never out of sight of habitations or foot-travellers; G. Slater, *op. cit.*, 172.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Towns

369 439 The towns of Kerala are for the most part either ports or crossing-points on the backwaters. There is virtually no indigenous maritime tradition, but from very early times spices attracted traders from E and W: Arabs, Graeco-Romans, Chinese.[51] With the Discoveries the Malabar coast became the scene of a fierce struggle between the Portuguese and their Muslim and European rivals. Relics of the era of European conflict are the tiny French settlement of Mahé (26 sq mls, poptn (1941) 14,092) and the exclaves of former British territory at Cochin itself and in Travancore

361 311

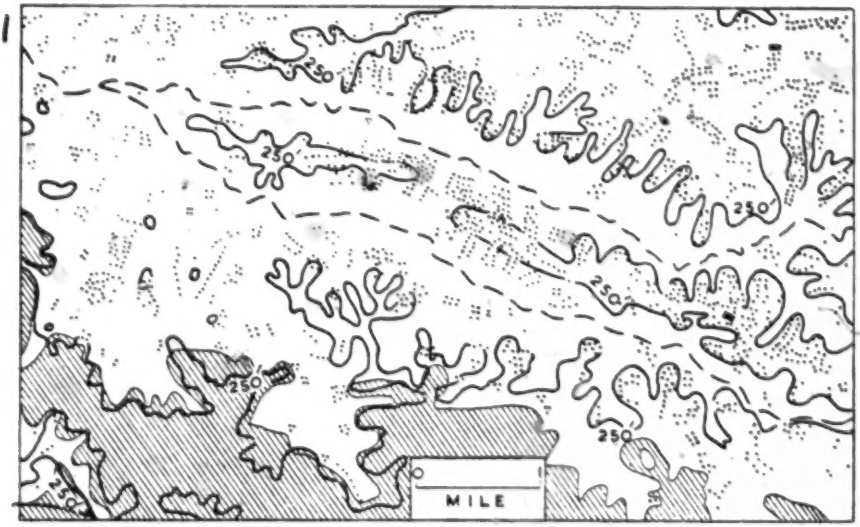

Fig. 123.—KERALA: INLAND SETTLEMENT. 5–10 mls SE of Palghat town; lateritic foothills in approach to Palghat Gap. Dots, habitations surrounded by groves; shaded, forest; blank, cultivation; broken lines, seasonal streams. SOI 58 B/10; courtesy SOI.

at Anjengo and Quilon (Tangasseri), which last had an area of 99 acres!

369 439 In Malabar Dt Tellicherry (36,320) exports most of the Coorg coffee and some pepper and copra; Calicut (158,724) has a similar trade but is more important administratively. Both ports are mere roadsteads, ships lying two or three miles offshore and lighters working from one or two piers, but at Tellicherry the shelter of offshore reefs enables some traffic to be carried on during the monsoon.

369 Cochin is far more important: it really consists of two adjacent towns, ex-British Cochin (26,320) and Cochinese Cochin or Mattancheri (53,346). Cochin is in fact the oldest European settlement in India; on Christmas

[51] On the Chinese shipping, see Ibn Battuta, *op. cit.*, 235–6.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Tamil AW16
Kerala AW11

T 31 [361] 496 T 41 T 377

atypical. Much of it indeed revolves around the hill-station of Ootacamund, lying under the highest point of the plateau, Dodabetta (8760 ft). 'Ooty' and its satellites Wellington and Coonor have the usual hills layout of straggling bungalows; they are reached by a metre-gauge rack-railway with gradients of 1 in 12½. There is a little local industry of the kind associated with resort functions: breweries (now presumably under a cloud), sodawater factories, and so on; tea, quinine, and eucalyptus oil are processed, and at Wellington the Government cordite factory had one of the earliest hydro-electric installations in India. Of much greater importance is the power station at Pykara Falls, with an installed capacity of 38,750 kW; large extensions are planned, and in addition the utilisation of the Pykara tail-water over a 1200-ft drop in the Moyar Valley, to produce another 36,000 kW, forming a new link with Mettur. This is in the future; but already the leisure resort of S India has become one of the most vital nodes in its workaday life.

(b) *The Anaimalais, Palnis, and Cardamoms*

T K 133

This remarkable group of hills (Figs. 121, 150) is more complex than the Nilgiris, and in Anaimudi itself they have the highest peak of the Peninsula, 8841 ft. The front to the Palghat Gap is remarkably steep and in the E remarkably straight; the SE flanks of the Palnis, overlooking the upper Vaigai re-entrant, are also remarkably abrupt, as are the Cardamoms and their protrusions (Varushanad Hills) S of the Vaigai. But to the NW the hills fray out into long SE–NW ridges; and indeed over much of the area this trend is most marked, the rivers (e.g. the Periyar) having longitudinal stretches of such straightness as to suggest control by faults, with transverse gorges producing a perfect trellis-pattern. Between 10° N and the Shencottah Gap the active streams of the exposed Arabian Sea front have pushed the watershed back to within 4 or 5 miles of the En edge of the hills: here the change from jungle-clad mountains to the tank-pitted Tamilnad Plain is very sudden (Fig. 150).

T K 311 433

Again, apart from the shifting cultivation of tribes some of whom (e.g. Cochin Kadars) are hardly more than hunters and gatherers, the economy is atypical: forests, plantations, hydro-electricity. The most exploited forests, served by special light railways, are in the NW, the Cochin slopes of the Anaimalais. As for plantations, these are not confined to the Wn flanks but are more numerous there, where there is a broader plateau development than on the E. A little coffee and tea are grown in Cochin and in Madura Dt (Madras), but the major share of the plantations (78,000 ac. tea, *c.* 6000 coffee) is in Travancore, which is also by far the most important rubber-producing area of India, with nearly 100,000 ac. bearing against 13,000 in Malabar and 10,000 in Cochin (1945). It is grown on the lower slopes generally below 1000 and never above 2000 ft, with 80–120 ins.

T K 241 311

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Tamil AW16
Marathi AW17

K T 241 311

rain. Above the rubber, tea extends to nearly 6000 ft, and indeed more than half of it is grown above 4000 ft; rainfall is usually 100–150 ins. It is noteworthy that over half the rubber is produced on Indian-owned estates, but only a small fraction of the tea.

K T 377

As for hydro-electricity, the hills are dotted with falls and rainfall on the Wn flanks is everywhere high and reliable. So far the most important large development is at Pallivasal in Travancore (installed 21,000 kW, potential 36,000), which powers the aluminium smelters at Alwaye and also works pumps draining the flooded paddy-fields of Kerala. A project of great interest is that for utilising the great Periyar Reservoir (Fig. 150) for power. The Periyar headwaters have been impounded and are taken through the watershed by tunnel to irrigate the Suruli-Vaigai Valley in Madura; some 40,000 kW might be developed, and altogether the region has a potential of at least 200,000 kW.

K T 211 361

The Wn flanks of the hills are too rain-swept to have much settlement except on plantations, forest camps, and power installations. In the E Kodaikanal, lying at 7000 ft on the Palnis, is a minor hill-station, noted for its mission schools and an old-established physical observatory.

Maharashtra

M 133 M 197 631

Maharashtra, the Maratha country *par excellence*,[5] may be taken as roughly coterminous with the main mass of the Deccan Lavas above the Ghats. To the N the Tapti Valley, flanked by typical lava plateaus but floored by alluvium, forms a transition to the central Indian scarplands; in the S, along the Malaprabha, there is another belt where Archaeans and lavas interdigitate and where cultural allegiance is divided between the Marathi and Kannada (Kanarese) languages. But to the E, in Hyderabad especially, the boundary of Marathi speech shows a striking accordance with the edge of the Lavas (Fig. 127); hence the division of the state into Marathwara and Telangana, a rare instance of official recognition of regionalism. This great area thus includes all central Bombay, the NW third of Hyderabad, and SW Madhya Pradesh (CP) as far as Nagpur.

The Terrain

M 133

It is a region of extraordinary physical homogeneity, in the gross at least, although (as Deshpande points out) detailed study would undoubtedly reveal significant differences in erosional features, soils, vegetation, and farming practice depending on the varying petrology of the lavas. The general slope to the E and SE is gentle: Poona lies at 1800 ft, and it is over 100 miles down the Bhima to the 1500-ft contour. From the Ghat culminations long tongues of higher ground (over 2000 ft) run E and divide the plateau

[5] The etymological connection of Maratha or Mahratta and Maharashtra, if any, is still controversial.

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566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

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406 The mhote too is seldom seen in these parts. The more common sorts of water-lifters are (1) an oval shaped bamboo-basket (costing about As. 2); (2) a wooden groove provided with a handle, costing about Re. 1; (3) and a frame-work consisting of two long bamboos, one small and another big in size balanced on a horizontal beam which is supported by two vertical poles; a picottah is attached to the small-sized bamboo and is drawn up and brought down by one or two persons standing opposite each other on two planks thrown across the middle of the well. The whole frame together with the picottah costs about Rs. 2. The oval shaped basket and the wooden groove are used to spread water from water courses and not from wells. Two persons, generally women, stand opposite each other on the side of a watercourse and pull the basket towards themselves by means of ropes tied round its 'ears' after filling it up with water; the extreme ease and facility with which they carry on the operations, often to the accompaniment of a snatch of song, is wonderful. The wooden groove is allowed to swing on a string and is moved to and fro by a person holding the handle.

651 The classes into which wet and dry lands are divided, the extent of each and the amount of assessment are subjoined.

Classes.	Wet lands.									Dry lands.				
	Single crop.					Double crop.					Single crop.			
	Area.		Assessment.			Area.		Assessment.			Area.		Assessment.	
	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.
I ..	35	65	116	7	9	320	74	1,527	5	5	301	48	261	11	3
II ...	4	56	15	10	9	59	72	210	6	3	12	69	3	12	8
III ...	16	0	36	0	7	39	73	114	6	0	212	60	77	5	7
IV ...	21	37	39	9	8	15	51	34	11	2	68	39	17	10	3
V ...	109	59	147	9	11	11	5	17	12	11	207	53	44	6	8
VI ...	18	6	34	10	10	1	24	3	2	5	56	49	3	13	8
VII ...	...		...			...		...			78	3	37	0	3

135 The selling prices of cultivable wet land in the village are approximately Class I Rs. 1,500, Class II Rs. 1,000, Class III Rs. 800 Class IV Rs. 500—600, Class V Rs. 500.

311 423 The land is classified according to tenure as follows:—

I. 'Pandaravaka Verumpattam' (Sirkar) non-favourable tenure.	Nilams (wet land) (A. 86·73).	109 pattadars.
	Parambas (dry land) (A. 210·88).	
II. 'Pandaravaka Kanam' (Sirkar) favourable tenure.	Nilams (A. 2·19) ...	4 pattadars.
	Parambas (7 cents) ...	
III. 'Puravaka' (outside Sirkar).	Nilams (A. 563·61) ...	54 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 711·80)...	
IV. Inams (gift tenure).	Nilams (71 cents) ...	6 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 14·47) ...	

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Between ages	41—50	11
"	51—60	9
"	61—70	9
"	71—80	10
84 years of age		1
92 "		1
		156

It is to be noted that infant deaths are more than half the total deaths and number 87 out of 156 last year.

This information is not fully accurate because the people do not report births and deaths generally to the village officials and consequently they have to ascertain the facts by inquiring and it is possible that some births or deaths escape their notice. The ignorance of the people and the unnecessary fear of post-mortem examination in the case of deaths explain their silence. Probably a considerable number of infant deaths escape report.

Paracheri.—Three families, 15 members.—7 women, 8 men.

Number of dead for the last ten years—

Family No. 1	7
" " 2	5
" " 3	4

The village lana—

	ACS
Garden lands	792½
Wet lands	360¾
Dry "	135⅝
Government lands	14⅓
Inam lands	201¾
Total	1,504 17/24

There are no waste lands.

The principal fruit trees are mangoes, jacks, plantains, and there are not many though sufficient for the village consumption.

There are tanks and wells in plenty. Drinking water is got from wells; and the tanks are used for bathing and for agricultural purposes.

Occupation of land and Agriculture.—The number of kanomdars in the village is 385. The large kanomdars do not generally cultivate the land themselves.

The land is divided into small strips, each strip containing from 50 to 1,000 coconut palms. The large kanomdar takes his residence on one of these strips, and he himself cultivates the particular strip where he is, and gives to small tenants the remaining strips belonging to him. Consequently only about 180 acres of the whole village are cultivated by the large kanomdars. In addition to these lands three kanomdars cultivate all of their land. Two are Muhammadans and one a Tiyya. The area belonging to these three kanomdars is about 134 acres. The remaining land, 1,200 odd acres, is given to tenants to cultivate. There are also between 200 and 300 small kanomdars belonging to the agricultural classes, who hold land insufficient for their maintenance and also cultivate the lands of big kanomdars. A number of the big

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Kerala AW11

The statistics of births and deaths of this desam are obtainable only for the year 1915. They are given below :— 163 165

Births.

Males	50	Hindu	84
Females	43	Muhammadan	9
	93		93

Deaths.

According to age—

Lifeless deliveries	7
Below one year	9
Between 1 and 10	13
" 10 and 20	1
" 20 and 30	7
" 30 and 40	3
" 40 and 50	...
" 50 and 60	3
" 60 and 80	5
	48

According to sex and castes—

Males	24	Hindus	43
Females	24	Muhammadans	5

There is no paracheri in the strict sense of the term. The depressed classes, mostly Cherumas, are still in a state of semi-serfdom, depending for everything on their landlords and masters. 566

Land.—The area of the desam by settlement is 1,803·40 acres. This desam together with Mattupalli, Peringode, Pillakkattiri, Tolukad, Mathur, Alikara, Kuttanad, Perumannur and Chalisseri desams formed the old revenue amsam of Kothachira. Now Kothachira revenue amsam includes only Kothachira, Mathur and Peringode desams. 631

The areas under each description of land— 423 311

—	Wet.	Garden.	Occupied dry.	Unoccupied dry.	Unassessed.	Inam.	Porambokе.	Total.
	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.			ACS. C.
Private Jenmi.	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	..	...	...	1,787 57
Government Jenmi.	...	..	...	..	...		..	...
Unregistered lands.	...	...		...	15 83	...	...	15 83
	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	15 83	..	...	1,803 40

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241
463 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agriculturists.

The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. The
654 assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira was Rs. 6,519-2 4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228 7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of the chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy and arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garden. The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Every household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of an antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They are kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are planted and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plants Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have to be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance from one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are at first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung and ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days in the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselves. When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and a shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of water. These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, small channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root of every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begun. This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are given a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of average showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for similar weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, they have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and third month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted in plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fifth and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is a second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediately after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop the ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two months of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle of January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period of two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under single
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessments on each. (The information is taken from the village accounts.)
311 The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settlement.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
MALABAR
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Classification and Assessment.

Description of soil.	Wet.						Garden.					Occupied dry.				
	Taram.	Whether single or double crop.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.	Taram.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.	Taram.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.	
Red loam, VII-1 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	6 0	1 49	8 15	...	2	1 8	1 10	1 11	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	5 0	4 24	21 3	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-2 ...	2	1	5 0	8 97	44 14	..	3	5 0	0 75	3 12	...	3	1 0	52 46	52 10	...
	...	2	6 4	205 46	1,284 2	...	4	4 0	24 95	99 13	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	.	...	5	3 0	33 18	99 8	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2 0	73 71	147 5	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1 0	13 75	13 12	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-3 ...	3	1	4 0	33 76	135 1	...	5	3 0	15 67	46 14	...	4	0 12	11 394	85 7	...
	...	2	5 0	95 82	479 3	...	6	2 0	18 28	36 9	...	...	...	...	..	...
	...	...	...	..	....	...	7	1 0	21 56	21 9	..	...	...	..	...	...
VII-4 ...	4	1	3 0	50 60	151 15	...	6	2 0	0 60	1 6	...	5	0 10	19 50	12 3	...
	...	2	3 12	10 57	39 10	...	7	1 0	0 80	0 13	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-5 ...	5	1	2 0	33 29	66 12	..	...	...	...	...	...	6	0 8	2 62	1 5	...
	...	2	2 8	0 59	1 8	..	...	..	...	..	...	...	...	...		...
Red sand, VIII-3	4	2	3 12	6 21	23 4	...	7	1 0	0 55	0 9	...	5	0 10	6 28	4 0	...
VIII-4	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	..	...	...	...	6	0 8	1 26	0 10	...
Total ..	...	...	...	445 27	2,226 5	..	...	...	209 43	502 0	...	...	...	197 16	157 14	...

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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311 *Land.*—

	ACS.
Wet land	681·07
Occupied dry land	231·12
Unoccupied dry land	1,221·92
Garden land	109·59

137 Woodlands cover an area of about 150 acres. Shrubs and thickets, as well as rank undergrowth are found almost everywhere. Big trees, scattered and in groves, are also abundant.

Fruit trees and scattered shade trees are abundant. Among the former may be mentioned the mango, jack, coconut and areca-nut palms, the palmyra palm (yielding toddy), etc. There are numerous kinds of shade trees, many of which can be used as timber. Among timber trees specially may be noted the teak and the jack-tree.

312 Tanks and wells are very numerous. Wells indeed are too numerous to be enumerated. Every house has one or more and there are several in the fields, about one in an acre. There are more than 50 tanks, though some of them are mere ponds, dry in most months. A few tanks yield water unfailingly for irrigation on a small rate. They may be 6 to 20 feet deep and of varying lengths, from, say 10 to 100 feet. Some are of irregular shape. The wells are either circular or rectangular and from 10 to 40 feet deep--often deeper still. If circular their diameter measures from 5 to 10 feet and if rectangular they are from 6 to 10 feet broad and 8 to 16 feet long. A few are dry in summer, but many wells yield an abundant and unfailing supply of water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

There is a small channel passing through the village which is full during the rains, but mostly dry in the hot months. A dam is however put across it in some places and the scanty water stored up for future use. But there is not any very considerable quantity.

427 *Occupation of land.*—Most of the cultivated area is sublet to tenants. This is characteristic of Malabar, where most of the landlords do not themselves cultivate the land, but let it to others on short leases of 12 years called *kanom* leases. The kanom lease-holders in turn sublet the land, though a few of them actually cultivate it.

There are nominally 50 patta-holders and all of them come under the head of non-cultivating landowners. The richest have no particular occupation. Many are Nambudiri Brahmans not resident in the village, and they have comfortable positions as priests, preceptors, etc. The biggest landowners, who almost monopolise the land, are two or three in number and they live in ease on the revenues of their lands.

The great body of tenants own no land; they simply rent it on kanom lease or are tenants at will. There may be one or two among the landowners who are also the kanom tenants of some other landlord. But as a rule the kanom tenant owns no land.

There is a growing body of landless agricultural labourers.

By the census of 1901 there were 383 landholders (tenants) in that year. This number declined to 258 in 1917, paying land-revenue as stated below (note that the superior occupier contracts with his tenants that the latter pay the kist).

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala All

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Less than Re. 1	54
From Re. 1 to Rs. 5	100
„ Rs. 5 to Rs. 10	49
„ Rs. 10 to Rs. 20	22
„ Rs. 20 to Rs. 30	10
„ Rs. 30 to Rs. 50	19
More than Rs. 50	4
	258

Many especially of those paying under Rs. 2 hold only the plots of ground in which their dwellings are erected.

Classification of holdings according to ownership. 423 651

Pattadars paying an assessment of	Number.	Extent.	Assessment.		
		ACS.	RS.	A.	P.
I. Re. 1 and less	2	0·26	0	15	0
II. Over Re. 1 and up to Rs. 10 (inclusive).	22	28·04	95	8	0
III. „ Rs. 10 „ „ 30 „	7	26·44	129	6	0
IV. „ „ 30 „ „ 50 „	6	65·04	234	7	0
V. „ „ 50 „ „ 100 „	3	55·59	196	5	0
VI. „ „ 100 „ „ 250 „	2	106·97	301	4	0
VII. „ „ 250 „ „ 500 „	1	62·15	274	7	0
VIII. „ „ 500 „ „ 1,000 „	...	...	...		
IX. Over Rs. 1,000	1	645·04	2,469	1	0

Thus the greater part of the cultivated land is owned by a single pattadar—a Nambudiripad, a very enlightened and sympathetic landlord who has a reputation for fairness and kind treatment. The majority of the other pattadars are also Nambudiris, very often holding the land as trustees of temples.

The following table shows the rate of assessment, area so assessed, with amount of assessment, of wet, dry and garden lands:— 311 651

—	I. Wet land.			II. Garden land.			III. Occupied dry land.			IV. Unoccupied dry land.		
	ACS.	RS.	A.	ACS.	RS.	A.	ACS.	RS.	A.	ACS.	RS.	A.
at Rs. 7-8 per acre.	108·49	813	11	...	...		...	...		...	...	
„ 6-4 „	194·87	1,215	15	...	...		...	...		...	...	
„ 6-0 „	0·09	0	9	0·03	0	3	...	...		...	...	
„ 5-0 „	109·06	542	11	2·28	11	6	...	...		...	...	
„ 4-0 „	39·21	157	5	7·09	28	6	...	...		...	...	
„ 3-12 „	7·69	28	15	...	...		...	...		...	...	
„ 3-0 „	93·37	280	1	14·28	42	14	...	...		...	...	
„ 2-0 „	128·00	256	13	36·43	72	14	3·23	6	9	43·53	87	0
„ 1-8 „	...	...		...	...		61·87	92	5	122·82	184	3
„ 1-0 „	...	...		49·48	49	14	98·84	99	0	288·66	288	11
„ 0-12 „	...	...		...	...		38·57	28	15	643·77	482	13
„ 0-10 „	...	...		...	...		3·42	2	3	148·42	92	12
Total	680·78	3,296	0	109·59	205	9	205·93	229	0	1,247·20	1,135	7

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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311 The assessment under IV. Unoccupied dry is the potential amount, i.e., it would be levied if the whole area were cultivated. 651 About one-third or one-half of it may have been at one time or another under cultivation, but the area cultivated in any single year is very small.

[427] Rents are generally paid in kind, though of recent years there is a tendency in some cases (e.g., when the tenant lives at a distance) to commute it for money at current market rates.

The village is assessed for land revenue at a permanent charge of Rs. 3,759-3-0, to which must be added (to obtain the total revenue demanded upon the village, for the year) the charges on the 'unoccupied dry land' actually under cultivation in the year. This last will vary from year to year; the possible maximum is above Rs. 1,000. There is a local cess of 1¼ anna in the rupee of kist levied by the Taluk Board for roads, etc.

241 *Agriculture—Area under principal crops.*—The area under this head varies from year to year according as more or less of the 311 unoccupied dry land is taken into cultivation. For the year ending March 1916, the following figures are given in the village accounts but they are less exact than they appear, being partly estimates by the village officials.

Paddy—First crop, 847·20 acres; second crop, 460·51 acres.			
Pulses and grains		122·47	acres.
Oil-seeds, gingelly		155·89	"
" castor		12·59	"
Spices, etc.		87·23	"
Fuel and timber trees...		63·00	"
Betel leaves		5·00	"
Vegetables and garden products made up of—			
Vegetables	59·41		
Plantains and bananas	29·57		
Coconuts	17·00		
Mangoes	23·00		
Arecanuts	9·00		
Jack fruits	8·00		
		145·98	

According to the 'A' Register the area of one crop wet land is 271 acres. In some years it appears that this area is smaller, because part of this is *potential* double-crop land, two crops can be raised on it under favourable conditions. But it may safely be said that some 150 acres of wet land yield only one crop. Such portion of the 'unoccupied dry' land which is cultivated in any year also yields but one crop—even that with difficulty, after lying fallow for one, two or more years.

The minimum available area of two-crop land is 409·73 acres. In some years (according to the weather and seasonal conditions) this may increase to some 525 acres. If irrigation could be extended more of the single crop area could be made to yield two crops.

243 Some fifteen to twenty-five acres may yield three crops, under favourable conditions.

All the wet land is utilized for paddy cultivation. Paddy is sown in May soon after the first rains. By the end of September or the beginning of October the first crop is harvested. The seed-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. [343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's 342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands 556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[357] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village [312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing [515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

357 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside 613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. [764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods [776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of [782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta- [825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might 592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the 427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya 613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as 433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade [439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle- [432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods [431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the 592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to [465] juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

PL. XIV.

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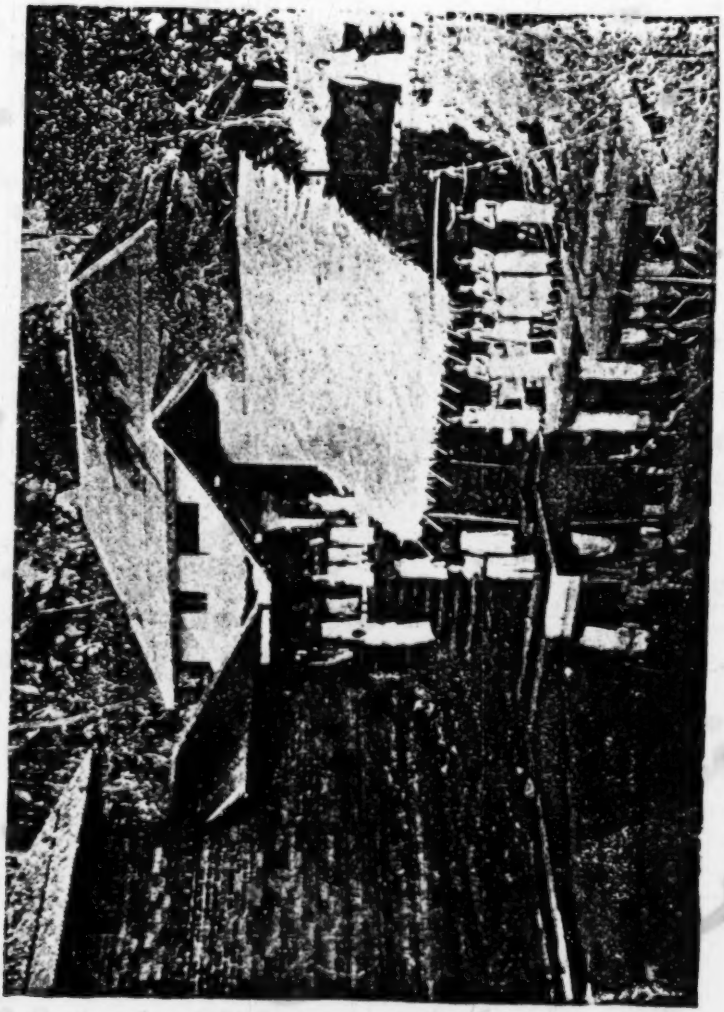

A NAYAR HOME, PANUR, N. MALABAR. THE BATHING TANK AND BATHING SHED IN THE FOREGROUND.

[Facing p. 262]

6:Pawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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[821]

lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank. [491]

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction. [312]

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand. [138]

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp. [701]

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely 133 aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region 288 —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section 182 of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence [464] of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala 133 would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have 487 also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the [508] coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

13 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed [234] available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. [312] Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse [339] repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 6]

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them.

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26.

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon.

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species.

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries.

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 12

AREA IRRIGATED ACCORDING TO SOURCES

(In '000 acres)

Source	*1950-51*	*Per cent to total*	*1956-57*	*Per cent to total*	*Per cent (+)/(—) (3)/(1)*
1	2	3	4	5	6
Government Canals	321	43.15	343	41.38	+ 6.8
Private Canals	68	9.14	71	8.57	+ 4.4
Total Canals	*389*	*52.29*	*414*	*49.96*	*+ 6.4*
Tanks	82	11.03	77	9.28	— 6.1
Wells	26	3.49	29	3.49	+11.5
Other sources	247	33.19	309	37.28	+25.1
TOTAL	*744*	*100.00*	*829*	*100.00*	*+11.4*

249
433

TABLE 13

AREA AND PRODUCTION OF RUBBER IN KERALA

Year	*No. of estates on 31st December*	*Area abandoned during the year* (In acres)	*New extension during the year including re-planting included in areas abandoned in the previous year*	*Total area under rubber during the year* (In acres)	*Area that has been tapped during the year* (In acres)	*Quantity of dry rubber produced* (Tons)
1951	9,026	1,856	4,386	141,750	99,078	13,800
1952	9,186	2,130	3,819	143,448	105,762	15,568
1953	14,231	1,489	1,555	143,254	143,263	19,430
1954	14,336	460	1,769	165,834	17,711	18,768
1955	14,386	2,386	4,963	168,412	152,831	21,605
1956	18,082	4,381	13,785	177,826	150,005	21,079
1957	43,783	4,230	31,699	246,793	167,421	21,496
1958	5,005	2,726	26,558	270,625	169,492	22,159

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar

NĀYAR HOUSE.

342
516
351
312

[facing P. 361]

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

below 70°, the annual range at Cochin is only 6° and the diurnal is about 10°. Apart from the high falls (180 ins. plus) in the hills, rainfall decreases from N to S (Calicut 119, Trivandrum 64 ins.) and the extreme S, around Comorin, falls below 40: here alone are there major irrigation works. But this decrease is balanced by a better seasonal distribution in the S: Trivandrum has 24·85 ins. in June–August, 21·32 in September–November, and 18·23 in December–May—28% in what is an almost completely dry season in nearly all the rest of the sub-continent. 132

Kerala as a whole (including the hills) has an area of about 15,500 sq mls, of which some 20% (mainly on the Travancore hills and foothills) is forested and 45% NSA. The TSA is about 15–20% greater than NSA in Cochin and Malabar. The question of 'culturable waste' is, as usual, difficult; but it seems that in the alluvial and lateritic zones respectively about 75–80 and 65–70% of the total area, or 90 and 80% of the 'cultivable', are in fact cultivated.[44] It is clear that what is left will be marginal and that there is very little room for expansion. 311

Rice is dominant, occupying about 260,000 out of a TSA of 550,000 cropped ac. in Cochin, 860,000 out of 1,790,000 in Malabar, but only 655,000 out of 2,200,000 in Travancore. The area under rubber, tea, and pepper in the Travancore hills accounts for this in part; but in Cochin and Malabar a good deal of rice is grown on the lateritic hills after burning the jungle; the heavier rainfall has probably a bearing on this. The local variations in cropping, analysed in detail in Kuriyan's 1942 paper, deserve summarising: 311 241

(i) In the extreme S rice is grown by canal- and in Shencottah taluk (E of the hills and really outside the region) by tank-irrigation. With intensive watering and careful transplanting crops can be obtained both in September–October and in February–March. In Chittur taluk—the Cochin outlier in Palghat—there is also a little irrigation by *anicuts* or weirs feeding canals, and here cotton and groundnuts are grown. These three areas are strongly influenced by Tamil methods. 311 312

(ii) Along the backwaters (*punja* and *cole* areas) the problem is not to get water on the land but to get it off. These areas are divided into blocks of up to 50 (exceptionally 100) ac., bounded by double dykes enclosing a channel. From July to September–October the ground is submerged, sometimes to a depth of several feet; after the rains the water is lifted into the bounding channels by Persian wheels; latterly oil-driven and still more recently electric pumps powered from Pallivasal have been introduced. The land lies three or four feet below the water-level in the channels, and sluices regulate various inundations during the growing season. Should the bunds be burst the half-drowned crop may be reaped from boats by cutting off the heads.

(iii) Along the backwaters on the Cochin-Malabar boundary the soil on areas liable to salt-water inundation is heaped up into mounds about one foot

[44] Kuriyan (1938), 133; (1942).

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311 high and five feet round, on which the paddy is sown just before the rains.
312 When the monsoon bursts the surrounding water is freshened and transplanting takes place. This is a rather precarious method, illustrating the devices enforced by severe population pressure.

(iv) In the wet lowlands above the backwaters more normal methods prevail, but the early onset of the rains enables planting to take place in April–May and harvest in September; the continuance of the rains then often permits a poor second crop (not necessarily paddy) harvested in January; very occasionally a third is possible.

241 After rice, coconut is the chief crop, accounting for nearly 1 m. ac., typically, of course, in the sandy coastal strip but also on alluvial loams and (with more careful preparation) on laterites. In Travancore the coconut acreage is nearly equal to that of rice; in Quilon taluk, indeed, it covers 85% of cropped area. After rice as the essential food, the coconut palm is the basis of life in Kerala: "Apart from the several uses of the chief products, viz., coir, copra, coconut oil, oil-cake, the hollowed trunk serves as a canoe, the nut forms a staple article of diet, the leaves may be used for many of the purposes of paper, are frequently employed as thatch and for the manufacture of brooms, baskets, umbrellas, tattis [screens kept soaked to cool rooms], and fans, and utilised as crude torches in a dried form, or burnt as fuel, as it is [*sic*] or in the form of charcoal. In addition, the fresh or fermented
273 juice of the stem is consumed as a beverage, by evaporation it is made into jaggery and by subsequent treatment even sugar is obtainable. When distilled, the toddy becomes arrack and finally vinegar."[45] Of the "industrial" workers of Kerala—most of them, of course, cottage workers—about a third
[464] are in various processes connected with coconut products, and of these
[286] two-thirds are women. The coir 'yarn' is almost entirely cottage-produced, its working-up into mats and so on largely a small factory industry.

The most important other crops (apart from plantation rubber and tea
311 in the hills), are cassava (tapioca) and pepper, mainly in the foothills. The
241 former is grown as a food crop on poorer lateritic soils; pepper is perhaps the chief peasant-produced cash crop after coconut. Cereals other than paddy are negligible, as are oilseeds except for a little sesamum (gingelly), often as a third crop on the higher wet-rice lands. Nearly every homestead has its plantains and other fruit trees, and ginger and the betel vine, with its associated areca palm, are also grown widely but in tiny patches.

Tapioca deserves special mention. Introduced about 1920, it is grown on the lateritic soils ("about as attractive for agriculture as railway ballast") in tiny holdings by the poorest of the poor. As Gourou points out, there is a sort of social inversion: the better-off rice farmers in the valley-bottoms, and a hundred feet or so above them a very wretched (largely Christian) peasantry.

[45] Quoted in Kuriyan, 1937 (Vol. XI), 286. Cf. P. K. Paniker, "The Coconut—its Cultivation on the Malabar Coast", *IGJ* XVIII (1943), 78–88.

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Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks, [46] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the [312]
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[46] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 269.

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THE COCHIN STATE.

WATAKANCHERY (TALAPILLI TALUK).

[*By S. Subbarama Aiyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

An absence of villages, as they are to be found in the east of the peninsula, is a characteristic of Malabar generally, including the States of Travancore and Cochin and the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency. The Malayalis are averse to having their houses congregated together. But the Taluk of Palghat is an exception. It is situated in the gap between the Nilgiris on the north, and the Palnis and other high ranges on the south, and is the natural line of communication between the west coast and the eastern plains, utilized by the South Indian Railway. All the villages in the Palghat taluk are designed in a manner that suggests that the original immigrants, coming from the east, were accustomed to an intense form of corporate life. They have a scientific and regular plan, and the description of any one of them will serve for all. 361

The Brahmans live in closely packed houses and their colony is called a '*gramam*' or '*agraharam*.' There is invariably either a temple at one end, or the streets of the *gramam* radiate in all directions from a temple in the midmost place. There are also wells in the street common to all the villagers. There is scarcity of water in summer in almost all the villages of Palghat as they are situated on a high level and rocky ground. The *gramam* is surrounded by the *tarai* in which all the other castes live. Artisans and agricultural labourers live there in houses built singly, but the weavers generally inhabit hovels built in rows. People of the same caste and profession congregate in particular blocks of the *tarai*. The *tarai* is occupied by the richest janmi as well as the poorest day labourer. The *tarai* has its own *kavu* or temple in which the low caste people conduct their worship. The *gramam* with its adjoining *tarai* is set up on rather elevated ground in the midst of paddy fields or on the slope of an adjoining hill so that every available acre of land may be cultivated. All houses in the *gramam* are built in the same way. From the street you step into a verandah whose extent corresponds to the whole width of the house; hence into a small room, the *neli*, to the right of which is a granary. The *neli* leads you into a rectangular hall, in the middle of which is a yard exposed to the sky. To the right of this is another big hall separated from the other by a long window crossed by beams. The store-room is on the street side of this, the kitchen on the back side. The kitchen has a verandah abutting on the garden. A cow-shed is erected at the other end of the garden. The house may or may not possess upstairs rooms; these usually adjoin the street. [312] 342

In that part of Malabar in which Watakanchery is situated the general plan of the Palghat type of house is followed, with modifications, by the *Tamil* Brahmans. The Malayali Brahmans, known as Nambudris, and the Nayars, have their houses surrounded by big compounds. Entering from the compound you step into a portico which thrusts itself forward from the general structure of the house.

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566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

● 312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

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454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[426] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings 525 by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts subscribed by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of persons agree that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by periodical instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, should take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all being returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some [301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* I.e., on the death of a man his property is equally divided among his sons. Ed.]

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562 women can speak to other caste people, male or female, without breach of decorum. Purdah is observed among the Nambudri Brahman women.

●312 Every house contains a well from which water is taken for drinking and domestic purposes. Water is specially good in the village since the ground forms a good filter. Wells are generally not very deep. Few people boil the water before drinking. Generally a raised mound is erected round the well to keep bad water out; nevertheless, during the rainy season water from the compounds runs to the wells with the result that the wells get extremely muddy, but the water is used without compunction by the people. Tank water is used only for bathing.

871 *Education.*—There are only three schools in the whole village, one for boys which has this year (1916) been raised to a high school, a Church school for Christian boys, and a vernacular school for girls up to the primary standard. The high school is a spacious building recently constructed at a cost of nearly Rs. 20,000. There is a prescribed code of study, and pupils are prepared for the School Final Examination which is conducted by the State. Brahman girls never attend the school after the age of 12. But all of them learn now to read and write the vernacular which is Malayalam in these parts, though the language the Brahmans use in their houses is Tamil, with an intonation markedly changed from the Tamil in the eastern parts. I subjoin below the strength of the respective classes in the high school and the girls' primary school. The Church school is maintained by the Christians in their church for their exclusive use. It is classed as a primary school.

Sirkar High School, Watakancheri.

	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Form IV	17	7	3	...	1	28
,, III (a)	9	7	3	...	2	21
,, ,, (b) ...	10	9	3	...	3	25
,, II (a)	13	11	1	...	3	28
,, ,, (b)	8	17	12	...	2	39
,, I (a)	11	7	4	...	2	24
,, ,, (b)	10	9	3	...	2	24
Standard IV (a)	7	10	4	1	2	24
,, ,, (b)	10	7	5	...	1	23
,, III (a)	10	20	6	1	1	38
,, ,, (b)	16	12	6	3	2	39
,, II (a)	6	10	9	...	6	31
,, ,, (b)	7	15	7	...	3	32
,, I (a)	16	16	2	...	3	37
,, ,, (b) ...	11	11	6	2	4	34
Infants (a)	9	13	8	4	6	40
,, (b) ...	9	18	6	1	6	40
Total ...	179	189	88	12	49	527

Note.—The Muhammadans are very backward in point of education. So too the lower castes of Hindus.

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he brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin
family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is
oose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not
much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it
with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it
involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are
three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the
carcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the
water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the
ame. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
chool managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls'
School and the other five are elementary schools, one being
Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress
being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curri-
culum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a
little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little
Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet
and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and
there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at
Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for
employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village
for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within
recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private
persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes
study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This
lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original
and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed
new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere
visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to
know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the
examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully
confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor.
He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the
jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads,
Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he
represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the
King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

Between ages	41—50	11
"	51—60	9
"	61—70	9
"	71—80	10
84 years of age		1
92 "		1
		156

165

It is to be noted that infant deaths are more than half the total deaths and number 87 out of 156 last year.

This information is not fully accurate because the people do not report births and deaths generally to the village officials and consequently they have to ascertain the facts by inquiring and it is possible that some births or deaths escape their notice. The ignorance of the people and the unnecessary fear of post-mortem examination in the case of deaths explain their silence. Probably a considerable number of infant deaths escape report.

Paracheri.—Three families, 15 members.—7 women, 8 men.

Number of dead for the last ten years—

Family No. 1	7
" " 2	5
" " 3	4

The village lana—

	ACS.
Garden lands	792½
Wet lands	360¾
Dry "	135⅝
Government lands	14⅛
Inam lands	201¾
Total	1,504 17/24

311

There are no waste lands.

The principal fruit trees are mangoes, jacks, plantains, and there are not many though sufficient for the village consumption. 245

There are tanks and wells in plenty. Drinking water is got from wells; and the tanks are used for bathing and for agricultural purposes. 312

Occupation of land and Agriculture.—The number of kanomdars in the village is 385. The large kanomdars do not generally cultivate the land themselves. 423

The land is divided into small strips, each strip containing from 50 to 1,000 coconut palms. The large kanomdar takes his residence on one of these strips, and he himself cultivates the particular strip where he is, and gives to small tenants the remaining strips belonging to him. Consequently only about 180 acres of the whole village are cultivated by the large kanomdars. In addition to these lands three kanomdars cultivate all of their land. Two are Muhammadans and one a Tiyya. The area belonging to these three kanomdars is about 134 acres. The remaining land, 1,200 odd acres, is given to tenants to cultivate. There are also between 200 and 300 small kanomdars belonging to the agricultural classes, who hold land insufficient for their maintenance and also cultivate the lands of big kanomdars. A number of the big [245]

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423 The desam contains 130 survey fields in all. The settlement
651 was first introduced in this desam in fasli 1313.

The following table shows the nature and extent of the holdings and revenue as given in the 'A' register of the village:—

Holdings and Revenue.

Fasli.	Occupied area. Wet. Extent.	Wet. Assessment.	Garden. Extent.	Garden. Assessment.	Dry. Extent.	Dry. Assessment.	Total. Extent.	Total. Assessment.	Deduct waste remitted. Extent.	Deduct waste remitted. Assessment.	Remainder charged. Actual cultivation.	Waste charged.	Total extent charged.	Assessment.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.			ACS.		ACS.	RS. A.
1313	445·27	2,226 5	209·43	502	197·16	157 14	851·86	2,886 3	...	...	851·86	...	851·86	2,886 3

Fasli—*cont.*	Second crop. Extent.	Second crop. Charge.	Miscellaneous revenue.	Total ryotwari demand excluding waste remitted.	Deduct remission other than waste already shown in column 11. Occasional remission other than for waste.	Other remissions and deductions.	Total.	Net demand for the year.	Amount collected within year. Arrear.	Current.
	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)
	ACS.	RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.
1313	8·96	13 11	96 5	2,996 3	...	851 12	851 12	2,144 7	...	2,144 7

● 312 The ryots mostly depend on the mercy of the monsoon for the watering of fields. But throughout the summer season beginning from the end of December to the end of July, watering is carried on from wells and tanks, especially in the case of garden cultivation. Tanks and wells are not sufficient and those existing are not deep enough and frequently dry up towards March.

241 The chief crops cultivated are coconut, arecanut, paddy, gingelly, pulses, horsegram, plantain and jack.

231 Pasturage is obtainable for the cattle on the unoccupied dry lands. Water for the cattle is obtained from channels, private tanks and wells.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

There is hardly any public tank. One stream (channel) flows along the northern boundary of the desam during rainy seasons when the fields become flooded. But its utility is limited since with the summer the whole channel is dried up. There are private wells in all gardens and sometimes in the fields of corn. But they are shallow for the most part and the water-supply is inadequate. The ryots who are wretchedly poor cannot afford to utilise modern progress in the field of well-boring, nor are they conversant with such developments. 312

There are woods and forests near the desam as we have before mentioned, but they are of no practical use to the people. The forest, which is outside the boundary limit of this desam, is under Government supervision and people are not allowed to cut trees. Other resources of the forest, moreover, are hardly taken advantage of, partly by the general apathy of the cultivator for improvement and partly by its being situated sufficiently far to dissuade them from incurring the necessary loss involved. At the same time it is in a way an influence to the ryots' detriment, for tigers, boars, etc., which the Akalanum and Mattur hills breed occasionally, make nocturnal depredations on the ryots' stock and corn fields. The peasantry are helpless against these enemies. 137 136

Occupation of land.—The private jenmam ryotwari holdings during the year of settlement (fasli 1313) are classified as follows :— 423 427 [651]

Pattadars paying	Number.			Extent.		Assessment.	
	Single	Joint.	Total.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.
Re. 1 and less	2	...	2	...	50	1	8
Rs. 10 and less but over Re. 1	7	2	9	7	71	33	14
" 30 " " " 10 ...	3	2	5	18	21	96	7
" 50 " " " 30 ...	1	...	1	7	8	37	5
" 100 " " " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 250 " " " 100 ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 500 " " " 250 ...	1	...	1	99	56	401	13
" 1,000 " " " 500 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1,000 ...	1	...	1	718	80	2,315	4
Total ...	15	4	19	851	86	2,886	3

Out of 851·86 acres no less than 818·36 belong to the two jenmi landlords. There are no occupants of Government jenmam ryotwari land in the same year.

Almost all kanomdars are themselves cultivators. The two jenmis, who are Brahmans by caste, and nearly 10 other families

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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311 *Land.*—

	ACS.
Wet land	681·07
Occupied dry land	231·12
Unoccupied dry land	1,221·92
Garden land	109·59

137 Woodlands cover an area of about 150 acres. Shrubs and thickets, as well as rank undergrowth are found almost everywhere. Big trees, scattered and in groves, are also abundant.

Fruit trees and scattered shade trees are abundant. Among the former may be mentioned the mango, jack, coconut and areca-nut palms, the palmyra palm (yielding toddy), etc. There are numerous kinds of shade trees, many of which can be used as timber. Among timber trees specially may be noted the teak and the jack-tree.

312 Tanks and wells are very numerous. Wells indeed are too numerous to be enumerated. Every house has one or more and there are several in the fields, about one in an acre. There are more than 50 tanks, though some of them are mere ponds, dry in most months. A few tanks yield water unfailingly for irrigation on a small rate. They may be 6 to 20 feet deep and of varying lengths, from, say 10 to 100 feet. Some are of irregular shape. The wells are either circular or rectangular and from 10 to 40 feet deep--often deeper still. If circular their diameter measures from 5 to 10 feet and if rectangular they are from 6 to 10 feet broad and 8 to 16 feet long. A few are dry in summer, but many wells yield an abundant and unfailing supply of water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

There is a small channel passing through the village which is full during the rains, but mostly dry in the hot months. A dam is however put across it in some places and the scanty water stored up for future use. But there is not any very considerable quantity.

427 *Occupation of land.*—Most of the cultivated area is sublet to tenants. This is characteristic of Malabar, where most of the landlords do not themselves cultivate the land, but let it to others on short leases of 12 years called *kanom* leases. The kanom lease-holders in turn sublet the land, though a few of them actually cultivate it.

There are nominally 50 patta-holders and all of them come under the head of non-cultivating landowners. The richest have no particular occupation. Many are Nambudiri Brahmans not resident in the village, and they have comfortable positions as priests, preceptors, etc. The biggest landowners, who almost monopolise the land, are two or three in number and they live in ease on the revenues of their lands.

The great body of tenants own no land; they simply rent it on kanom lease or are tenants at will. There may be one or two among the landowners who are also the kanom tenants of some other landlord. But as a rule the kanom tenant owns no land.

There is a growing body of landless agricultural labourers.

By the census of 1901 there were 383 landholders (tenants) in that year. This number declined to 258 in 1917, paying land-revenue as stated below (note that the superior occupier contracts with his tenants that the latter pay the kist).

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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556 own most of the cultivable land in the village. This family draws an income of rather more than 10,000 paras of paddy from the village, husking it in the village and using it to feed a vast household of Nambudri priests and students, and maintain a choultry. It employs a Sanskrit pandit, whose time, as the demand for Sanskrit teaching diminishes, is partly taken up with the recital to the young students of Puranic stories to which the unseen ladies of the household listen eagerly.

312 *Water-supply.*—The water-supply is abundant and is obtained from deep wells and tanks. Water from deep wells alone is used for drinking purposes. Owing to the rocky nature of the subsoil some wells are dry in summer. Each house has one or more wells; it costs about Rs. 20 to bore an ordinary deep well. The quality of well water is excellent and is an asset to the village. All people [515] bathe every day in tanks, sometimes both in the morning and evening, especially Brahmans. The villagers are personally very clean and tidy.

871 *Education.*—One elementary school, started (very recently) and managed by the philanthropic Nambudri landlord of the place, gives free instruction to boys and girls of all castes up to the fifth standard. The school has two tiled buildings, one having an area of 72 by 20 feet, inside, and a verandah of the same length which is 9 feet broad, and the other having an area of 15 by 18 feet. Both are well ventilated and well situated and have a good appearance. There is a small flower garden in front. The school is provided with the necessary furniture, maps, and pictures, and is as far as it goes one of the best equipped of such schools. It teaches reading, writing and arithmetic, music, drawing and gardening. About the practical, as distinct from the cultural value of this education, one must say (like the Scotchman) "I have my doots." There are now no less than 5 "qualified" teachers; how one wishes that "qualified" meant much more than it does mean in educational language! They are so ill-paid (Rs. 7 to 15 per month) that it is hopeless to expect more capable men to be forthcoming or to take real interest in the work of the school. As it is, I know that at least one master is interested in the work. One hundred and twenty-six boys and 42 girls, I am informed, attend the school more or less regularly. These are drawn from all classes, except the very lowest like Cherumas and Paraiyas. The vast majority however are caste Hindus—all the girls are—and come from the Nayar and Brahman families. One could wish for greater regularity in their attendance. But they complain of having work to do at home, in assisting their parents, or they are sometimes too hungry to attend school. They are as a rule too poor to buy their own books or slates and these have to be provided by the school. Numerous prizes of books, slates, etc., are given by liberal villagers and the manager every year, to encourage the pupils to persist and to attract others. The school is steadily growing.

The average duration of school life is about four years. Many students leave before that period owing to the necessity of working 871 for their livelihood.

212 About 18 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular. This

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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land is the chief source of a livelihood and industries do not exist. 178
What is the conclusion? The increasing emigration to other 511
places points in the same direction. The fact that the emigrants [167]
return as soon as they earn something shows that they are
not likely to leave home unless hard-pressed. The increasing indebtedness of the villagers and the growth in the number of assignments and mortgages are other evidence. But population has increased only 7 per cent between 1901 and 1911. Wages are very low and have not risen in proportion to prices. Prices of food-stuffs have in many cases doubled within my own personal knowledge. Articles like milk, ghee, etc., have doubled in price within the last ten years. The price of grain has risen enormously in a generation. I have been told on good authority that some fifty years ago grain was four times as cheap as to-day. Only the land-owning classes and those who have surplus grain to sell have profited from this high rise. Many independent owners of land have been forced to sell their land to keep themselves free from debt and to pay the Government taxes. Taxation is much heavier: when the settlement was introduced into the village some twelve years ago the assessment was doubled and many villagers suffered. Against all this evidence of deterioration one must place the improvement in the standard of living of some classes and the growth of education, though unsatisfactory in many respects.

As for possibilities of economic improvement and the opportunities therefor, it may be said that the former are many, the latter few (as things now are) unless the villagers get help from outside—from the Government. In the sphere of agriculture improvement is badly needed, though the means of bringing it seem to be lacking, methods of cultivation could be improved and the use of scientific manure introduced. But all this requires capital and that is conspicuous by its absence. The advantage must be practically demonstrated to the cultivator and to the landlord, who alone can take the initiative herein. It seems to be impossible to introduce scientific farming so long as the system of scattered and strip holdings continues. The landlord must get his [423]
lands continuous; as it is as many as half a dozen landlords may have strips of land in one survey division of half a dozen acres. A man holding 10 acres may have it in 20 parcels, a distance of a mile from one plot to another is not uncommon.

About the possibility of extending the area of irrigated land 312 ●
only an expert could speak with confidence. As it is, out of a total area of 2,380 acres only 680·78 acres are wet land and 110 acres garden land—the rest coming under 'unoccupied or occupied dry.' It would be a very good thing if more of this could be brought under cultivation than at present. It does not appear that many more wells could be sunk with advantage. At present the wet and garden lands abound in wells, the 'dry' land being without any. It would not pay to sink wells in it and take out water according to the existing methods. If cheaper and more efficient methods are possible, then it would be worth attempting.

Something might be done—must be done, if the village is to 600
improve—to ameliorate the general condition of the villagers and

241 Large plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and
313 cinnamon have been developed, chiefly by British, in the highlands in the past hundred years, and in the forests teak provides a basic industry.

132 The rainfall is very heavy, especially in the north where the mountains encroach nearer to the sea. Through most of the area it varies between 75" and 170"; in the extreme south it drops to 32". Most of the rain comes with the southwest monsoon between May and September; lighter rains occur with the northeast monsoon in late November and December. Humidity is
[243] always very high. In most areas two wet paddy crops are taken in a year, in February and September. The temperature varies from 70° to 90°, and is hottest in April just before the monsoon breaks.

[4] (2) Political Divisions

631 From the establishment of British supremacy in 1792, until July 1949, the Malabar Coast was divided into three political areas. In the north is the Malabar District of Madras State, in area 5,790 square miles. It is governed in internal affairs by the legislative assembly of Madras, and is under a Collector (of land revenue) who lives in Calicut, the capital of the district. The port of Cochin is also administered as part of Malabar District. In the centre was Cochin State, in area 1,493 square miles. It was governed internally by the Maharaja of Cochin, assisted by the Cochin legislative assembly, whose headquarters was in Ernakulam, the capital. In the south was Travancore State with an area of 7,625 square miles, under the Maharaja

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%).

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth.

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging.

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

137 distributed over the year. The high degree of rainfall, old geological formation and
132 maritime climate have largely been responsible for the luxuriant forest growth in Kerala. Trees get the full benefit of moisture, depth of soil and protection from frost and drought. For these reasons, forests in Kerala also possess the advantage of a long growing season.

137 4.5 Most of the forest area lies in the high ranges on the eastern border of the
311 State and in the area adjacent to these. Only a few strips are found in the coastal plain. The forest area is, however, distributed over all the districts of the State. Since the forests run across the whole of eastern border while the districts in the State occur almost longitudinally, all districts, except Alleppey have a good proportion of their area under forests. The districts of Quilon and Trichur have as high as 45.2 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively of their area under forests. (Table 23) 2/λ

137 4.6 The wide variations in climatic and topographical conditions in the State have resulted in a large variety of forests. With the exception of the desert, the truly temperate and the alpine types, all classes of forests are found in Kerala. In addition to the natural forests, Kerala has also got artificial plantations of valuable species. The State has been a pioneer in this sphere.

4.7 Among the natural forests, deciduous forests comprise 80 per cent of the growth. The rest is of the evergreen type. The evergreens are found mostly in the higher ranges above a height of 2,500 feet since they require a cool climate for their growth. The various types of forests found in the State are given below:

(1) *Evergreen Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet evergreen forests,
(*b*) Southern tropical semi-evergreen forests,
(*c*) Mountain wet sub-tropical evergreen forests, and
(*d*) The temperate Shola-Grasslands.

(2) *Deciduous Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet Deciduous forests and
(*b*) Tropical dry Deciduous Forests.

3/3 4.8 Among the evergreen types, most of the species are utilized in the manufacture
[322] of plywood and packing cases, which is a flourishing industry in the State. Pali Kulamavn and Vellapine are some of the well known plywood species. Anjali, which is used for boat-building and mahagony utilized for furniture, are two other important economic species found among the evergreens. Of late, a number of other evergreen species have sprung into prominence and are now finding economic uses. Since markets for these are growing, it is planned to extract these newer species also on a commercial scale.

4.9 Teak and rosewood are the most important species found among the deciduous forests. Vanteak, Rosewood, Poola and Charopine are some of the other important species belonging to this category. These species are chiefly useful in making furniture and in building and construction work. A detailed list of the trees and other major produce found in Kerala along with their present uses is given in Appendix 5. 2/λ A list of minor produce is given in Appendix 6. 3/λ

2/λ [Table 23, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed -- Ana]
2, 3/λ [see pp. 329-333, category 11b -- Analyst]

Artificial Plantations

4.10 As mentioned already, in addition to the natural forests, Kerala also ranks high among the Indian States in respect of artificially raised plantations of valuable species. In fact the teak plantations were first raised in Nilambur as far back as 1842. The planting work had been regularly carried out with the result that there were about 75,000 acres under this species at the end of 1959. 245

4.11 Although Kerala can claim to have been a pioneer in the matter of teak plantations, a beginning with the other plantations has been made only very recently with the onset of the era of planning in the State. During the First Plan period forestry could be paid little attention. Effective beginning may, therefore, be said to have been made only during the Second Plan. Some of the plantations which have been recently started in the State are:

(i) *Cashewnut plantations*: Covering an area of 1,100 acres.
(ii) *Softwood plantations*: An area of 9,220 acres had been covered by the end of the Second Plan.
(iii) *Wattle plantations*: A beginning for raising this very valuable tanbark tree has been made recently in the Hamilton Plateau of the Devicolam range.
(iv) *Eucalyptus grandis*: Plantations of this species were started in the high ranges in Peermade and Munnar and have been showing very encouraging results. They form the raw materials for making pulp, which is used for manufacturing newsprint and rayon.

It will thus be seen that Kerala has made considerable progress in its plantation programmes and leads the other States, especially in respect of its teak plantations.

Forest Produce—Its Extraction and Utilization

4.12 Total quantity of major forest produce extracted from the forests of Kerala during 1958-59 through Government Agency as well as through purchasers is given below: 313

MAJOR FOREST PRODUCE EXTRACTED FROM KERALA, 1958-59

	Government Agency (*cu. feet*)	*Purchasers*
Rough logs	3,950,567	5,06,079 c.ft.
Rough poles	410,202	1,088 c.ft.
Sawn and Squared timber	144,802	—
Fuel	22,791	25,576 tons
Miscellaneous	1,626	Rs. 1,224,460 worth

The gross revenue through actual sales amounted to Rs. 2.44 crores and royalties on coupes sold to purchasers earned another Rs. 0.64 crores. [434]

4.13 Extraction and stocking in the depots are undertaken by contractors but the actual disposal is done departmentally by means of auction. Standing coupes are also

313 sold to purchasers for extraction of major forest produce but the extent of this is very limited in Kerala, Whereas for the whole of India about 75 per cent of major forest produce is extracted by the purchasers, in Kerala only about 15 per cent of forest is extracted by the purchasers directly, the rest being entrusted to departmental extraction.

[432] 4.14 The procedure in case of sale of timber and poles is to offer them first to the Government Departments and to sell only the surplus by open auction. The result is that while the Government Departments are able to obtain timber at reasonable negotiated rates, the trade obtains timber at very heavy rates.

4.15 In case of firewood, Messrs Forest Industries (Travancore) Ltd. (F.I.T.) have been given a concession for extraction of firewood for supply to M/s Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Ltd., Alwaye. The latter are now switching on to oil and, therefore, other uses shall have to be found for firewood extracted by the F.I.T. whose concession has still to run a number of years. Firewood supplies to the main cities come from the forest coupes which are sold to purchasers in auction after extraction of the timber. No area is managed purely for raising firewood as in some other States of India.

4.16 Unlike the major forest produce whose removal is done mainly through the Government agency, extraction of minor forest produce is mostly done through the purchasers. As may be seen from Appendix 6 Government earned only Rs. 50,000 as [651] revenue through sale of minor produce while it earned about Rs. 5 lakhs in the form of royalties from purchasers.

Silvicultural Systems

313 4.17 Kerala is unique in having working plans for all the Government owned 655 forest areas in the State. Since all the Government forests are managed under the latest scientific systems, there is hardly any danger of over-felling in the public sector forests.

4.18 With a wide variety of forests, both natural and artificial, the systems of silviculture practised are suited to the types. The Selection System[1] is the one that is being applied in all the evergreen forests and only the trees of little economic importance are extracted under the simple felling rules. The complex nature of the vegetation and difficulty of regeneration of evergreen species, together with the danger of heavy wild growth have caused these forests to be worked under the Selection System.

4.19 In the other timber forests clear-felling with natural regeneration, supplemented by artificial planting, is being undertaken. The climate and soil conditions are so favourable that there is generally no difficulty in obtaining natural regeneration. The only exception, and it is quite an important one, exists in case of the evergreen forests which are being worked more and more heavily as demand for new species arises in the market. Their regeneration is not keeping pace with the removals.

1. Under the Selection System trees are selected for felling uniformly all over the forest. Under simple felling rules patches of forests are completely cleared in rotation irrespective of age, type or growth of trees contained in that patch.

SOME FORESTRY PROBLEMS

Acquisition of Private Forests

4.20 It has been mentioned that forests of Kerala are one of the best managed ones. But this is true only of the reserved forests under Government jurisdiction. In the Malabar area there are about 5 lakh acres of private forests which are maintained very unsatisfactorily. Unlike the reserved forests, there is no adequate protective staff for the care of these forests and no attention is paid to their regeneration or management on scientific lines. This has naturally resulted in an unwarranted depletion of forest wealth in the private forest areas. In the interests of adequate preservation of forest wealth, immediate steps are necessary to acquire the private forests and bring them within unified forest management under the control of the Forest Department. A provision for acquiring the private forests was made during the Second Plan but their acquisition could not be carried out. This must be effected during the Third Plan period.

The Problem of Encroachment

4.21 There is one other disquitening feature about forests in Kerala. Such is the pressure of population in the State that inroads are being made into the forest areas, especially where forests occur in the midland region. This has taken the form of Government deforestation of forest areas in the interests of Grow More Food Campaign. In addition, there have also been illicit encroachments and these areas are still under cultivation, although the State Government have declared them to be revertible. The extent of these areas is not very large compared to the total area under forests. About 9,750 acres fall within the former category and 16,500 acres belong to the category of revertible areas. The gravity of the encroachment situation arises from the fact that in case a lenient view is taken, these will prove a serious menace to proper maintenance of forest potential in the long run.

Regeneration of Evergreen Forests

4.22 The problems referred to above were of an administrative nature; but forestry in Kerala is faced with one or two urgent technical problems as well. One of these is to find out some way of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen species.

4.23 Of late a number of evergreen species have found new uses in the manufacture of plywood logs, railway sleepers, telegraph poles, etc., and these species have all come into prominence. Full potential of the existing evergreen forests cannot, however, be tapped since their natural regeneration takes time. The forest department has, therefore, got to keep control over the working of these forests.

4.24 In case of some species because of difficulties connected with regeneration, there has been a shortage of supply. The problem of regeneration of these forests is intimately connected with the problem of light. Regeneration requires light to

313 be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means [65] of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

137 4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious [65] menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilisers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

*433 162 464 4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of [245] population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

433 313 654 4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. An amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

* [Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed! – Analyst]

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in the early years has been due to the fact that either the sanctions from the Government were received late or the staff was not appointed in time. The shortfall in performance during the Second Plan period emphasises the need for devoting greater attention to forest development programmes during the Third Plan period.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY

4.29 Forests are an important source of raw material for industry in Kerala. Their importance is brought out by the fact that forest-based industries are more predominant in the economy of Kerala compared to the position they occupy in the industrial structure of India as a whole.[1]

4.30 In view of the important position occupied by the forest-based industries in Kerala, the policy towards forest resources should aim at long-run enhancement of the forest potential so that an increasing surplus of raw materials could be made available to industry. Forest development policy in the State should, therefore, be guided by the following objectives :

(*i*) Utilization of resources as yet untapped.
(*ii*) Raising the long-run forest potential through:
  (*a*) acceleration of the process of conversion of poor deciduous forests into valuable teak and softwood plantations.
  (*b*) extensive reclamation of grasslands on the basis of experimental Eucalyptus plantings carried out during the Second Plan.
(*iii*) Incorporation of technical improvements in the methods of logging, etc., so that wastage could be reduced. These aspects are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Existing Potential

4.31 In Kerala, the existing potential of forest resources is being exploited comparatively much better than in many other States of India. Due to easy accessibility provided by the numerous rivers and roads, many of which serve the forests, extraction has been very much facilitated. The importance of the role of river transport in exploitation of forest wealth is shown by the fact that two big centres of forest produce, viz., Kallai and Chalakudy are both located by the side of rivers. Although the general picture as regards exploitation of existing resources is quite bright, some pockets still remain untapped. These are discussed below :

4.32 (*i*) *Bamboo Resources* : In spite of a large bamboo potential in the State, this source remains completely unutilized for industrial purposes. Out of the total available supply, about two-thirds is utilized for local requirements of construction, etc. The position regarding the quantum of surplus available is as follows.

[1] See Chapter on Industries.

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[428]
[438]

AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	38,347	..	..
Koshikode	20,045	61,479	14,735	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,336	20,908	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,634	2,890	3,586
Nemmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,467*	*172,878*	*64,100*	*143,353*

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Kerala.

[384] 4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

313 289 4.36 (*ii*) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

*433 314 4.37 (*iii*) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

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number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [911]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

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433 in the following table :
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Type of Plantation	Third Plan		Fourth Plan		Fifth Plan	
	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)	Physical targets (acres)	Financial targets (Rs. lakhs)
Teak	20,000	15.0	40,000	30.0	60,000	45.0
Softwood	15,000	15.0	30,000	30.0	50,000	50.0
Grassland Sholas[a] (Eucalyptus grandis)	10,000	75.0	15,000	102.5	—	—
Burma Bamboo[b]	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Cashewnut	1,000	0.5	2,000	1.0	3,000	1.5
Casurina and Matchwood on Coastal Perrumbavur	1,000	2.0	2,000	4.0	3,000	6.0
Wattle	5,200	7.8	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	53,200	115.8	91,000	168.0	119,000	104.0

[a] All grassland sholas would be afforested by the end of the Fourth Plan.
[b] Most of these plantations in the Fourth and Fifth Plans will be in the private forests acquired in Malabar.

SOME TECHNICAL IMPROVEMENTS

4.54 The existing logging techniques and modes of extraction entail a lot of wastage of timber. Since there is a general shortage of timber, supply of timber from the forest areas could be enhanced by incorporating some of the improvements disscussed below.

Proper Seasoning Facilities

4.55 A large amount of timber at present goes waste or is used as fuel. This could be more economically utilized if proper seasoning and preservation facilities are introduced. Seasoning and preservation plants should be encouraged in all areas where there is a concentration of saw mills. This would make possible utilization of a large variety of secondary timber through upgrading them and making them commercially profitable. Government departmental rules may have to be modified to insist on the use of seasoned timber in place of the more valuable teak timber in all Government construction works.

Better Logging Techniques

4.56 The present methods of logging need to be mechanized, especially as a good network of roads exists through which mechanical saws, etc., can be taken to the actual coupes. The techniques currently employed are antiquated and involve a lot of wastage. With improved techniques, the extent of wastage could be reduced. The extraction of timber by elephants in Malabar should be continued as it has proved to be cheap and quite efficient.

Forest Roads

4.37 Although in respect of overall position regarding forest roads, Kerala is comparatively better off and accessibility is quite good, there are some remote areas for which new roads are required. Opening up of these areas through forest roads would permit tapping of certain pockets of forest resources uptil now lying untapped. Some of these important roads which have been suggested for being taken up during the Third Plan are :

(a) *Roads from Dhon to Palamalai*—to tap the Chenat Nair reserved forests and to make Palamalai a summer resort.

(b) *Extension of the Silent Valley roads to the borders of the Nilgiris district*—to tap the rich resources of the Silent Valley reserved forest and the improvement of its existing natural regeneration.

(c) *Construction of a road from Nelliampathy Parambikulam Tellikkal.* This will make Sungam and Parambikulam Ranges accessible through the Kerala territory only. At present, the State has to depend on the goodwill of the Madras Forest Department for the extraction of forest produces.

The cost of constructing these roads is estimated to be Rs. 50 lakhs.

Training Facilities

4.58 The programme for raising forest plantations can be implemented smoothly only if there is adequately trained personnel to deal with the several technical problems. At present the staff is generally deputed to Forest Colleges at Dehra Dun and Coimbatore for training. These colleges cannot, however, meet the requirements of training lower grade staff. It is, therefore, suggested that in view of the importance of forestry to Kerala, this State should have a separate training institute of its own. This institute, may be located at Peechi.

Resource Survey

4.59 For proper planning of forest-based industries, the exact extent of availability and location of different types of forest resources should be known. In the past, development has been impeded by industries being allotted more areas than was warranted by their capacity. This has thwarted development of other industries which could have utilized the surplus raw material from the forest coupes. These defects can be remedied only if a full inventory of forest resources is available. Uptil now only a survey of bamboo areas has been carried out. During the Third Plan a full resource survey should be carried out.

ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED FOR THE DEVELOPMENTS PROPOSED

4.60 If the development programmes proposed in this report are to be carried out, strengthening of the Forest Department will be necessary. Appointment of

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*433 313 647 two more Conservators of Forest, one to deal with general development works of the State and the other for the new plantations may be considered. It is also proposed that an additional Chief Conservator of Forests to cope with the heavy work may be appointed as soon as the tempo of development work has gained momentum, say, by the middle of the Third Plan period. The Territorial Divisional Forest Officers should each be given a gazetted assistant to deal with all the development works in their divisions. The present annual expenditure on Establishment amounts to Rs. 8.23 lakhs (1958-59). If the above suggestions are accepted there should be an increase of about 25 per cent. It is also expected that if the tempo of developments is maintained, higher amounts will be needed in the Fourth Plan. The establishment expenditure is, therefore, worked out as under :

Third Plan period	Rs. 10.29 lakhs annually.
Fourth Plan period	Rs. 10.97 lakhs annually.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

*433 313 653 651 4.61 The major part of investment during the coming decade will be on raising the various commercial plantations discussed above. Investment on other items is summarized in Table appearing under Para 4.53. The amount of Rs. 3 crores[1] which is expected to be spent during the Third Plan period on acquisition of private forests, does not appear in the investment figures since the amount is only in the nature of a monetary transfer.

4.62 As a result of the development programmes suggested above, output contributed by the forests may be envisaged to increase from the following sources during the coming decade :

(1) Sale of forest produce from areas clear-felled for teak plantations. This item will be quite substantial.

(2) Income from thinning of teak plantations.

(3) Income from bamboo and eta reed resources, which will start accruing by the end of the Third Plan period when all the flowered areas would have been regenerated.

(4) Income from other plantations would start accruing only towards the end of the coming decade or during the beginning of the Fifth Plan since gestation period before the plantations start maturing is rather long.

4.63 It is difficult to give an exact forecast but taking the above factors into account, the increase in income accruing from forestry during the coming decade is taken to be as follows. It is assumed that income at the end of the Second Plan, that is, during 1960-61 would be 10 per cent higher than that in 1955-56, in 1965-66 twenty per cent higher than that in 1955-56 and by 1970-71 it would be one and a half times the income in 1955-56. On this basis projections for State income from forestry would

[1] The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 3.75 crores for Forest Development which compares quite favourably with investment suggested by us. However, it has to be kept in mind that our figure does not include finances for acquiring private forests, which the State Plan has to provide for.

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be as follows :

	Rs. crores
1955-56	5.0
1960-61	5.5
1965-66	6.0
1970-71	7.5

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4.64 It will be noticed that in the earlier period income is projected to grow at a lower rate than towards the end of the period. This is naturally to be expected in view of the fact that gestation period for growth of forest potential is rather long and the effects of the development programmes will start becoming visible only towards the end of the Fourth Plan period and during the Fifth Plan period. During the Second and Third Plan periods rise in income is expected only from clear felling areas for teak plantations and intermediate felling in the older areas.

Appendix 5

Lists of Trees and other Produce Found in Kerala Along with their Present Uses

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E denotes Evergreen; *D* denotes Deciduous; *H* denotes Hardwood; *S* denotes Softwood

Malayalam name	*Botanical name*	*E or D*	*S or H*	*Uses*
1	2	3	4	5
1. *Teak*	*Tectona grandis*	D	H	Construction, furniture
2. *Mathi (Thembavu)*	*Terminalia tomentosa*	D	H	Construction, sleepers, etc.
3. *Marudu*	*Terminalia paniculata*	D	H	-do-
4. *Venteak*	*Lagerstromia Lanceolata*	D	H	Boat-building, ceilings
5. *Venga*	*Pterocarpus Marsupium*	D	H	Building construction good substitute for teak
6. *Manjakadamba*	*Adina cordifolia*	D	H	Bobbins and furniture
7. *Rosewood*	*Dalbergia latifolia*	D	H	Furniture, plywood, export size above 72" midgirth
8. *Chadachi (Unnam)*	..	D	H	Furniture
9. *Kinnimaga*	*Albizia Odoratissima*	D	H	Building construction
10. *Anjili or (Anjili)*	*Artocarpus hirsuta*	E	H	-do-, Good substitute for teak, boat-building furniture
11. *Irimbagam or (Nanga)*	*Mesua Ferrea*	E	H	Sleepers
12. *Mahogany*	*Swietina entocarpa*	E	H	Furniture
13. *Wattle*	*Acacia melissima*	D	H	Being introduced for tan bark
14. *Ambazham*	*Spondias mangifera*	D	S	Packing cases
15. *Chemi*	*Tetramelus nudiflora*	E	S	Packing cases
16. *Mani Marathi*	*Lagerstromia flosreginae*	E	S	Building construction
17. *Cherapinu*	*Hardwickia binata*	D	H	Packing cases, plywood
18. *Chuvanangil*	*Cordia tomentosa*	D	H	Furniture

(Continued)

[PP 313-328 not Processed]

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Appendix 3 (Continued)

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1	2	3	4	5
19. *Mola*	*Dendrocalamus*			Bamboos for cheap housing, raw material for paper and rayon
20. *Pala*	*Alstonia scholaris*	E	S	Packing cases
21. *Irul*	*Xylia Xylocarpa*	D	H	Railway sleepers, building construction
22. *Kalpine*	*Diptanocarpus indicus*	E	S	Plywood
23. *Kassu*	*Cassia fistula*	D	S	Tanning
24. *Vellangil (white cedar)*	*Dysoxylum malabaricum*	E	H	Plywood and furniture
25. *Nellika*	*Phyllanthus emblica*	E	H	Fruits for pickling and for Ayurvedic medicines
26. *Maruthi*	*Hydnocarpus wightiana*	E	H	Soap-making, oil used for lighting purpose
27. *Eta reed*	*Ochlandra Travancorica and Beddi*			Raw material for paper
28. *Pudiri*	*Strombosia Ceylanica*	E	S	Packing cases
29. *Pilava*	*Artocarpus integrifolia*	D	H	Building construction, boat-making, furniture, etc.
30. *Pooia (Elava)*	*Salmalia Malabarica*	D	S	Matchwood, cotton used for pillows
31. *Poovam*	*Schleichera trijuga*	D	H	For lac cultivation
32. *Poona*	*Calophyllum tomentosa*	E	H	Plywood and cheap timber for construction purposes
33. *Kanjiram*	*Hopea parviflora*	E	H	Building construction, sleepers, etc.
34. *Vakai*	*Strevalia Vilosa*			Cember Bark (fibre) used for making ropes for timber dragging purposes
35. *Chakota*	*Calamia ensiba*	E	S	Plywood
36. *Vellapine*	*Vateria indica*	E	S	A favourite plywood species
37. *Mathi*	*Ailanthus malabarica (ensiba)*	D	S	Matchwood
38. *Pali*	*Palaquim Elipticum*	E	S	Plywood
39. *Kalamava*	*Machilus Macrantha*	E	S	-do-
40. *Mava*	*Mangifera indica*	E	S	Plywood, boat-building, packing cases
41. *Kalamaicha*	*Anacardium densiflora*	E	S	Plywood
42. *Kapari (chava)*	*Callania ensiba*	E	S	-do-
43. *Thavali*	*Hardwickia Pinnata*	E	S	-do-

(Continued)

Appendix 3 (Continued)

1	2	3	4	5
44. ..	*Eucalyptus grandis*	E	S	Pulp timber
45. *Blue gum*	*E. Globulus*	E	S	Pulp timber
46. *Cashew*	*Anacardium Occidentale*	E	H	Nuts and apple
47. *Kadukka*	*Terminalia Chebula, and belerica*	D	H	Myrobalans
48. *Punnappamaram*	*Delenia pentagyna*	D	H	House construction
49. *Vekkali*	*Anogeissi latifolia*	D	H	Mine props
50. *Nedumar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	S	Masts and packing cases
51. *Nedumar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	H	Cabinet-making and furniture
52. *Malavappu*	*Chukrasia tabularis*	E	H	-do-
53. *Chenkurunthi*	*Elattrawancoria*	E	H	-do-
54. *Venkotta*	*Lophopetton wightianum*	E	S	Plywood
55. *Puli*	*Tamarindus indica*	D	E	Fruit good glue material, Bobbins
56. *Azal*	*Holoptelea integrifolia*	E	S	Box and packing cases
57. *Black dammar*	*Canarium strictum*	E	S	Packing cases
58. *Pupitta*	*Sterculia compaulata*	E	S	Matchwood, packing cases
59. *Kumbli (Nasakam)*	*Exodia roxburghiana*	E	S	Matchwood
60. *Vella Kumadamba*	*Hyrenodicton excelsa*	D	S	Bobbins
61. *Poovarsu*	*Thespesia populnea*	D	H	Shuttles
62. *Dotapala*	*Wightia tinctoria*	D	H	Combs, and carvings
63. ..	*Gmelina arborium*	D	H	Musical instruments
64. *Pungu*	*Pongamia glabra*	D	H	Oil seeds
65. *Mukayini*	*Bridelia retusa*	D	H	Tans and dyes
66. *Chandu*	*Caesalpinia sappan*	D	H	Dyes
67. *Udi*	*Odina wodier*	D	H	Gum used for curving fishermen's nets

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Government of Kerala.

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31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

● 313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neighbouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent [435] head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans
571 and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The houses of the low castes, high castes, and of other religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1½ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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237 (called varatties) and used as fuel to supplement firewood, by the poorer classes, who go about picking the stray deposits of cattle-dung in the by-ways and streets. Perhaps a small percentage of cattle-dung is wasted. Yet it is the most important manure and an acre of land uses 100 to 150 baskets of it.

Cattle urine is not used, except by Brahman ladies to a very small extent, in growing kitchen vegetables in their backyards.

The refuse of goat-pens and of fowls (which are kept in most low-class and Nayar houses), as well as bone dust, is used in small quantities for growing garden vegetables.

241 All sorts of green manure are used. About fifty to seventy-five bales of green stuff are used on one acre of land. But green manure is not grown; it is obtained from the neighbouring woods, and the shrubby undergrowth which is commonly found on almost every hillside and in the compounds of houses.

Wood-ash is commonly used, especially in garden cultivation.

Salt is used in coconut plantations.

Chemical manures are unknown in the village.

Garden cultivation is an important item, and very profitable too, though it is not yet carried on very extensively. About 110 acres of land are used for this purpose. Water is obtained mostly from wells, of which there is one or more in every garden. The chief products are coconuts (selling at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per 100), arecanuts used for chewing, etc. (Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2 per 1,000), plantains or bananas (Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 per 1,000), jack-fruits (2 to 6 annas each), mangoes, yams and various kitchen vegetables like pumpkins, brinjals, etc. These are cultivated in almost all gardens. Pepper and ginger, betel leaves and turmeric, are also cultivated in all good gardens. Pepper is very valuable and gives a good profit.

[722] Coconuts being largely exported in the form of copra, have fallen 50 per cent in price, through shortage of freight, during the war. This has entailed great hardship on the large classes of coconut growers and workers in the Malabar Coast, this village suffering with the rest.

242 *Insect-pests.*—A kind of beetle sometimes does great damage to the crops—especially the new paddy crops and plantains. Small birds also carry away grains of corn. The usual method of combating them is to keep watch in the fields and drive them off—a very tedious and difficult operation. No help is got from the Agricultural Department, of whose very existence the village is unaware.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Hoof disease is the commonest and most dangerous. Kerosene oil mixed with lamp black is the popular remedy. There is another disease—a sort of suffocation. A cholera-like disease is also heard of, accompanied by bleeding, etc. Snake-poisoning is another danger, a bite on the nose being supposed to be fatal. The villagers have their traditional methods of combating these. Charms and incantations are used to supplement medicine. No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural Department.

313 *Wood* is obtained from the neighbouring forests, as well as from the clusters of trees in the village. Building timber is often

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

313 purchased from the nearest markets and brought in carts. Wood is getting dearer and dearer. It used to be very cheap.

The increase in price is due to the felling of trees without replanting, increased outside demand for fuel, as by the railway company and the Shoranur Tile Works; and the better appreciation and consequent increased demand for the local timber trees.

361 *The village.*—Strictly speaking there is no village-site. The houses are not built in street formation, but are scattered throughout the village. This is characteristic of most villages in Malabar and strongly contrasts with what obtains in other districts. The area of the village is 2,380 acres.

Localization of castes is not complete. Brahmans are located in the centre around the temple, with the Nayars, and the other higher castes surrounding them. The Thiyyas or Ezhuvas live farther apart and the depressed classes—Cherumas, Pariahs, etc.—live far out of the way of the higher castes on the outskirts of the village in hovels on hill sides, which are unfrequented by the other castes. Of course there are social prohibitions to their approaching the higher castes, much more to living near them.

342 There are a few fine houses: about 20 are tiled and have two storeys, about half of them belonging to the Brahmans. About 100 are one-storeyed thatched houses, almost exclusively owned by the castes. The rest are mere huts used by the poorer classes. There is no terraced house at all. Most of the houses are pretty old, but the tiled ones are mostly of recent construction. The houses are built more or less on a uniform plan and are often large without being convenient or comfortable.

The Pariahs and Cherumas live in thatched huts, miserable hovels one should call them, small, dark and exposed.

351 Almost every house has a 'garden' of some sort, with a few fruit trees like the coconut-palm, the mango tree, the jack tree, the areca-palm, plantain trees, etc. But very few houses have really good gardens. The gardens are watered from wells, which are found in every house. Whether there are fruit-trees on it or no, each house of the better class has a compound attached to it. This is sometimes used for growing kitchen vegetables.

361 The distance of cultivated lands from the home of the cultivator is never more than one mile. In the working season the ryot starts very early in the morning from his home with his oxen and agricultural implements so as to reach his land in time.

343 Field huts are almost unknown—except tiny watchmen's huts where watch is kept by a man at night when the crops are getting ready for harvest.

323 *Subsidiary industries—Potters.*—There are no weavers. There is a class of potters, of Telugu origin (as their language shows) engaged in making pots for household use, etc. They get the clay for their industry from the banks of the Bharata river (situated to the south of the village). Their wares find a ready market in the neighbouring villages, being very cheap and necessary. The lower castes cook in pots of burnt clay, while the better classes use bronze and other metals, such as copper. The art is the whole time employment of this class. But earnings are not very high, only just affording the means of subsistence. If the art is refined and improved to suit modern conditions and requirements it

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	38,347	..	..
Kozhikode	20,045	61,479	14,735	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,536	20,988	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,654	2,890	5,586
Nenmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,467*	*172,678*	*64,100*	*143,353*

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Kerala.

4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

4.36 (*ii*) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

4.37 (*iii*) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [311]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Appendix 5 (Continued)

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1	2	3	4	5
19. *Mula*	*Dendrocalamus*			Bamboos for cheap housing, raw material for paper and rayon
20. *Pala*	*Alstonia scholaris*	E	S	Packing cases
21. *Irool*	*Xylia Xylocarpa*	D	H	Railway sleepers, building construction
22. *Kalpine*	*Dipterocarpus indicus*	E	S	Plywood
23. *Kusna*	*Cassia fistula*	D	S	Tanning
24. *Vellangil (white cedar)*	*Dysoxylum malabaricum*	E	H	Plywood and furniture
25. *Nellika*	*Phyllanthus emblica*	E	H	Fruits for pickling and for Ayurvedic medicines
26. *Maravetti*	*Hydnocarpus wighiana*	E	H	Soap-making, oil used for lighting purpose
27. *Eta reed*	*Ochlandra Travancoria and Reedi*			Raw material for paper
28. *Podiri*	*Strosspermum Chelonoidis*	E	S	Packing cases
29. *Pilavu*	*Artocarpus integrifolia*	D	H	Building construction, boat-making, furniture, etc.
30. *Poola (Elavu)*	*Salmalia Malabarica*	D	S	Matchwood, cotton used for pillows
31. *Poovam*	*Schlichera trijuga*	D	H	For lac cultivation
32. *Punna*	*Calophylum tomentosa*	E	H	Plywood and cheap timber for construction purposes
33. *Kanhiagam*	*Hopea parviflora*	E	H	Building construction, sleepers, etc.
34. *Vakkai*	*Sterculia Villosa*			Cember Bark (fibre) used for making ropes for timber dragging purposes
35. *Chakkan*	*Colonia ewelsa*	E	S	Plywood
36. *Vellapine*	*Vateria indica*	E	S	A favourite plywood species
37. *Mathi*	*Ailanthus malabaricum (ewelsa)*	D	S	Matchwood
38. *Pali*	*Palaquim Elipticum*	E	S	Plywood
39. *Kulamavu*	*Machilus Macrantha*	E	S	-do-
40. *Mavu*	*Mangifera indica*	E	S	Plywood, boat-building, packing cases
41. *Kalamaicha*	*Anacolosa densiflora*	E	S	Plywood
42. *Kayari (chera)*	*Callonia ewelsa*	E	S	-do-
43. *Shaveli*	*Hardwickia Pinnata*	E	S	-do-

(Continued)

11: India , G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Appendix 5 (Continued)

1	2	3	4	5
44. ..	*Eucalyptus grandis*	E	S	Pulp timber
45. *Blue gum*	*E. Globulus*	E	S	Pulp timber
46. *Cashew*	*Anacardium Occidentale*	E	H	Nuts and apple
47. *Kadukka*	*Terminalia Chebula, and belerica*	D	H	Myrobalans
48. *Punnappanaram*	*Delenia [illegible]yna*	D	H	House construction
49. *Vekkali*	*Anogeissus latifolia*	D	H	Mine props
50. *Nedunar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	S	Masts and packing cases
51. *Nedunar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	H	Cabinet-making and furniture
52. *Malaveppu*	*Chukrasia tabularis*	E	H	-do-
53. *Chenkurunthi*	*Elattrariancoria*	E	H	-do-
54. *Venkotta*	*Lophopetlum wightianum*	E	S	Plywood
55. *Puli*	*Tamarindus indica*	D	E	Fruit good glue material, Bobbins
56. *Aeal*	*Holoptelea integrifolia*	E	S	Box and packing cases
57. *Black dammar*	*Canarium strictum*	E	S	Packing cases
58. *Papitta*	*Sterculia compaulata*	E	S	Matchwood, packing cases
59. *Kambli (Nasaken)*	*Erodia roxburghiana*	E	S	Matchwood
60. *Vella Kamadamba*	*Hyrenodicton excelsa*	D	S	Bobbins
61. *Poovarsu*	*Thespesia populnea*	D	H	Shuttles
62. *Datapala*	*Wightia tinctoria*	D	H	Combs, and carvings
63. ..	*Gmelina arborium*	D	H	Musical instruments
64. *Punga*	*Pongamia glabra*	D	H	Oil seeds
65. *Mukuyini*	*Bridelia retusa*	D	H	Tans and dyes
66. *Chanda*	*Caesalpinia sappan*	D	H	Dyes
67. *Udi*	*Odina wodier*	D	H	Gum used for curving fishermen's nets

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Government of Kerala.

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824

Chapter 6

Minerals

FROM THE POINT of view of its industrial development, Kerala's mineral resources are a weak link in the State's economy. With a share of only 1.7 per cent in the all-India production of the minerals, Kerala lags behind most other States in the output of minerals. During 1955-56, the net value contributed by the minerals (Rs. 1.95 crores) was 0.6 per cent of the State income against one per cent of country's income. 433* 135 (434)

6.2 The important minerals of the State are beach sands comprising ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, zircon, china-clay and tile-clay. Among these ilmenite and china-clay are the most prominent. The reserves of these minerals are adequate to last more than 20 years and may, therefore, be classified as "minerals with adequate reserves". Graphite, iron ore and mica are also found, though only in very small quantities. The deposits of limeshells occur in lakes and along the coast, but are rather modest in content. The metallic minerals and fossil fuels, however, are almost completely absent. It is the deficiency of these minerals which presents an obstacle to the growth of large scale industries.

6.3 Apart from beach sand collection and limeshell winning from the lakes and estuaries, there are eleven workings, all open cast. These do not include tile-clay working about which no data is available. The number of persons engaged in all these 11 mining enterprises (inclusive of beneficiation) is roughly 6,900. However, according to 1951 Census, the number of persons employed in mining as well as in stone-quarrying is about 18,000, i.e., 0.3 per cent of total working force (all-India 0.4%). 316 317 464

6.4 Table 28 gives the output of minerals from the various workings and their value. In 1955, the value of minerals production was Rs. 1.35 crores. Next year, the value of production went upto Rs. 1.95 crores, representing an increase of approximately 37 per cent. This steep rise was mainly due to the increase in ilmenite production, which went upto 314,348 tons in 1956 from 231,585 tons in 1955. Production registered a further increase of about Rs. 20 lakhs during the next year, (that is, 1957), reaching a level of Rs. 2.1 crores. This was maintained during the next two years, that is, 1958 and 1959. In 1960, however, there was a setback as one of the mineral sand companies had since closed down; and it is likely that the value of the output might not have exceeded Rs. 1.3 crores. 433* 316 317

[Text continues on p. 92]

[Table 28, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

investment for this will be about Rs. 5 lakhs and additional employment for 350 persons. 433* 317

Graphite

6.40 This mineral occurs in the form of disseminated grains, stringers and thin veins in surface laterites and the crystalline rocks underneath, mainly charnockitic and associated types. While the disseminated grains occur in charnockitic rocks, the worthwhile occurrences appear to be confined to the area of leptynites.[1] 135

6.41 Surface occurrences of graphite are known to occur in Kerala at a number of places, viz., Plachikuzhi, Nellimood, Narical, Ozhupara, Karipur, Perumpallimuzhi and Vellanad in Nedumangad taluk, Puliyarakonam and Chenagalloor in Neyyattinkara taluk and in various other isolated localities in Trivandrum district. The occurrences are being investigated geo-physically using electrical methods without appreciable success. This is probably due to the electrical anomalies being marked by the laterite host rock. Perhaps geo-chemical methods may prove more fruitful. 316

6.42 This mineral was mined in Kerala between 1898 and 1911 by the Morgan Crucible Company, altogether 35,000 tons of material being won. Consequent upon the discovery of graphite in Madagascar, operations ceased in Kerala. The most productive mine was at Vellanad. Recently operations were started at Aukulam on a small scale, but were suspended shortly thereafter. The production has been negligible. The prime need in the near future will be to have a more detailed prospecting on the lines suggested. 433* 316

Iron Ore

6.43 Quartz-magnetite bodies are reported from various localities. In all these cases, the top of these bodies is laterized and often very rich in iron. However, within a few feet the iron content decreases very appreciably. 135

6.44 The Nanminda occurrence (Pookunnu Hill) is probably the largest one. It would be necessary to explore this area in detail, possibly with core drills before any reasonable conclusion can be drawn. The ore body is steep dipping and will have to be won by underground mining, and further, magnetite concentrate obtained. All this would make the prospect very dear when compared to other iron ore occurrences elsewhere in the country being currently exploited. Further, the possibility of establishing a pig iron plant based either on low-shaft furnaces or electrical furnace techniques, is fraught with difficulties because of the non-availability of coke or lignite and fluxing material within the State. 433* 135

Limeshell Deposits

6.45 Even though no important horizon of limestone is found in the State, limeshell is found to occur in the various backwaters and also in the estuaries of some 135

[1] I.C. Chacko: *A Sketch of the Geology of Travancore.*

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6.53 First, possibilities of an alternative source, e.g., shells from the sea, should be assessed quantitatively, which could possibly meet requirements of the local lime-burning units. This would relieve the pressure on the lake and estuarine deposits, which could then be conserved for larger industrial units. 433* 317 339

6.54 Secondly, new industries could perhaps be located near other known shell deposits. A case in point here is the Calcium Carbide Factory requiring about 10,000 tons annually, which could be located in the Kadalundi area where reserves of the order of 400,000 to 500,000 tons are available. In this location the unit would be assured of its shell requirements for the next 40 to 50 years on the basis of an average annual requirement of 10,000 tons, whereas in the Vembanad lake location, reserves would last only for 15 to 20 years.

6.55 The requirements of the sand-lime brick factory, however, are only about 3,500 tons a year and it should be possible to accommodate this requirement from the present consumption of 25,000 tons by the lime-burning industry.

6.66 In this context, it would be relevant to mention that in absolute terms, the accretion of shells is rather small; and in terms of the proposed rate of exploitation this accretion is even negligible. Further, the proposal to construct a bar across the mouth of the Vembanad lake would change the salinity of the water and would very likely put an end even to this small accretion. As to whether the shell organism could be simulated to thrive on a large scale is a problem for long term research. 433* 317

6.57 In the meantime, in view of the rapid depletion of reserves in the Vembanad lake, strict control should be exercised over the exploitation of this deposit with periodical inspection to check unauthorized collection. The rate of exploitation may be kept at the present level but should not be allowed to rise.

Mica

6.58 Two varieties of mica, muscovite and phlogopite are known to occur in the State. Muscovite is reported from Kulikhoor, and Sholayaramson from Palghat district and phlogopite from Punalur in Quilon district. However data relating to reserves are not available for any of these deposits. 1356

6.59 At Kulikoor in Palghat district, a few prospecting pits have been put down which exposed a small vein of ruby mica with very little strains. The presence of ruby mica on a fairly large scale along the same belt in the adjoining State may be taken as a favourable indication. Further prospecting should be undertaken in the area. 316

6.60 Production from the only mine in the State at Punalur has been intermittent. Figures for production since 1957 when mining activity was revived are given below: 433* 316

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1957	72	40,000
1958	72	40,000
1959	46	23,000

433 316 6.61 Formerly mica used to be exported from this mine, but now because of its inferior grade and development of cheaper substitutes, the market has ceased to exist. Production has been giving demand and the mine is again on the verge of closing down.

Quartz-Sand

135 6.62 An extensive deposit of quartz-sand occurs along the Shertallai-Pattanakad-Pallipuram-Panavally area. Reserves of the order of 80 million tons are said to exist here. However, all the sand is not glass grade, being gritty in large portions.

317 6.63 There are two workings in Shertallai taluk, one at Pallipuram and the other at Panavally. Mining is selective in that only such areas which contain finer material are worked. The workings are not mechanized. The raw sand is sieved and winnowed at the workings. Further sieving is done at the glass factory, the final recovery standing at 50 per cent of the original, and represents the portion between 30 and 80 mesh screens.

433 317 323 6.64 About 3,000 tons sand is produced annually with a pits-mouth-value of Rs. 1.50 a ton. A major portion of the output is consumed by the glass factory at Alwaye, while the rest is supplied to silicate factories in the State and consumers outside the State.

6.65 A sand-lime brick factory is coming up at Pallathara in the public sector with an installed capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and it will be a major consumer of quartz-sand. Its sand requirements would be 33,750 tons a year. The total raw sand requirements by 1965-66 would be 46,000 tons a year. Exploitation at this rate would require an investment of Rs. 2 lakhs. By 1970-71, the sand requirements would further increase to 90,000 tons a year requiring an additional investment of Rs. 15 lakhs. At the same time, an integrated scheme to work the sands systematically and utilize both the coarse and finer grades should be undertaken, rather than leaving the sand collection to contractors.

Salt

6.66 Salt, besides being an essential ingredient of food, also serves as a basic raw material for the manufacture of alkalies. It is commonly extracted from sea water by solar evaporation. Production of salt in Kerala during the last few years has been as follows :

Year	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
1955	56,094	1,180,000
1956	783	10,000
1957	336	5,000
1958	708	10,000
1959	1,007	13,000

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*433 formation of a large number of companies which together won 600 ozs. of metal. 316 During the last war, operations were again commenced but mainly for pyrite, which were also given up.

6.76 It is obvious that all surface occurrences have been worked out. However, prospecting for hidden lodes could still be carried out. A preliminary survey by panning up the stream to the heads of the tributaries in search of mother lodes is indicated.

135 6.77 *Lignite*: A lignite occurrence two feet to eight feet thick exposed on the beach at Varkalai had been reported, but it has proved to be abortive on drilling.

6.78 *Semi-Precious Stones*: The presence of semi-precious stones like cats' eye, amethyst, and iolite are reported from various places in Nedumangad taluk, Thiruvalla and Kollengode, but none has proved worthwhile. Recently beryl has also been reported from mica bearing area at Kulikkoor in Palghat district.

6.79 *Kankar*: In the black cotton soil tracts of Kozhinjampara and Chittur firkas in Palghat district kankar limestone is met with and is used locally in lime burning.

6.80 *Gypsum* : It is known to occur in similar soils in the Coimbatore district of Madras State. An intensive search may, therefore, be made in these black cotton soil areas for this mineral.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 135 6.81 Mineral resources play a vital role in the economic development of any region. The process of industrial development generally involves a shift from industries based on primary raw materials like agricultural or forest produce to more technologically advanced industries using a higher content of metallic minerals. Kerala is unfortunately placed in this respect as its mineral resources are marked by absence of any of these basic minerals, namely, coal, iron and copper.

*433 317 6.82 Some of Kerala's industries, however, do have good prospects. Beach sands, the chief mineral assets of Kerala, are the source of titanium bearing ilmenite. Although possibilities of increase in export of this sand are not bright, internal demand for ilmenite from the Titanium Dioxide industry is expected to rise substantially. Similarly, extensive deposits of quartz sand and fine quality china-clay occur in the State. This report envisages a considerable expansion in demand for both of these from existing industries as well as from new factories suggested for production of high tension insulators, sand-lime bricks, etc. In contrast to these three, the other minerals have only limited potentials of development. Thus monazite which contains the radioactive element thorium is available in quantity but has a restricted demand at present. On the other hand, the known reserves of limeshell are in short supply and do not offer scope for expansion of the cement industry based on it.

[135] 6.83 Among the rest, iron ores are not capable of being developed for lack of coal while mica and graphite would depend entirely on future discoveries.

6.84 On the whole, an increase in mineral production from a value of Rs. 130 lakhs in 1961 to Rs. 197 lakhs by 1965-66 and Rs. 250 lakhs by 1970-71 is envisaged here. Between 1956 and 1961 there was, however, a fall in the value of output from

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

Chapter 6

Minerals

FROM THE POINT of view of its industrial development, Kerala's mineral resources are a weak link in the State's economy. With a share of only 1.7 per cent in the all-India production of the minerals, Kerala lags behind most other States in the output of minerals. During 1955-56, the net value contributed by the minerals (Rs. 1.95 crores) was 0.6 per cent of the State income against one per cent of country's income. 433* 135 [434]

6.2 The important minerals of the State are beach sands comprising ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, zircon, china-clay and tile-clay. Among these ilmenite and china-clay are the most prominent. The reserves of these minerals are adequate to last more than 20 years and may, therefore, be classified as "minerals with adequate reserves". Graphite, iron ore and mica are also found, though only in very small quantities. The deposits of limeshells occur in lakes and along the coast, but are rather modest in content. The metallic minerals and fossil fuels, however, are almost completely absent. It is the deficiency of these minerals which presents an obstacle to the growth of large scale industries.

6.3 Apart from beach sand collection and limeshell winning from the lakes and estuaries, there are eleven workings, all open cast. These do not include tile-clay working about which no data is available. The number of persons engaged in all these 11 mining enterprises (inclusive of beneficiation) is roughly 6,900. However, according to 1951 Census, the number of persons employed in mining as well as in stone-quarrying is about 18,000, i.e., 0.3 per cent of total working force (all-India 0.4%). 316 317 464

6.4 Table 28 gives the output of minerals from the various workings and their value. In 1955, the value of minerals production was Rs. 1.35 crores. Next year, the value of production went upto Rs. 1.95 crores, representing an increase of approximately 37 per cent. This steep rise was mainly due to the increase in ilmenite production, which went upto 314,348 tons in 1956 from 231,585 tons in 1955. Production registered a further increase of about Rs. 20 lakhs during the next year, (that is, 1957), reaching a level of Rs. 2.1 crores. This was maintained during the next two years, that is, 1958 and 1959. In 1960, however, there was a setback as one of the mineral sand companies had since closed down; and it is likely that the value of the output might not have exceeded Rs. 1.3 crores. 433* 316 317

[Text continues on p. 92]

2/A [Table 28 appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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MINERAL RESOURCES: SIZE OF DEPOSITS AND EXTRACTION COST

6.5 In the following pages the importance of the mineral resources, the size of the deposits, costs of extraction—and allied factors, as they affect the industrialization programmes for Kerala, are discussed at some length. 128

Ilmenite

6.6 Foremost among the mineral resources of the State are the beach sand deposits in Quilon district which contain large concentrations of heavy minerals like ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite and zircon. Some of the ilmenite is of inferior quality due to leucoxenization, particularly along the Neendakara—Azhiyikkal bar. 317 [438]

6.7 The heavy mineral occurrences are of three types:

(*i*) Back beach sand dunes, which form a wasting asset.
(*ii*) Beach washings, which are renewed seasonally during the monsoons.
(*iii*) Sand bar.

In general, the beach washings have a higher content of ilmenite and other heavy minerals than the dunes and the sand bar. The extent of the variations in this respect may be seen in the table below:

	Beach washing (Per cent)	*Dunes (Per cent)*	*Sand Bar (Per cent)*
Ilmenite	75/78	60/70	40
Other heavy minerals	15/20	10/25	—
Quartz	around 50	10/15	60

6.8 Of these, the dune deposits are rapidly being used up; and as for the washings, it is not possible to predict the quantities that are likely to be available from time to time. The main reliance for ilmenite has, therefore, to be placed on the sand bar, the total reserves from which are estimated at 34.08 million metric tons.[1] Another estimate places the reserves at 50 million tons. In addition, there are a few minor occurrences in the lake deposits, and in the interior of the country beyond 500 feet of the shoreline. 433 317

6.9 At present, however, nearly half the requirements of raw sand come from the washings and the other half from the dunes. The collection of raw sand is done through contractors who supply the sand to the mineral companies. The dune sand is worked manually with a wooden scraper and the pools are very often not back-filled. Beach washings are merely scraped off the beach wherever they accumulate. The cost of the raw sand from these sources works out to nearly Rs. 8 a ton.[2] [435] [113]

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, Geneva, 1958, p. 106.
[2] *Quartz sand at Pallipuram*—pits mouth value Rs. 1.50 a ton.

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*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

* [433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

rest of the production is exported to various countries, the bulk of it going to the USA and the UK. Export figures are given in Table 29 for the period 1956–59.

6.17 Irregular supplies made through the Koilthottam port, mainly due to labour difficulties, have resulted in the loss of contracts with importers in the USA. Export possibilities of ilmenite are now limited only to two contracts to UK totalling 1,50,000 tons per year. This setback has occurred in spite of the fact that the Chavara ilmenite has a high TiO_2 content (55-60%) and is cheaper when compared to Malayan ilmenite (about 45% TiO_2) which, however, finds a ready export market.

6.18 India, which at one time used to hold almost a monopolistic position in the export of ilmenite has now to face competition. Side by side with the expansion of titanium industry, other world sources for supply of ilmenite have come into operation as in Norway, Canada, Malaya, Australia, South Africa, etc. Whereas in 1940 India used to contribute 90 per cent to world production of ilmenite, now its share is only 25 per cent.

6.19 In view of the rapid expansion of India's steel industry, the consumption of TiO_2 pigment is itself expected to go up. The total requirements of ilmenite by 1965-66 would be 150,000 tons a year for export and 36,000 tons a year for the manufacture of TiO_2 pigment, on the basis of proposal for expansion of Titanium Dioxide plant at Trivandrum incorporated in this report. Table 30 gives demand for Titanium Dioxide pigment from steel industry and various other sources. The two existing companies can produce about 160,000 tons a year. Extra capacity of 30,000 tons a year will have to be installed, and this along with certain improvements suggested earlier may require an investment of Rs. 20 lakhs. Very little increase in labour force is envisaged. The existing labour force itself appears to be excessive, since the output per man per shift works out to a low level of 0.4 tons.

6.20 During the Fourth Plan period, steel production is expected to double itself. Therefore, by 1970-71, the demand for Titanium Dioxide may also be expected to be roughly double of the demand in 1965-66. This would necessitate another 30,000 tons of ilmenite per annum. Total requirement of ilmenite by 1970-71 would thus be 220,000 tons a year, comprising of 150,000 tons for export and 60,000 tons for the manufacture of Titanium Dioxide. This would involve further additional outlay of Rs. 10 lakhs. Even this order of expansion can be achieved with the existing labour at an output of one ton per man per shift which would measure a fairly reasonable level of productivity.

Monazite

6.21 Monazite is a phosphate of thorium and cerium with rare earth elements and small quantities of Uranium Oxide. It constitutes a source of the radio-active element, thorium being used for atomic energy purposes. Monazite was first discovered in India, by C.W. Von Sohomberg, a German citizen, in 1909 along the beach at Manavalakkurichi.

6.22 Monazite occurs along with other heavy minerals in the beach sands. Reserves of the order of 6.7 million tons are estimated to be present in the bar between Neendakara and Kayarkulam. There is, however, no production of monazite

[Table 30, appearing on p. 290 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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135 concentrates from Chavara, the Manavalakkurichi (in Madras State) material being preferred because of its higher thorium content.

317 328 [439] 6.23 A rare earth factory is located in the State at Alwaye, which processes 1,500 tons of monazite a year ; but it obtains its requirements from Manavalakkurichi in the Madras State. This factory produces Thorium Oxide, rare earth salts and Trisodium Phosphate. The Chavara Monazite may be considered for use in the rare earth factory instead of the monazite from Manavalakkurichi in Madras State, particularly in view of the fact that monazite would be a byproduct of ilmenite which is won in larger quantities in Kerala and may, therefore, prove cheaper.

Rutile

317 6.24 Rutile is another titanium mineral occurring in smaller quantities in the beach sands. The beach washings contain, on an average, about 4 per cent of rutile. A portion of the sand bar at Neendakara is estimated to contain 740,125 tons of the mineral.[1] Kerala is the only State in India producing rutile.

317 328 6.25 At present only one of the mineral sand factory units produces this mineral. Electro-static separators are used in concentrating rutile from the non-magnetic tailings after the extraction of ilmenite. Recovery is one-fifth of the rutile content of raw sand and the rest is allowed to go into the tailings for lack of equipment.

*433 317 328 [439] [435] 6.26 Only small quantities of rutile are produced. During 1959, 482 tons valued at Rs. 4.75 lakhs were beneficiated. The current price is Rs. 1,000 a ton. The mineral is not utilized in the State, but is sent to Bombay and Calcutta for the manufacture of welding rods. During 1957, 155 tons of rutile were imported to meet the requirements of this industry. Future requirements of welding rods within India is estimated to go up from 417 m. ft. in 1960-61 to 2,022 m. ft. in 1970-71.[2] To meet this rise in demand, output of rutile would have to be stepped upto 6,750 tons by 1970-71. An expansion in capacity of this order would require an investment of the order of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Sillimanite and Zircon

135 6.27 Sillimanite as well as zircon occur in small amounts in beach sands in association with ilmenite and other heavy minerals. They average 5.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively of the beach washings. In addition, 1,916,260 tons of sillimanite and 799,350 tons of zircon are estimated to form a part of the Neendakara bar.[3] Only experimental production of either of these minerals has been taken up so far.

*433 317 6.28 Sillimanite is mainly used in refractories, but the internal requirement of sillimanite refractories is very small. Moreover, the material from Assam which is of a massive variety can be shaped into blocks and used directly. Export possibilities are also dim and due to the development of artificial mulite bricks from domestic kyanite in the USA. Exports have dropped from 20,000 tons to 6,000 tons in 1957.

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, P. 102.
[2] NCAER estimates.
[3] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Op. Cit, p. 102.

6.29 Zircon is also commonly used in refractories. The pattern of consumption of zircon is as follows: 433* 317

	(Per cent)
Refractories	45
Vitreous enamels	7
Electrical and chemical industries	3
Foundry facings	19
Glass	1

In addition, zircon was considered for use in nuclear reactors. But the great geochemical coherence between zirconium and hafnium makes it unsuitable for this purpose, since their separation is very costly. Niobium is, therefore, replacing zirconium in reactor technology. In view of these factors both zircon and sillimanite do not possess very bright prospects.

China-Clay

6.30 China-clay is the principal raw material for the manufacture of china and other porcelains. Apart from this, it finds a number of uses, as for example, in sizings for textiles and as fillers for paper, rubber, linoleum, soap and cosmetics, as well as for pastels, pencils and insecticides. The quality of china-clay found in Kerala especially in Kundara, is claimed to be one of the finest in India. The china-clay occurrences, reported from Changanacheri in the north to beyond Trivandrum in the south, constitute one of the most important horizons in South India. 317

6.31 According to a survey carried out by the Geological Survey of India, the china-clay deposits in Trivandrum and Quilon districts are extensive. In the Kundara area, it is estimated that one square mile would yield 22 million tons of china-clay. In addition, reserves of the order of 40,000 tons are stated to be available at Murukkampuzha. In the Vanchi clay mines at Chathannoor, the clay horizon has an average thickness of 10-15 feet. The occurrences reported from Ernakulam and Kozhikode districts are either very small or very inferior. 433* 317

6.32 There were six mines in operation in 1960; one of these, viz., the Kundara clay mines is run by State Government; the others are privately operated. All the mines are open surface workings and mining is by manual labour. With the exception of the working at Kurukkampuzha, all the others have washing plants attached to them. Production of crude china-clay in these concerns during the past few years has been steadily rising as may be seen from the following table:

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value Rs.
1956	15,401[a]	355,000[a]
1957	15,578	319,000[a]
1958	17,047	486,000
1959	21,434	603,000

[a]*Mineral Production in India, 1957*

6.33 The quantity in the Kundara Clay Mines has already been taken to a depth of 35' in the china-clay horizon. Further deepening, it is feared, will only result in material of lower or partly altered basement gnesis being won. However, in view of

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the extensive horizontal spread of this horizon, mining operations are capable of considerable lateral expansion.

6.34 The china-clay from Quilon and Trivandrum districts is mostly consumed within the State by the Government-run ceramic factory at Kundara and the other privately owned ceramic factories, as well as by the rubber, paper, insecticide and cement (for white cement) industries in the State. A few hundred tons are supplied to consumers in the neighbouring States and a small quantity is also (75 tons in 1959 and 44 tons during Jan.—August 1960) exported to Ceylon. The crockery and sanitaryware plants in the State consume about 1,900 tons of refined clay and another 1,700 tons are used by the insecticide, rubber and paper factories in the State. The china-clay produced from Cannanore district is mostly exported to other parts of India.

6.35 It is worth noting here that India imports textile grade china-clay. Import figures for 1956 and 1957 are 7,282 tons and 4,354 tons respectively. The State could very well fill this gap particularly in view of the excellent quality of the material it possesses. Increase in output to meet this demand should be undertaken from the Quilon district, where large reserves are available.

6.36 Demand for china-clay (in terms of crude material)[1] is likely to be as under by 1965-66:

	(Tons)
For ceramics, inclusive of insulators	9,000
For the rubber, paper and insecticide industries	10,000
For the textile industry	15,000
For white cement manufacture	12,000

6.37 During the period 1966–71, china-clay requirements are likely to go up still further as a result of setting up of another high tension insulator factory and increase in demand from the paper, textile and insecticide industries, and are estimated to reach 70,000 tons in terms of unwashed clay by 1970-71. To meet this rise in demand, mining in the public sector at Kundara can be expanded to produce an additional 13,500 tons by 1965-66. This would hardly involve any mechanization. Along with this, the capacity of the washing plant will have to be increased to 30 tons a day. The expansion of mining operations and installation of additional washing capacity proposed would roughly involve a capital outlay of Rs. 5 lakhs.

6.38 Reopening and development of the mines at Chathanoor should also be considered at a rate of exploitation of 22,000 tons of crude clay per year. A washing plant with a capacity of 30 tons a day would be required at this mine. This mine and washing plant may be operated in the private sector. The capital outlay required would be of the order of Rs. 5 lakhs and the mine and washing plant would together provide employment for 310 persons.

6.39 In order to produce an anticipated 70,000 tons per year by 1970-71, representing an increase of 24,000 tons a year over the Third Plan period, a further expansion of mining operations and additional washing capacity of the extent of 20 tons a day will have to be considered either at Kundara or Chathanoor. The additional

[1] Refined china-clay is roughly one-third the weight of crude china-clay.

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investment for this will be about Rs. 5 lakhs and additional employment for 350 persons. 433* 317

Graphite

6.40 This mineral occurs in the form of disseminated grains, stringers and thin veins in surface laterites and the crystalline rocks underneath, mainly charnockitic and associated types. While the disseminated grains occur in charnockitic rocks, the worthwhile occurrences appear to be confined to the area of leptynites.[1] 135

6.41 Surface occurrences of graphite are known to occur in Kerala at a number of places, viz., Plachikuzhi, Nellimood, Narical, Ozhupara, Karipur, Perumpallimuzhi and Vellanad in Nedumangad taluk, Puliyarakonam and Chenagalloor in Neyyattinkara taluk and in various other isolated localities in Trivandrum district. The occurrences are being investigated geo-physically using electrical methods without appreciable success. This is probably due to the electrical anomalies being marked by the laterite host rock. Perhaps geo-chemical methods may prove more fruitful. 316

6.42 This mineral was mined in Kerala between 1898 and 1911 by the Morgan Crucible Company, altogether 35,000 tons of material being won. Consequent upon the discovery of graphite in Madagascar, operations ceased in Kerala. The most productive mine was at Vellanad. Recently operations were started at Aukulam on a small scale, but were suspended shortly thereafter. The production has been negligible. The prime need in the near future will be to have a more detailed prospecting on the lines suggested. 433* 316

Iron Ore

6.43 Quartz-magnetite bodies are reported from various localities. In all these cases, the top of these bodies is laterized and often very rich in iron. However, within a few feet the iron content decreases very appreciably. 135

6.44 The Nanminda occurrence (Pookunnu Hill) is probably the largest one. It would be necessary to explore this area in detail, possibly with core drills before any reasonable conclusion can be drawn. The ore body is steep dipping and will have to be won by underground mining, and further, magnetite concentrate obtained. All this would make the prospect very dear when compared to other iron ore occurrences elsewhere in the country being currently exploited. Further, the possibility of establishing a pig iron plant based either on low-shaft furnaces or electrical furnace techniques, is fraught with difficulties because of the non-availability of coke or lignite and fluxing material within the State. 433* 135

Limeshell Deposits

6.45 Even though no important horizon of limestone is found in the State, limeshell is found to occur in the various backwaters and also in the estuaries of some 135

[1] I.C. Chacko: *A Sketch of the Geology of Travancore.*

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135 of the rivers. The best known among these is that of Vembanad lake ; other less important occurrences are in the estuaries of the Kadalundi and Korapuzha rivers, Kozhikode district and Cranganore lake. Only a few of these tracts have been prospected so far. A systematic exploration programme should, therefore, be initiated in all the backwater and estuarine tracts.

317 6.46 The deposits in Vembanad lake were surveyed by the Travancore Cement Company in 1946. There was no layer of limeshell as such, but it occurred amidst sands and clays, the total thickness of the mixed deposits varying from 1-7 feet. Reserves as estimated then were 3 million tons.

6.47 In addition, in the estuary of the Kadalundi river 400,000 to 500,000 tons of limeshell are estimated to be available in an area of 300 acres.[1] About 100,000 tons of material is also likely to be available from the lower reaches of the rivers Pullut and Thathapally which drain into the Cranganore lake.[2]

6.48 These limeshell deposits provide a raw material of very high purity and which is eminently suitable for use in the chemical industry and in the manufacture of white cement.

*433 317 6.49 The present production is mainly from Kottayam and Alleppey districts, where the Vembanad lake deposits are exploited. Small quantities are also won from the Kadalundi and Korapuzha estuaries. Details of production available for 1959 are given below:

District	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
Alleppey	9,098	76,542
Kottayam	86,509	696,333
Kozhikode	500 to 1,000	N.A.

*433 317 339 6.50 Excepting small quantities sent to the adjoining States from Kozhikode district, the State's output is consumed within the State. The cement company consumes 70,000 tons of shells a year for producing 50,000 to 60,000 tons of grey cement. About 26,000 tons a year are used in lime-burning of which 25,000 tons come from the Vembanad lake.

6.51 Other limeshell utilizing industries which are under active consideration are a sand-lime brick factory at Pallathara with a capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and a calcium carbide factory at Chingavanam with a capacity of 10,000 tons a year. Both these would use shells from Vembanad lake and their annual requirements would be 8,500 tons and 10,000 tons respectively.

6.52 The total annual requirement during 1961--66 would thus be 108,500 tons of shells from the Vembanad lake. In view of the fact that the cement factory has been in existence for the last 11 years and has already consumed about a third of the original reserve of 3 million tons, proposals for new limeshell-based industries in the same area introduce problems regarding assured reserves of raw materials and their conservation.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Geological Department*, Government of Kerala, 1958-59, pp. 3-4.
[2] Ibid pp. 3-4.

6.53 First, possibilities of an alternative source, e.g., shells from the sea, should be assessed quantitatively, which could possibly meet requirements of the local lime-burning units. This would relieve the pressure on the lake and estuarine deposits, which could then be conserved for larger industrial units.

6.54 Secondly, new industries could perhaps be located near other known shell deposits. A case in point here is the Calcium Carbide Factory requiring about 10,000 tons annually, which could be located in the Kadalundi area where reserves of the order of 400,000 to 500,000 tons are available. In this location the unit would be assured of its shell requirements for the next 40 to 50 years on the basis of an average annual requirement of 10,000 tons, whereas in the Vembanad lake location, reserves would last only for 15 to 20 years.

6.55 The requirements of the sand-lime brick factory, however, are only about 3,500 tons a year and it should be possible to accommodate this requirement from the present consumption of 25,000 tons by the lime-burning industry.

6.66 In this context, it would be relevant to mention that in absolute terms, the accretion of shells is rather small; and in terms of the proposed rate of exploitation this accretion is even negligible. Further, the proposal to construct a bar across the mouth of the Vembanad lake would change the salinity of the water and would very likely put an end even to this small accretion. As to whether the shell organism could be simulated to thrive on a large scale is a problem for long term research.

6.57 In the meantime, in view of the rapid depletion of reserves in the Vembanad lake, strict control should be exercised over the exploitation of this deposit with periodical inspection to check unauthorized collection. The rate of exploitation may be kept at the present level but should not be allowed to rise.

Mica

6.58 Two varieties of mica, muscovite and phlogopite are known to occur in the State. Muscovite is reported from Kulikhoor, and Sholayaramson from Palghat district and phlogopite from Punalur in Quilon district. However data relating to reserves are not available for any of these deposits.

6.59 At Kulikoor in Palghat district, a few prospecting pits have been put down which exposed a small vein of ruby mica with very little strains. The presence of ruby mica on a fairly large scale along the same belt in the adjoining State may be taken as a favourable indication. Further prospecting should be undertaken in the area.

6.60 Production from the only mine in the State at Punalur has been intermittent. Figures for production since 1957 when mining activity was revived are given below:

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1957	72	40,000
1958	72	40,000
1959	46	23,000

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 316 6.61 Formerly mica used to be exported from this mine, but now because of its inferior grade and development of cheaper substitutes, the market has ceased to exist. Production has been giving demand and the mine is again on the verge of closing down.

Quartz-Sand

135 6.62 An extensive deposit of quartz-sand occurs along the Shertallai-Pattanakad-Pallipuram-Panavally area. Reserves of the order of 80 million tons are said to exist here. However, all the sand is not glass grade, being gritty in large portions.

317 6.63 There are two workings in Shertallai taluk, one at Pallipuram and the other at Panavally. Mining is selective in that only such areas which contain finer material are worked. The workings are not mechanized. The raw sand is sieved and winnowed at the workings. Further sieving is done at the glass factory, the final recovery standing at 50 per cent of the original, and represents the portion between 30 and 80 mesh screens.

*433 317 323 6.64 About 3,000 tons sand is produced annually with a pits-mouth-value of Rs. 1.50 a ton. A major portion of the output is consumed by the glass factory at Alwaye, while the rest is supplied to silicate factories in the State and consumers outside the State.

6.65 A sand-lime brick factory is coming up at Pallathara in the public sector with an installed capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and it will be a major consumer of quartz-sand. Its sand requirements would be 33,750 tons a year. The total raw sand requirements by 1965-66 would be 46,000 tons a year. Exploitation at this rate would require an investment of Rs. 2 lakhs. By 1970-71, the sand requirements would further increase to 90,000 tons a year requiring an additional investment of Rs. 15 lakhs. At the same time, an integrated scheme to work the sands systematically and utilize both the coarse and finer grades should be undertaken, rather than leaving the sand collection to contractors.

Salt

6.66 Salt, besides being an essential ingredient of food, also serves as a basic raw material for the manufacture of alkalies. It is commonly extracted from sea water by solar evaporation. Production of salt in Kerala during the last few years has been as follows :

Year	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
1955	36,094	1,180,000
1956	783	10,000
1957	336	5,000
1958	708	10,000
1959	1,007	13,000

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) [435]

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 [439]

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 [469]

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31.[1] 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon,

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

[1] [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

*433 formation of a large number of companies which together won 600 ozs. of metal.
316 During the last war, operations were again commenced but mainly for pyrite, which were also given up.

6.76 It is obvious that all surface occurrences have been worked out. However, prospecting for hidden lodes could still be carried out. A preliminary survey by panning up the stream to the heads of the tributaries in search of mother lodes is indicated.

135 6.77 *Lignite*: A lignite occurrence two feet to eight feet thick exposed on the beach at Varkalai had been reported, but it has proved to be abortive on drilling.

6.78 *Semi-Precious Stones*: The presence of semi-precious stones like cats' eye, amethyst, and iolite are reported from various places in Nedumangad taluk, Thiruvalla and Kollengode, but none has proved worthwhile. Recently beryl has also been reported from mica bearing area at Kulikkoor in Palghat district.

6.79 *Kankar*: In the black cotton soil tracts of Kozhinjampara and Chittur firkas in Palghat district kankar limestone is met with and is used locally in lime burning.

6.80 *Gypsum* : It is known to occur in similar soils in the Coimbatore district of Madras State. An intensive search may, therefore, be made in these black cotton soil areas for this mineral.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 6.81 Mineral resources play a vital role in the economic development of any
135 region. The process of industrial development generally involves a shift from industries based on primary raw materials like agricultural or forest produce to more technologically advanced industries using a higher content of metallic minerals. Kerala is unfortunately placed in this respect as its mineral resources are marked by absence of any of these basic minerals, namely, coal, iron and copper.

*433 6.82 Some of Kerala's industries, however, do have good prospects. Beach sands,
317 the chief mineral assets of Kerala, are the source of titanium bearing ilmenite. Although possibilities of increase in export of this sand are not bright, internal demand for ilmenite from the Titanium Dioxide industry is expected to rise substantially. Similarly, extensive deposits of quartz sand and fine quality china-clay occur in the State. This report envisages a considerable expansion in demand for both of these from existing industries as well as from new factories suggested for production of high tension insulators, sand-lime bricks, etc. In contrast to these three, the other minerals have only limited potentials of development. Thus monazite which contains the radioactive element thorium is available in quantity but has a restricted demand at present. On the other hand, the known reserves of limeshell are in short supply and do not offer scope for expansion of the cement industry based on it.

[135] 6.83 Among the rest, iron ores are not capable of being developed for lack of coal while mica and graphite would depend entirely on future discoveries.

6.84 On the whole, an increase in mineral production from a value of Rs. 130 lakhs in 1961 to Rs. 197 lakhs by 1965-66 and Rs. 250 lakhs by 1970-71 is envisaged here. Between 1956 and 1961 there was, however, a fall in the value of output from

Rs. 200 lakhs to Rs. 130 lakhs mainly due to the loss of export market for ilmenite in the USA. 433* 317

6.85 An increase in the minerals output between 1961–71 of the above order is estimated to require an investment of Rs. 56 lakhs during 1961–66 and Rs. 35 lakhs during 1966–71. Additional employment, however, is expected to increase only by about 2,000, that is, from 7,000 to 9,000 persons. The existing labour employed in ilmenite concerns is rather excessive, and it is considered that output of ilmenite can be raised without much extra labour. These results are summarized in Table 32.

[Table 32, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed - - Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

137 distributed over the year. The high degree of rainfall, old geological formation and
132 maritime climate have largely been responsible for the luxuriant forest growth in Kerala. Trees get the full benefit of moisture, depth of soil and protection from frost and drought. For these reasons, forests in Kerala also possess the advantage of a long growing season.

137 4.5 Most of the forest area lies in the high ranges on the eastern border of the
311 State and in the area adjacent to these. Only a few strips are found in the coastal plain. The forest area is, however, distributed over all the districts of the State. Since the forests run across the whole of eastern border while the districts in the State occur almost longitudinally, all districts, except Alleppey have a good proportion of their area under forests. The districts of Quilon and Trichur have as high as 45.2 per cent and 45.1 per cent respectively of their area under forests. (Table 23) 7/1

137 4.6 The wide variations in climatic and topographical conditions in the State have resulted in a large variety of forests. With the exception of the desert, the truly temperate and the alpine types, all classes of forests are found in Kerala. In addition to the natural forests, Kerala has also got artificial plantations of valuable species. The State has been a pioneer in this sphere.

4.7 Among the natural forests, deciduous forests comprise 80 per cent of the growth. The rest is of the evergreen type. The evergreens are found mostly in the higher ranges above a height of 2,500 feet since they require a cool climate for their growth. The various types of forests found in the State are given below:

(1) *Evergreen Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet evergreen forests,
(*b*) Southern tropical semi-evergreen forests,
(*c*) Mountain wet sub-tropical evergreen forests, and
(*d*) The temperate Shola-Grasslands.

(2) *Deciduous Type*

(*a*) Southern tropical wet Deciduous forests and
(*b*) Tropical dry Deciduous Forests.

3/3 4.8 Among the evergreen types, most of the species are utilized in the manufacture
[322] of plywood and packing cases, which is a flourishing industry in the State. Pali Kulamavn and Vellapine are some of the well known plywood species. Anjali, which is used for boat-building and mahagony utilized for furniture, are two other important economic species found among the evergreens. Of late, a number of other evergreen species have sprung into prominence and are now finding economic uses. Since markets for these are growing, it is planned to extract these newer species also on a commercial scale.

4.9 Teak and rosewood are the most important species found among the deciduous forests. Vanteak, Rosewood, Poola and Charopine are some of the other important species belonging to this category. These species are chiefly useful in making furniture and in building and construction work. A detailed list of the trees and other major produce found in Kerala along with their present uses is given in Appendix 5.2/1 A list of minor produce is given in Appendix 6.3/1

7/1 [Table 23, appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed--Ed.]
2/1, 3/1 [See pp. 329-333, category 11b --Analyst]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is 322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine 326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for 325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo 285 by the Parialas. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation 293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring [276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti.* Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

794 564 [782]

vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin. [262] [613]

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine. 564

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages. 564 794 [613]

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine. 564 613

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men- 564

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain. [643] [333] [323]

*433 3/6 6.61 Formerly mica used to be exported from this mine, but now because of its inferior grade and development of cheaper substitutes, the market has ceased to exist. Production has been giving demand and the mine is again on the verge of closing down.

Quartz-Sand

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Salt

6.66 Salt, besides being an essential ingredient of food, also serves as a basic raw material for the manufacture of alkalies. It is commonly extracted from sea water by solar evaporation. Production of salt in Kerala during the last few years has been as follows :

Year	Quantity (Metric tons)	Value (Rs.)
1955	56,094	1,180,000
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1957	336	5,000
1958	708	10,000
1959	1,007	13,000

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

313 purchased from the nearest markets and brought in carts. Wood is getting dearer and dearer. It used to be very cheap.

The increase in price is due to the felling of trees without replanting, increased outside demand for fuel, as by the railway company and the Shoranur Tile Works; and the better appreciation and consequent increased demand for the local timber trees.

361 *The village.*—Strictly speaking there is no village-site. The houses are not built in street formation, but are scattered throughout the village. This is characteristic of most villages in Malabar and strongly contrasts with what obtains in other districts. The area of the village is 2,380 acres.

Localization of castes is not complete. Brahmans are located in the centre around the temple, with the Nayars, and the other higher castes surrounding them. The Thiyyas or Ezhuvas live farther apart and the depressed classes—Cherumas, Pariahs, etc.—live far out of the way of the higher castes on the outskirts of the village in hovels on hill sides, which are unfrequented by the other castes. Of course there are social prohibitions to their approaching the higher castes, much more to living near them.

342 There are a few fine houses: about 20 are tiled and have two storeys, about half of them belonging to the Brahmans. About 100 are one-storeyed thatched houses, almost exclusively owned by the castes. The rest are mere huts used by the poorer classes. There is no terraced house at all. Most of the houses are pretty old, but the tiled ones are mostly of recent construction. The houses are built more or less on a uniform plan and are often large without being convenient or comfortable.

The Pariahs and Cherumas live in thatched huts, miserable hovels one should call them, small, dark and exposed.

351 Almost every house has a 'garden' of some sort, with a few fruit trees like the coconut-palm, the mango tree, the jack tree, the areca-palm, plantain trees, etc. But very few houses have really good gardens. The gardens are watered from wells, which are found in every house. Whether there are fruit-trees on it or no, each house of the better class has a compound attached to it. This is sometimes used for growing kitchen vegetables.

361 The distance of cultivated lands from the home of the cultivator is never more than one mile. In the working season the ryot starts very early in the morning from his home with his oxen and agricultural implements so as to reach his land in time.

343 Field huts are almost unknown—except tiny watchmen's huts where watch is kept by a man at night when the crops are getting ready for harvest.

323 *Subsidiary industries—Potters.*—There are no weavers. There is a class of potters, of Telugu origin (as their language shows) engaged in making pots for household use, etc. They get the clay for their industry from the banks of the Bharata river (situated to the south of the village). Their wares find a ready market in the neighbouring villages, being very cheap and necessary. The lower castes cook in pots of burnt clay, while the better classes use bronze and other metals, such as copper. The art is the whole time employment of this class. But earnings are not very high, only just affording the means of subsistence. If the art is refined and improved to suit modern conditions and requirements it

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

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177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta ; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is 322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine 326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for 325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo 285 by the Parialas. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation 293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring [276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti*. Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new cloths to women after menstruation, but my information on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the goldsmith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only. 796 564 [294] [326]

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple ; Vannân bringing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day. [293]

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful ; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword. 796 326 226 564

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the 796 564 [782] [482] [326]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

796 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

534 The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See Plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 114 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate importance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 184 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti 782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the [346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others [126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of [532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver [326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 [588] [793] [852] [764] 564 182

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *taravād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *taravād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State. 564

6. *Márár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies. [534]

7. *Pádamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision. [788]

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Vániyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers' in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :— 564 326

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1] [778]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses. 564

12. *Edachéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *tâli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Athâsham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Brâhmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *tâli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpâd in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the maternal uncle or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and brings the girl, who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with ornaments,
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. She is then seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes presents of
[326] cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *tâli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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588 by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who [431] with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. [787] She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. [326] When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for [465] each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given 184 above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocra- 588 tic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the [787] village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* [556] tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Brúhmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the 588 ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Axán*, the head- 622 man of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

The polyandry of the Kammalans, of the four sub-castes of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and bell-metal smiths, is in every way identical with that of the Thandans and Tiyas of the central area. This may be because they claim a common Sinhalese origin for it. The legend relates that one of the early Perumal kings of Kerala, having received some useful hints as to how to have his washing done by a *dhobi* (washerman) promised to give him a girl of the Asari (carpenter) caste in marriage. This revolted the Kammalans, and in order to avoid the degrading proposition, they emigrated in a body to Ceylon, leaving their king with none but a few workmen specialized in making roofs for the temples. The pre-historic boycott had its desired effect. The Perumal monarch, in dire distress, promised to give up the marriage he had had in mind and appealed to the king of Ceylon for the return of his indispensable artisans. These agreed to come back, but were given protection by the king of Sinhala in the form of an escort of his own subjects who brought the coconut with them, settled in Kerala and became the ancestors of the Tiyas. Presumably, the Kammalans learned the advantages of polyandry when they were in the kingdom of Kandy, and have never ceased to practise it since. 595 173 [564] [326]

I found all the artisan families which I visited polyandrous, and I was told that the custom is still very vigorous, in spite of what outsiders have to say. The same applies to those associated craftsmen castes, the Kolla- and Vil-Kurups, the Tol-kollan, Kanisans, Mannans, Panans and Pulluvans, who do not seem either to have given up polyandry in any great numbers. Their form of the institution differs in no way from that of their fellows of the senior caste. 595 564

B. POLYANDRY IN THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR AND IN NORTH COCHIN

Personal Observations

It was into this complex maze of Kerala society that I ventured, a few years ago now, to study the polyandry of some of its people. In the following pages, I give the results of this personal investigation. Thanks to my helpers and interpreters, I was able to find polyandrous households almost immediately. My first visit to the Palghat taluk and to Walluvanad allowed me to confirm that the Tiyas still practised what I was searching for, and that what I had heard about them was not incorrect. While in Tellicherry, I had the same experience, even though 595*

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
582 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
601 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
582 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age are some of the un-
732 married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
●[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

[i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]
[TEXT Continues On P. 194]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs. and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11.

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there.

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan.

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-*

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 197]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in; and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p. 199]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

286 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to [791] house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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326 [465] father is usually the teacher of his children in the hereditary caste. A good workman can earn from about 8 annas to 10 annas per day.

438 *Village trade.*—Iron ware used for domestic utensils and for agricultural purposes is got from Trichur, the nearest town. There are however a few retail shops in the 'town.' All articles of consumption are bought from retail shops, the retail keepers themselves getting their wares from either Trichur or Palghat.

Rice is the principal commodity. Arecanut and to some extent pepper and bamboos form important items of sale. There is a fair half a mile to the north of the 'town' which meets once a week (every Wednesday), for the sale of arecanut and pepper. Merchants from various parts of Malabar and even from the east of the Ghats come here to buy arecanuts. Vegetables and sundries also are exposed for sale for the use of the villagers only.

361 491 The main metalled road which passes from Shoranur to Trichur passes through the middle of the 'town.' Another road from the west touches the main road to the north of the 'town.' The Shoranur-Cochin Railway touches this place. The commercial town of Trichur is only ten miles to the south.

474 Co-operation in trading as well as in most other affairs is conspicuous by its absence. A Registrar of Co-operative Societies has recently been appointed in the State, and, I am told, gave one or two lectures in the place, but nothing came of it. I have hopes that a co-operative credit society will be started within a few years. I may mention that such credit societies have been opened in three places in the taluk and are receiving much help from the State. The co-operative principle as yet is not extended to trading, but with the development of knowledge and culture this may come.

Economic condition—

465 Statement showing wages (in *money*) for the whole State.

Workers.	Minimum.		Maximum.		Maximum in villages.	
	RS.	A.	RS.	A.	RS.	A.
Carpenters	0	[illegible]	1	0	0	8
Blacksmiths	0	6	0	12	0	8
Masons	0	6	0	14	0	8
Bricklayers	0	7	0	12	0	8
Sawyers	0	10	1	0	Piece-worker.	
Coolies—						
Male	0	4	0	10	0	6
Female	0	3	0	6	0	3
Boys	0	2	0	4	0	2

To Cherumans payment is made in kind (see above). Also wages are paid in kind to agricultural workers in the village area especially during the harvest season.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

smiths, masons, etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work. 465

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20. 465 326

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise. 465

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown. [462]

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure. 435 [804]

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000. 454

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of 434

* [180 lb.—Ed.]

† [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is 322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine 326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for 325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo 285 by the Pariahs. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation 293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring [276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti*. Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962. AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

*[433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

rest of the production is exported to various countries, the bulk of it going to the USA and the UK. Export figures are given in Table 29 for the period 1956–59. The 317 328

6.17 Irregular supplies made through the Koilthottam port, mainly due to labour difficulties, have resulted in the loss of contracts with importers in the USA. Export possibilities of ilmenite are now limited only to two contracts to UK totalling 1,50,000 tons per year. This setback has occurred in spite of the fact that the Chavara ilmenite has a high TiO_2 content (55-60%) and is cheaper when compared to Malayan ilmenite (about 45% TiO_2) which, however, finds a ready export market. 439

6.18 India, which at one time used to hold almost a monopolistic position in the export of ilmenite has now to face competition. Side by side with the expansion of titanium industry, other world sources for supply of ilmenite have come into operation as in Norway, Canada, Malaya, Australia, South Africa, etc. Whereas in 1940 India used to contribute 90 per cent to world production of ilmenite, now its share is only 25 per cent.

6.19 In view of the rapid expansion of India's steel industry, the consumption of TiO_2 pigment is itself expected to go up. The total requirements of ilmenite by 1965-66 would be 150,000 tons a year for export and 36,000 tons a year for the manufacture of TiO_2 pigment, on the basis of proposal for expansion of Titanium Dioxide plant at Trivandrum incorporated in this report. Table 30 gives demand for Titanium Dioxide pigment from steel industry and various other sources. The two existing companies can produce about 160,000 tons a year. Extra capacity of 30,000 tons a year will have to be installed, and this along with certain improvements suggested earlier may require an investment of Rs. 20 lakhs. Very little increase in labour force is envisaged. The existing labour force itself appears to be excessive, since the output per man per shift works out to a low level of 0.4 tons. 433* 317 328 386

6.20 During the Fourth Plan period, steel production is expected to double itself. Therefore, by 1970-71, the demand for Titanium Dioxide may also be expected to be roughly double of the demand in 1965-66. This would necessitate another 30,000 tons of ilmenite per annum. Total requirement of ilmenite by 1970-71 would thus be 220,000 tons a year, comprising of 150,000 tons for export and 60,000 tons for the manufacture of Titanium Dioxide. This would involve further additional outlay of Rs. 10 lakhs. Even this order of expansion can be achieved with the existing labour at an output of one ton per man per shift which would measure a fairly reasonable level of productivity.

Monazite

6.21 Monazite is a phosphate of thorium and cerium with rare earth elements and small quantities of Uranium Oxide. It constitutes a source of the radio-active element, thorium being used for atomic energy purposes. Monazite was first discovered in India, by C.W. Von Sohomberg, a German citizen, in 1909 along the beach at Manavalakkurichi. 135

6.22 Monazite occurs along with other heavy minerals in the beach sands. Reserves of the order of 6.7 million tons are estimated to be present in the bar between Neendakara and Kayarkulam. There is, however, no production of monazite

* [Table 30, appearing on p. 290 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

concentrates from Chavara, the Manavalakkurichi (in Madras State) material being preferred because of its higher thorium content.

6.23 A rare earth factory is located in the State at Alwaye, which processes 1,500 tons of monazite a year ; but it obtains its requirements from Manavalakkurichi in the Madras State. This factory produces Thorium Oxide, rare earth salts and Trisodium Phosphate. The Chavara Monazite may be considered for use in the rare earth factory instead of the monazite from Manavalakkurichi in Madras State, particularly in view of the fact that monazite would be a byproduct of ilmenite which is won in larger quantities in Kerala and may, therefore, prove cheaper.

Rutile

6.24 Rutile is another titanium mineral occurring in smaller quantities in the beach sands. The beach washings contain, on an average, about 4 per cent of rutile. A portion of the sand bar at Neendakara is estimated to contain 740,125 tons of the mineral.[1] Kerala is the only State in India producing rutile.

6.25 At present only one of the mineral sand factory units produces this mineral. Electro-static separators are used in concentrating rutile from the non-magnetic tailings after the extraction of ilmenite. Recovery is one-fifth of the rutile content of raw sand and the rest is allowed to go into the tailings for lack of equipment.

6.26 Only small quantities of rutile are produced. During 1959, 482 tons valued at Rs. 4.75 lakhs were beneficiated. The current price is Rs. 1,000 a ton. The mineral is not utilized in the State, but is sent to Bombay and Calcutta for the manufacture of welding rods. During 1957, 155 tons of rutile were imported to meet the requirements of this industry. Future requirements of welding rods within India is estimated to go up from 417 m. ft. in 1960-61 to 2,022 m. ft. in 1970-71.[2] To meet this rise in demand, output of rutile would have to be stepped upto 6,750 tons by 1970-71. An expansion in capacity of this order would require an investment of the order of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Sillimanite and Zircon

6.27 Sillimanite as well as zircon occur in small amounts in beach sands in association with ilmenite and other heavy minerals. They average 5.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively of the beach washings. In addition, 1,916,260 tons of sillimanite and 799,350 tons of zircon are estimated to form a part of the Neendakara bar.[3] Only experimental production of either of these minerals has been taken up so far.

6.28 Sillimanite is mainly used in refractories, but the internal requirement of sillimanite refractories is very small. Moreover, the material from Assam which is of a massive variety can be shaped into blocks and used directly. Export possibilities are also dim and due to the development of artificial mulite bricks from domestic kyanite in the USA. Exports have dropped from 20,000 tons to 6,000 tons in 1957.

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, P. 102.
[2] NCAER estimates.
[3] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Op. Cit, p. 102.

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377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. 435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35[2] presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as 432 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity [439] system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis 377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more [328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[113] 1 *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.

2 [Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed! — Analyst]

Z:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p 199]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kammalans

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[Text continues on p 199]

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133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely 133 aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region 288 —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section 182 of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence [364] of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala 133 would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have 487 also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the 509 coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

3 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed [234] available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. [312] Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse [339] repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 6]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

135 of the rivers. The best known among these is that of Vembanad lake ; other less important occurrences are in the estuaries of the Kadalundi and Korapuzha rivers, Kozhikode district and Cranganore lake. Only a few of these tracts have been prospected so far. A systematic exploration programme should, therefore, be initiated in all the backwater and estuarine tracts.

317 6.46 The deposits in Vembanad lake were surveyed by the Travancore Cement Company in 1946. There was no layer of limeshell as such, but it occurred amidst sands and clays, the total thickness of the mixed deposits varying from 1-7 feet. Reserves as estimated then were 3 million tons.

6.47 In addition, in the estuary of the Kadalundi river 400,000 to 500,000 tons of limeshell are estimated to be available in an area of 300 acres.[1] About 100,000 tons of material is also likely to be available from the lower reaches of the rivers Pullut and Thathapally which drain into the Cranganore lake.[2]

6.48 These limeshell deposits provide a raw material of very high purity and which is eminently suitable for use in the chemical industry and in the manufacture of white cement.

433 317 6.49 The present production is mainly from Kottayam and Alleppey districts, where the Vembanad lake deposits are exploited. Small quantities are also won from the Kadalundi and Korapuzha estuaries. Details of production available for 1959 are given below:

District	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
Alleppey	9,098	76,542
Kottayam	86,509	696,333
Kozhikode	500 to 1,000	N.A.

433 317 339 6.50 Excepting small quantities sent to the adjoining States from Kozhikode district, the State's output is consumed within the State. The cement company consumes 70,000 tons of shells a year for producing 50,000 to 60,000 tons of grey cement. About 26,000 tons a year are used in lime-burning of which 25,000 tons come from the Vembanad lake.

6.51 Other limeshell utilizing industries which are under active consideration are a sand-lime brick factory at Pallathara with a capacity of 44,000 bricks a day and a calcium carbide factory at Chingavanam with a capacity of 10,000 tons a year. Both these would use shells from Vembanad lake and their annual requirements would be 8,500 tons and 10,000 tons respectively.

6.52 The total annual requirement during 1961–66 would thus be 108,500 tons of shells from the Vembanad lake. In view of the fact that the cement factory has been in existence for the last 11 years and has already consumed about a third of the original reserve of 3 million tons, proposals for new limeshell-based industries in the same area introduce problems regarding assured reserves of raw materials and their conservation.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Geological Department*, Government of Kerala, 1958-59, pp. 3-4.
[2] Ibid pp. 3-4.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

6.53 First, possibilities of an alternative source, e.g., shells from the sea, should be assessed quantitatively, which could possibly meet requirements of the local lime-burning units. This would relieve the pressure on the lake and estuarine deposits, which could then be conserved for larger industrial units.

6.54 Secondly, new industries could perhaps be located near other known shell deposits. A case in point here is the Calcium Carbide Factory requiring about 10,000 tons annually, which could be located in the Kadalundi area where reserves of the order of 400,000 to 500,000 tons are available. In this location the unit would be assured of its shell requirements for the next 40 to 50 years on the basis of an average annual requirement of 10,000 tons, whereas in the Vembanad lake location, reserves would last only for 15 to 20 years.

6.55 The requirements of the sand-lime brick factory, however, are only about 3,500 tons a year and it should be possible to accommodate this requirement from the present consumption of 25,000 tons by the lime-burning industry.

6.66 In this context, it would be relevant to mention that in absolute terms, the accretion of shells is rather small; and in terms of the proposed rate of exploitation this accretion is even negligible. Further, the proposal to construct a bar across the mouth of the Vembanad lake would change the salinity of the water and would very likely put an end even to this small accretion. As to whether the shell organism could be simulated to thrive on a large scale is a problem for long term research.

6.57 In the meantime, in view of the rapid depletion of reserves in the Vembanad lake, strict control should be exercised over the exploitation of this deposit with periodical inspection to check unauthorized collection. The rate of exploitation may be kept at the present level but should not be allowed to rise.

Mica

6.58 Two varieties of mica, muscovite and phlogopite are known to occur in the State. Muscovite is reported from Kulikhoor, and Sholayaramson from Palghat district and phlogopite from Punalur in Quilon district. However data relating to reserves are not available for any of these deposits.

6.59 At Kulikoor in Palghat district, a few prospecting pits have been put down which exposed a small vein of ruby mica with very little strains. The presence of ruby mica on a fairly large scale along the same belt in the adjoining State may be taken as a favourable indication. Further prospecting should be undertaken in the area.

6.60 Production from the only mine in the State at Punalur has been intermittent. Figures for production since 1957 when mining activity was revived are given below:

Year	*Quantity* (Metric tons)	*Value* (Rs.)
1957	72	40,000
1958	72	40,000
1959	46	23,000

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) (435)

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 (439)

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 (464)

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31.[1] 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon,

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

[1] [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

613 Powerful emotional ties bind a Nayar to his ancestral
[342] land and to his house, which is large and beautifully constructed of whitewashed laterite, carved wooden pillars and a tiled roof. The lineage-names of retainer-Nayars are the names of original ancestral sites in the village, e.g., Kirakkutt Velappil ("Eastern Garden"). Desavari lineages take the name of their desam, chiefly lineages of their nad, and royal lineages of their kingdom. The knowledge that their matrilineal forbears once jointly owned a house and land holds lineage-members together.

[361] Except in unusual circumstances (i.e., if it is dying out) a lineage comprises several households, traditionally congregated in separate gardens some distance apart on a stretch of dry land
613 in the village. Today with the vast increase in
596 population during British rule, a lineage may comprise up to 20 or more households; traditionally, it seems usually to have contained about four to ten. Each of these households comprised a segment of the lineage, [41] usually, a group of siblings together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. The household was also the unit whose members jointly owned ancestral garden land, kanam rice lands and movable property: I call it a property-group. The lineage as a whole (unless it were dying out and comprised only one property-group) owned no property in common and its members had no economic cooperation as a group.

613 The lineage was exogamous, and matrilineal kinship terms were extended throughout its

421 was headed by its oldest male member (karana-
van) who was the legal guardian of all members
and represented them in the local subcaste as-
sembly. When spoken of in its own right the
property-group, like the lineage, was called a
taravad; when spoken of as a segment of the lin-
eage it was called a tavari (lit. - "mother's
line"). Tavari could also be used of any inter-
mediate segment of the lineage or of a minimal
segment of one [54] mother and her children with-
in the property-group had a separate garden
name in addition to its lineage-name: each indiv-
idual was called by his taravad-name, property-
group name, personal name and caste-title (e.g.,
Kolangatt Thekkedil Govindan Nayar - "In the
place of the bathing pool, the southern side,
Govindan Nayar.")

421 Usually, a property-group owned only one
592 house and was simultaneously a dwelling group.
In wealthier desavari and naduvari lineages,
however, a group which increased in size might
build two or more adjacent houses. In some
cases a minimal segment descended from one
sister occupied each of these houses, and cook-
ing was separate. Much more commonly, the
two adjacent houses would be used indiscrimin-
ately by all members, cooking being carried on
in only one.

592 A traditional house of the retainer or desavari
•342 subcastes comprises a central large building
with two storeys, separate staircases for men
and women, and in the centre of it a separate
courtyard open to the sky. The house faces
east and is fronted by a spacious verandah used

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group - Analyst]

513 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
542 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. [343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's 342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands 556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village 312 headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing [515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside 613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. [764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods [776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of [782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta- [825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might 592 sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its 241 subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the 427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya 613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as 433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade [439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle- [432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods [431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the 592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops [465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

PL. XIV.

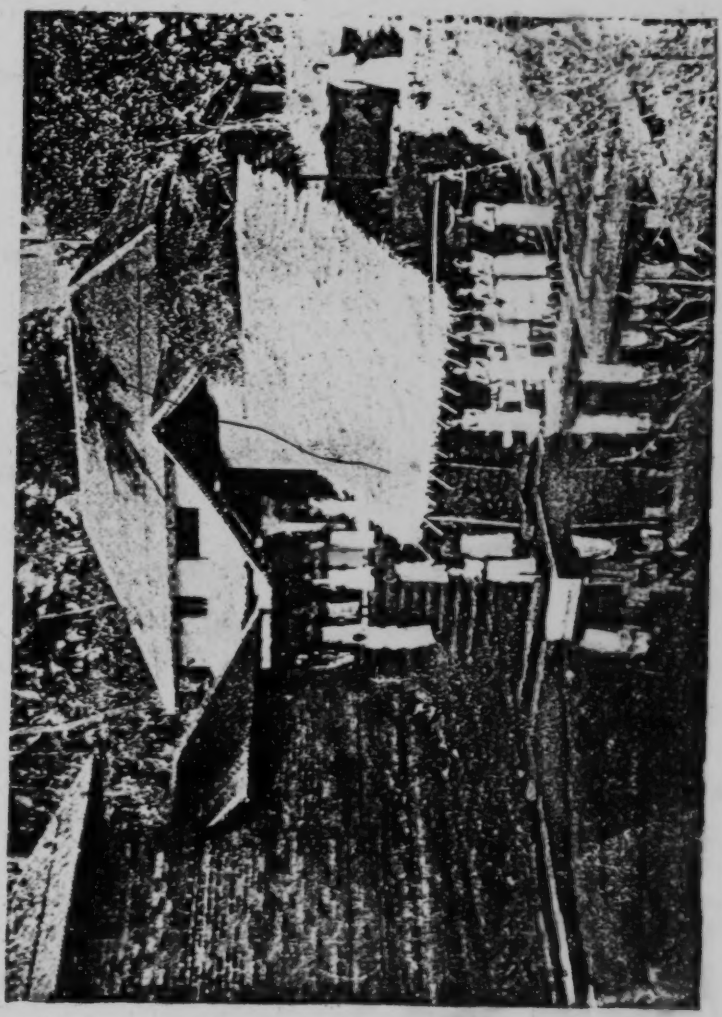

A NAYAR HOME, PANUR, N. MALABAR. THE BATHING TANK AND BATHING SHED IN THE FOREGROUND.

342
343
515
312

[Facing p. 262]

for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

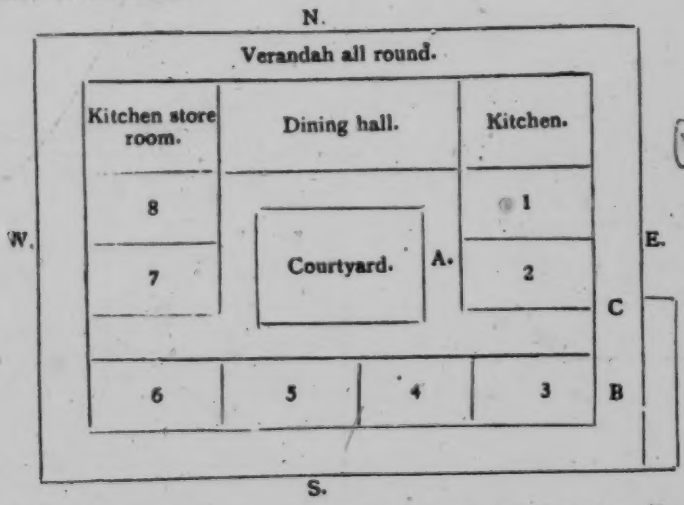

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon.

342
556 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
[769] between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
[778] women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
[735] and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
[782] of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot afford to make these images, substitute simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside and offered.

The entrance is at C.

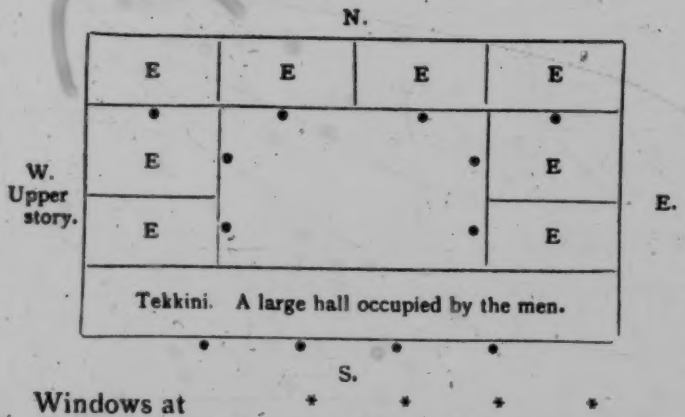

Windows at * * * *

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably, there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

342
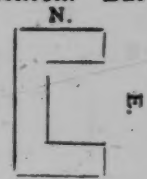

[351]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police, and the village watchmen (*kúvalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asúns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asún* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asún* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

464 564 [212] The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population belong to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning [357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 [515] [771] **Food.** The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worshipping in the temple close at hand. Their meals are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between 262 264 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular [272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for [556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation [562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 556 [357] In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavaḷasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

[1] THE KINSHIP SYSTEM OF THE NAYARS OF MALABAR

I The Malabar Coast

(1) Physical Features

131 The Malabar Coast lies in the extreme southwest of India, along the shores of the Arabian Sea. The coastline is 360 miles long, the area 14,908 square miles. It is divided off from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the centre of the [167] area by the Palghat Gap. Though periodic immigrations have taken place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, the mountains prevented close contacts between the people who became established there [177] and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid the area open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (1,000 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (5th century B.C.), Romans (1st century A.D.), Chinese (6th century A.D.), and after 1498 the Portuguese followed by the English, Dutch and French.

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats.

[241] The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. [2] In the southern half of the area it is broken by salt-water lagoons which for over 100 miles form a continuous navigable chain, parallel to 133 the sea. Almost all the chief towns (from north • 361 to south, Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé,

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by
chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
241 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet,

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[264] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
"good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
[611] two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
[783] ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandry, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[437] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
564 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

ritual pollution decreed that the several lower castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. Th Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes there were and are in Kerala large groups of Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
563 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

564 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
564 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended such festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

613 Powerful emotional ties bind a Nayar to his ancestral
[342] land and to his house, which is large and beautifully constructed of whitewashed laterite, carved wooden pillars and a tiled roof. The lineage-names of retainer-Nayars are the names of original ancestral sites in the village, e.g., Kirakkutt Velappil ("Eastern Garden"). Desavari lineages take the name of their desam, chiefly lineages of their nad, and royal lineages of their kingdom. The knowledge that their matrilineal forbears once jointly owned a house and land holds lineage-members together.

[361] Except in unusual circumstances (i.e., if it is dying out) a lineage comprises several households, traditionally congregated in separate gardens some distance apart on a stretch of dry land
613 in the village. Today with the vast increase in
596 population during British rule, a lineage may comprise up to 20 or more households; traditionally, it seems usually to have contained about four to ten. Each of these households comprised a segment of the lineage, [41] usually, a group of siblings together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. The household was also the unit whose members jointly owned ancestral garden land, kanam rice lands and movable property. I call it a property-group. The lineage as a whole (unless it were dying out and comprised only one property-group) owned no property in common and its members had no economic cooperation as a group.

613 The lineage was exogamous, and matrilineal kinship terms were extended throughout its

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

564 tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in
[361] a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title
121 today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes.
564 Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name
[703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their
162 personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a sepa-
621 rate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdavaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
631 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
423 appointed by the Raja or the *nâdavari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
[614] Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nâdavari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *taravâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

586 Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
595 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
684 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
851

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampudiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one 771
becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" 177
or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyan* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which [114]
lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. 241
The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of 242
excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific 245
skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme [177]
fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut 245
cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by 471
the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the [361]
Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. 241
Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. [438]
It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the [432]
market.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
[417] tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
[343] Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
342 order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
[787] ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
[764] ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

163
165

COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

Rural-Urban Breakdown

1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,980 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] *See* Appendix 2 for details.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

131 Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand
[133] feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the
[631] reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

133 All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

133 Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed
134 by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

134 The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper
241 and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant
132 throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

137 In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among
[361] these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in
[351] villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595* 601

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed. [464] [167] [464] [166]

Kalyany told me that she was related to the brothers of the Katukulangara *tarawad* whom I had interviewed at Kadavelur on the 27th of October. She was a half sister of Velu by another mother. I found this family particularly interesting, because it illustrated, more than any other Tiya one encountered so far, the ancient and persistant connection which the caste has with Ceylon. Their genealogy is given in Table 8.

Before going on to an account of my visits to Kammalans and other artisan families practising polyandry in Kerala, I would like to give here, together with the material that I collected about Tiyas, the description of a Thandan family that I went to see on the 25th of November 1949. 595*

They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on p. 191]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
582 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
601 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
582 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age[7] are some of the un-
132 married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

7 [i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]
[TEXT Continues on p. 194]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866¼) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There 595*
was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any 601
other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two hus- [614]
bands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a [582]
bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen [582]
and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand 595*
rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a 435
paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* 429
Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the imple- 595*
ments we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the [326]
paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, al- [243]
thought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12. [433]

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, 595*
I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard 564
that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimi- [335]
lated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub- [333]
caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the 595*
main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The 342
compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just [361]
beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p. 199]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans
Kolla-Kurups

428 564 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

427 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 564 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

[305] [282]

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lakkidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

349 [487] [351]

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[291]

[Text continues on P. 206]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

Holla-kuraps
Tol-kollans
Kanisans

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.) 595* 465 [427]

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk. 564 [282] [342] [361] [304] [574]

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them. 595* 564

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions. 564 [491] [361] [574] [115]

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna- 564 614

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year [868] old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph [126] the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the vil-
614 lage. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house *595 was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve [429] annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

• 361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our
564 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake
959 worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.
971

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 Awil Kerala Awil
Pulluvans

* 595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text continues on p. 216]

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

161 Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore respectively 14, 23, and 27% in 1921–31, 11, 18, and 19% in 1931–41. The decrease in rate seems to be associated with later marriage. Females outnumber males in Cochin (1042:1000) and in both Cochin and Travancore the proportion of unmarried females over 15 years old is several times greater than that of India as a whole—in 1941 Cochin had 172 per mille and Travancore 107 against an All-India rate of 36. In Cochin also the proportion of children under 10 had been stable in the last two Censuses.[47] The rate of increase, however, turned upwards again in 1941–51, which added to Travancore-Cochin 1,772,264 souls—an increase of 23·6% compared with an *Indian* average of 13·4. Population is now **9,280,425** with a density of **1015** on 9155 sq mls.

161 311 The situation is grave; on the 1931 figures Kuriyan calculated that taking a liberal view of the potentialities of 'culturable waste' only another 2,000,000 souls could be supported. Holdings are extremely small—96% under 10 ac., 87% under 5, 38% less than 1; and 5 ac. is regarded as the minimum for a family to live in reasonable comfort.[48] In Cochin the total area per person in 1941 was 0·67 of an acre, of cultivable land 0·36, of land actually cultivated 0·29; and the rice grown is sufficient to feed the people for only 7 out of 12 months.[49] During the war the Cochin and Travancore governments prided themselves, with some justice, on the efficiency of their procurement and rationing, but the ration was minimal even by Indian standards. As we have seen, agriculture is in many respects extremely intensive; yet in many areas there is a slack season from May through August, and this coincides with the slack season in sea-fishing owing to the stormy monsoon.

Diversification and expansion of agriculture are thus urgently necessary. But the density on cultivated area in the lowland is now at least 2250, and there is here very little land available for expansion on the most optimistic view imaginable. Various plans exist for irrigating perhaps 100,000 ac., mainly in the foothills; but these will not go very far, and it is difficult to see where the 15,000 ac. allotted to jute in 1950 can be fitted in. Even in the foothills there are well over **1000** persons to the cultivated square mile. Here, however, there is perhaps some room for diversification by expansion—perhaps of poorer crops on the poorer soils. Gram, soya, and other pulses, fodder crops, and buckwheat are suggested by Kuriyan, together with more tapioca and fruit. Other occupations may play an ancillary role in relieving pressure, but their scope is limited.

361 As for settlement patterns, the extreme density of population (as in Bengal) produces a close stipple of habitations; there are no grouped villages (other than mere thickening of homesteads) except in the tran-

[47] 1941 Census, Vol. XIX (Cochin), 18–24; the discussion is largely based on Cochin figures since this, by exception in 1941, is an excellent report.
[48] *Ibid.*, 31; Kuriyan (1938), 140, where 8–10 ac. is given as the 'economic' holding.
[49] 1941 Census, Vol. XIX, 31.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

sitional areas—Comorin, Shencottah, Palghat, parts of Malabar. The importance of food-producing trees (coconut, areca, plantain, jackfruit) fits in with this: they are grown in the house compounds, so that the actual dwelling-space subtracts hardly anything from the cultivation-space, while

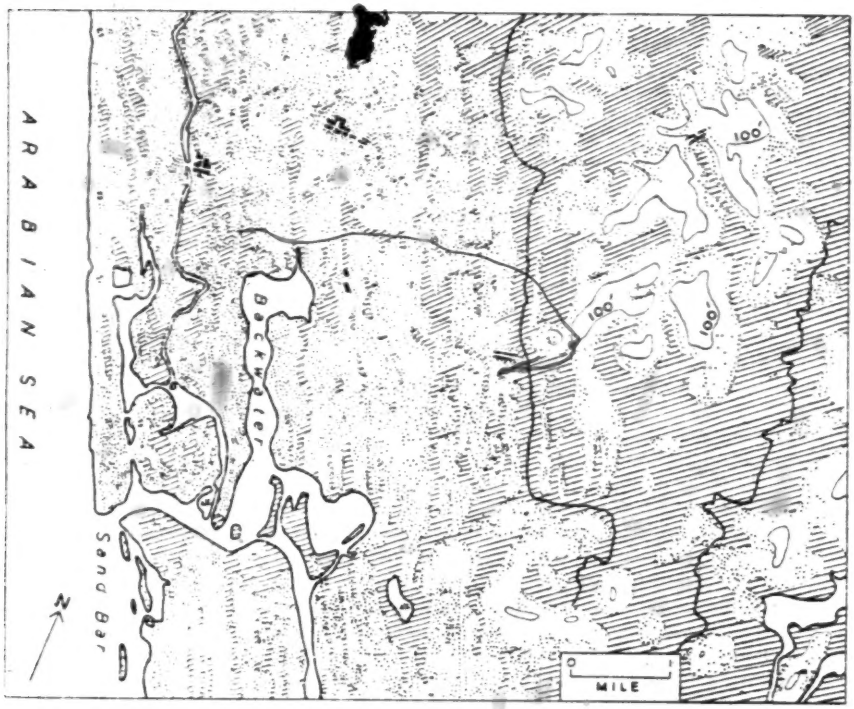

Fig. 122.—KERALA: COASTAL SETTLEMENT. 40 mls N of Cochin town. Dots, habitations; shaded, paddy. Note contrast between linear settlement on beach-ridges (under coconut) in W and ring settlement around lateritic rises in E. SOI 58 B/2; courtesy SOI.

at the same time the compounds ensure that the 'village' is loosely built, and may indeed spill all over the village lands. (Fig. 122.)[50]

Along the coast there is a marked linear tendency, houses and coconuts on the sandy ridges with their fresh ground-water, paddy in the lows. Inland the lateritic topography exercises a marked effect, settlement being strung out along valley-flanks or interfluves or forming a complete ring around the rises. (Fig. 123.)

[50] The 14th and the 20th centuries tell the same tale. "Mulaybar, which is the pepper country, extends for two months' journey along the coast. . . . there is not a foot of ground but what is cultivated. Every man has his own orchard, with his house in the middle and a wooden palisade all round it." (Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa, 1325–1354*, trans. H. A. R. Gibb (1929), 231–32). Along the 40 miles from Quilon to Trivandrum one is never out of sight of habitations or foot-travellers; G. Slater, *op. cit.*, 172.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Towns

369 439 The towns of Kerala are for the most part either ports or crossing-points on the backwaters. There is virtually no indigenous maritime tradition, but from very early times spices attracted traders from E and W: Arabs, Graeco-Romans, Chinese.[51] With the Discoveries the Malabar coast became the scene of a fierce struggle between the Portuguese and their Muslim and European rivals. Relics of the era of European conflict are the tiny French settlement of Mahé (26 sq mls, poptn (1941) 14,092) and the exclaves of former British territory at Cochin itself and in Travancore

361 311

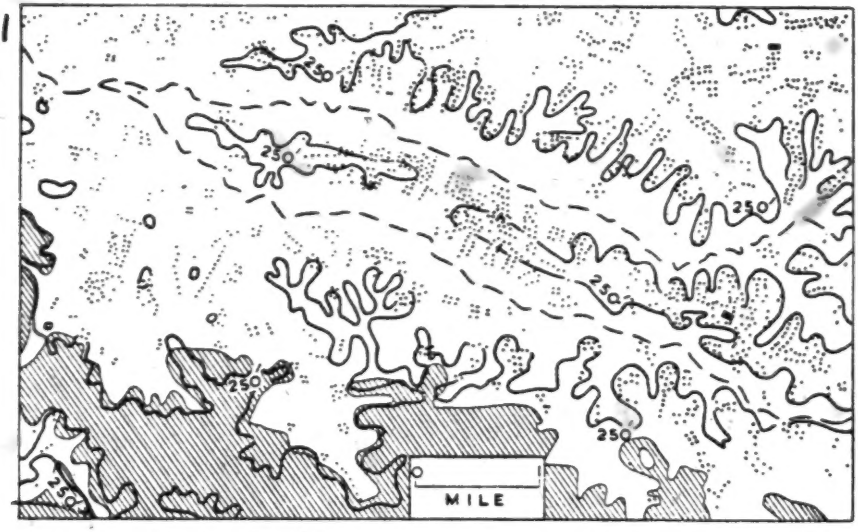

Fig. 123.—KERALA: INLAND SETTLEMENT. 5–10 mls SE of Palghat town; lateritic foothills in approach to Palghat Gap. Dots, habitations surrounded by groves; shaded, forest; blank, cultivation; broken lines, seasonal streams. SOI 58 B/10; courtesy SOI.

at Anjengo and Quilon (Tangasseri), which last had an area of 99 acres!

369 439 In Malabar Dt Tellicherry (36,320) exports most of the Coorg coffee and some pepper and copra; Calicut (158,724) has a similar trade but is more important administratively. Both ports are mere roadsteads, ships lying two or three miles offshore and lighters working from one or two piers, but at Tellicherry the shelter of offshore reefs enables some traffic to be carried on during the monsoon.

369 Cochin is far more important: it really consists of two adjacent towns, ex-British Cochin (26,320) and Cochinese Cochin or Mattancheri (53,346). Cochin is in fact the oldest European settlement in India; on Christmas

[51] On the Chinese shipping, see Ibn Battuta, *ed. cit.*, 235–6.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Laccadives AZ4
Maldives AZ5

K 369 K 504 K 439 K 471 K 369 361 504 M L 133 631

Day 1500 Cabral arrived, and from then until the Dutch supplanted them in 1663 the Portuguese were in alliance with the rulers of Cochin against the Muslim Zamorin of Calicut. The port has considerable locational advantages: it is central on the backwaters, the Palghat Gap lies about 125 miles (by rail) to the NE, and it is about 300 miles nearer Aden and Durban than is Bombay. It may even rival Colombo as a transit port, as a call at Cochin adds only 40 miles to the Aden-Fremantle run.[52] The development of the modern port was for long impeded by its curious political situation; it lies on a breach in the long spit separating the great backwater from the sea, but while the major installations and the approaches lie in what was British territory, the inner harbour—in which much of the trade is carried on—is in Cochin state, and much of the backwater was Travancorean. Real development—including the cutting of a channel through the bar across the natural breach, and much reclamation—began only in 1920–23; later a 3-mile approach channel was dredged to a width of 450 and a depth of 37 ft, so that the inner harbour is now accessible to any ship which can pass Suez. Rail and road bridges cross the backwater, and a large airport has been built on reclaimed land; the old metre line to the SIR through the Palghat has been changed to BG. The volume of trade increased from 450,000 tons in 1920 to about 1,250,000 in 1950, while the number of ships using the port has more than trebled. Normally rice from Burma and Indo-China formed two-fifths in bulk of the total trade; mineral oil is also a major import. The exports are the usual Kerala ones: coconut products, especially coir and copra, tea, rubber, cashew nuts. Across the backwater is Ernakulam (46,790), capital of Cochin, with important soap factories, the largest owned (naturally) by Tatas: rice milling, as at Mattancherri, is also important. Trichur (57,524), the largest town of Cochin, has cotton spinning and weaving mills and tile factories; it shares with Palghat (55,160) command of the gap.

Travancore is less urbanised than Cochin, but Trivandrum (**186,931**) is the capital of Travancore–Cochin state. Alleppey (**116,278**) and Quilon are ports of ancient fame now decayed; mere roadsteads, they still carry on a considerable backwater traffic. Alleppey, protected by a mudbank, is slightly the better port, but Quilon has the advantage of its situation on the metre line from Trivandrum through the Shencottah Gap.

The Maldive and Laccadive Islands

These groups of coral atolls extend from the Equator to about 15° N, 180–300 miles from the Malabar coast. The Laccadives and Minicoy are attached to Madras, the Maldives (which have their own Sultan and constitutional government) to Ceylon: these affiliations represent historical accident merely.

[52] *Handbook of Commercial Information for India* (Delhi, 1937), 79; personal information from Sir Robert Bristow.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Tamil AW16
Marathi AW12

K T 241 311

rain. Above the rubber, tea extends to nearly 6000 ft, and indeed more than half of it is grown above 4000 ~~ft; rainfall~~ is usually 100–150 ins. It is noteworthy that over half the rubber is produced on Indian-owned estates, but only a small fraction of the tea.

K T 377

As for hydro-electricity, the hills are dotted with falls and rainfall on the Wn flanks is everywhere high and reliable. So far the most important large development is at Pallivasal in Travancore (installed 21,000 kW, potential 36,000), which powers the aluminium smelters at Alwaye and also works pumps draining the flooded paddy-fields of Kerala. A project of great interest is that for utilising the great Periyar Reservoir (Fig. 150) for power. The Periyar headwaters have been impounded and are taken through the watershed by tunnel to irrigate the Suruli-Vaigai Valley in Madura; some 40,000 kW might be developed, and altogether the region has a potential of at least 200,000 kW.

K T 311 361

The Wn flanks of the hills are too rain-swept to have much settlement except on plantations, forest camps, and power installations. In the E Kodaikanal, lying at 7000 ft on the Palnis, is a minor hill-station, noted for its mission schools and an old-established physical observatory.

Maharashtra

M 133

Maharashtra, the Maratha country *par excellence*,[5] may be taken as roughly coterminous with the main mass of the Deccan Lavas above the Ghats. To the N the Tapti Valley, flanked by typical lava plateaus but floored by alluvium, forms a transition to the central Indian scarplands; in the S, along the Malaprabha, there is another belt where Archaeans and lavas interdigitate and where cultural allegiance is divided between the Marathi and Kannada (Kanarese) languages. But to the E, in Hyderabad especially, the boundary of Marathi speech shows a striking accordance with the edge of the Lavas (Fig. 127); hence the division of the state into Marathwara and Telangana, a rare instance of official recognition of regionalism. This great area thus includes all central Bombay, the NW third of Hyderabad, and SW Madhya Pradesh (CP) as far as Nagpur.

M 197 631

The Terrain

M 133

It is a region of extraordinary physical homogeneity, in the gross at least, although (as Deshpande points out) detailed study would undoubtedly reveal significant differences in erosional features, soils, vegetation, and farming practice depending on the varying petrology of the lavas. The general slope to the E and SE is gentle: Poona lies at 1800 ft, and it is over 100 miles down the Bhima to the 1500-ft contour. From the Ghat culminations long tongues of higher ground (over 2000 ft) run E and divide the plateau

[5] The etymological connection of Maratha or Mahratta and Maharashtra, if any, is still controversial.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

THE COCHIN STATE.

WATAKANCHERY (TALAPILLI TALUK).

[*By S. Subbarama Aiyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

An absence of villages, as they are to be found in the east of the peninsula, is a characteristic of Malabar generally, including the States of Travancore and Cochin and the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency. The Malayalis are averse to having their houses congregated together. But the Taluk of Palghat is an exception. It is situated in the gap between the Nilgiris on the north, and the Palnis and other high ranges on the south, and is the natural line of communication between the west coast and the eastern plains, utilized by the South Indian Railway. All the villages in the Palghat taluk are designed in a manner that suggests that the original immigrants, coming from the east, were accustomed to an intense form of corporate life. They have a scientific and regular plan, and the description of any one of them will serve for all. 361

The Brahmans live in closely packed houses and their colony is called a '*gramam*' or '*agraharam*.' There is invariably either a temple at one end, or the streets of the *gramam* radiate in all directions from a temple in the midmost place. There are also wells in the street common to all the villagers. There is scarcity of water in summer in almost all the villages of Palghat as they are situated on a high level and rocky ground. The *gramam* is surrounded by the *tarai* in which all the other castes live. Artisans and agricultural labourers live there in houses built singly, but the weavers generally inhabit hovels built in rows. People of the same caste and profession congregate in particular blocks of the *tarai*. The *tarai* is occupied by the richest jammi as well as the poorest day labourer. The *tarai* has its own *kavu* or temple in which the low caste people conduct their worship. The *gramam* with its adjoining *tarai* is set up on rather elevated ground in the midst of paddy fields or on the slope of an adjoining hill so that every available acre of land may be cultivated. All houses in the *gramam* are built in the same way. From the street you step into a verandah whose extent corresponds to the whole width of the house; hence into a small room, the *neli*, to the right of which is a granary. The *neli* leads you into a rectangular hall, in the middle of which is a yard exposed to the sky. To the right of this is another big hall separated from the other by a long window crossed by beams. The store-room is on the street side of this, the kitchen on the back side. The kitchen has a verandah abutting on the garden. A cow-shed is erected at the other end of the garden. The house may or may not possess upstairs rooms; these usually adjoin the street. [312] 342

In that part of Malabar in which Watakanchery is situated the general plan of the Palghat type of house is followed, with modifications, by the *Tamil* Brahmans. The Malayali Brahmans, known as Nambudris, and the Nayars, have their houses surrounded by big compounds. Entering from the compound you step into a portico which thrusts itself forward from the general structure of the house.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

361 *Preliminary.*—Watakanchery is a Government division, rather than a true village, being marked out merely for convenience of revenue assessment. It stretches from east to west a distance of nearly four miles along the foot of a hill. A water-course which runs from east to west forms the northern boundary; the maximum distance from north to south is nearly a mile and a half. The whole area is 3,692·64 acres (nearly 5½ square miles). It is an area containing a few groups of houses intersected by paddy fields and "parambas," i.e., land on which paddy cultivation is not undertaken.

Watakanchery proper, or the town of Watakanchery, as it is called in the village accounts, is at the easternmost boundary of the Government village area and is the headquarters of the taluk containing all the public offices. Two tracts of land, one inhabited by Mappillas (Muhammadans) and another by Syrian Christians (locally known as Nasranees, i.e., Nazarenes) are included in the "town" of Watakanchery from the contiguous areas of the adjoining Government villages on the north and south respectively. Its area is 1½ square miles.

The Taluk of Talapilli contains 74 such "villages" divided solely for revenue purposes. In the "town" Brahmans live in great numbers, while the lower castes occupy the rest of the village area. This block I shall designate Watakanchery (T) and the whole area Watakanchery (V) in the following.

162 *Population.*—Watakanchery (T) has about 2,000 inhabitants;
[779] Watakanchery (V) about 4,000. Watakanchery (T) contains within
564 its limits three religions—Hindus in the centre and Mappillas (Muhammadans) and Christians to the north and south, respectively. Among the Hindus the Brahmans form the majority in the "town," while there are a few "vocational" castes such as barbers, goldsmiths, etc., and a few Nayars. Though the term "castes" is in strictness to be applied to Hindus alone the Mappillas and Christians are regarded as two other castes. The Mappillas and the Christians cannot touch the Hindu caste-people without polluting them, while there are castes within the Hindu fold itself, such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, Cherumas (vide below), Eluvas, etc., who are
[113] kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority.

[778] * [In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri Brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that
[361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths
165 are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	96	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths
[361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land.
[465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of
566 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The
162 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]

[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].

‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

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566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

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326 [465] father is usually the teacher of his children in the hereditary caste. A good workman can earn from about 8 annas to 10 annas per day.

438 *Village trade.*—Iron ware used for domestic utensils and for agricultural purposes is got from Trichur, the nearest town. There are however a few retail shops in the 'town.' All articles of consumption are bought from retail shops, the retail keepers themselves getting their wares from either Trichur or Palghat.

Rice is the principal commodity. Arecanut and to some extent pepper and bamboos form important items of sale. There is a fair half a mile to the north of the 'town' which meets once a week (every Wednesday), for the sale of arecanut and pepper. Merchants from various parts of Malabar and even from the east of the Ghats come here to buy arecanuts. Vegetables and sundries also are exposed for sale for the use of the villagers only.

361 491 The main metalled road which passes from Shoranur to Trichur passes through the middle of the 'town.' Another road from the west touches the main road to the north of the 'town.' The Shoranur-Cochin Railway touches this place. The commercial town of Trichur is only ten miles to the south.

474 Co-operation in trading as well as in most other affairs is conspicuous by its absence. A Registrar of Co-operative Societies has recently been appointed in the State, and, I am told, gave one or two lectures in the place, but nothing came of it. I have hopes that a co-operative credit society will be started within a few years. I may mention that such credit societies have been opened in three places in the taluk and are receiving much help from the State. The co-operative principle as yet is not extended to trading, but with the development of knowledge and culture this may come.

Economic condition—

465 Statement showing wages (in *money*) for the whole State.

Workers.	Minimum.		Maximum.		Maximum in villages.	
	RS.	A.	RS.	A.	RS.	A.
Carpenters	0	6	1	0	0	8
Blacksmiths	0	6	0	12	0	8
Masons	0	6	0	14	0	8
Bricklayers	0	7	0	12	0	8
Sawyers	0	10	1	0	Piece-worker.	
Coolies –						
Male	0	4	0	10	0	6
Female	0	3	0	6	0	3
Boys	0	2	0	4	0	2

To Cherumans payment is made in kind (see above). Also wages are paid in kind to agricultural workers in the village area especially during the harvest season.

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796 beat the drums according to their 'science' for two or three hours. The figure of the God or Goddess is taken on the back of the middle elephant in the row. There is a display of fireworks at night.

794 A few temples in the village are managed by private people or Janmis, usually Nambudri Brahmans. Such temples have landed property managed by these Janmis who generally make use of the profits. Recently the Government has been trying to encroach upon the temple properties in its capacity of *melkoyma*; this is very much resented by the Nambudri Jánmis.

The common people as a rule have no part or lot in temple management or expenditure.

426 *State loans.*—Only one person in the village has borrowed from the Government a loan of Rs. 400 to be paid back in ten instalments of Rs. 40 each with interest at 5 per cent. The small landholders do not approach the Government for help; the mediocre landholders rent their land to others; while the few big ones have money of their own if they want to make any improvement. The fact is that agriculture is routine work with many people; no permanent improvements are thought of by the majority.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Plague and tuberculosis are not heard of. Malaria only affects those who resort for agricultural purposes to the foot of the hills four or five miles east from the village. Attacks of cholera frequently occur among the local Muhammadans, who are as a rule quite insanitary, poor, living in low and ill-ventilated thatched huts or hovels; one is sick of the stinking smell when one approaches their huts. The local Christians, though equally poor, are better in this respect. The houses of most of the Brahmans and the majority of the Nayars are decent. The hovels of the lower castes and working men again are poor and insanitary. [361] As the houses are not built in rows, but separate, each having a compound big or small, epidemic diseases such as small-pox when they come at all are easily avoided. But the case is different in the quarters of the Muhammadans and Christians, who build their houses in streets.

The chief endemic diseases are fever, rheumatism, attacks of bile.

759 There are plenty of snakes in the village everywhere. One sometimes hears of deaths caused by snake-bites. There are however a few who pretend to cure snake-bites by incantations aided by medicines.

There is a Government free dispensary established in the 'town' where the Apothecary is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. But most people resort to native (ayurvedic) physicians or vaidyans. Ayurveda, or the Hindu science of medicine, makes use of vegetable drugs both in the raw and dried state. The physician comes to your house and prescribes a certain mixture according to the directions laid down in his code which he has committed to memory in the form of verses. The drugs can be got from the market, or from a neighbouring hill, or even from one's own compound.

This science is handed down from father to son in certain families in Malabar who form even now some of the most distinguished native physicians in Malabar. Even in a petty village

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MALABAR DISTRICT.

GURUVAYUR (PONNANI TALUK).

[*By V. Lakshmana Aiyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—Guruvayur is situated in the southern part of the Ponnani taluk, and is only 2 miles distant from the Arabian Sea. It is close to the backwater which extends from the northern point of the taluk to Cochin and Travancore. To the east it is only 3 miles distant from the State of Cochin. It is 14 miles away from the capital town of the taluk through which flows the chief river of Malabar. No forests can be seen throughout the whole taluk. The whole taluk is one red sandy mass with no waste lands, no mountains or hills. The chief crop of the village and perhaps of the whole taluk is coconut.

Malabar land tenure.—The system of land tenure that obtains in Malabar is entirely different from that of other districts. No doubt the theory that the Government is the legitimate owner of all the land in India and the people hold the land from the Government to which they pay a rent or tax, obtains its full significance here also. But there is an intermediary landlord, between the Government and the actual occupier of the land. How this intermediary landlord arose requires some explanation.

The origin of Malabar according to tradition is that a demi-god Parasurama reclaimed from the sea the portion of land extending from Gokarnam (Bombay) to Cape Comorin and from the Western Ghats to the sea. This demi-god having killed 21 times all the Kshatriyas, and having surrendered to Rama all his possessions after trial of battle, wanted a place to live in. He ordered the sea to recede and thus formed these lands. Malabar is a portion of that land. What historical facts are concealed in this tradition it is not easy to know but it may be guessed that in the general organizing of the Deccan, a certain number of Aryans * crossed the Western Ghats and reclaimed the lands from forest and wild beasts and made it habitable for civilized men. They may have dominated the original inhabitants by their superior civilization and Parasurama may have been the leader of that little band of Aryans. The tradition says that the demi-god gave all the lands he created to 64 Brahmans who became the leaders of the 64 villages into which the whole of the land was divided. These 64 Brahmans formed the original Malabar Brahmans or Nambudris, and they formed an assembly and decided matters of common concern. Individual villages decided their own matters and in every discussion of their affairs the Brahmana was the president and his opinion had perhaps the force of law. The whole village belonged to him and he was the Uralla or the chief man of the village. As time went on the one important family extended its branches and each branch had an equal voice in the affairs of the village. The one became many. I shall refer later to the remnants of this constitution of the village.

* [This hypothesis is ingenious, but not, in my opinion, probable.—Ed.]

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241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of otheir religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1½ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

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KOTHACHIRA DESAM (PONNANI TALUK).

[*By A. Krishna Wariyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—This desam is situated about 13 miles south-east of Ponnani, a small thriving town at the mouth of the river of the same name, a Muhammadan centre and the headquarters of the taluk. The visitor to Kothachira leaves the train at Pattambi, the nearest railway station and after a six miles walk along the Pattambi-Chowghat road turns to the left and by a footpath over a rising eminence descends into the paddy fields. A two miles walk southwards through these fields will bring him to the borders of the Kothachira desam. 361

This desam is a completely rural area and there is nothing of interest in the place. The shortest distance from the nearest river (river Ponnani) is 5 miles. Hills and forests are not rare since the desam enjoys proximity to the Akalanum (east) and the Mattur (north) hills. [133]

The term 'desam' literally means a piece of territory. The desam is the political and social unit in Malabar, and is the nearest equivalent to the villages of the east. The chief differences, however, are—(1) the village organization, in its entirety, is not found here; (2) the village has no particular site. The population is distributed throughout the desam area, each individual landholder having his home and family compound often in the midst of his lands and gardens and separated far from his neighbours. 621

Population.—The population of this desam according to the censuses of 1891 and 1901 was as follows:— 162

Year of census.	Number of inhabited houses.	Total population.			Religion.			Occupation.				Population per 100 acres of occupied land.
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Others.	Landholders.	Labourers.	Weavers.	Others.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1891 ...	295	898	985	1,883	1,678	204	1	767	563	...	553	221
1901 ...	312	961	1,047	2,008	1,808	200	...	559	378	...	1,071	236

The report of the last census (that of 1911) is not obtainable. My enquiry gives the following results:—

Number of houses 333.

Males ...	1,216	Hindus ...	1,990	Landholders ...	442
Females ...	1,107	Muhammadans.	327	Labourers ...	518
		Others ...	6	Weavers ...	...
				Others * ...	1,363
Total ...	2,323		2,323		2,323

* Including all who have no regular occupation, children, women of higher castes, old men, and even a good many young men belonging to joint families.

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VATANAMKURUSSI VILLAGE (WALLUVANAD TALUK).

[*By N. Sundara Aiyar, Presidency College, Madras.*]

361 489 *Preliminary.*—The village lies in the interior of the district, thirty miles west of the municipal town of Palghat on the high road that passes from Palghat to Ponnani. It is to the north of the railway line passing from Calicut to Palghat, and about equidistant from the two railway stations of Shoranur and Pattambi on that line (South Indian Railway). It is fifty-four miles south-east (by railway) of the port of Calicut, the capital of the district.

361 131 The village is more or less surrounded by low hills on all sides, and there is a small forest to the east of it. A portion of the village has for its southern boundary the Bharata Puzha (called the Ponnani river, because it joins the sea at Ponnani). The river is of little use for navigation, since it is in flood during the rains and almost dry in summer. The railway passes through the village, for about a mile, though the nearest railway station is 4½ miles distant. The trunk road from Palghat also passes through the middle of the village. The village is roughly in the shape of a triangle with its apex to the north and the base on the south. Being in the midst of hilly country, dry soil abounds in the village, though the few wet acres are comparatively good.

162 *Population.*—The total population of the village in Census years was as follows :—

Year.	Occupied houses.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.
1891 ...	322	1,055	1,134	2,189	2,116	73
1901 ...	369	1,130	1,187	2,317	2,226	91
1911 ...	398	1,210	1,270	2,480	2,373	107

The figures include those of an adjacent small village, of which the total population in 1911 was 124, all Hindus.

564 There are Brahmans and Sudras, the latter split up into a large number of sub-castes and sects like the Nayars, Nambiyars, Menons, Chettis, etc., and the lower classes like the Thiyyas, or Ezhuvans, and the depressed classes of Cherumas, Pariahs and Nayadis. Nayars predominate in the village. There are a few Muhammadans, but no Christians at all.

Of Brahmans there are ten families comprising 60 individuals resident in the village. There are two families of Nambudiri Brahmans with some 30 members.

162 The great majority are Nayars, of whom there are about 150 families with nearly 1,500 individuals. Cherumas may number between 300 and 400, the Thiyyas or Ezhuvans about 500. The chief minor sub-castes in the village are Chettis (34), Kunparars (Potters, about 50), Asaris (Carpenters, 28), Karuvans (blacksmiths, 21), Thattars (goldsmiths, 19), Panans (makers of bamboo and palm leaf umbrellas, 29), Masons (13), Pariahs (42), and five families of Mannans, washermen of the lower classes, who also make mud walls, engage themselves as herdsmen and act as Pujaris, i.e.,

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313 purchased from the nearest markets and brought in carts. Wood is getting dearer and dearer. It used to be very cheap.

The increase in price is due to the felling of trees without replanting, increased outside demand for fuel, as by the railway company and the Shoranur Tile Works; and the better appreciation and consequent increased demand for the local timber trees.

361 *The village.*—Strictly speaking there is no village-site. The houses are not built in street formation, but are scattered throughout the village. This is characteristic of most villages in Malabar and strongly contrasts with what obtains in other districts. The area of the village is 2,380 acres.

Localization of castes is not complete. Brahmans are located in the centre around the temple, with the Nayars, and the other higher castes surrounding them. The Thiyyas or Ezhuvas live farther apart and the depressed classes—Cherumas, Pariahs, etc.—live far out of the way of the higher castes on the outskirts of the village in hovels on hill sides, which are unfrequented by the other castes. Of course there are social prohibitions to their approaching the higher castes, much more to living near them.

342 There are a few fine houses: about 20 are tiled and have two storeys, about half of them belonging to the Brahmans. About 100 are one-storeyed thatched houses, almost exclusively owned by the castes. The rest are mere huts used by the poorer classes. There is no terraced house at all. Most of the houses are pretty old, but the tiled ones are mostly of recent construction. The houses are built more or less on a uniform plan and are often large without being convenient or comfortable.

The Pariahs and Cherumas live in thatched huts, miserable hovels one should call them, small, dark and exposed.

351 Almost every house has a 'garden' of some sort, with a few fruit trees like the coconut-palm, the mango tree, the jack tree, the areca-palm, plantain trees, etc. But very few houses have really good gardens. The gardens are watered from wells, which are found in every house. Whether there are fruit-trees on it or no, each house of the better class has a compound attached to it. This is sometimes used for growing kitchen vegetables.

361 The distance of cultivated lands from the home of the cultivator is never more than one mile. In the working season the ryot starts very early in the morning from his home with his oxen and agricultural implements so as to reach his land in time.

343 Field huts are almost unknown—except tiny watchmen's huts where watch is kept by a man at night when the crops are getting ready for harvest.

323 *Subsidiary industries—Potters.*—There are no weavers. There is a class of potters, of Telugu origin (as their language shows) engaged in making pots for household use, etc. They get the clay for their industry from the banks of the Bharata river (situated to the south of the village). Their wares find a ready market in the neighbouring villages, being very cheap and necessary. The lower castes cook in pots of burnt clay, while the better classes use bronze and other metals, such as copper. The art is the whole time employment of this class. But earnings are not very high, only just affording the means of subsistence. If the art is refined and improved to suit modern conditions and requirements it

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754 going to happen he slept across the doorway, so that she could not without waking him leave the house. The door was closed and fastened, he sleeping *inside*. In the early hours of the morning he awoke, and, fearing something unpleasant had taken place as the door was open, he called his brother who was sleeping upstairs. Together they searched for the woman, and found her lying outside in the yard, unconscious. When she recovered her senses, she said that for some nights previous she felt as if she was being called outside, and she tried hard to resist the impulse to go out of the house into the night. At last she could resist no longer and, altogether against her will, unfastened the door and went out. What happened then she knew not. There was neither removal of a fœtus nor death in this case. Such is the story. It is quite possible that stories of the kind are inculcated by wary husbands to keep the women indoors and prevent their being crowned with horns. At any rate the story is one of the kind such as every Nâyar [364] believes. It is, I may say, quite plainly to be seen that, when the Nâyar constructs his house, he takes care that there are certain conveniences, so that the women need never leave the house at night. My narrator was a native gentleman in a position of authority, living at the scene of this strange story when the events related in it occurred not long ago. The persons were named, but I did not question them, as there is much objection to speak of such things to a stranger.

754 795 564 *The Ôḍi cult.*—The Parayan adepts in the magic Ôḍi cult are to some extent hereditary functionaries.* They form one of those hierarchies, common enough in this country, of which Europeans know so little; of which the people themselves know but little as nothing connected with them or with their system is written. It is custom pure and simple—custom which is the most difficult of all to approach and define within accuracy. We will put down what is known, in the way of popular belief of course, as may be free from error.

Those who belong to it, born into it so to speak, go through a certain novitiate, not easy; but those who wish to join it from outside the fraternity of the cult are required to *prove* themselves worthy to join it; and it is their trials as novices, terrifying and utterly filthy, which

* For much of this which follows I am indebted to Mr. U. Balakrishna Nâyar, who has kindly obtained for me matter which is in a general way, unobtainable to the European.

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622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364 There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

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so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [514] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	.	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

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433 377 into a useful commodity. If this is done, it is possible to visualize that from 1965 onwards the State can be made the seat of bulk hydro-power generation not only for meeting the requirements of its own development programmes, but also for export to neighbouring areas in the southern zone. During the coming decade activities in connection with power development should, therefore, be geared mainly to the need of achieving this objective.

Prior to the Plans

433 377 655 7.5 The beginning of an extensive power supply system, utilizing hydro-power resources of the State, was first initiated with the establishment of the hydro-electric power station at Pallivasal in 1940. During the years of the Second World War the power system registered significant progress as a result of increased industrial activity in the State. Just prior to 1951, the State had developed a total installed capacity of about 33 MW, of which 14 per cent was in diesel stations and the rest in hydel projects. A 66 KV transmission system covered the State and power was distributed to about 28,000 consumers in 1958 towns and villages.

First Plan Period

7.6 Out of a total Plan provision of Rs. 30.03 crores, the largest share (Rs. 11.4 crores) was allotted to the development of power. Four hydro-electric projects viz., Sengulam Project, the Poringalkuthu Project I Stage, Poringalkuthu Project II Stage and the Nariamangalam Project, were taken up. During the First Plan period, the Mattupatty Dam (of the Pallivasal Project) with a storage capacity of 1,900 million cubic feet was constructed for augmenting the summer flow to the Pallivasal hydel station. The installed capacity of the station itself was raised to 37.5 MW providing for an effective generating capacity of the order of 32.5 MW. The Sangulam Project was commissioned in 1954 with an installed capacity of 48 MW. The Poringalkuthu Project, I Stage, was almost complete by 1956, and the remaining two projects were taken up for execution only during the last year of the First Plan. By 1956, the generating capacity had risen from 28.5 MW in 1951 to 85 MW, and the energy generated from 151 million units to 350 million units. Besides this, the transmission network was further expanded and 744 villages were electrified. An additional 51,456 consumers were connected to the system.

Second Plan Period

7.7 The share of power was quite large in the Second Plan allocations. Out of the total outlay of Rs. 87 crores, the allotment for power development alone was Rs. 23.45 crores.

7.8 The total expenditure on power was made up of Rs. 11.40 crores for hydro

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 377 655 effective capacity was only around 84.5 MW. This will rise sharply with the execution of Panniar and Sholayar schemes during the early years of the Third Plan.

7.11 The position at the end of the Second Plan was as follows :—

Transmission, Distribution and Rural Electrification schemes had made good progress. The works which were completed include:

(i) the 110 KV Sengulam-Pallom-Kundra double circuit transmission lines and the 110 KV sub-stations at these places;

(ii) the 110 KV Neriamangalam-Alwaye-FACT double circuit transmission lines;

(iii) the 110 KV Sholayar-Poringalkuthu double circuit transmission lines;

(iv) the 66 KV single circuit line from Viyyur and Palghat; and

(v) the 66 KV sub-station at Peermade, Thiruvalla, Alleppey and Vythilla and 33 sub-stations at Karumagappally.

Besides a carrier communication system linking all the generating and receiving stations and the headquarters of the State Electricity Board was completed and taken into service. In the sphere of rural electrification, the benefit of electricity was further [365] extended to 1,003 centres, additional 97,662 consumers were connected to the system and 57,282 street lights were installed in various parts of the State.

GENERATION AND UTILIZATION OF ELECTRICITY

*433 377 7.12 Table 33[2] summarizes the progress of electric power generation and utilization in the State of Kerala during the period 1954-55 to 1958-59. Some of the characteristics are worth noting. Of the total available electrical energy, about 20 per cent is lost in transmission and distribution or used for power station auxiliaries (all India 17.5%). Of the rest, as could be expected, industries are the most important consumers. They account for about 65 per cent of total electricity consumption in the State, the comparable proportion in the country being 50-55 per cent. Next in order of importance is domestic lighting which absorbs about 6.5 to 8 per cent (all India about 10%). The proportion of power used for irrigation has varied between 2 and 4 per cent of the total. Pumping out of water from the water-logged areas of Kuttanad is one of the main source of utilization of electricity in the sphere of irrigation.

7.13 Apart from these, two other important points may be noted : (i) Practically all the energy generated (97-98%) is from the hydro-electric power stations. This is in marked contrast to the pattern of power generation in the rest of India where roughly 55 per cent of electricity is from thermal sources. However, unlike the rest of India where it is necessary to have thermal stations to stabilize supply of power throughout the year, in Kerala because of an exceptionally well distributed rainfall and consequently assured supply of water over the different seasons, there is no such necessity and (ii) It is significant that the load factor has been steadily increasing during the recent years. The units generated annually per kW of installed capacity reached a figure of 4,400 during 1958-59 from 3,200 in 1954-55, that is, the load factor increased from 37 per cent to 46 per cent. Additional demand for power since 1954 has been met, almost entirely, by more intensive utilization of the existing capacity.

[2] [Table 33, appearing on pp. 292 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. . For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. . Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

643
the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants 422
caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells. 825

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme 634
powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the 585
country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction [182]
who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even [431]
now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His [574]
consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living 595
with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, 634
adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a 588
girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the 634
local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other 421
things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect 634
buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the 342
inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restric- [369]
tions are not totally inoperative. In the State His High- [182]
ness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social 643
matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a 566
similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies 634
were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the [493]
only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1] [564]
[553]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pivu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars [177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

231 178 464 433* 235 [369] [439]

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

433* 231 [234]

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

231 [134]

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

231 232 [654]

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

433* 23

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

*433 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction
235 of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has
[164] come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite
231 contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per
231 goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs.
234 (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter
[269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census)

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages.

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56[2] gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951.

[1] *1961 Census* (Provisional Population figures).

[2] [Table 56, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rate** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	737	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

actively unemployed persons during 1956 was 6.6 lakhs.[1] The total labour force during 1956 may, therefore, be taken to be 56.9 lakh persons, i.e., 37.9 per cent of the total population. 162 464

11.29 One striking feature revealed by this survey is the very high degree of open unemployment. Open unemployment comes out to be as high as 4.2 per cent of the total population, as can be seen from Table 60 (Category 7).[2] Generally it is under-employment rather than open unemployment which is prominent in backward agricultural economies. For example, unemployment in India is only 0.29 per cent of total rural population and 1.99 per cent in urban areas giving a weighted average of 0.58 per cent[3]. The percentage of open unemployment to population in Kerala is, therefore, roughly seven times as high as in the rest of India.

11.30 Category (6) of Table 60, that is, the proportion of casual workers to the total population gives an idea of the magnitude of the problem of under-employment. The incidence of under-employment is also higher in Kerala than in India. Of the total population, 9.6 per cent belongs to this category against about 6 per cent for the whole of India.[4] Among the under-employed section of the population, on an average, a worker was unemployed for about 2.35 days per week. This, however, does not tell the whole story. There are the seasonal variations which extend the period of unemployment to several days at a stretch.

11.31 The above figures do not include disguised unemployment. In rural areas, where family enterprise is the dominant form of organization, there is generally a large surplus of hidden manpower which does take part in economic activity, but whose net contribution towards increasing the output is very little. An objective assessment of the surplus in disguised unemployment is rather difficult. It would have to rely heavily upon notional norms regarding optimum labour requirements among the self-employed sector of rural population. Within the coming decade the problem of primary importance, however, is that of providing jobs for the large back-log of unemployed, who sit completely idle, rather than for those who are in the comparatively favourable position of being employed but below their full capacity. 464 369

RURAL-URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT

11.32 The nature of unemployment in rural and urban areas varies considerably. According to NSS Report on 'Employment and Unemployment' (9th Round), open unemployment in rural areas was rather insignificant affecting only 0.29 per cent of the total rural population (urban areas 1.99%). Because of the small size of the sample, the unemployment survey referred to above did not collect separate data for rural and urban unemployment in Kerala. Under these circumstances, only rough 162 464 369

[1] Table 60.

[2] It may be noted that in Table 60 the absolute number of unemployed persons is likely to be high since a portion of Travancore-Cochin, viz., Kanyakumari was transferred to Madras. However, the percentage figures may be assumed to be fairly correct.

[3] *NSS Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[4] *Ibid.*

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162 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural
464 and urban areas.

369 11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9 (86%)	2.10 (14.0%)	15 0 (100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be
464 helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The im-
871 pression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of
[212] the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.
[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

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TABLE 5

CONSUMER EXPENDITURE IN RUPEES PER PERSON BY ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION FOR PERIOD OF 30 DAYS IN RURAL AREAS

Items	*Travancore-Cochin*		*All-India*	
	Expenditure level (Rs.)	*Percentage*	*Expenditure level* (Rs.)	*Percentage*
Foodgrains	6.10	32.7	8.70	4.06
Milk and milk products	0.43	2.3	1.35	6.3
Edible oil	0.57	3.1	0.45	2.1
Meat, egg and fish	0.78	4.2	0.42	2.0
Sugar	0.40	2.2	0.43	2.1
Salt	0.06	0.3	0.06	0.3
Other food	2.83	15.2	2.11	9.8
FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*11.17*	*60.0*	*13.54*	*63.2*
Clothing	1.13	9.8	1.66	7.7
Fuel and light	1.13	5.9	1.16	5.4
Rent	0.08	2.8	0.30	1.4
Taxes	0.06	0.2	0.07	0.3
Miscellaneous	5.07	15.4	4.71	22.0
NON-FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*7.47*	*39.0*	*7.90*	*36.8*
TOTAL	18.64	100.0	21.44	100.0

SOURCE: *The National Sample Survey*, Fourth Round, April-September 1952, Number 13.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW1

Towns

369 439 The towns of Kerala are for the most part either ports or crossing-points on the backwaters. There is virtually no indigenous maritime tradition, but from very early times spices attracted traders from E and W: Arabs, Graeco-Romans, Chinese.[51] With the Discoveries the Malabar coast became the scene of a fierce struggle between the Portuguese and their Muslim and European rivals. Relics of the era of European conflict are the tiny French settlement of Mahé (26 sq mls, poptn (1941) 14,092) and the exclaves of former British territory at Cochin itself and in Travancore

361 311

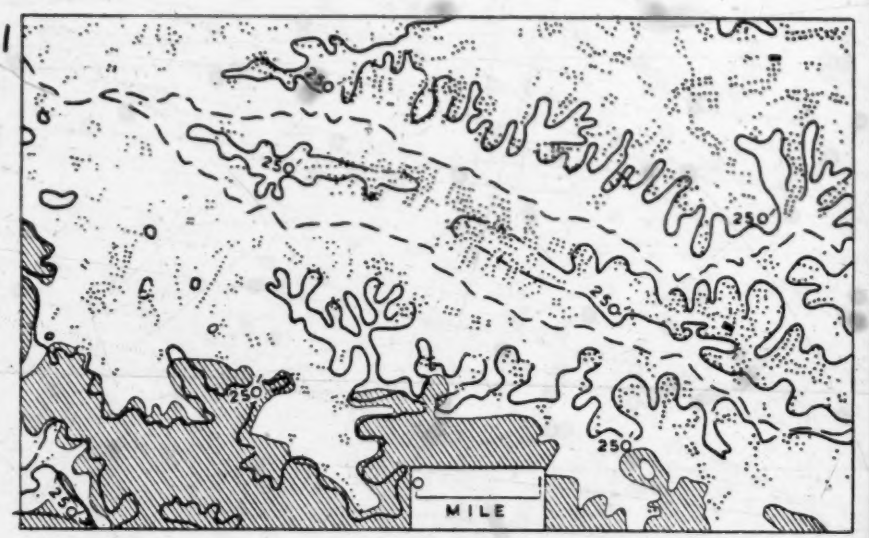

Fig. 123.—KERALA: INLAND SETTLEMENT. 5–10 mls SE of Palghat town; lateritic foothills in approach to Palghat Gap. Dots, habitations surrounded by groves; shaded, forest; blank, cultivation; broken lines, seasonal streams. SOI 58 B/10; courtesy SOI.

at Anjengo and Quilon (Tangasseri), which last had an area of 99 acres!

369 439 In Malabar Dt Tellicherry (36,320) exports most of the Coorg coffee and some pepper and copra; Calicut (158,724) has a similar trade but is more important administratively. Both ports are mere roadsteads, ships lying two or three miles offshore and lighters working from one or two piers, but at Tellicherry the shelter of offshore reefs enables some traffic to be carried on during the monsoon.

369 Cochin is far more important: it really consists of two adjacent towns, ex-British Cochin (26,320) and Cochinese Cochin or Mattancheri (53,346). Cochin is in fact the oldest European settlement in India; on Christmas

[51] On the Chinese shipping, see Ibn Battuta, *ed. cit.*, 235–6.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Laccadives AZ4
Maldives AZ5

Day 1500 Cabral arrived, and from then until the Dutch supplanted them in 1663 the Portuguese were in alliance with the rulers of Cochin against the Muslim Zamorin of Calicut. The port has considerable locational advantages: it is central on the backwaters, the Palghat Gap lies about 125 miles (by rail) to the NE, and it is about 300 miles nearer Aden and Durban than is Bombay. It may even rival Colombo as a transit port, as a call at Cochin adds only 40 miles to the Aden-Fremantle run.[52] The development of the modern port was for long impeded by its curious political situation; it lies on a breach in the long spit separating the great backwater from the sea, but while the major installations and the approaches lie in what was British territory, the inner harbour—in which much of the trade is carried on—is in Cochin state, and much of the backwater was Travancorean. Real development—including the cutting of a channel through the bar across the natural breach, and much reclamation—began only in 1920–23; later a 3-mile approach channel was dredged to a width of 450 and a depth of 37 ft, so that the inner harbour is now accessible to any ship which can pass Suez. Rail and road bridges cross the backwater, and a large airport has been built on reclaimed land; the old metre line to the SIR through the Palghat has been changed to BG. The volume of trade increased from 450,000 tons in 1920 to about 1,250,000 in 1950, while the number of ships using the port has more than trebled. Normally rice from Burma and Indo-China formed two-fifths in bulk of the total trade; mineral oil is also a major import. The exports are the usual Kerala ones: coconut products, especially coir and copra, tea, rubber, cashew nuts. Across the backwater is Ernakulam (46,790), capital of Cochin, with important soap factories, the largest owned (naturally) by Tatas: rice milling, as at Mattancherri, is also important. Trichur (57,524), the largest town of Cochin, has cotton spinning and weaving mills and tile factories; it shares with Palghat (55,160) command of the gap.

Travancore is less urbanised than Cochin, but Trivandrum (**186,931**) is the capital of Travancore–Cochin state. Alleppey (**116,278**) and Quilon are ports of ancient fame now decayed; mere roadsteads, they still carry on a considerable backwater traffic. Alleppey, protected by a mudbank, is slightly the better port, but Quilon has the advantage of its situation on the metre line from Trivandrum through the Shencottah Gap.

The Maldive and Laccadive Islands

These groups of coral atolls extend from the Equator to about 15° N, 180–300 miles from the Malabar coast. The Laccadives and Minicoy are attached to Madras, the Maldives (which have their own Sultan and constitutional government) to Ceylon: these affiliations represent historical accident merely.

[52] *Handbook of Commercial Information for India* (Delhi, 1937), 79; personal information from Sir Robert Bristow.

433 In the sphere of industries, the major emphasis has been placed on the expansion of engineering industries. Out of a total investment of Rs. 145 crores in the factory industries, the engineering industries alone will absorb nearly Rs. 63 crores. The majority of light engineering industries to be established or expanded are high value adding industries and would cater to regional demand for implements, tools and other engineering goods. The capital-output ratio for these industries is also comparatively low, viz., 2.1. These are some of the factors on account of which a large scale expansion of engineering industries would be quite feasible in Kerala although the raw materials required by them would have to be imported from other parts of India over long distances. A large scale expansion of engineering industries would help to improve the technological level of other industries and agriculture in Kerala. Apart from being themselves technologically superior, the engineering industries induce technological improvements in other spheres and spread the use of better equipment, tools and machines.

For a steady growth of industries in a State like Kerala where the industrialists have been shy of investing on account of its unstable political climate, it is most essential to take all possible measures to inculcate a sense of confidence among the investor class. The State Government's recent Industrial Policy Declaration expressing their desire to give all possible help to prospective entrepreneurs, marks a step in the right direction. However, the State Government alone may not be able to go far in this matter unless they have the active cooperation of the public and political parties in the execution of their economic policies.

● 371 One of the chief assets of Kerala from the point of view of its future industrialization programmes is its vast resources of hydro-electric power. During the Second Plan period unfortunately, signs of power shortage were visible and the growth of industries had to suffer as a consequence. For the coming years the State should keep ahead of demand for power and should plan for surplus power generation capacity. Secondly, since the State has plenty of power resources and the costs of generation are very low, it would be in the interest of the economy of the Southern region of India to form a zonal grid. The surplus power generated in Kerala could be sold at a profit to the neighbouring States, especially Madras, which is not so fortunately placed as Kerala in respect of its hydel resources. Kerala would also stand to gain from this transfer of electrical energy since it can generate power at a much lower cost than its neighbouring States, and therefore, earn sizeable revenues from this source.

Total investment effort required for execution of the plans of development suggested in this report would be of the order of Rs. 1,000 crores over the ten-year period. The share of the State Government would be approximately Rs. 500 crores, the balance being left to the initiative of the Private Sector, and the investments through Central Government projects. Total investment would be distributed over the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in the ratio of 20.8 per cent, 28.8 per cent and 50.4 per cent respectively.

371 464 The impact of the proposed developments on the unemployment situation is not likely to be unimpressive. It is estimated that of the 17.8 lakh jobs envisaged to be created over the decade, 1.8 to 2 lakh jobs would be in the primary sector, 7.8 lakhs in the industrial sector and the balance of 7.7 lakhs in the tertiary sector. It

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough.

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff.

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

July 1962

Chapter 7

Power

433 377 135 135 KERALA HAS IMMENSE potentiality for the generation of hydro-electric power. The State does not possess any resource of coal or oil (within its own boundary) for generation of power but there are 44 rivers which constitute a storehouse of hydel power. This favourable factor compensates, for the absence of any fossil fuels. Investigations so far have led to an estimate of this potential to be roughly of the order of 1,539 MW.[1]

433 464 371 7.2 One of the basic problems of Kerala's economy is posed by the situation of acute unemployment prevailing in the State. A long run solution to this lies in an intensive programme of industrialization only. An accelerated pace of industrial development, in turn, requires an ensured supply of adequate power. One possible way of looking at power development activities is to consider power as a complementary factor in the programme of industrialization of the State. Targets for power generation capacity in such cases should be fixed slightly higher than what the demand is expected to be.

433 377 7.3 The alternative approach, which is the more feasible one for Kerala, is to consider power, generation itself as an industry and to develop the State's abundant hydro-power resources to the maximum extent possible. The surplus of electricity generated over local requirements could be exported to the neighbouring State of Madras, which is not so well placed in respect of its power resources as Kerala. The electricity exported would provide a means of earning revenue, which is turn could be utilized for capital formation within the State. Moreover, a surplus in power generation capacity is desirable in itself since for a State like Kerala, where some factors deterrent to industrialization have been operating in the past, a regular supply of adequate power should be made to act as an incentive for setting up new industries. Planning for a power surplus and export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States should, therefore, form the keynote of the future power development policy in the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

7.4 The process of power development in the State is already well set. What is now required is to harness the huge energy potential of the State and convert it

[1] By the Central Water and Power Commission.

[text continues on p. 112]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. 435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35[2] presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as 132 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity [439] system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis 377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more [328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[113] [1] *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.

[2] [Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality.[1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas; and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-19.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

342 351 823 372 [824] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses.

If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times.

Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of otheir religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1¼ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion 755
and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has [532]
a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed
of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the
village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, [373]
sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come [535]
before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying
music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric
effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like
blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible
looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into
a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who
prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and
the devil is supposed to have been cast out.

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," that they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into [775]
girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no
avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endear- 776
ment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god. He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place

[1] Note; the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

Eleven per cent non-productive consumption contributes nearly 60 per cent of the total revenue. This is much more than its reasonable share. This amount of subsidy cannot be easily justified. Domestic consumption alone forms only a little over 7 per cent of the total consumption, contributes over 51 per cent of the total revenue from the sale of power. This is much too high a share.

7.39 There was a small, generally upward, revision of rates in December 1958, without materially altering the structure of the tariff. The above conclusions, therefore, still hold good.

7.40 Amongst the non-productive classes of load, item iv (Table 36) Public Water Works and Sewage Pumping is billed at "Industrial Rates" and classified as industrial loads for the purpose. In respect of item iii (Table 36) Public Lighting, the revised tariff of December, 1958 provides a rate of "15 nP per kWh for lamps for the first 6 hours of burning and 12 nP per unit for the remaining hours". This rectifies the high average rate per kWh in 1957-58, as seen in the above statement. The average unit rate per kWh of domestic consumption comes to as much as seven times the average selling rate of the total consumption through all categories of load. It is 15 times the average rate for productive consumption. The tariff revision of December, 1958 does not relieve this position. This is important. The structure of the domestic tariffs could induce optimum utilization of installed capacity with better load factor, but the domestic rates themselves have to be reduced substantially. In a State which leads the rest of the country in economic power generation, this should not be difficult. The "power surplus" position of the State can also enable the State to take effective steps to make cheap power (though costlier than productive power) available for domestic consumers extensively and may substantially raise the total domestic consumption to a higher level. In the light of the above observations, it is recommended that the State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales.

POSSIBILITY OF POWER SHORTAGE

7.41 It is learnt that power shortage is adversely affecting some of the existing big industries which are heavily dependent upon adequate power supply for their full production. Besides, starting of new industries may be hampered unless adequate power supply is forthcoming, or at least, the present power shortage is removed.

7.42 A careful analysis of the power situation in Kerala shows that there will be no danger of a prolonged serious power gap. On the generation side, according to the present plans the Panniar Power Station with an installed capacity of 30,000 kW and the Sholayar Power Station with an installed capacity of 54,000 kW are expected to be commissioned in 1963 and 1964 respectively. Two of the six generating units of 50,000 kW each in the Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) Power Station are also expected to be commissioned by the end of 1964 by which time the State will reach a very comfortable position in regard to power supply.

7.43 Any suggestion for setting up thermal power stations in the State to bridge the likely gaps in power supply will have to be examined in this context. As already pointed out, thermal power generation costs more, both in terms of the cost of genera-

*433 375 tion and foreign exchange requirements. Besides, the construction of a thermal station even if immediately taken up, cannot be completed before two to three years. This time lag considerably reduces its value for alleviating the immediate problem of power shortage. Under such circumstances, there is no case at all for considering any thermal power stations in Kerala.

*433 377 7.44 At present, the best solution would be to arrange for the staggering of power load and to encourage the working of industries during the off-peak hours. Another possibility is that the Governments of Kerala and Madras may get together to alleviate the power problem of Kerala to whatever extent it is possible through the zonal grid.

INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS

7.45 Kerala's installed capacity by the end of the Second Plan was 147.5 MW. To build it up to 400 MW by the end of the Third Plan as suggested in this report an additional installed capacity of roughly 250 MW will be necessary. According to current estimates, approximately Rs. 1,600 per kW will be required in Kerala for generation, transmission and distribution. On this basis, about Rs. 40 crores will be required during the Third Plan. During the Fourth Plan, installed capacity is envisaged to increase from 400 MW to 800 MW. At the same rate of investment per kW as mentioned above, investment requirements for the Fourth Plan would be about Rs. 64 crores. Thus Kerala State would require the sum of about Rs. 104 crores over the Third and Fourth Plan periods to satisfy its own power needs. Requirements of neighbouring States for Kerala's power would require additional investment over and above this figure.

CONCLUSIONS

7.46 The abundant water resources of the State, which can be utilized for generation of hydro-electric energy, form one of the strong points of Kerala economy. Apart from the large hydro-electric potential which is estimated to be of the order of 1,589 MW, the important feature of power resources of Kerala is the low cost of generation per unit. This is due to the favourable nature of the terrain and the high degree of rainfall which Kerala receives.

7.47 In the absence of any coal or oil deposits in Kerala or in nearby regions, hydro-electric power has to be the chief source of energy requirements of industry. The favourable position of Kerala in this respect should be utilized as a factor helping industrialization. For this purpose harnessing of the hydro-electric potential should be properly planned in advance so that an adequate amount of well-assured electric supply could be guaranteed to the industrialists. In this context the State would be well-advised to plan for a power surplus.

[439] 7.48 In view of the fact that Kerala is in a position to generate electric energy in excess of its requirements, while the neighbouring State of Madras has almost exhausted its domestic resources and Mysore and Andhra are just on the verge of self-

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133 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very
● 377 short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

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13 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

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133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

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[text continues on p. 6]

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STATE INCOME (RS. IN CRORES)—AT 1955-56 PRICES

	1955-56	1960-61	Proportionate increase (per cent)
Primary Sector	172.5	193.2	12.0
Secondary Sector	52.3	62.6	19.7
Tertiary Sector	126.8	144.2	13.7
TOTAL	351.6	400.0	13.7
Per capita income	Rs. 234.4	Rs. 240.0	

*433 1.63 As a result of the various measures for increased agricultural production, the value added by this sector has increased but not by any spectacular amount. Output of rice increased from 7.5 lakh tons in 1952-53 to 8.7 lakh tons in 1955-56 and 9.8 lakh tons in 1959-60, the increase between 1956–60 being 8 per cent. Other important increases during the period 1955-56 to 1958-59 were: tapioca 15 per cent; sugarcane 3 per cent, arecanut 5 per cent, rubber 6 per cent, cashewnuts 22 per cent, coconut 3.2 per cent and bananas 120 per cent. On the basis of these increments in output and shift towards a superior cropping pattern, it is estimated that the net value contributed by the agricultural sector increased by about 10-12 per cent between 1955-56 and 1960-61. A rate of growth of 12 per cent is assumed for the whole of the primary sector over the Second Plan period.

1.64 Estimates of increase in the output of industry can be made only with the help of indirect indicators. There is generally a high correlation between increase in the consumption of electrical energy and output from the organized factory sector. [377] On the basis of data for the utilization of electric energy in industries, factory output has been estimated to have increased from Rs. 18 crores in 1955-56 to Rs. 24.4 crores[1] in 1960-61.

1.65 Non-factory sector output is estimated to have increased from Rs. 32.3 crores to Rs. 35.5 crores.[2] The rate of increase of output from the secondary sector as a whole, therefore, comes to be 19.7 per cent. The rate of industrial growth may have been higher but for the fact that during the Second Plan period industries could not develop at the anticipated pace as a result of non-execution of all the power projects planned earlier. Foreign exchange difficulties were the main obstruction in the way of implementation of Plans for power projects. Consequently effective

[1] During 1955-56, the relationship between factory sector output and electricity consumption works out to Rs. 0.8/kWh. According to NCAER's study *Demand for Energy in India* this coefficient is likely to decrease with the passage of time both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and through the expansion of electric-intensive industries. By 1960-61, the co-efficient in case of Kerala is expected to have decreased to Rs. 0.65/kWh. The industrial consumption of electricity by 1960-61 is expected to have reached 376 m. kWh. On the basis of the co-efficient of Rs. 0.65/kWh, the output from factory sector is estimated to have reached Rs. 24.4 crores, by 1960-61.

[2] Non-factory sector output is assumed to have increased in the same ratio as gross purchasing power. Gross purchasing power depends upon rise in population as well as the rise in per capita income, that is, it is correlated with increase in over-all level of income. Since output from the non-factory sector mostly caters to the needs of the local village population, it is not very unreasonable to assume that output from this sector has increased at the same rate as income originating from agriculture, which roughly represents the level of purchasing power in the rural areas.

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capacity increased from 89.6 MW to only 100 MW during the Second Plan period. 433* Total availability of electrical energy increased from 347.1 million kWh (1955-56) [377] to 515 million kWh (1958-59) mainly through an increase in the load factor.

1.66 Tertiary incomes generally grow at about the same pace as the commodity 433* output, that is, output of the primary and secondary sector combined. Tertiary 434 income is assumed to have risen at 13.7 per cent, the same as the State Income. On these premises projections for sectoral increase in the State Income (at 1955-56 prices) of Kerala have been given in table under paragraph 1.62. State income is expected to have increased by 13.7 per cent but most of this rise has been absorbed by the increase of population. Consequently the per capita income at constant prices is likely to have arisen from Rs. 234.4 (1955-56 prices) to only Rs. 240.7 in 1960-61.

1.67 This has been rather a slow rate of development. Obviously Kerala needs 433* a higher rate of growth, much bigger plans that would generate it, and a strategy of development that would ensure it. These aspects are considered and discussed in the chapters that follow. The picture which emerges out of the aggregation of [128] sectoral plans is discussed in Chapter 12 dealing with the pattern of growth.

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Chapter 7

Power

*433 377 135 133 KERALA HAS IMMENSE potentiality for the generation of hydro-electric power. The State does not possess any resource of coal or oil (within its own boundary) for generation of power but there are 44 rivers which constitute a storehouse of hydel power. This favourable factor compensates for the absence of any fossil fuels. Investigations so far have led to an estimate of this potential to be roughly of the order of 1,539 MW.[1]

*433 464 371 7.2 One of the basic problems of Kerala's economy is posed by the situation of acute unemployment prevailing in the State. A long run solution to this lies in an intensive programme of industrialization only. An accelerated pace of industrial development, in turn, requires an ensured supply of adequate power. One possible way of looking at power development activities is to consider power as a complementary factor in the programme of industrialization of the State. Targets for power generation capacity in such cases should be fixed slightly higher than what the demand is expected to be.

*433 377 7.3 The alternative approach, which is the more feasible one for Kerala, is to consider power, generation itself as an industry and to develop the State's abundant hydro-power resources to the maximum extent possible. The surplus of electricity generated over local requirements could be exported to the neighbouring State of Madras, which is not so well placed in respect of its power resources as Kerala. The electricity exported would provide a means of earning revenue, which is turn could be utilized for capital formation within the State. Moreover, a surplus in power generation capacity is desirable in itself since for a State like Kerala, where some factors deterrent to industrialization have been operating in the past, a regular supply of adequate power should be made to act as an incentive for setting up new industries. Planning for a power surplus and export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States should, therefore, form the keynote of the future power development policy in the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

7.4 The process of power development in the State is already well set. What is now required is to harness the huge energy potential of the State and convert it

[1] By the Central Water and Power Commission.

[text continues on p. 112]

MAP 10

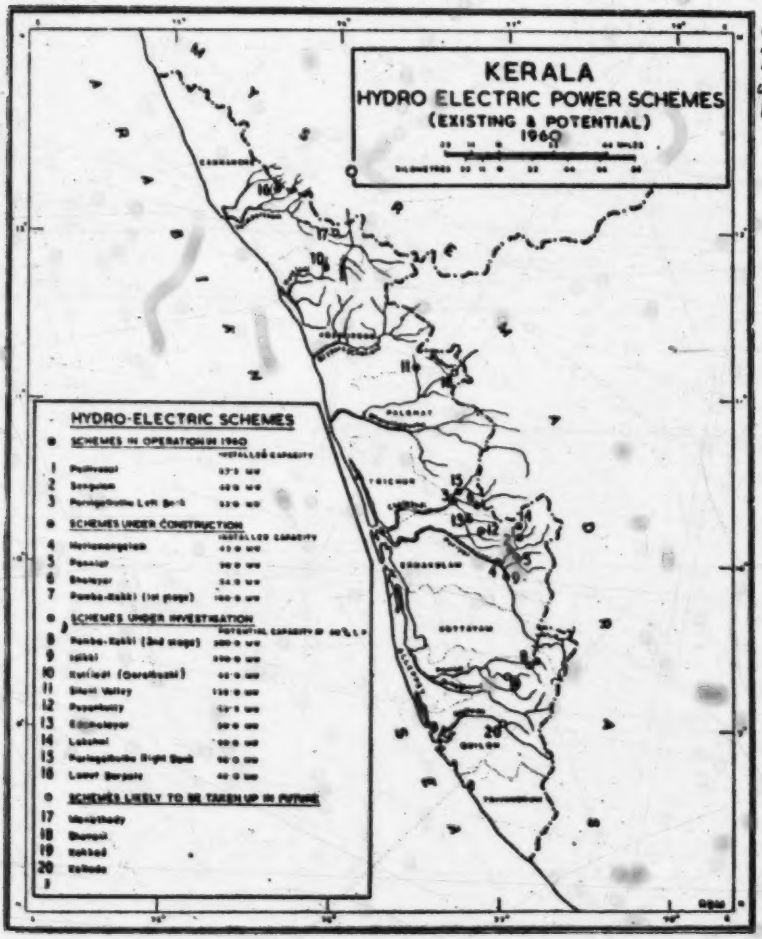

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into a useful commodity. If this is done, it is possible to visualize that from 1965 onwards the State can be made the seat of bulk hydro-power generation not only for meeting the requirements of its own development programmes, but also for export to neighbouring areas in the southern zone. During the coming decade activities in connection with power development should, therefore, be geared mainly to the need of achieving this objective.

Prior to the Plans

7.5 The beginning of an extensive power supply system, utilizing hydro-power resources of the State, was first initiated with the establishment of the hydro-electric power station at Pallivasal in 1940. During the years of the Second World War the power system registered significant progress as a result of increased industrial activity in the State. Just prior to 1951, the State had developed a total installed capacity of about 33 MW, of which 14 per cent was in diesel stations and the rest in hydel projects. A 66 KV transmission system covered the State and power was distributed to about 28,000 consumers in 1958 towns and villages.

First Plan Period

7.6 Out of a total Plan provision of Rs. 30.03 crores, the largest share (Rs. 11.4 crores) was allotted to the development of power. Four hydro-electric projects viz., Sengulam Project, the Poringalkuthu Project I Stage, Poringalkuthu Project II Stage and the Nariamangalam Project, were taken up. During the First Plan period, the Mattupatty Dam (of the Pallivasal Project) with a storage capacity of 1,900 million cubic feet was constructed for augmenting the summer flow to the Pallivasal hydel station. The installed capacity of the station itself was raised to 37.5 MW providing for an effective generating capacity of the order of 32.5 MW. The Sangulam Project was commissioned in 1954 with an installed capacity of 48 MW. The Poringalkuthu Project, I Stage, was almost complete by 1956, and the remaining two projects were taken up for execution only during the last year of the First Plan. By 1956, the generating capacity had risen from 28.5 MW in 1951 to 85 MW, and the energy generated from 151 million units to 350 million units. Besides this, the transmission network was further expanded and 744 villages were electrified. An additional 51,456 consumers were connected to the system.

Second Plan Period

7.7 The share of power was quite large in the Second Plan allocations. Out of the total outlay of Rs. 87 crores, the allotment for power development alone was Rs. 23.45 crores.

7.8 The total expenditure on power was made up of Rs. 11.40 crores for hydro

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electric projects, Rs. 4.82 crores for extension of transmission lines and Rs. 7.23 crores for rural electrification-cum-distribution schemes. The physical targets aimed at under the Second Plan were as follows.

A. Additional Generating Capacity	
(i) Poringalkuthu, I Stage	24 MW
(ii) Poringalkuthu, II Stage	8 ,,
(iii) Neriamangalam scheme	45 ,,
(iv) Sholayar project	54 ,,
(v) Panniar project	30 ,,
TOTAL	*161 MW*
B. Transmission Lines and Sub-stations	
(i) 110 KV lines	388 circuit miles
(ii) 66 KV lines	43 circuit miles
(iii) 110 KV sub-station	4 nos.
(iv) 66 KV sub-station	6 nos.
C. Rural Electrification and Distribution Schemes	
(i) Villages to be electrified	1,344 nos.
(ii) Additional consumers to be served	105,260 nos.

7.9 The capital investment in the Second Plan, till the end of the year 1959, was nearly Rs. 18.75 crores. Almost all the essential items of plant and equipment had to be imported for working the power schemes included in the Second Plan. The foreign exchange component of the cost is of the order of 45 per cent. The difficulties experienced with regard to the availability of foreign exchange during the early years of the Second Plan affected the progress of the planned hydro-electric schemes in Kerala. Further, pending a decision on the riparian rights of Kerala and Madras regarding the waters of Poringalkuthu and Sholayar, the execution of Sholayar hydel scheme had been delayed. Only the Poringalkuthu II Stage extension could be completed by the end of the Second Plan. The first two units of the Neriamangalam scheme, having a total capacity of 30 MW, were also installed. In consequence, as against a much higher target that is, 246.5 MW, the total installed capacity in the system reached only 147.5 MW as shown by the breakdown below in the table :

INSTALLED CAPACITY IN MW

Name of Station	*At the end of the First Plan (By March 1956)*	*Addition during the Second Plan (1956-61)*	*Total (By March 1961)*
Pallivasal	37.5	Nil	37.5
Sengulam	48	Nil	48.0
Poringalkuthu I Stage	—	24	24.0
Poringalkuthu II Stage	—	8	8.0
Neriamangalam	—	30	30.0
TOTAL	*85.5*	*62*	*147.5*

7.10 Owing to non-commissioning of the Panniar and Sholayar projects, sufficient water was not available for running the machines to their rated capacity either at Poringalkuthu or Neriamangalam. Consequently, by the end of the Second Plan,

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*433 effective capacity was only around 84.5 MW. This will rise sharply with the execution
377 of Panniar and Sholayar schemes during the early years of the Third Plan.
655 7.11 The position at the end of the Second Plan was as follows :—

Transmission, Distribution and Rural Electrification schemes had made good progress. The works which were completed include:

(i) the 110 KV Sengulam-Pallom-Kundra double circuit transmission lines and the 110 KV sub-stations at these places;

(ii) the 110 KV Neriamangalam-Alwaye-FACT double circuit transmission lines;

(iii) the 110 KV Sholayar-Poringalkuthu double circuit transmission lines;

(iv) the 66 KV single circuit line from Viyyur and Palghat; and

(v) the 66 KV sub-station at Peermade, Thiruvalla, Alleppey and Vythilla and 33 sub-stations at Karumagappally.

Besides a carrier communication system linking all the generating and receiving stations and the headquarters of the State Electricity Board was completed and taken
[365] into service. In the sphere of rural electrification, the benefit of electricity was further extended to 1,003 centres, additional 97,662 consumers were connected to the system and 57,282 street lights were installed in various parts of the State.

GENERATION AND UTILIZATION OF ELECTRICITY

*433 7.12 Table 33[2] summarizes the progress of electric power generation and utili-
377 zation in the State of Kerala during the period 1954-55 to 1958-59. Some of the characteristics are worth noting. Of the total available electrical energy, about 20 per cent is lost in transmission and distribution or used for power station auxiliaries (all India 17.5%). Of the rest, as could be expected, industries are the most important consumers. They account for about 65 per cent of total electricity consumption in the State, the comparable proportion in the country being 50-55 per cent. Next in order of importance is domestic lighting which absorbs about 6.5 to 8 per cent (all India about 10%). The proportion of power used for irrigation has varied between 2 and 4 per cent of the total. Pumping out of water from the water-logged areas of Kuttanad is one of the main source of utilization of electricity in the sphere of irrigation.

7.13 Apart from these, two other important points may be noted : (i) Practically all the energy generated (97-98%) is from the hydro-electric power stations. This is in marked contrast to the pattern of power generation in the rest of India where roughly 55 per cent of electricity is from thermal sources. However, unlike the rest of India where it is necessary to have thermal stations to stabilize supply of power throughout the year, in Kerala because of an exceptionally well distributed rainfall and consequently assured supply of water over the different seasons, there is no such necessity and (ii) It is significant that the load factor has been steadily increasing during the recent years. The units generated annually per kW of installed capacity reached a figure of 4,400 during 1958-59 from 3,200 in 1954-55, that is, the load factor increased from 37 per cent to 46 per cent. Additional demand for power since 1954 has been met, almost entirely, by more intensive utilization of the existing capacity.

[2] [Table 33, appearing on pr. 292 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

As explained earlier, the effective capacity could not be increased beyond 84.5 MW mainly on account of foreign exchange difficulties. 433* 377

7.14 The relative shares of various consumers in the coming years will naturally depend on the pace of economic development. Nevertheless, it can be reliably forecast that the relative proportions will not significantly change and industry will retain its predominant place since it is expected that the industrial development will continue to be considered the pivot for economic growth of Kerala.

7.15 Per capita consumption of electrical energy in the State was about 27.75 kWh in 1959-60, which was slightly less than the all-India level of 30.45 kWh.

Regional Distribution of Electricity Facilities

7.16 There is some imbalance in the distribution of electricity in Kerala. The southern districts which were part of the former progressive State of Travancore-Cochin, are more developed from the standpoint of industry and power, whereas the northern districts constituting the Malabar area are comparatively backward. The relative position of different districts in this regard is indicated in Table 34.* 377 184

7.17 Similarly, the network of transmission and distribution lines also depicts a concentration of electrical facilities in the south or south-central region. Naturally, this has led to a clustering of industries in this area. However, it is possible to even out the position in future by undertaking the extension of transmission lines to the northern parts of Kerala as well. The present programme of extending 110 KV line to the north is a step in the proper direction.

Cost of Power Generation

7.18 One of the outstanding features of power development in Kerala is the low cost of generation. Generally investment per kW of installed capacity is higher in the case of hydro schemes than in the case of thermal power stations. In Kerala, however, the figure for investment per kW of installed capacity is Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 for hydro schemes which is no higher than in the case of thermal stations. Most of the hydro sites are still unexploited and are ideally suitable for hydel generation. Since the catchment areas of hydel projects receive rain from both the south-west and north-east monsoons, the storage capacity required per kW of generating capacity is relatively small which in turn reduces the overall capital cost per kW. It is because of these factors that the initial investment normally incurred in case of hydro-electric schemes in Kerala, excluding transmission and distribution, is as low as Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 per kW of installed capacity against the all-India average of Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,000. Not only investment per kW of installed capacity is about the same for hydro and thermal projects in Kerala, the foreign exchange component of investment on hydro schemes up to generation, will also be of the order of only 25 per cent whereas in case of thermal schemes it is about 50 to 60 per cent. 377 435

7.19 Since the capital cost of hydro-power in Kerala is exceptionally low, the average cost of generation from the existing hydro stations is only 1.7 nP per unit. In the case of schemes under execution as well as the schemes already investigated,

* [Table 34, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. 435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35[2] presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as 432 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity [439] system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis 377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more [328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[183] 1 *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.
2 [Table 35, appearing on p 293 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

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emergence of new power-intensive industries, from 0.8 kWh/Rupee in 1955-56 to 1.7 kWh/Rupee in 1970-71. Considering that power-intensive industries like aluminium will not grow as fast as the other less power-intensive lines of manufacture, the power coefficient is not likely to increase as rapidly in Kerala as in the rest of India. Assuming that in 1970-71 2.0 kWh of power would be needed on the average to produce one rupee worth of output in the factory industry, the projected net output of factories in that year, viz., Rs. 89.2 crores would require about 1,750 million kWh.

7.25 Assuming that the industries still account for 65 per cent of total energy consumption, total demand for energy in 1970-71 would be nearly 2,700 million kWh. This corresponds to 675 MW of generating capacity considering that 4,000 of kWh are generated per kW of capacity. Simultaneous peak demand for energy by 1970-71 may be taken at 675 MW.

7.26 The probable phasing of this demand necessarily involves a certain amount of conjecture. If it is assumed that Kerala's power consumption increases at roughly the same rate as in all-India, the demand for energy would reach about 1,000 million kWh by 1965. However, in view of the fact that there is already unsatisfied demand for about 40 MW, and since the availability of power is one of the main means by which the State can attract industries, Kerala would be well advised to plan for a faster rate of power development during the next five years. Tentatively, simultaneous peak demand for 1965-66 is estimated to be 350 MW. Installed capacity may be about 15 per cent, higher than the simultaneous peak demand. The results are tabulated below :

	1965-66 (*MW*)	*1970-71*
Simultaneous peak demand estimated	350	675
Approximate installed capacity required	400	800

The Kerala State Electricity Board has estimated that the demand for power within the State by 1965-66 will be about 365 MW. The installed capacity of 400 MW as suggested above should be adequate for this demand.

7.27 To meet a peak demand for 350 MW by end of the Third Plan and 675 by end of the Fourth Plan, installed capacities of 400 and 800 MW will have to be built up to have effective capacities equal to simultaneous peak demand. This will be the requirement of Kerala alone and any demand from the south zone including that of Madras State will have to be added to this figure to arrive at the overall installed capacities to be built up.

7.28 In the sphere of transmission it appears necessary to build a high tension trunk line of 110 KV or higher throughout the length of the State from north to south. This will facilitate interchange of power amongst various hydel stations and thereby help to reduce the standby capacity. This is also expected to bring down simultaneous peak demand in the State by taking full advantage of diversity in different loads. The State Electricity Board is already at work on this line.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

PROSPECTS DURING THE THIRD PLAN

*433 377 7.29 The total allocation of the Third Plan for the State is fixed at Rs. 170 crores and the outlay for power is fixed at Rs. 43.56 crores. According to the proposals for power development under the Third Plan, the implementation of the spill-over schemes of Panniar, Sholayar and Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) will be the principal developmental activity during the Third Plan period. With the completion of these schemes, the installed capacity in the State will rise to 546 MW. Two new hydro-electric schemes, viz., Kuttiadi in North Malabar (installed capacity 75 MW) and Idikki Hydro-Electric Scheme (installed capacity 500 MW) are also proposed to be taken up during the Third Plan period. The Idikki scheme has been planned with the long range power requirements in view. Due to these continuing schemes, the total installed capacity available at the end of the Fourth Plan is expected to be about 975 MW.

7.30 An intensive rural electrification scheme has been programmed for the Third Plan. It will extend the benefits of electricity to about 750 more villages in the State. This, if fully implemented, will bring the total number of electrified localities to 3,100 by the end of the Third Plan. The distribution schemes during the Third Plan are expected to connect 100,000 new consumers and install 40,000 street lights.

FUTURE OF POWER DEVELOPMENT IN KERALA

7.31 Three important factors have to be taken into account in considering the future of power development in Kerala. (*i*) In view of the heavy pressure of population on agriculture and acute unemployment in the State, rapid industrialization is essential which in turn requires an abundant low cost power generating capacity; (*ii*) shortfalls in the supply of electric power should be avoided or at least minimized during the next five years, and (*iii*) Kerala has not only abundant hydel resources but it is also possibly the only State in the South which is likely to have a surplus in hydro-power potential.

Zonal Integration

7.32 Since during the next decade Kerala is likely to be the only power surplus State in the South, zonal integration should form the keynote of its power planning. It is expected that if implementation progresses according to Plans, by the end of the Third Plan period, Kerala will be able to have a surplus of power of about 150 MW over its own requirements. This will gradually go down until the spill-over schemes in the Fourth Plan start materializing. This surplus of 150 MW will then be steadily maintained and can be exported to the neighbouring State on a permanent basis so far as power development is concerned. Mysore and Andhra can, at best, remain on the fringe of self-sufficiency, at least for the next two decades, and Madras would have practically harnessed all its power resources by 1965-66. True, Madras has sizable lignite resources, but in view of manifold uses of lignite in industry, its utilization for

power generation will naturally be restricted. It is, therefore, essential that in the interests of the national economy, hydro-power generated at low cost in Kerala flows abundantly, and in bulk, to Madras State.

LIMITATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS OF EXPORT SALE OF POWER

7.34 The generation and export sale of the surplus electricity potential of the State, as a business proposition with a definite profit motive, just like any other industrial undertaking, has certain limitations and obligations which should be understood in advance. It is not as if this surplus generation places the State in a comfortable position of meeting any unanticipated demands of sizable magnitudes within the State itself at any time and gives it the option to export only whatever is in surplus to its needs from time to time. Export commitment is a definite contract and, except in the case of valid *force majuri* conditions, contractual obligations have to be met even when there is an acute power shortage within the State itself due to normal causes of development. Electricity industry is capital-intensive and involves the use of sizable foreign exchange for capital equipment. Electricity projects also take a long time to materialize. In a planned economy for the country as a whole, the available resources are equitably distributed for maximum regional growth. Therefore, when the economic surplus power potentials of the State are exploited for export to the neighbouring State, on considerations of overall national economy, corresponding provision for power generation in the neighbouring State is at the same time avoided and it is made to depend on import of power for its needs. These long-term commitments have, therefore, to be firmly and clearly understood in advance.

Rates for Export Sale of Power

7.35 Viewed as a commercial proposition, the maximum price which can be demanded for this exported power will have to be just less than what it would have cost the neighbouring State if it were left to its own costly thermal generation. In addition, the selling State should surrender a small prefixed margin of its profit to the purchasing State in order to make the purchase attractive and worthwhile. In the case of Madras, there can be no difficulty at all. It will have to pay for Kerala power what it pays for Neyveli power. There is also an added advantage for Madras in taking Kerala power at thermal rates. Neyveli will give only a firm power all through the year and can serve only as a base load station. Excepting the hydro stations in Nilgiris, all other hydel stations of Madras are tied up with irrigation regulations and the varying seasonal outputs have to be largely firmed up by an integrated operation of all these stations. There are limitations in this when seasonal power growth tends to assume sizable proportions and the full utilization of the seasonal discharges for power generation may not be possible. Luckily the position is different in Kerala. The large hydro potentials of Kerala are predominantly for power generation. Integrated operation of the hydel stations of Kerala with the Madras grid is possible and it can effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of Madras State. This will also

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*433 377 439 result in mutual advantage to both the States and optimum exploitation and utilization of the water resources of the region as a whole. Kerala can thus give Madras varying power through all the seasons of the year and effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of the State. This operational aspect has also to be kept in view while planning projects for an integrated operation and export of surplus power of Kerala to Madras. Hence, Kerala power at average kWh rates of Neyveli supply, is more advantageous to Madras than Neyveli power. It benefits Kerala also.

Rates for Sale of Power to Consumers within the State

*433 377 7.36 From the economic standpoint, the use to which power is put is just as important as its production. The two chief aspects of electricity consumption are: (i) Consumption of electricity as a factor in production in the field of industry, agriculture and traction. This can be termed "productive" power, or power in relation to productivity which activates the production and distribution circuits on which the increase of a country's wealth depends. (ii) Consumption of electricity for the direct, collective and individual needs of the people that is energy as a consumer good. This can be termed "non-productive" power.[1]

7.37 In Kerala, productive consumption (industrial power, irrigation and agricultural de-watering) formed about 85 per cent of the total in 1959-60 and non-productive power (domestic, light and small power commercial light, and small power public lighting and water works) formed the remaining 15 per cent. The domestic consumption alone came to about 10.7 per cent. The corresponding figures for all-India (1959-60) were 77.9 per cent (productive), 22.1 per cent (non-productive) and 11.1 per cent (domestic consumption alone). But this small percentage of non-productive consumption contributed much more (than its reasonable share to the total revenues) from the sale of power.

*433 377 651 7.38 For ready comparison, the consumption of energy distributed by Kerala State Electricity Board to its consumer within the State (i.e., excluding bulk supplies to Distributing Licencees and to the neighbouring Madras State) and the revenue thereof are given in Table 36 for the year 1957-58. The statement is revealing.

[1] "Productive" power helps to raise the standard of living of the community while "non-productive" power rather serves to measure the standard achieved. The rate-fixing policy must take into account these two distinct categories of consumption. Generally speaking, the policy should be one of cheap "productive" power for such productive cycles as would lead to a rise in wages so that it would then become possible for "non-productive" power to be sold at normal rates. In fixing higher rates for "non-productive" consumption, the ultimate objective of raising the standard of living of the community as a whole should not be lost sight of. The rate itself should not be unduly high to deny the service altogether to the bulk of the community living in an electrified locality. To this end, the rate fixed for "non-productive" power should also take into account the capacity of the community to pay. One of the objects of a sound rate-fixing policy would be to maintain within a given community a reasonable relation between "productive" and "non-productive" power consumption. Both in productive and non-productive uses of electricity where power replaces labour, power consumption will rise in proportion to its cheapness as compared to the cost of labour. In other words, the potential expansion of power consumption in a region may to a certain extent, be measured by the ratio of labour costs to power costs in the area. A policy of power expansion, if the costs remain high in relation to the cost of labour, cannot, therefore, achieve all the desired beneficial results; lowering of power costs, therefore, becomes more imperative where labour is cheapest.

[Table 36, appearing on p. 299 of the text, has not been processed -- Ahalya]

Eleven per cent non-productive consumption contributes nearly 60 per cent of the total revenue. This is much more than its reasonable share. This amount of subsidy cannot be easily justified. Domestic consumption alone forms only a little over 7 per cent of the total consumption, contributes over 51 per cent of the total revenue from the sale of power. This is much too high a share. 433* 377 651

7.39 There was a small, generally upward, revision of rates in December 1958, without materially altering the structure of the tariff. The above conclusions, therefore, still hold good. 433* 377 435

7.40 Amongst the non-productive classes of load, item iv (Table 36) Public Water Works and Sewage Pumping is billed at "Industrial Rates" and classified as industrial loads for the purpose. In respect of item iii (Table 36) Public Lighting, the revised tariff of December, 1958 provides a rate of "15 nP per kWh for lamps for the first 6 hours of burning and 12 nP per unit for the remaining hours". This rectifies the high average rate per kWh in 1957-58, as seen in the above statement. The average unit rate per kWh of domestic consumption comes to as much as seven times the average selling rate of the total consumption through all categories of load. It is 15 times the average rate for productive consumption. The tariff revision of December, 1958 does not relieve this position. This is important. The structure of the domestic tariffs could induce optimum utilization of installed capacity with better load factor, but the domestic rates themselves have to be reduced substantially. In a State which leads the rest of the country in economic power generation, this should not be difficult. The "power surplus" position of the State can also enable the State to take effective steps to make cheap power (though costlier than productive power) available for domestic consumers extensively and may substantially raise the total domestic consumption to a higher level. In the light of the above observations, it is recommended that the State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales.

POSSIBILITY OF POWER SHORTAGE

7.41 It is learnt that power shortage is adversely affecting some of the existing big industries which are heavily dependent upon adequate power supply for their full production. Besides, starting of new industries may be hampered unless adequate power supply is forthcoming, or at least, the present power shortage is removed. 433* 377

7.42 A careful analysis of the power situation in Kerala shows that there will be no danger of a prolonged serious power gap. On the generation side, according to the present plans the Panniar Power Station with an installed capacity of 30,000 kW and the Sholayar Power Station with an installed capacity of 54,000 kW are expected to be commissioned in 1963 and 1964 respectively. Two of the six generating units of 50,000 kW each in the Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) Power Station are also expected to be commissioned by the end of 1964 by which time the State will reach a very comfortable position in regard to power supply.

7.43 Any suggestion for setting up thermal power stations in the State to bridge the likely gaps in power supply will have to be examined in this context. As already pointed out, thermal power generation costs more, both in terms of the cost of genera- 433* 375

*433 tion and foreign exchange requirements. Besides, the construction of a thermal 375 station even if immediately taken up, cannot be completed before two to three years. This time lag considerably reduces its value for alleviating the immediate problem of power shortage. Under such circumstances, there is no case at all for considering any thermal power stations in Kerala.

*433 7.44 At present, the best solution would be to arrange for the staggering of power 377 load and to encourage the working of industries during the off-peak hours. Another possibility is that the Governments of Kerala and Madras may get together to alleviate the power problem of Kerala to whatever extent it is possible through the zonal grid.

INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS

7.45 Kerala's installed capacity by the end of the Second Plan was 147.5 MW. To build it up to 400 MW by the end of the Third Plan as suggested in this report an additional installed capacity of roughly 250 MW will be necessary. According to current estimates, approximately Rs. 1,600 per kW will be required in Kerala for generation, transmission and distribution. On this basis, about Rs. 40 crores will be required during the Third Plan. During the Fourth Plan, installed capacity is envisaged to increase from 400 MW to 800 MW. At the same rate of investment per kW as mentioned above, investment requirements for the Fourth Plan would be about Rs. 64 crores. Thus Kerala State would require the sum of about Rs. 104 crores over the Third and Fourth Plan periods to satisfy its own power needs. Requirements of neighbouring States for Kerala's power would require additional investment over and above this figure.

CONCLUSIONS

7.46 The abundant water resources of the State, which can be utilized for generation of hydro-electric energy, form one of the strong points of Kerala economy. Apart from the large hydro-electric potential which is estimated to be of the order of 1,589 MW, the important feature of power resources of Kerala is the low cost of generation per unit. This is due to the favourable nature of the terrain and the high degree of rainfall which Kerala receives.

7.47 In the absence of any coal or oil deposits in Kerala or in nearby regions, hydro-electric power has to be the chief source of energy requirements of industry. The favourable position of Kerala in this respect should be utilized as a factor helping industrialization. For this purpose harnessing of the hydro-electric potential should be properly planned in advance so that an adequate amount of well-assured electric supply could be guaranteed to the industrialists. In this context the State would be well-advised to plan for a power surplus.

[439] 7.48 In view of the fact that Kerala is in a position to generate electric energy in excess of its requirements, while the neighbouring State of Madras has almost exhausted its domestic resources and Mysore and Andhra are just on the verge of self-

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

sufficiency, Kerala should play the role of a net exporter of electric energy to these States. A zonal grid which is now planned to be laid in the South, is essential to make the most economic use of the power generating potential of the Southern States. Since the cost of electric generation is much lower in Kerala than in Madras or the other neighbouring States even after including transmission costs, Kerala may also be in a position to earn net revenue through export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States. This revenue could be utilized for capital formation within Kerala.

7.49 The State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales specially with reference to consumption of power for domestic purposes.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Literary and place-name evidence points to continuing growth of the land within proto-historic or even historic times. It seems likely that there were at least two phases of relative upward movement, represented by erosion surfaces in the laterite at around 250 and 600 ft, while the last stage—that reflected in legend and literature—added the eight miles or so between the existing shore and a line of villages of whose names 'sea' or 'island' is a component; some places mentioned by Ptolemy as sea-ports now lie at a similar distance inland. But all these are near the great Cochin backwater, which suggests—as do the large-scale maps—that normal prograding on a low shoreline of emergence is responsible for this accretion, rather than an actual change of levels. Probably associated with this are the Malabar mudbanks, which lie off all the river mouths. They are up to eight miles long, and their extremely finely comminuted lateritic mud forms as it were an emollient which deadens the ocean swell; in their lee are safe roadsteads for the small ports of the coast. 133

The general tripartite longitudinal division is found: alluvial coastland, low lateritic plateaus and foothills, gneissic highlands. The division is indeed rather more clear cut than in the more complex Nn lowlands, but each zone has certain peculiarities. In the alluvium is the great development of lagoons and backwaters, saline or fresh, which, with some artificial cuts, form splendid waterways for some 150 miles from the Ponnani mouth to Trivandrum. The largest of these, behind Cochin, widens out Swds into Vembanad Lake. The laterites (including the ?Pliocene Warkalais) form plateaus at 200–600 ft, with much grass and scrub; into them project spurs of the Anaimalai-Cardamom Hills which, S of Palghat, have a very strong SE–NW trend, shown by the Periyar Valley. The hills themselves, rain-swept and forested, will be treated in the next chapter, but it may be noted here that the plantation agriculture of Kerala is confined to them, and the development of hydro-electricity from Pallivasal is of great importance to the agriculture and industry of the lowland. [433] [377]

The Ponnani, the headwaters of which rise on the Nn slopes of the Anaimalais, leads up to the Palghat Gap, nearly 20 miles wide and not much over 1100 ft on its broad sill, which lies beyond the regional limits. Farther S the higher (nearly 1500 ft) and much narrower Shencottah Gap gives access to the extreme S of Madras. It is noteworthy that in both these gaps there were exclaves of Cochin and Travancore territory, extending well E of the watershed in the latter; these, with the ancient walls across the Comorin lowland, emphasise the importance of these sole easy points of contact between Kerala and Tamilnad.

Climate and Agriculture

The climate represents the nearest approach in India to equatorial conditions. Maximum temperatures rarely exceed 90° F., minima rarely fall 132

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks,[46] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the [312]
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[46] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 369.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Tamil AW16
Marathi AW12

K T 241 311

rain. Above the rubber, tea extends to nearly 6000 ft, and indeed more than half of it is grown above 4000 ft; rainfall is usually 100–150 ins. It is noteworthy that over half the rubber is produced on Indian-owned estates, but only a small fraction of the tea.

K T 377

As for hydro-electricity, the hills are dotted with falls and rainfall on the Wn flanks is everywhere high and reliable. So far the most important large development is at Pallivasal in Travancore (installed 21,000 kW, potential 36,000), which powers the aluminium smelters at Alwaye and also works pumps draining the flooded paddy-fields of Kerala. A project of great interest is that for utilising the great Periyar Reservoir (Fig. 150) for power. The Periyar headwaters have been impounded and are taken through the watershed by tunnel to irrigate the Suruli-Vaigai Valley in Madura; some 40,000 kW might be developed, and altogether the region has a potential of at least 200,000 kW.

K T 311 361

The Wn flanks of the hills are too rain-swept to have much settlement except on plantations, forest camps, and power installations. In the E Kodaikanal, lying at 7000 ft on the Palnis, is a minor hill-station, noted for its mission schools and an old-established physical observatory.

Maharashtra

M 133

Maharashtra, the Maratha country *par excellence*,[5] may be taken as roughly coterminous with the main mass of the Deccan Lavas above the Ghats. To the N the Tapti Valley, flanked by typical lava plateaus but floored by alluvium, forms a transition to the central Indian scarplands; in the S, along the Malaprabha, there is another belt where Archaeans and lavas interdigitate and where cultural allegiance is divided between the Marathi and Kannada (Kanarese) languages. But to the E, in Hyderabad especially, the boundary of Marathi speech shows a striking accordance with the edge of the Lavas (Fig. 127); hence the division of the state into Marathwara and Telangana, a rare instance of official recognition of regionalism. This great area thus includes all central Bombay, the NW third of Hyderabad, and SW Madhya Pradesh (CP) as far as Nagpur.

M 197 631

The Terrain

M 133

It is a region of extraordinary physical homogeneity, in the gross at least, although (as Deshpande points out) detailed study would undoubtedly reveal significant differences in erosional features, soils, vegetation, and farming practice depending on the varying petrology of the lavas. The general slope to the E and SE is gentle: Poona lies at 1800 ft, and it is over 100 miles down the Bhima to the 1500-ft contour. From the Ghat culminations long tongues of higher ground (over 2000 ft) run E and divide the plateau

[5] The etymological connection of Maratha or Mahratta and Maharashtra, if any, is still controversial.

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[428]
[438]

AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	38,347	..	..
Kozhikode	20,045	61,479	14,755	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,336	20,988	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,634	2,890	5,586
Nemmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,467*	*172,678*	*64,100*	*143,353*

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Kerala.

[384] 4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

313 289 4.36 (*ii*) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

*433 314 4.37 (*iii*) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

Il: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

*[433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

rest of the production is exported to various countries, the bulk of it going to the USA and the UK. Export figures are given in Table 29 for the period 1956–59.

6.17 Irregular supplies made through the Koilthottam port, mainly due to labour difficulties, have resulted in the loss of contracts with importers in the USA. Export possibilities of ilmenite are now limited only to two contracts to UK totalling 1,50,000 tons per year. This setback has occurred in spite of the fact that the Chavara ilmenite has a high TiO_2 content (55-60%) and is cheaper when compared to Malayan ilmenite (about 45% TiO_2) which, however, finds a ready export market.

6.18 India, which at one time used to hold almost a monopolistic position in the export of ilmenite has now to face competition. Side by side with the expansion of titanium industry, other world sources for supply of ilmenite have come into operation as in Norway, Canada, Malaya, Australia, South Africa, etc. Whereas in 1940 India used to contribute 90 per cent to world production of ilmenite, now its share is only 25 per cent.

6.19 In view of the rapid expansion of India's steel industry, the consumption of TiO_2 pigment is itself expected to go up. The total requirements of ilmenite by 1965-66 would be 150,000 tons a year for export and 36,000 tons a year for the manufacture of TiO_2 pigment, on the basis of proposal for expansion of Titanium Dioxide plant at Trivandrum incorporated in this report. Table 30 gives demand for Titanium Dioxide pigment from steel industry and various other sources. The two existing companies can produce about 160,000 tons a year. Extra capacity of 30,000 tons a year will have to be installed, and this along with certain improvements suggested earlier may require an investment of Rs. 20 lakhs. Very little increase in labour force is envisaged. The existing labour force itself appears to be excessive, since the output per man per shift works out to a low level of 0.4 tons.

6.20 During the Fourth Plan period, steel production is expected to double itself. Therefore, by 1970-71, the demand for Titanium Dioxide may also be expected to be roughly double of the demand in 1965-66. This would necessitate another 30,000 tons of ilmenite per annum. Total requirement of ilmenite by 1970-71 would thus be 220,000 tons a year, comprising of 150,000 tons for export and 60,000 tons for the manufacture of Titanium Dioxide. This would involve further additional outlay of Rs. 10 lakhs. Even this order of expansion can be achieved with the existing labour at an output of one ton per man per shift which would measure a fairly reasonable level of productivity.

Monazite

6.21 Monazite is a phosphate of thorium and cerium with rare earth elements and small quantities of Uranium Oxide. It constitutes a source of the radio-active element, thorium being used for atomic energy purposes. Monazite was first discovered in India, by C.W. Von Sohomberg, a German citizen, in 1909 along the beach at Manavalakkurichi.

6.22 Monazite occurs along with other heavy minerals in the beach sands. Reserves of the order of 6.7 million tons are estimated to be present in the bar between Neendakara and Kayarkulam. There is, however, no production of monazite

[Table 30, appearing on p. 290 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and net value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise, both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778 796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land*—

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

● 406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

406 The mhote too is seldom seen in these parts. The more common sorts of water-lifters are (1) an oval shaped bamboo-basket (costing about As. 2); (2) a wooden groove provided with a handle, costing about Re. 1; (3) and a frame-work consisting of two long bamboos, one small and another big in size balanced on a horizontal beam which is supported by two vertical poles; a picottah is attached to the small-sized bamboo and is drawn up and brought down by one or two persons standing opposite each other on two planks thrown across the middle of the well. The whole frame together with the picottah costs about Rs. 2. The oval shaped basket and the wooden groove are used to spread water from water courses and not from wells. Two persons, generally women, stand opposite each other on the side of a watercourse and pull the basket towards themselves by means of ropes tied round its 'ears' after filling it up with water; the extreme ease and facility with which they carry on the operations, often to the accompaniment of a snatch of song, is wonderful. The wooden groove is allowed to swing on a string and is moved to and fro by a person holding the handle.

651 The classes into which wet and dry lands are divided, the extent of each and the amount of assessment are subjoined.

Classes.	Wet lands.									Dry lands.				
	Single crop.					Double crop.				Single crop.				
	Area.		Assessment.			Area.		Assessment.			Area.	Assessment.		
	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.
I ..	35	65	116	7	9	320	74	1,527	5	5	301	48	261	11	3
II ...	4	56	15	10	9	59	72	210	6	3	12	69	3	12	8
III ...	16	0	36	0	7	39	73	114	6	0	212	60	77	5	7
IV ...	21	37	39	9	8	15	51	34	11	2	68	39	17	10	3
V ...	109	59	147	9	11	11	5	17	12	11	207	53	44	6	8
VI ...	18	6	34	10	10	1	24	3	2	5	56	49	3	13	8
VII ...	...		...			...		...			78	3	37	0	3

35 The selling prices of cultivable wet land in the village are approximately Class I Rs. 1,500, Class II Rs. 1,000, Class III Rs. 800 Class IV Rs. 500—600, Class V Rs. 500.

311 The land is classified according to tenure as follows :—
423

I. 'Pandaravaka Verumpattam' (Sirkar) non-favourable tenure.	Nilams (wet land) (A. 86·73).	109 pattadars.
	Parambas (dry land) (A. 210·88).	
II. 'Pandaravaka Kanam' (Sirkar) favourable tenure.	Nilams (A. 2·19) ...	4 pattadars.
	Parambas (7 cents) ...	
III. 'Puravaka' (outside Sirkar).	Nilams (A. 563·61) ...	54 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 711·80) ...	
IV. Inams (gift tenure).	Nilams (71 cents) ...	6 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 14·47) ...	

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

406
291

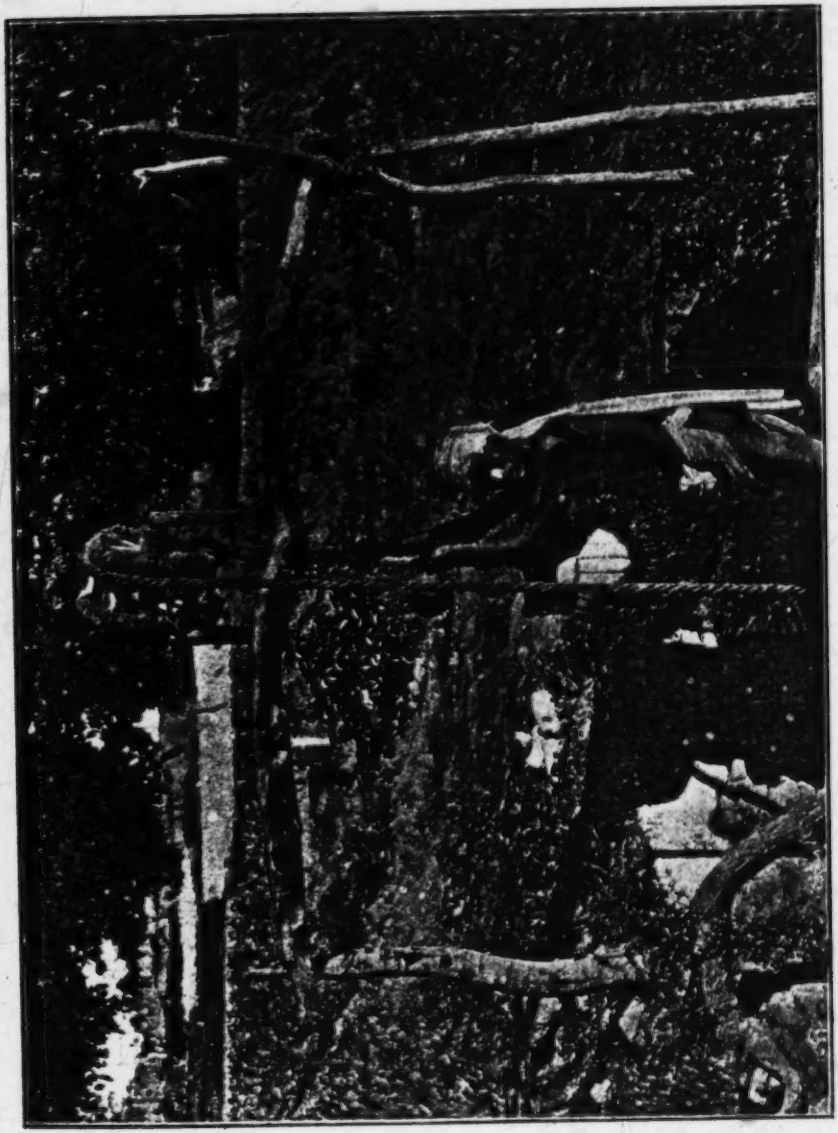

"RATANAM", A FORM OF WATER-LIFT (TIRUVALLUR). Photo by Agricultural College.

[facing p. 152]

of paddy. This would not only give additional production of pulses which are deficit in the State, but also enrich the soil by leaving a nitrogen residue, and thereby constitute a better rotation. It may be possible to develop pulse crops on 250,000 acres. Assuming an yield of a quarter ton per acre, the additional production of pulses by crop intensification, as suggested here, would be roughly 62,500 tons per year. 433* 242

2.74 Better plant protection is another measure for getting a substantial increase in yields. It is estimated that yields increase approximately by about 10 per cent through this method. The Department of Agriculture should tackle this problem more effectively. This would only be possible by strengthening the Plant Protection Wing of the Department of Agriculture. [642]

Implements

2.75 Agricultural implements in use in the State are antiquated and inefficient. The wooden plough continues to be the master implement and is used for tillage operations of almost all the crops. Iron ploughs and other tillage implements are not popular. In fact the number of iron ploughs decreased by 22 per cent during 1951–56 and at present stands at 10,225. Tractors during the same period, however, increased from 59 to 187. Irrigation pumps too have shown an increase of 116 per cent. 407 ●

2.76 The slow adoption of improved implements is mostly due to non-availability of implements and machinery suited to local conditions as well as due to their high cost. The topographical conditions and techniques of cultivation are unique in Kerala and there are no implements designed and developed to suit such conditions. There is, therefore, need for developing efficient implements for rice cultivation, plantation crops, soil conservation work and also for specialized implements such as ridgers and earthers for ginger and tapioca. It would be necessary to have a well equipped and adequately staffed agricultural engineering station to undertake the type of work suggested here. The proposed station may also do some work in designing of irrigation aids and may advise farmers on the selection of pumping sets and cane crushers. 433* 407

Soil Erosion

2.77 Soil erosion is a serious problem in Kerala. Conditions prevalent in the State such as lateritic soils, undulating to steep topography, the system of farming followed and heavy cloud burst—all these constitute towards excessive soil erosion. There is no reliable estimate regarding the extent of area affected or vulnerable to soil erosion, but it is estimated that about one-third of the cultivated area—approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres—is affected by it. It should be possible to protect at least one million acres through soil conservation measures by 1971. 134 185

2.78 Soil conservation work as carried out by the Department of Agriculture has become very popular with the farmers. The Department gives technical advice on soil conservation matters and undertakes operations in specified areas in water-shed units. [647]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

243 Area yielding one crop—205·23 acres.
Area yielding two crops—448·01 acres.

There are a few acres yielding three crops, but only two crops are assessed.

There are different kinds of paddy, each having different periods of growth, and specially suited to particular soils. The fields are manured and in some cases slightly ploughed just before the rains in summer. The south-west monsoon usually begins in June and lasts for four months. As soon as the rain comes, lands are ploughed and paddy is sown in particularly favourable areas. Then all the fields of the farmer are well ploughed and manured; the seedlings are replanted over the whole area after a growth of twenty-eight days. Some kinds of paddy grow for sixty days, others eighty and ninety days. The system in which no replantation takes place is also in much vogue. The fields are protected from animal or bird pests; after a period of at most three months the paddy is mown by agricultural workers who separate the paddy from the stalks.

Another crop is also generally sown during the north-east monsoon season (October and November) which usually gives rain for about one month.

[407] The ploughs used are primitive and old-fashioned. The furrowing is done in this wise:—a flat piece of iron sharpened at one end is attached to a wooden frame with a handle; this handled frame is attached by means of a pole to a yoke which is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen or buffaloes; the worker then holds the handle and drives the oxen round and round the field until the whole field is well furrowed over. This is done *before* the heavy rain, when the ground is softened, but not under water. The sod is then crushed by means of sticks, this being generally done by females. The women walk in a row, beating the sod to and fro with heavy sticks held in one hand. After the field has been well watered by rains it is once more worked over by means of a log of wood (levelling board) drawn by oxen.

[412] The other agricultural implements used are the sickle, a big knife and spades.

231 *Stock.*—The following is the official census of the stock:—

Working oxen	245
Cows	289
Male buffaloes	361
Cow buffaloes	20
Young stock—	
Calves	169
Young buffaloes	7
Horses	2
Donkeys and mules	22
Sheep and goats	583

Oxen are used to drag carts, and for ploughing the fields. Most of the oxen here appear to be lean and weak; especially those used in ploughing. Cart-drawing oxen are better.

234 Cows are used for milking only, though the Muhammadans of the locality are not averse to eating beef now and then. The milk, buttermilk and ghee of the cow are in great demand especially among the Brahmans who cannot do without them; the lower

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

651 On registered double crop land, the charge for the second crop has been consolidated at one-quarter of the single crop assessment. For occasional second crop on land assessed as single crop, the charge will be one-half the single crop assessment.

231 The stock as ascertained by personal enquiry are as shown below. The account of the stock of Kothachira was not obtainable from the village officials, for it is lost. I have tried my best to make the statement complete and exhaustive. But this is a period of extreme fatality to the stock in these parts. Daily one or more are dying. In a single family there died twenty within forty-five days leaving only one or two pairs. The numbers are—

Bullocks	240	
Cows	403	
Buffaloes	287	
Young stock	374	under 4 years.
Goats	712	
[407] Ploughs	414	
Carts	5	
Oil mills	4	

A comparison with the figures for the census of 1899–1900 for the whole amsom of Kothachira (the three desams of Kothachira, Peringode and Mattur) shows an all-round decrease of about forty per cent. I believe the causes of this great reduction to be partly a succession of very bad seasons for stock, and partly selling off under pressure of poverty.

Cattle feeding.—Bullocks and working oxen and buffaloes, besides being left to graze on the unoccupied dry lands and on cultivable areas when they are lying fallow, are given straw and 'kanchi,' water mixed with the dusty part of rice and 'punac' or oil-cake. For cows and young stock only straw is given besides grazing. Goats are simply left to graze. Straw is given to the above working stock after they are housed in their sheds for the evening. The 'kanchi' water is given in the morning just before leading them into fields and in the afternoon after their work is over. They are led to be washed after field work. Bullocks and buffaloes are the working stock.

The breed.—The cattle are very second rate in their breed. The most healthy working oxen grow to a height of from three to three and a half feet and their strength is not half as much as the oxen employed by the firms of Madras. The cow is a pitiable thing ordinarily two to three feet high and milking on an average from a half to one Madras measure per day.* Comparison, it need hardly be said, with Madras cows is odious. They can be milked for only six months. The best come into milking again within a year, but many only within two years.

241 *Manure.*—Almost all the cattle dung is used for manure. One per [237] cent perhaps goes for purposes of washing floors, etc. The cattle urine is allowed in some places to flow into the dung-pit, but no systematic attempt is anywhere made to utilize it to the best advantage. Besides this, burnt ashes and green manure are in common

* [A Madras measure is 62·5 fluid ounces = 3½ pints. A fair Madras cow in full milk yields about 3¾ Madras measures per day, i.e., 5 quarts.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

lings for the second crop are then planted and will be ready for harvest in December or January. In double-crop wet lands both crops are as a rule paddy. But a small area may be used for growing garden vegetables, and this is invariably the case in the three crop lands. Only one crop is raised in the dry lands actually tilled and this crop is determined by a rotation of crops, consisting of paddy, other grains and pulses, gingelly, etc. There is great variety in rotation. Usually the field lies fallow once in three years, often for two or three years continuously, according to the fertility of the soil. The importance of rain in due season for paddy cultivation cannot be over-estimated, the whole prospects of the village for the year may be altogether changed by even a slight failure of the monsoon at the critical stages in cultivation. In that case the local prices of paddy go up very suddenly, as now (August 1917). 243

Only one type of plough is seen—the usual old fashioned country plough, which merely scratches the ground. It lasts only for a year or two and costs only from ten to twelve annas. 407

Other implements are the levelling board, harrow (a long wooden hammer used by the hand), spade, kuzhi kutti (i.e., burrowing tool), jack-knife, etc. The levelling board costs about Rs. 2½ and lasts from 6 to 8 years; the spade costs Re. 1 and is worn out in a year. It has a blade set at right angles to the handle and is swung like a pick-axe.

Stock.— 231

	1914.	1910.
(*a*) Working oxen	296	250
(*b*) Cows	350	382
(*c*) Male buffaloes	256	286
(*d*) Cow buffaloes	6	10
(*e*) Young stock of above species ...	266	221
(*f*) Riding horses	2	...
(*g*) Donkeys and mules...	...	..
(*h*) Sheep	...	...
(*i*) Goats	201	285
(*j*) Pigs	...	...

The 1914 figures are approximately true in 1916.

Working oxen and buffaloes are better fed than others. They are given enough straw or grass, and hot conjee (gruel) mixed with oil-cake, bran, atc. Occasionally working oxen are given flesh (fowls). Cows and cow-buffaloes are given straw and conjee and bran water. They are led out to graze on the hill sides and pastures during the day. Their young follow them. The goats are allowed to stray and feed themselves as best they can. Their milk is used for medicinal purposes and is considered very nutritious.

There is no good pasture in the village, and the cattle are lean and bony. After harvest cattle stray over the stubbles, finding what food they can. The fields are often quite small, say 100 by 75 feet, and frequently there are considerable differences of level between adjoining fields, which is a difficulty in the way of proper irrigation.

Manuring.—About seventy-five per cent of the cattle dung is used as manure. The rest is dried in the form of thick cakes 237

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P.185]

THE NÂYARS OF MALABAR.*

IT is likely that some of the gentle readers of this monograph are not familiar with "The Lusiad," the epic poem of Luis de Camoens, the restless soldier-poet who sailed with a detachment of the Portuguese for the West Coast of India in 1553. Voltaire, who is not given to redundant praise of anybody, styles him the Portuguese Virgil. At any rate he has written a fine epic, and from it I will quote a few lines concerning the Nâyars, with whom he came in personal contact three and-a-half centuries ago.

"Polias the labouring lower clans are named;
"By the proud *Nayres* the noble rank is claimed;
"The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
"The warrior's plumes their haughty brows adorn;
"The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right,
"Their left arm wields the target in the fight;
"Of danger scornful, ever armed they stand
"Around the king, a stern barbarian band." †

A former Governor of Bombay, Johnathan Duncan by name, who visited Malabar in 1792-3, has anticipated me in quoting some of these lines, and with regard to them he observes: "These lines . . . . . contain a good description of a Nâyar, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders." ‡

The Nâyars, the Nareæ of Pilny, (Nat. Hist. VI, 21), were the swordsmen, the military caste of the west coast of India. There are some small sects or castes intervening, but broadly speaking the Nâyars rank after the Nambûtiris in Malabar, and they occupy the same position in the Native States of Cochin and Travancore.

* The first article of this series was in Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where the Nambûtiri Brahmans of Malabar were described.
† Mickle's Translation, London, 1798.
‡ Logan's "Manual of Malabar," page 137.

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as U âlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

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411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

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military element in Malabar. The opponents who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter staff, stood 30 feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, a la cancan, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with outstretched arms, came down *slowly* on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and after some preliminary pirouetting went for each other tooth and nail. 526

The sword play which one sees during festive ceremonies, a marriage or the like, done by the hereditary retainers who fight imaginary foes and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly. above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs—in ever so many impossible ways.

Nâyar swords and shields are figured in the illustration. The shields are made of wood covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle and half way up the blade; but the one which is figured will suffice to show what the Nâyar fighting sword was like. The smaller shields are now used in play. 714 411 [531]

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persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with 175
such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became 701
the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient
were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when
required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the 648
Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. 175
Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand 411
and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again [714]
were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their
shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise
by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that
they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus
with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could
be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the
Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they
went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with 175
equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with 726
such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their
extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in
forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared
themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his
ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of [701]
the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers 175
and his peculiar weapon is an instrument 411
with a thin but very broad blade hooked to- [714]
wards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's
knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked
instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever
he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no
scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an
ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used
for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet'
or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an
instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat
part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies.

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien.

disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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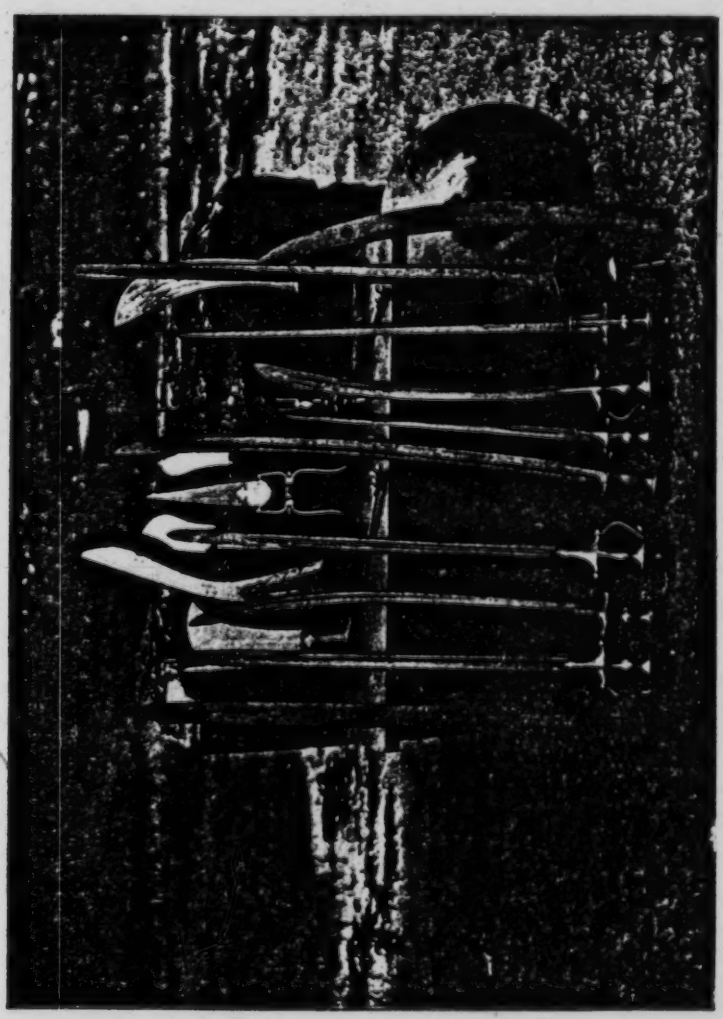

THE WEAPONS OF THE OLD NAYAR WARRIORS.

[facing p. 6]

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

175 564 701 went on to observe: 'These lines, and especially the two last, contain a good description of a Nayr, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in [411] their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders' (Asiatic Researches, V. 10, 18). 726 M. Mahé de la Bourdonnais, who had some experience of their fighting qualities in the field, 175 564 701 thus described them: 'Les Nairs sont de grands hommes basanés, légers, et vigoureux: Ils n'ont pas d'autre profession que celle des armes, et seraient de fort bons soldats, s'ils étiaent disciplinés: mais ils combattent sans ordre, ils prennent la fuite dès qu'on les serre de près avec quelque supèriorité; pourtant, s'ils se voient pressés avec vigueur et qu'ils se croient en danger, ils reviennent à la charge, et ne se rendent jamais' (M. Esquer, Essai sur les Castes dans l'Inde, page 181). Finally, the only British General of any note—Sir Hector Munro—who had ever to face the Nāyars in the field, thus wrote of their modes of fighting:—

'One may as well look for a needle in a Bottle of Hay as any of them in the daytime, they being lurking behind sand banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the Fort, and then they appear like bees out in the month of June.' 'Besides which,' he continued, 'they point their guns well, and fire them well also' (Tellicherry Factory Diary, March, 1761). They were, in short, brave light troops, excellent in skirmishing, but their organization into small bodies with discordant interests unfitted them to repel any serious invasion by an enemy even moderately well organised. Among other strange Malayāli customs, Sheikh

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [441] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

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of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 502 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

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291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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THE NAYAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

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CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

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[facing p. 65]

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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman [574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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243 Area yielding one crop—205·23 acres.
Area yielding two crops—448·01 acres.

There are a few acres yielding three crops, but only two crops are assessed.

There are different kinds of paddy, each having different periods of growth, and specially suited to particular soils. The fields are manured and in some cases slightly ploughed just before the rains in summer. The south-west monsoon usually begins in June and lasts for four months. As soon as the rain comes, lands are ploughed and paddy is sown in particularly favourable areas. Then all the fields of the farmer are well ploughed and manured; the seedlings are replanted over the whole area after a growth of twenty-eight days. Some kinds of paddy grow for sixty days, others eighty and ninety days. The system in which no replantation takes place is also in much vogue. The fields are protected from animal or bird pests; after a period of at most three months the paddy is mown by agricultural workers who separate the paddy from the stalks.

Another crop is also generally sown during the north-east monsoon season (October and November) which usually gives rain for about one month.

[407] The ploughs used are primitive and old-fashioned. The furrowing is done in this wise:—a flat piece of iron sharpened at one end is attached to a wooden frame with a handle; this handled frame is attached by means of a pole to a yoke which is placed on the neck of a pair of oxen or buffaloes; the worker then holds the handle and drives the oxen round and round the field until the whole field is well furrowed over. This is done *before* the heavy rain, when the ground is softened, but not under water. The sod is then crushed by means of sticks, this being generally done by females. The women walk in a row, beating the sod to and fro with heavy sticks held in one hand. After the field has been well watered by rains it is once more worked over by means of a log of wood (levelling board) drawn by oxen.

[412] The other agricultural implements used are the sickle, a big knife and spades.

231 *Stock.*—The following is the official census of the stock:—

Working oxen	245
Cows	289
Male buffaloes	361
Cow buffaloes	20
Young stock—	
Calves	169
Young buffaloes	7
Horses	2
Donkeys and mules	22
Sheep and goats	583

Oxen are used to drag carts, and for ploughing the fields. Most of the oxen here appear to be lean and weak; especially those used in ploughing. Cart-drawing oxen are better.

234 Cows are used for milking only, though the Muhammadans of the locality are not averse to eating beef now and then. The milk, buttermilk and ghee of the cow are in great demand especially among the Brahmans who cannot do without them; the lower

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw.

[428] * [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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(7) pestle and mortar for husking rice, 412

(8) (for coconut cultivation) a long broad knife with blade and handle each 1 foot long (this serves all purposes),

(9) an implement intermediate between an axe and mamoti, with a thick sharp blade, and a fairly long handle, used for cutting wood, etc.,

(10) a basket, with ropes attached at both sides, worked by two men, to transfer water from a tank or from one field to another,

(11) a form of picotah, worked by a man standing on a platform inside the well, with his hands,

(12) the ordinary bullock lift,

(13) a sharp rod fixed in the earth for removing the outer cover of the coconut,

(14) ropes tied circularly for the purpose of climbing the coconut tree.

Stock— 231

Working oxen	922*
Cows	220
Male buffaloes	503*
Cow ,, ...	221
Young stock	1,103
Horses	7
Donkeys and mules	...
Sheep and goats	1,305
Pigs	20

There are 112 carts.

The cattle are fed on dry paddy straw, coconut fodder, waste powdered rice mixed with water, and grass in the winter season. The feeding of cattle is very carelessly done. They keep their skins and bones only.

Manuring.—Cattle dung is used for three purposes :— 237

(1) For cleaning the whole house. Hindus believe that the sprinkling of cattle dung water purifies the house. Consequently, every day every house is thus cleaned.

(2) For fuel. Chaff mixed with straw and dung is dried and burnt for culinary purposes. All the dung from cows kept by the non-agricultural classes (nearly every family of means keeps a cow for milk) is used in the above ways.

(3) The dung produced among the agricultural classes is used [241] for manure, not for paddy or coconut, but for the cultivation of vegetables. Very little dung is used for the cultivation of chief crops. The wastage is also large. Perhaps one-fourth of the total dung is used for manuring vegetables. All the rest is used as stated above or wasted. A small portion of the cattle urine is collected in pots and used as manure for vegetables, but nearly all is wasted.

Fish and muddy water are used as manure for coconuts, but 241 not to a very great extent, and only by the three rich kanomdars who themselves cultivate. Some also use salt for manure, when they plant coconut. This is very advantageous, and sometimes

* [This shows the very high proportion of one working ox or buffalo for each acre of cultivated land, a proportion accounted for by what is stated about the condition of the animals.—Ed.]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce." 564 613 588 [586]

If, as has been said, the "pâttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste. [533]

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction [171] [735] [184] [824] [415]

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891). [113]

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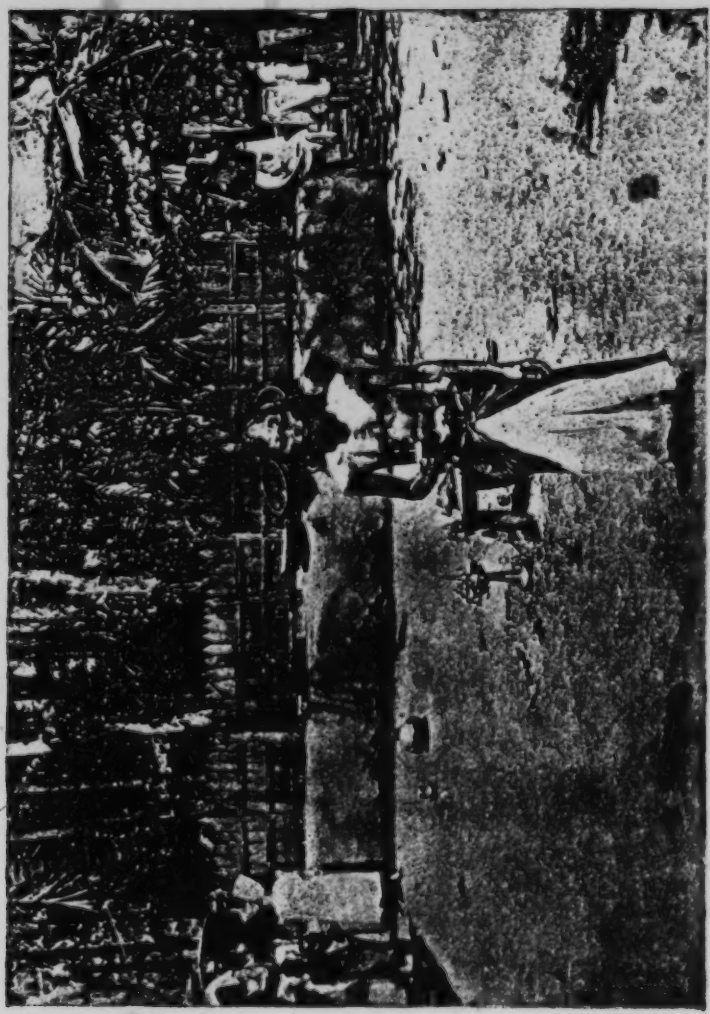

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8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharavad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 611 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 [343] [312] [515] [574] [343] [245] As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 [175] Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early childhood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. 352 [556] [177] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days furnished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 352 412 184 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 564 The house itself is called by several names according to the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534]
which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* [354]
carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male [415] members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

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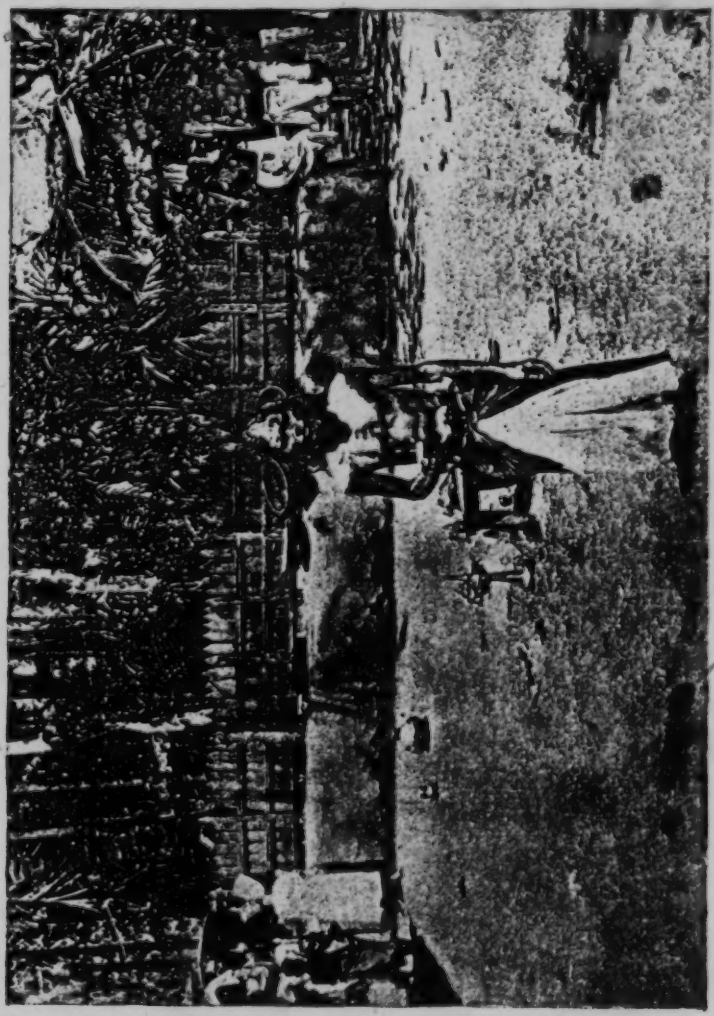

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361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
343 Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
342 order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
787 ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
764 ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

613 the assembly.

Though the order of segmentation is known in the taravad and is relevant to reversion of property, to the emotional strength of matrilineal ties, and to ultimate division of the group into new exogamous taravads, the Nayars cannot therefore be said to have a lineage in the strict British sense of a system in which "minimal groups of unilineal kin combine into larger groups in contrast to [53] other groups of like nature which in turn combine until a maximal lineage or clan is formed as a capstone to the whole structure." (4) However, since it does not appear certain that matrilineal lineages of this type exist anywhere, yet since the term "matrilineage" is in current use to describe corporate groups of a matrilineal society in which the order of segmentation is known, I use this word to describe corporate groups of a matrilineal society in which the order of segmentation is known, I use this word to describe the taravad.

421 V The Traditional Kinship System

(1) The Property-Group

(a) The Corporate Character of the Group

A traditional property-group was a small segment of the lineage, usually comprising a group of brothers and sisters by the same mother, and the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint property-owning unit: its members, male and female, were from birth equal copartners in the buildings, gardens, kanam and janmam lands, movables, ritual objects and serfs owned by the group. The group

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564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
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[787] ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
[564] ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

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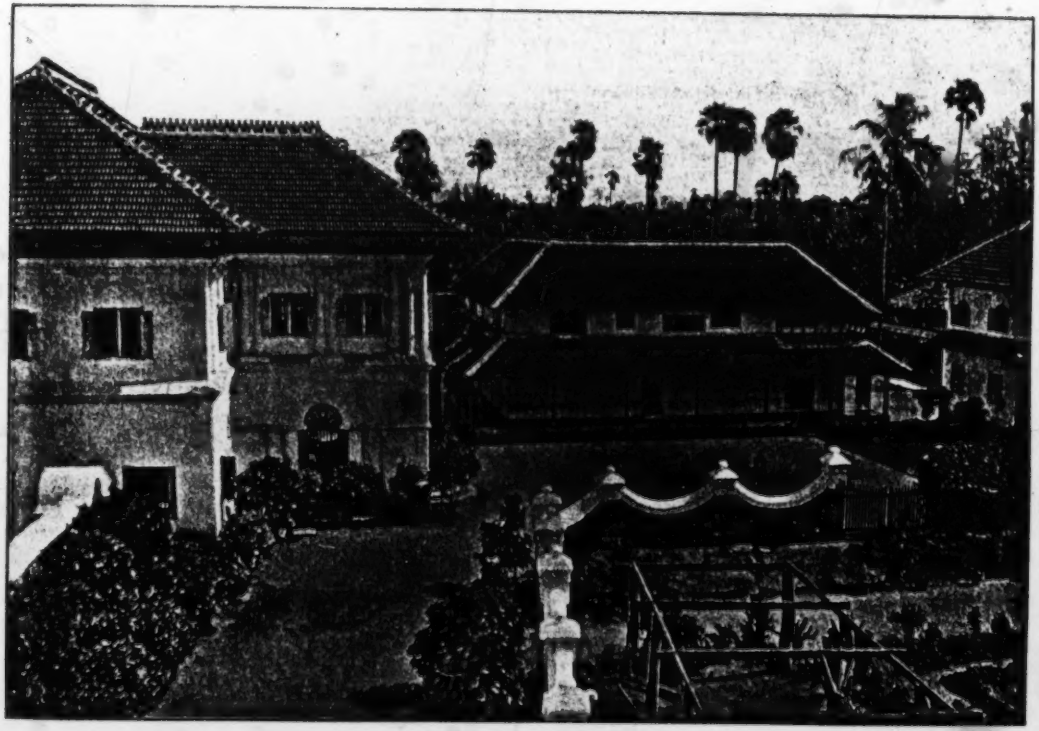

A TYPICAL ARISTOCRATIC NAYAR HOUSE.

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early childhood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days furnished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

The house itself is called by several names according to the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality.[1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas: and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-23.

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342 351 823 372 [564] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses.

If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times.

Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peral (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi) 824
or *peral* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant on the west, *nâga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peral* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arâyal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

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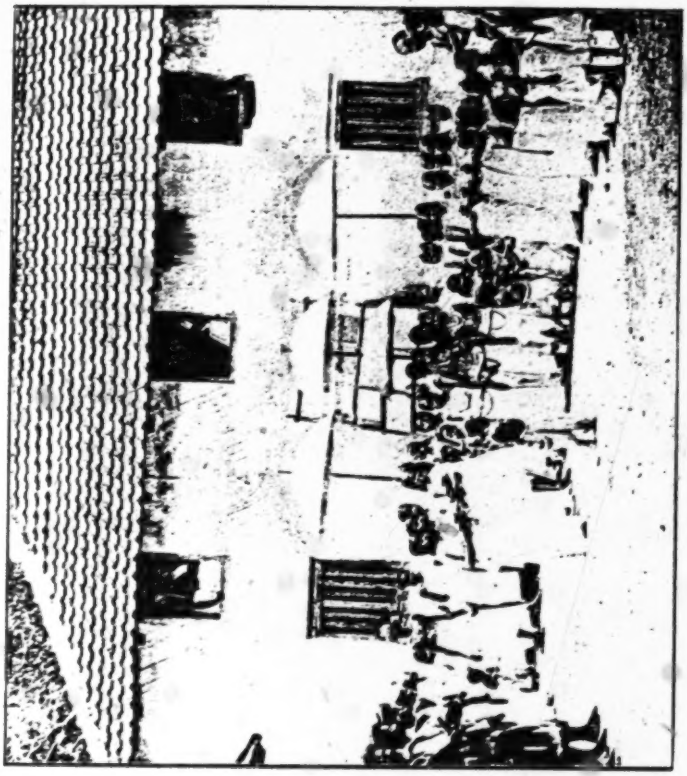

A NAYAR GIRL RETURNING HOME IN PROCESSION AFTER BATH ON THE FOURTH DAY AFTER THE FIRST MENSES.

[facing p. 29]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkáshcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles [1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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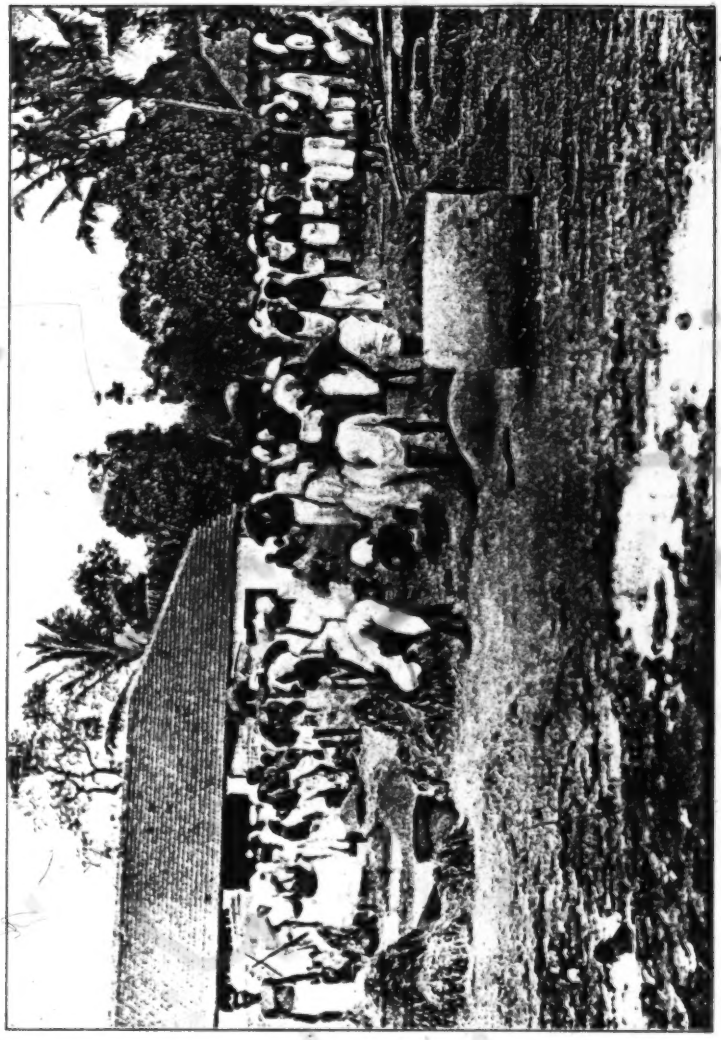

NAYAR WOMEN THRESHING CORN.

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[facing p. 98]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 [114] With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The [611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they [920] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound con- [351] sisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red [942] soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 115 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him. [551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

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Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, although the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p 199]

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Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 619 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans
Kolla-Kurups

428 524 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

429 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 564 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise [305] [282] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-
•342 [487] kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated [351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, [291] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 206]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595* Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601 to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repeti- [115] tion of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [551] helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582] matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 410 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465 ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 79 went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [243] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast- feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

The cloths are placed in the western room of the house (padinhatta), in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and ashtamangalyam, which consists of eight articles symbolical of mangalyam or marriage. These are rice, paddy (unhusked rice), the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round box called cheppu. These will be found placed on the floor of the room as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groomsman enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloths and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east, with the ashtamangalyam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groomsman then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride sprinkles rice over the lamps and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom, who immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. Next morning, the vettilakettu or salkāram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is feasting in honour of the occasion. Uzhamporukkuka or vidāram kayaral is a peculiar form

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

NĀYAR HOUSE.

342
56
351
312

[facing P. 361]

342 west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. [823] Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nāyars. The following is a plan of a nālapura or four-556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

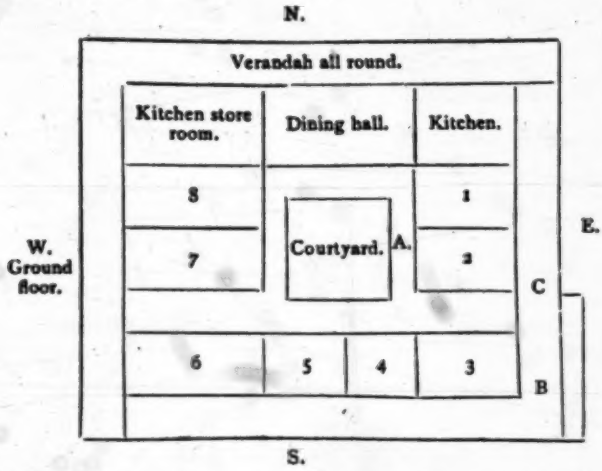

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

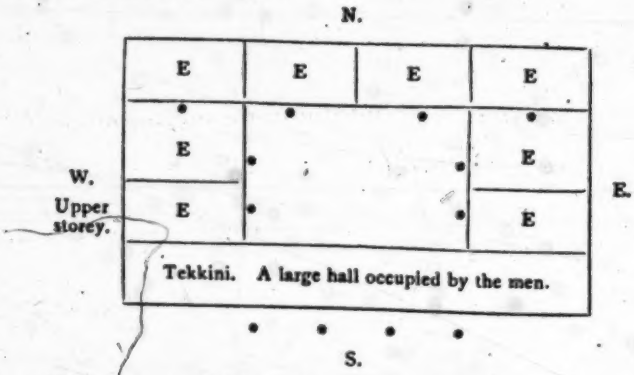

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard-[356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile [532] to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow-dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

291 177 564 564 184 576 643

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

THE COCHIN STATE.

WATAKANCHERY (TALAPILLI TALUK).

[*By S. Subbarama Aiyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

An absence of villages, as they are to be found in the east of the peninsula, is a characteristic of Malabar generally, including the States of Travancore and Cochin and the Malabar District of the Madras Presidency. The Malayalis are averse to having their houses congregated together. But the Taluk of Palghat is an exception. It is situated in the gap between the Nilgiris on the north, and the Palnis and other high ranges on the south, and is the natural line of communication between the west coast and the eastern plains, utilized by the South Indian Railway. All the villages in the Palghat taluk are designed in a manner that suggests that the original immigrants, coming from the east, were accustomed to an intense form of corporate life. They have a scientific and regular plan, and the description of any one of them will serve for all. 361

The Brahmans live in closely packed houses and their colony is called a '*gramam*' or '*agraharam*.' There is invariably either a temple at one end, or the streets of the *gramam* radiate in all directions from a temple in the midmost place. There are also wells in the street common to all the villagers. There is scarcity of water in summer in almost all the villages of Palghat as they are situated on a high level and rocky ground. The *gramam* is surrounded by the *tarai* in which all the other castes live. Artisans and agricultural labourers live there in houses built singly, but the weavers generally inhabit hovels built in rows. People of the same caste and profession congregate in particular blocks of the *tarai*. The *tarai* is occupied by the richest janmi as well as the poorest day labourer. The *tarai* has its own *kavu* or temple in which the low caste people conduct their worship. The *gramam* with its adjoining *tarai* is set up on rather elevated ground in the midst of paddy fields or on the slope of an adjoining hill so that every available acre of land may be cultivated. All houses in the *gramam* are built in the same way. From the street you step into a verandah whose extent corresponds to the whole width of the house; hence into a small room, the *neli*, to the right of which is a granary. The *neli* leads you into a rectangular hall, in the middle of which is a yard exposed to the sky. To the right of this is another big hall separated from the other by a long window crossed by beams. The store-room is on the street side of this, the kitchen on the back side. The kitchen has a verandah abutting on the garden. A cow-shed is erected at the other end of the garden. The house may or may not possess upstairs rooms; these usually adjoin the street. [312] 3420

In that part of Malabar in which Watakanchery is situated the general plan of the Palghat type of house is followed, with modifications, by the *Tamil* Brahmans. The Malayali Brahmans, known as Nambudris, and the Nayars, have their houses surrounded by big compounds. Entering from the compound you step into a portico which thrusts itself forward from the general structure of the house.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India

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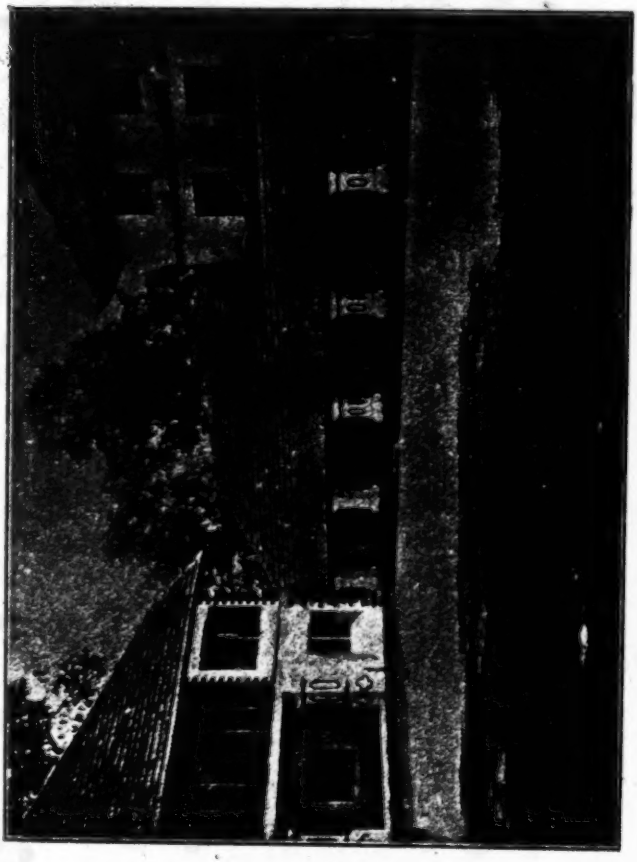

Photo by G. Slater.

COURT-YARD OF NAMBUDRI HOUSE.

[facing p. 124]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

361 *Preliminary.*—Watakanchery is a Government division, rather than a true village, being marked out merely for convenience of revenue assessment. It stretches from east to west a distance of nearly four miles along the foot of a hill. A water-course which runs from east to west forms the northern boundary; the maximum distance from north to south is nearly a mile and a half. The whole area is 3,692·64 acres (nearly 5½ square miles). It is an area containing a few groups of houses intersected by paddy fields and "parambas," i.e., land on which paddy cultivation is not undertaken.

Watakanchery proper, or the town of Watakanchery, as it is called in the village accounts, is at the easternmost boundary of the Government village area and is the headquarters of the taluk containing all the public offices. Two tracts of land, one inhabited by Mappillas (Muhammadans) and another by Syrian Christians (locally known as Nasranees, i.e., Nazarenes) are included in the "town" of Watakanchery from the contiguous areas of the adjoining Government villages on the north and south respectively. Its area is 1½ square miles.

The Taluk of Talapilli contains 74 such "villages" divided solely for revenue purposes. In the "town" Brahmans live in great numbers, while the lower castes occupy the rest of the village area. This block I shall designate Watakanchery (T) and the whole area Watakanchery (V) in the following.

162 [779] 564 *Population.*—Watakanchery (T) has about 2,000 inhabitants; Watakanchery (V) about 4,000. Watakanchery (T) contains within its limits three religions—Hindus in the centre and Mappillas (Muhammadans) and Christians to the north and south, respectively. Among the Hindus the Brahmans form the majority in the "town," while there are a few "vocational" castes such as barbers, goldsmiths, etc., and a few Nayars. Though the term "castes" is in strictness to be applied to Hindus alone the Mappillas and Christians are regarded as two other castes. The Mappillas and the Christians cannot touch the Hindu caste-people without polluting them, while there are castes within the Hindu fold itself, such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, Cherumas (vide below), Eluvas, etc., who are kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority. [113]

[778] * [In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri Brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

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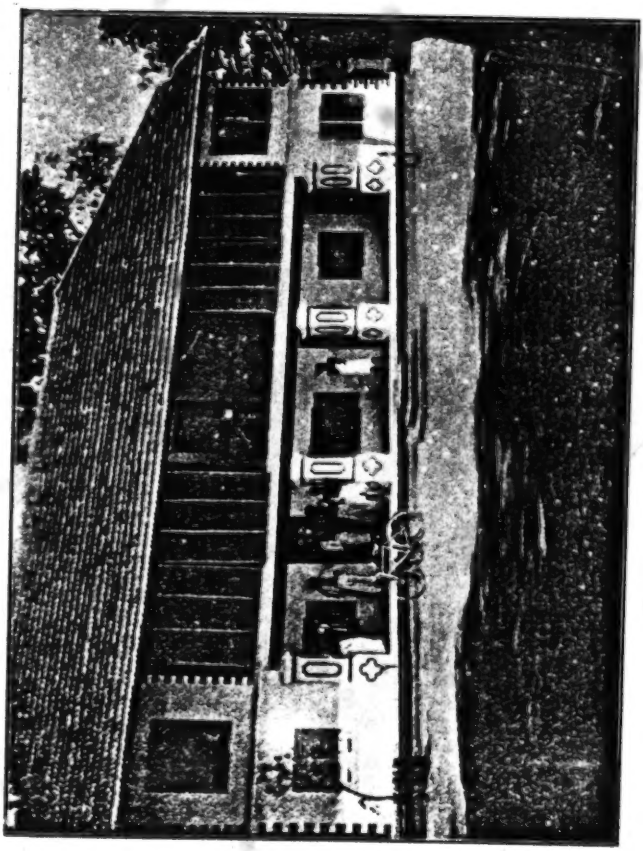

GUEST CHAMBER OF NAMBUDRI HOUSE. Photo by G. Slater.

[facing p. 126]

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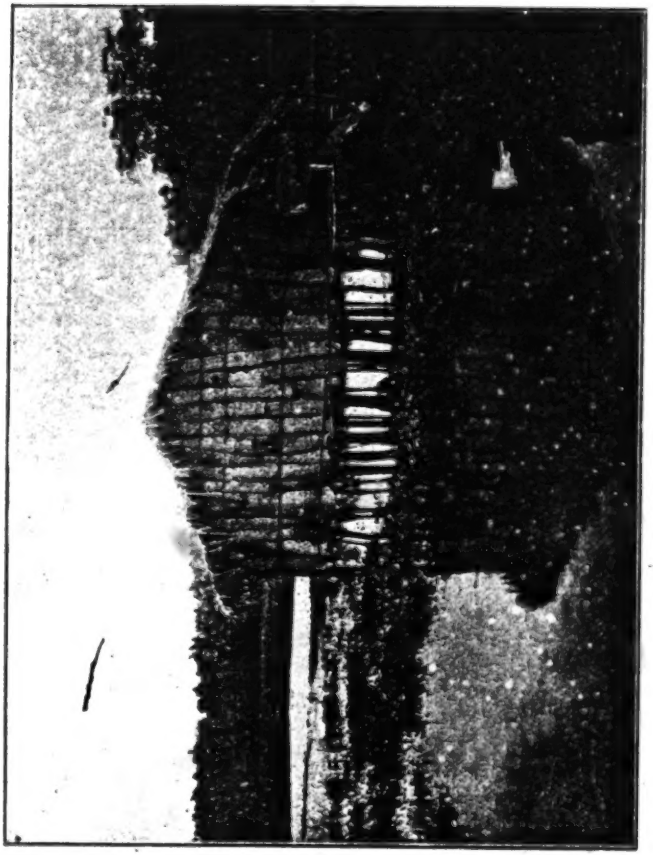

HUT NEAR TRICHUR, COCHIN STATE. Photo by G. Slater.

[facing p. 132]

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351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neighbouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent [435] head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

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241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from
361 a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans
571 and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The houses of the low castes, high castes, and of other religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1½ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

178 426 The increase in the number of families must not be taken for a sign of prosperity. I have sought out its causes. It has both a social and an economic cause. The breaking up of the old 'Tharvads' into small homesteads, owing to want of harmony among the members, mismanagement of property due to ignorance and rank illiteracy, growing indebtedness of the once rich Tharvads to the local money-lenders or the landlord, are the causes of the downfall of the great Tharvads of old which half a century ago were gracing this desam; the stories yet current in those parts of men of high worth and talents who belonged to them, and the occasional ruined foundations of their family houses alone remain. Indeed joint families have almost all broken up and the Tharvad properties all absorbed by the local 'Jenmis.' The people are day by day being reduced to want and dependence on the landlord and the creditor.

564 The desam cannot be called a 'caste' desam strictly speaking. There are no separate quarters allotted on the basis of caste difference. In spite of the rigorous observance of the 'system of pollution' between caste and caste, peculiar to the Malabar country, all castes hold lands, work, and have families promiscuously throughout the land. For example, every landholding farmer, who is usually a Nayar, has in his family precincts (indeed far enough away to be out of reach of pollution) small homesteads of his labourers who are generally Cherumas or Pulayas * by caste.

There are—

3	Brahman	families ...	24	individuals.
3	Ambalavasi	" ...	36	"
137	Nayar	" ...	956	"
85	Tiyya	" ...	584	"
80	Cheruma	" ...	390	"
24	Muhammadan	" ...	27	"
1	Christian family	...	6	"

[463] The *Tiyya* class includes the families of the artisans—'Asari' (carpenter—two families), 'Karuvan' (blacksmith—one family), 'Kollan' (shoemaker—two families), 'Thattan' (goldsmith—one family), 'Mannan' (washerman of the lower class—one family), 'Panikkan' (stone-mason—one family).

Children living	642	
" dead	188	Born within the last ten years.
" born lifeless	67	

Children below ten are alone included in this. This has been ascertained by enquiry among the mothers.

342 Homesteads number 266. The homesteads of the villagers are miserable looking and squalid, frequently being only mud hovels of eight by five feet, more or less. Not more than 40 houses out of 333 are houses worthy of the name. The rest are simply hovels, often the very picture of poverty and famine.

* Between these two depressed castes there are only minute differences.

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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

313 purchased from the nearest markets and brought in carts. Wood is getting dearer and dearer. It used to be very cheap.

The increase in price is due to the felling of trees without replanting, increased outside demand for fuel, as by the railway company and the Shoranur Tile Works; and the better appreciation and consequent increased demand for the local timber trees.

361 *The village.*—Strictly speaking there is no village-site. The houses are not built in street formation, but are scattered throughout the village. This is characteristic of most villages in Malabar and strongly contrasts with what obtains in other districts. The area of the village is 2,380 acres.

Localization of castes is not complete. Brahmans are located in the centre around the temple, with the Nayars, and the other higher castes surrounding them. The Thiyyas or Ezhuvas live farther apart and the depressed classes—Cherumas, Pariahs, etc.—live far out of the way of the higher castes on the outskirts of the village in hovels on hill sides, which are unfrequented by the other castes. Of course there are social prohibitions to their approaching the higher castes, much more to living near them.

342 There are a few fine houses: about 20 are tiled and have two storeys, about half of them belonging to the Brahmans. About 100 are one-storeyed thatched houses, almost exclusively owned by the castes. The rest are mere huts used by the poorer classes. There is no terraced house at all. Most of the houses are pretty old, but the tiled ones are mostly of recent construction. The houses are built more or less on a uniform plan and are often large without being convenient or comfortable.

The Pariahs and Cherumas live in thatched huts, miserable hovels one should call them, small, dark and exposed.

351 Almost every house has a 'garden' of some sort, with a few fruit trees like the coconut-palm, the mango tree, the jack tree, the areca-palm, plantain trees, etc. But very few houses have really good gardens. The gardens are watered from wells, which are found in every house. Whether there are fruit-trees on it or no, each house of the better class has a compound attached to it. This is sometimes used for growing kitchen vegetables.

361 The distance of cultivated lands from the home of the cultivator is never more than one mile. In the working season the ryot starts very early in the morning from his home with his oxen and agricultural implements so as to reach his land in time.

343 Field huts are almost unknown—except tiny watchmen's huts where watch is kept by a man at night when the crops are getting ready for harvest.

323 *Subsidiary industries—Potters.*—There are no weavers. There is a class of potters, of Telugu origin (as their language shows) engaged in making pots for household use, etc. They get the clay for their industry from the banks of the Bharata river (situated to the south of the village). Their wares find a ready market in the neighbouring villages, being very cheap and necessary. The lower castes cook in pots of burnt clay, while the better classes use bronze and other metals, such as copper. The art is the whole time employment of this class. But earnings are not very high, only just affording the means of subsistence. If the art is refined and improved to suit modern conditions and requirements it

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group --- Analyst]

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
[778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrub bery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. [343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's 342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands 556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village [312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing [515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside 613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. [764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods [776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of [782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta- [825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might 592 sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its 241 subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the 427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya 613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as 433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade [439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle- [432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods [431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to 592 juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops [465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

PL. XIV.

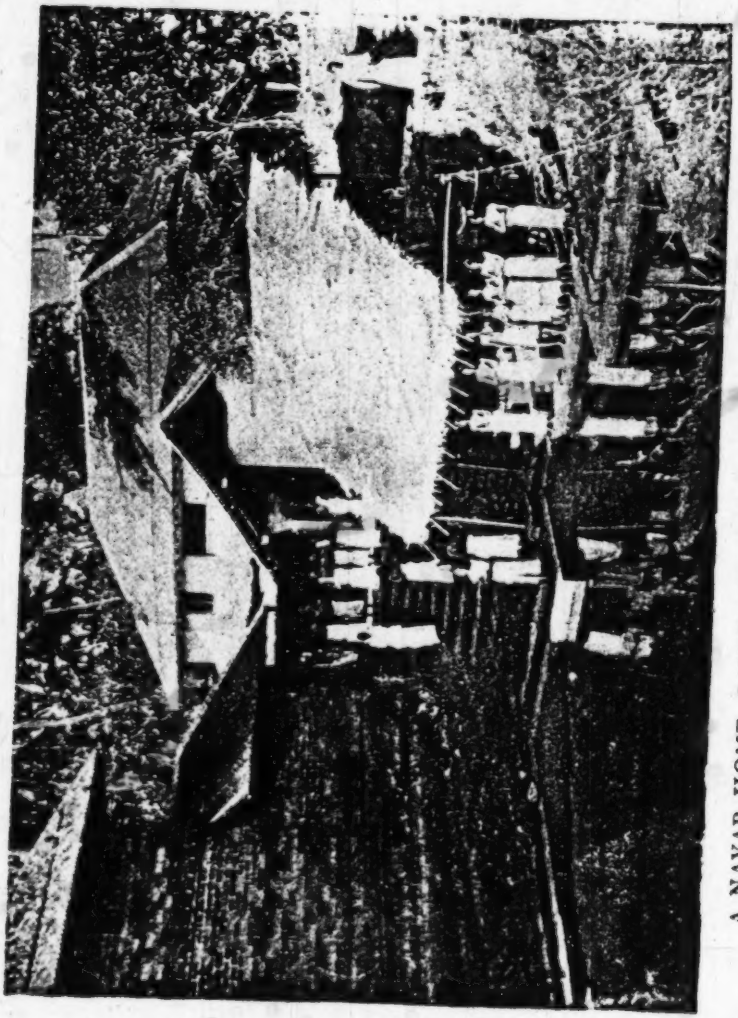

A NAYAR HOME, PANUR, N. MALABAR. THE BATHING TANK AND BATHING SHED IN THE FOREGROUND.

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343
515
312

[Facing p. 262]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
[417] tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
[343] Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and
342 had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
[787] order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind, ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
[764] ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177
342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a
[312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from
[515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut
[245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

342
The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi), 824
or *peràl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant on the west, *ndga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayàl* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peràl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arayal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] ●
east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

296 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to [791] house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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Localization of castes is not complete. Brahmans are located in the centre around the temple, with the Nayars, and the other higher castes surrounding them. The Thiyyas or Ezhuvas live farther apart and the depressed classes—Cherumas, Pariahs, etc.—live far out of the way of the higher castes on the outskirts of the village in hovels on hill sides, which are unfrequented by the other castes. Of course there are social prohibitions to their approaching the higher castes, much more to living near them.

342 There are a few fine houses: about 20 are tiled and have two storeys, about half of them belonging to the Brahmans. About 100 are one-storeyed thatched houses, almost exclusively owned by the castes. The rest are mere huts used by the poorer classes. There is no terraced house at all. Most of the houses are pretty old, but the tiled ones are mostly of recent construction. The houses are built more or less on a uniform plan and are often large without being convenient or comfortable.

The Pariahs and Cherumas live in thatched huts, miserable hovels one should call them, small, dark and exposed.

351 Almost every house has a 'garden' of some sort, with a few fruit trees like the coconut-palm, the mango tree, the jack tree, the areca-palm, plantain trees, etc. But very few houses have really good gardens. The gardens are watered from wells, which are found in every house. Whether there are fruit-trees on it or no, each house of the better class has a compound attached to it. This is sometimes used for growing kitchen vegetables.

361 The distance of cultivated lands from the home of the cultivator is never more than one mile. In the working season the ryot starts very early in the morning from his home with his oxen and agricultural implements so as to reach his land in time.

343 Field huts are almost unknown—except tiny watchmen's huts where watch is kept by a man at night when the crops are getting ready for harvest.

323 *Subsidiary industries—Potters.*—There are no weavers. There is a class of potters, of Telugu origin (as their language shows) engaged in making pots for household use, etc. They get the clay for their industry from the banks of the Bharata river (situated to the south of the village). Their wares find a ready market in the neighbouring villages, being very cheap and necessary. The lower castes cook in pots of burnt clay, while the better classes use bronze and other metals, such as copper. The art is the whole time employment of this class. But earnings are not very high, only just affording the means of subsistence. If the art is refined and improved to suit modern conditions and requirements it

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except
554 that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with
554 her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

565 at a distance of several miles, and managed by
621 Nambudiri Brahmans. In this case a represen-
423 tative Nambudiri patrilineal family might live in the village and play the role of headman. In yet other villages, which probably comprised about half the villages in the kingdom, the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (desavari) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the nad. The Nayar desavaris of a chiefdom collectively formed a subcaste ritually lower than the subcaste of chiefs of their kingdom. In Walluvanad and Calicut the subcaste of village headmen was called Kiriattil Nayar; in Cochin they were called Vellayma Nayars.

565 The landowning families in all of these types
622 of villages were called janmis. In every case,
423 no matter whether the janmi were of a patrilineal or a matrilineal caste, the eldest man of the extended family had legal guardianship of his own family, and in another sense, of the village lands and the lower caste inhabitants. [16] In addition to his economic rights, the janmi had administrative rights. First, he must sanction marriages of all castes in the village, none of which could be performed without his consent. Second came ambalapadhi or control of ceremonies in the village temple(s); and third urayma or direction of temple lands and servants.
• [346] (It should be made clear that each village had its public temple apart from the larger temples of the chiefdom and the kingdom.) While headman of the village and a landowner in a certain sense, however, the janmi could not sell away his lands

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Pl. XIII.

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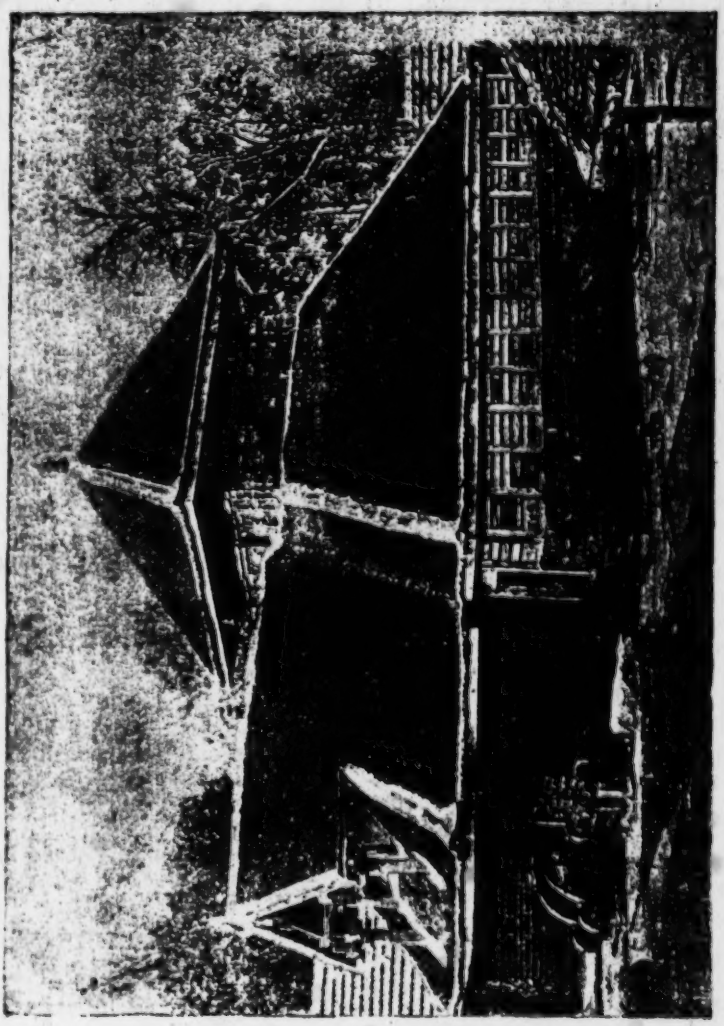

BHAGAVATI TEMPLE, PANDALUR.

[Facing P. 252]

796
564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[346] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See Plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 114 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate importance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 184 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti 782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the [346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others [126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of [532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver [326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
[579] accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

AYYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALICUT.

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[Facing P. 272]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [787]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Ilvypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri 588 613 [776] [782] 588

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 [874] bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 701 874 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 874 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*, [346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 541 701 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained, even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 794 [346] The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community. The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these [631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 [121] In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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872 youngster got a mastery of the letters. Then he was taught to read and write short sentences on cadjan leaves (*Ola Ezhutal*). He was made to commit to memory short verses, and lessons in arithmetic were added to his curriculum. Thus the youngster acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in about two years, and was thereafter recommended to an advanced course of studies, which consisted of a study of Sanskrit, the perusal of the *Purânas*, and also arithmetic sufficient to enable him to calculate the position of planets and help him in the casting of horoscopes. Girls also were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were encouraged in the reading of the *Purânas*. Such in brief was the course of instruction imparted in these small institutions.

872 876 346 354 The schools were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture, while the boys sat on small mats or on the floor, which was covered with sand for purposes of writing. The teacher had a raised seat from which he supervised and listened to the loud recitations of the lessons set on the previous evenings. The boys went to him, one by one, repeated their lesson, and received another written by him on the palm leaf, which was to be learnt during the day. The school hours were generally from seven to ten in the morning and again from two to five in the afternoon. During the latter hours, the budding scholars were instructed in the reading of the Ramayana and other *Purânas*; and before the end of the lessons for the day, the boys were made to repeat with one voice, some mathematical formula. At home, the boys revised their work and recited the names of Gods and short verses as prayers to them. They had no work for about 12 days in the month, besides the usual Hindu holidays. [875] Twice during the month, when the fortnightly holidays commenced, *i. e.*, on *Dwâdesi* (the 12th day after the full or new moon), the teacher was remunerated by each boy with the payment of an anna or two, and even this was sometimes evaded by the opportune absenting of some pupils. He also received presents of cloth with a rupee or two from some of the richer families to which a few of his pupils belonged. Boys were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; caning was freely resorted to as a mode of correction, and the teacher was often regarded with terror rather than with respect and admiration. Their only books were manuscripts on cadjan leaves; their

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

564 771 776 **Religion.**

The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-cháttan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kívus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, ánd require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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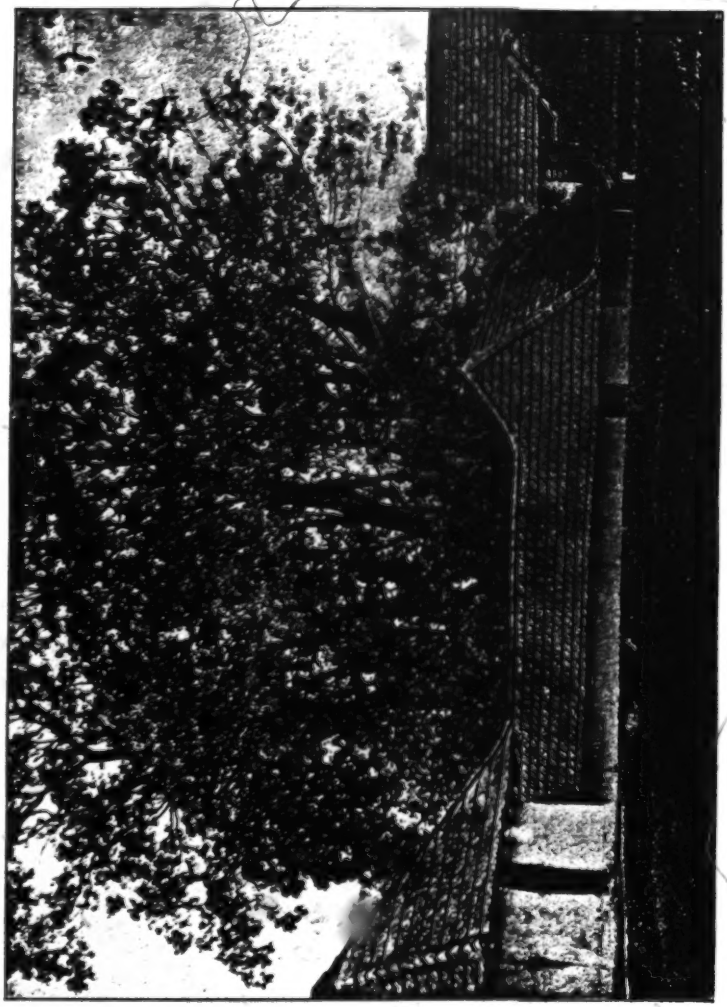

A TYPICAL KAVU.

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
[789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
[783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
[753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
[793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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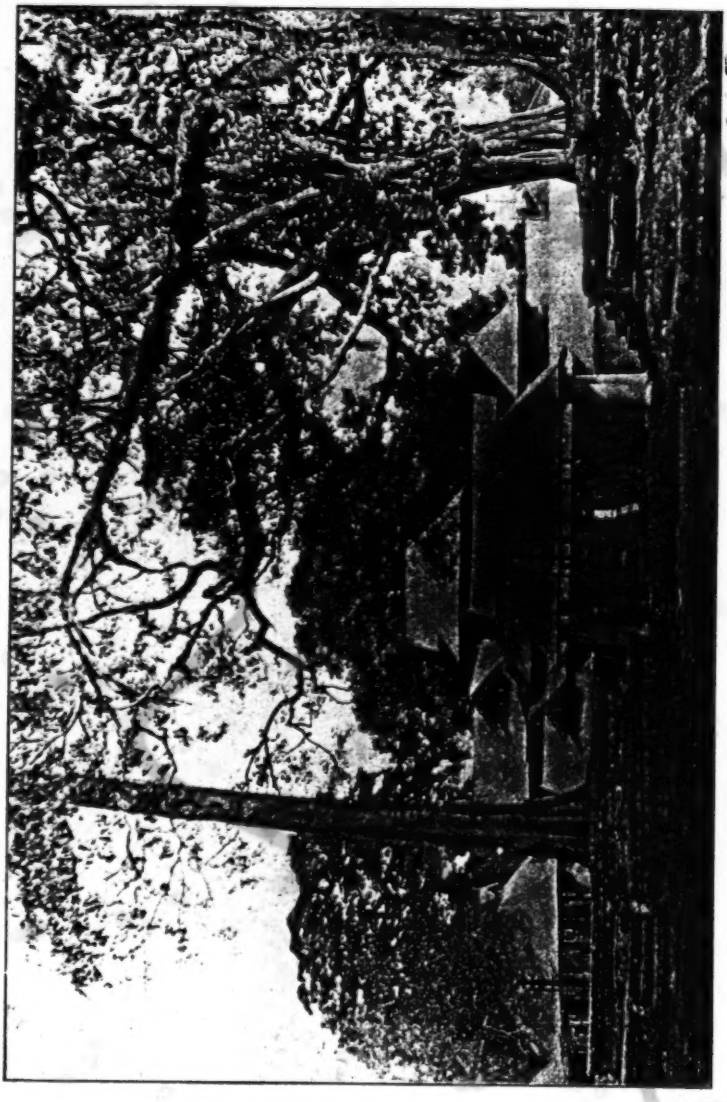

CRANGANORE BHAGAVATHI TEMPLE.

[facing p. 86]

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

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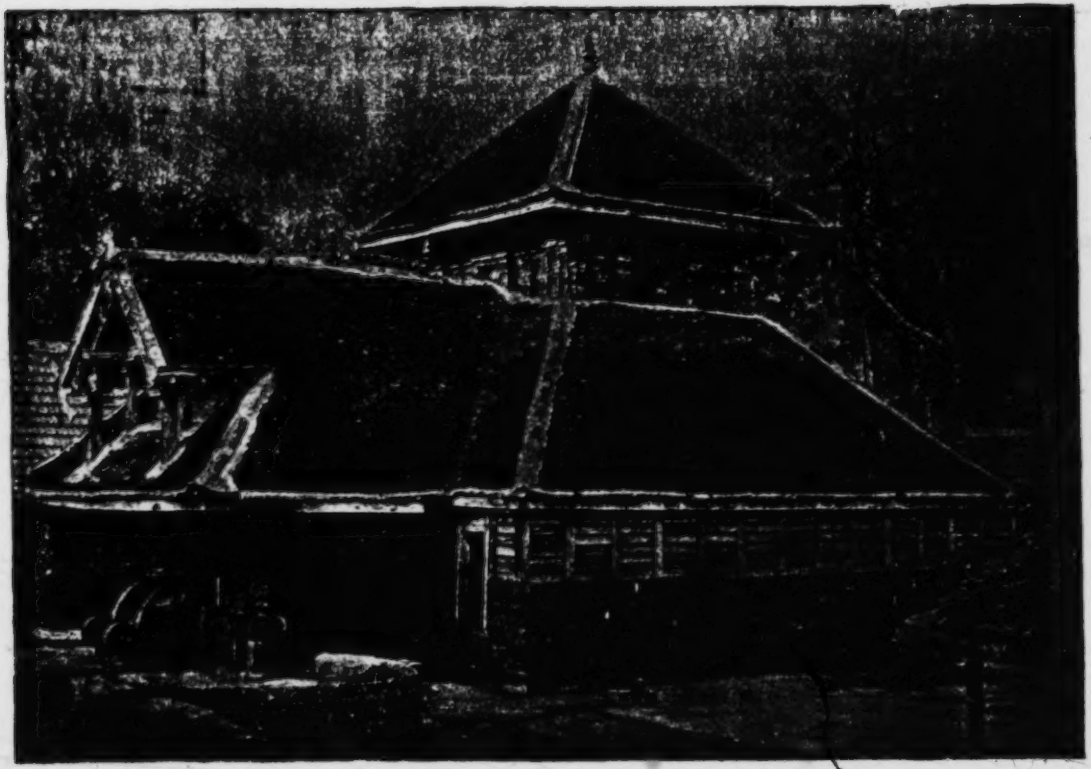

BHAGAVATI TEMPLE, PANDALŪR.

[facing p. 326]

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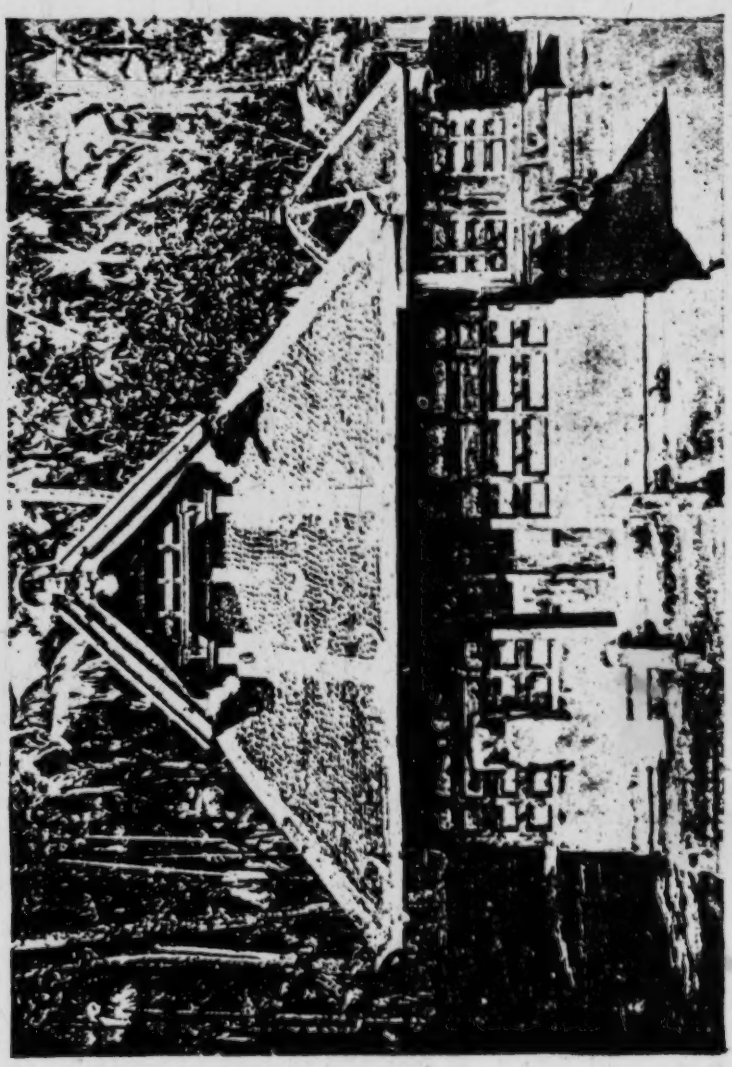

AIYAPPAN TEMPLE.

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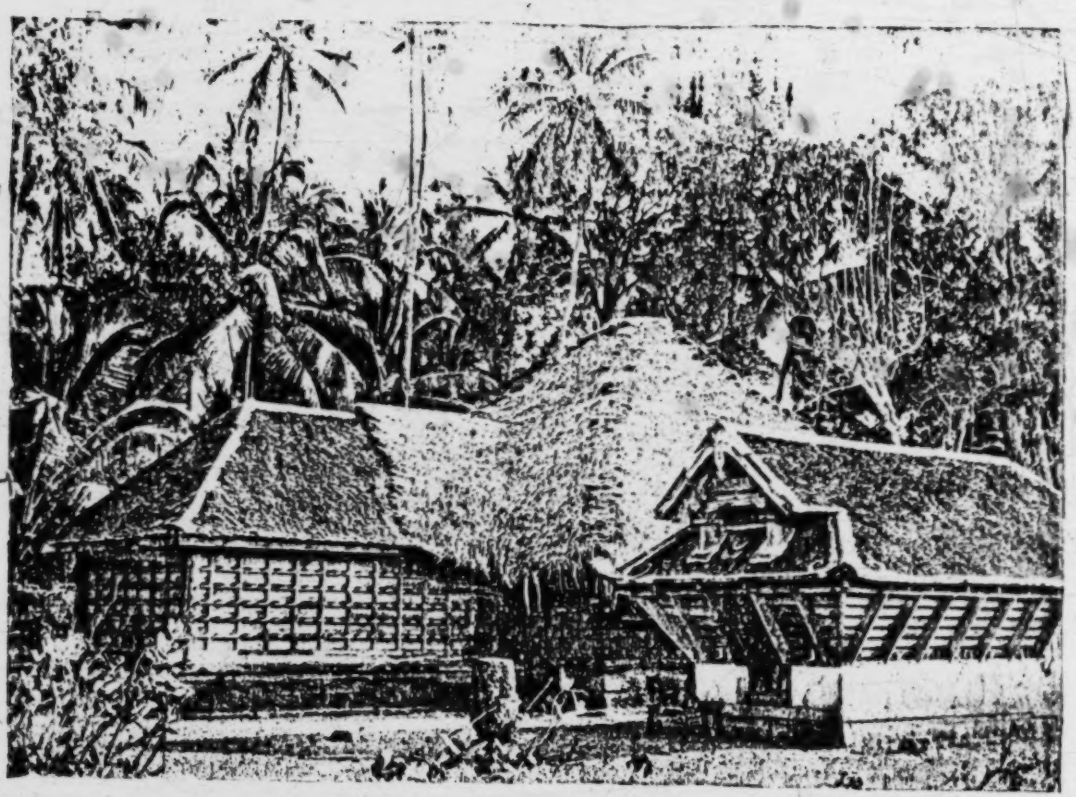

AIYAPPAN TEMPLE, NEAR CALICUT.

[Facing p. 393]

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796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 577 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

982 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 796
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three 452 cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

[428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

513 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[357] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

357 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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613 in the larger houses), and, if there is not, is taken to the
[351] front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandalwood paste and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is then done what is called the Potavekkuka ceremony or placing new cotton cloths (kóti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the (deceased's) Taravâd followed by all the other members, also sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse when being taken to the place of burial or cremation. In some parts
[184] of Malabar the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried (well covered in the cloths) by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is
[204] removed there is done another ceremony called Para Virakkuka (filling up pâras—a pâra is a measure nearly as big as a gallon). All adult male members of the Taravâd take part in it under the direction of a man of the Atikkurissi clan (who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisite all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit). It consists in filling up three pâra measures with paddy, and one edangâli ($\frac{1}{10}$ of a pâra) with raw rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a (burning) lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela villâku. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end, one in the middle; on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased, tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist, and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist a piece of iron, generally a

* The eldest male member of the Malabar Taravâd is called the Kâranavan, as noted already (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1); all male members, brothers, nephews and so on, who are junior to him are called Anandravans of the Taravâd.

and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the [357]
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the [354]
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword 796
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

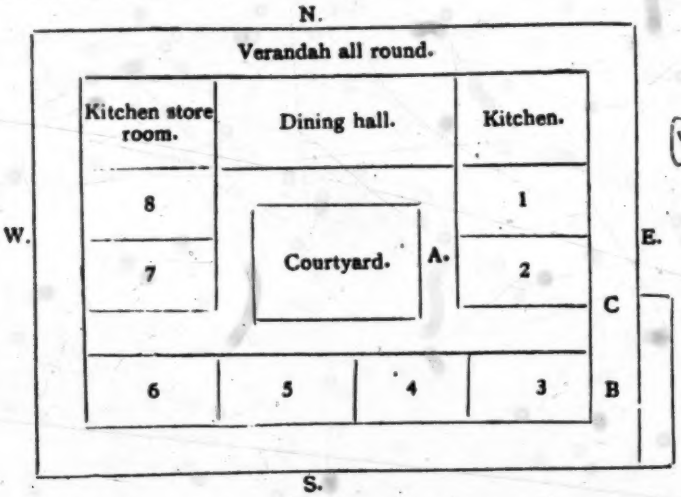

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon.

342 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
56 between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
[769] women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
[778] and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
[735] of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people,
who cannot afford to make these images, substitute
simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or
[782] to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl
will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside
and offered.

The entrance is at C.

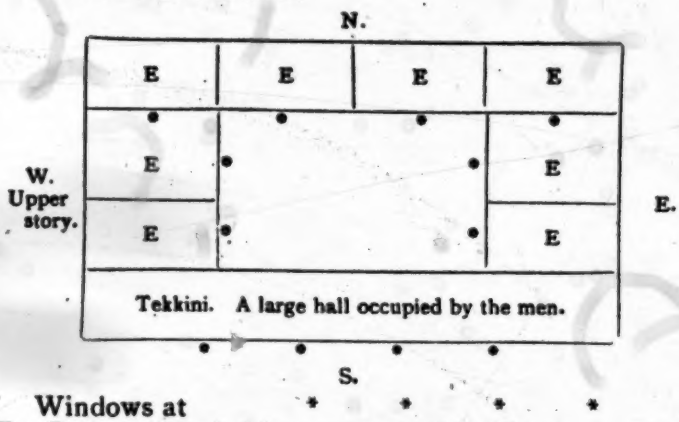

Windows at

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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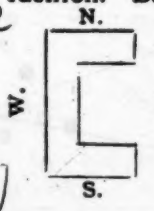

[351]

264 626 564 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were persuaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their 621 178 village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it [425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar 351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called 613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women. [562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns 421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family, [177] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

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361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
[417] tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
[343] Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
342 order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
[787] ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
[764] ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

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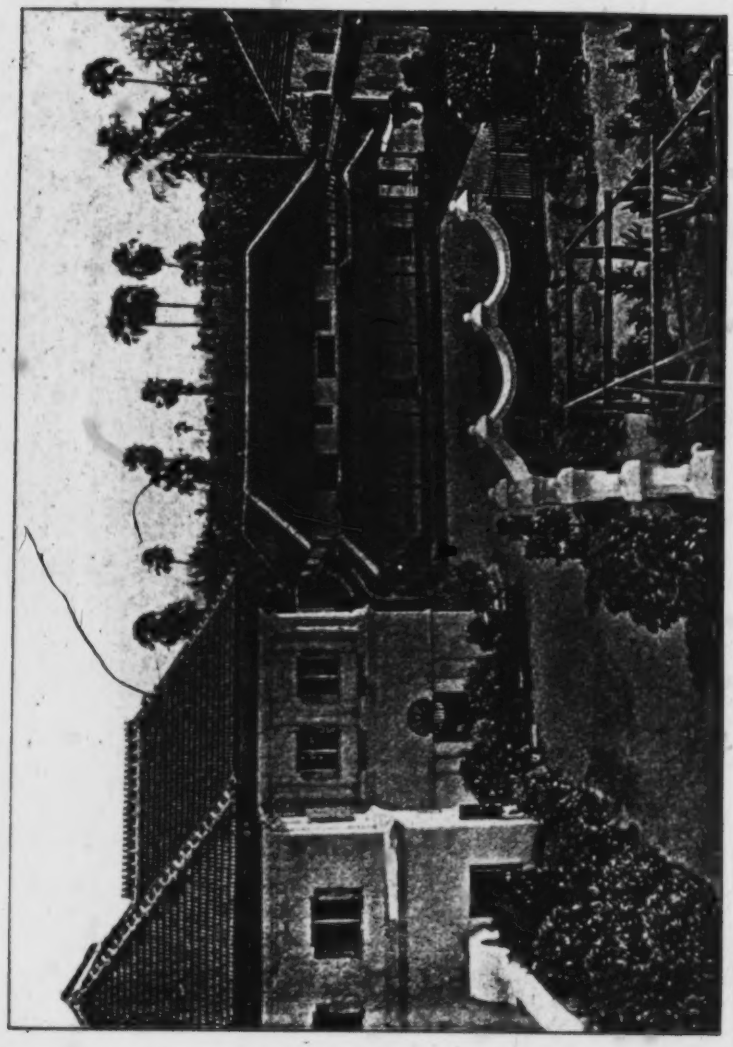

A TYPICAL ARISTOCRATIC NAYAR HOUSE.

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[facing p. 8]

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated
[312] tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a
[515] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman
[574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[343] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut
[245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *taravad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality. [1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas; and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-17.

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342 351 823 372 [524] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses.

If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times.

Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi), 824
or *peràl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant on the west, *nagc* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayàl* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peràl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arayal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or o

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

*595 I was in that town for only a very short time. I shall begin by giving a description of the little remaining Nayar polyandry that I was able to find.

Research, in this case, was the very opposite of easy. When I was in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk in 1949, and had made that town the centre of my activities, all the influential local Nayars, most of them *wakils* or lawyers, got together and, threatening the severest punishments if anyone disobeyed them, decided that none of their caste would give me any information at all regarding their alleged polyandry. The town is one from which many of the most prominent Nayars in Government service in New Delhi today have originally come, and in which members of their *tarawads* and immediate families still live. It is therefore understandable that they should have taken this line, it being considered by them today that any hint of their being polyandrous is insulting and degrading. Later, I heard that I had been accused in the Indian capital of stating that Nayars were descendants of the most primitive aboriginals. There was, naturally, absolutely no truth in this, but it is easy to see how the rumour originated.

114 *595

*595 On the 28th of August, 1939, I went to a Nayar household which I have marked down in my notes as bearing the name of Tsingepuram Kailott. It was in the outskirts of Tellicherry, a large house in a garden compound, with a smaller building some distance away from it. There I met a man called Apunayar and his brother Kamarnayar, and the latter who seemed to be the most talkative, told me through my interpreter that he was the youngest of the two, while his brother, the other man, was the eldest of the whole family. There were four brothers, he explained, the two other ones, junior to this pair, lived in the smaller house in the compound: their names were Kunjiramanayar and Narayannayar. Their mother, Amalu of Tsingepuram kailott *tarawad* had recently died. She had been polyandrous, and the four brothers and a daughter who was also dead now had been born and brought up in the big house by their maternal uncles. The latter had died before their mother, and they had inherited the property. They had given up polyandry and now lived each of them with a wife. Households had been split, and the younger brothers had built themselves the smaller house in the garden, and lived there with their respective wives, while the two elder men had remained in the ancestral mansion. Apunayar had four children, two boys and two girls, Karanayar one girl, while in the smaller household, there were only a little boy and a little girl, both the children of Narayannayar.

[351]

[928]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there
[114] were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The
[611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property
[920] and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they
[351] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green
[342] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing
115 only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him.
[551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595* 601

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed. [464] [167] [464] [166]

Kalyany told me that she was related to the brothers of the Katukulangara *tarawad* whom I had interviewed at Kadavelur on the 27th of October. She was a half sister of Velu by another mother. I found this family particularly interesting, because it illustrated, more than any other Tiya one encountered so far, the ancient and persistant connection which the caste has with Ceylon. Their genealogy is given in Table 8.

Before going on to an account of my visits to Kammalans and other artisan families practising polyandry in Kerala, I would like to give here, together with the material that I collected about Tiyas, the description of a Thandan family that I went to see on the 25th of November 1949. 595*

They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on P. 191]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11. 595 601 [582]

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there. 595* 564 326 [351]

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan. 595* 601 [853]

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-* [614]

[Text continues on p. 197]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans
Kolla-kurups

428 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could
564 inherit if there were no male heirs.

427 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the
564 Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise
[305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather
[282] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-
342 kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the
[487] south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated
[351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister,
[291] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[Text continues on P. 206]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
[782] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

NÂYAR HOUSE.

342
516
351
312

[facing P. 361]

342 west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. [823] Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlapura or four-556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

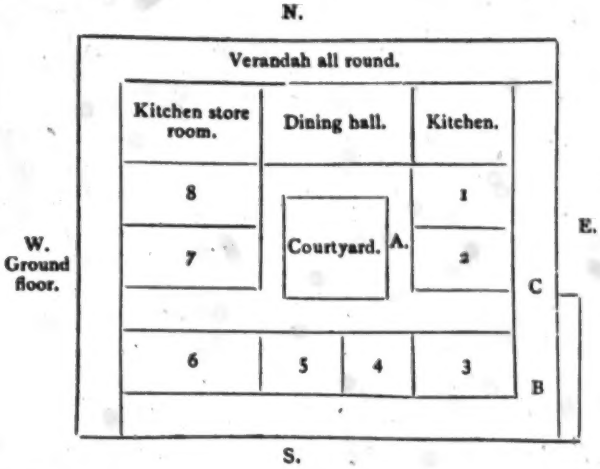

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

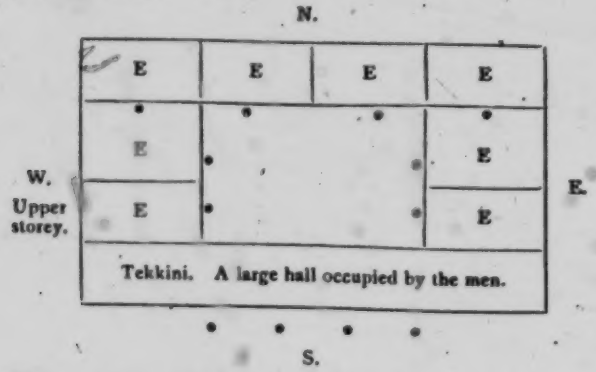

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

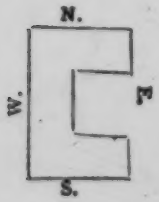

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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234 castes very rarely use these products. The cows too are not brought up on a scientific basis, and are consequently of a weak [804] build and generally yield from 4 nalis * to 6 or 8 nalis of milk per day.†

Male buffaloes are used in ploughing and sometimes to draw loaded carts. These too are of weak build.

Cow buffaloes are used mostly for milking, but sometimes in ploughing. The milk they yield is greater in quantity but inferior in quality to that of the cows.‡

231 Very little care is taken of the young of the above species. The young calf or calf-buffalo is not usually reared with the object of getting strong or vigorous oxen or buffaloes, but allowed to grow haphazardly. Some die off young, and especially the buffalo-calf since the buffalo can be milked without its young and not so the cows.§ The official figures in this respect (vide above) are instructive. The usual practice is to buy cows or buffaloes from a fair for milking purposes and to dispose of them, buffaloes especially, unless needed for ploughing, when the milk dries up.

The only use to which the horse is put is to drive jutkas, but as jutkas are rare in this village, horses are seldom seen here.

Donkeys and mules too are few.

Sheep and goats are used for their mutton which is in demand among the lower castes, but more for their milk, which is considered to be medicinal.

Pigs are reared for their flesh by the local Christians; the Muhammadans consider it to be a sacrilege even to utter the name.

Cows, oxen and buffaloes are made to stand in stalls, two or more being allowed to be in the same stall. Bundles of rice straw form the chief food, but green grass is used during the rainy season. Rice dust and poonac (copra from which the oil has been extracted) mixed in water is given. Cows are let loose during the daytime under care of a keeper to feed in the fields or near the hills.

241 Cattle-dung mixed with cattle urine is used as manure in the paddy fields. This is scattered in the fields during the hot season 237 (April-May). The percentage of cattle-dung will approximately be 25 per cent of the total manure used. Dung is also used as fuel. Women are becoming averse to making varatties and use more wood.

Sheep dung is sometimes used.

241 But green manure consisting of leaves of certain plants and trees is scattered in the fields after they have been well ploughed in the first fall of the monsoon rains. Green manure is never grown, but is obtained from the neighbouring hills.

351 Every house without exception has a compound big or small surrounding it in which there are coconut palms, arecanut palms, mango trees, jack fruit trees, plantains, etc., and sometimes pepper. During the hot months (March-April-May) vegetables

* [1 nali (nari or nazhi) = ¼ of a Madras measure and very nearly = 9 fluid ounces or nearly half a pint.—Ed.]

† I.e., one or two quarts of milk per day. A Madras cow yields up to five quarts per day.

‡ [I.e., it is less valued. Buffalo's milk is very rich.—Ed.]

§ [It is a fact that an Indian cow refuses to give milk without the calf. If the calf dies the dairyman stuffs the skin and makes an imitation calf. This serves the purposes. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neighbouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent [435] head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

313 purchased from the nearest markets and brought in carts. Wood is getting dearer and dearer. It used to be very cheap.

The increase in price is due to the felling of trees without replanting, increased outside demand for fuel, as by the railway company and the Shoranur Tile Works; and the better appreciation and consequent increased demand for the local timber trees.

361 *The village.*—Strictly speaking there is no village-site. The houses are not built in street formation, but are scattered throughout the village. This is characteristic of most villages in Malabar and strongly contrasts with what obtains in other districts. The area of the village is 2,380 acres.

Localization of castes is not complete. Brahmans are located in the centre around the temple, with the Nayars, and the other higher castes surrounding them. The Thiyyas or Ezhuvas live farther apart and the depressed classes—Cherumas, Pariahs, etc.—live far out of the way of the higher castes on the outskirts of the village in hovels on hill sides, which are unfrequented by the other castes. Of course there are social prohibitions to their approaching the higher castes, much more to living near them.

342 There are a few fine houses: about 20 are tiled and have two storeys, about half of them belonging to the Brahmans. About 100 are one-storeyed thatched houses, almost exclusively owned by the castes. The rest are mere huts used by the poorer classes. There is no terraced house at all. Most of the houses are pretty old, but the tiled ones are mostly of recent construction. The houses are built more or less on a uniform plan and are often large without being convenient or comfortable.

The Pariahs and Cherumas live in thatched huts, miserable hovels one should call them, small, dark and exposed.

● 351 Almost every house has a 'garden' of some sort, with a few fruit trees like the coconut-palm, the mango tree, the jack tree, the areca-palm, plantain trees, etc. But very few houses have really good gardens. The gardens are watered from wells, which are found in every house. Whether there are fruit-trees on it or no, each house of the better class has a compound attached to it. This is sometimes used for growing kitchen vegetables.

361 The distance of cultivated lands from the home of the cultivator is never more than one mile. In the working season the ryot starts very early in the morning from his home with his oxen and agricultural implements so as to reach his land in time.

343 Field huts are almost unknown—except tiny watchmen's huts where watch is kept by a man at night when the crops are getting ready for harvest.

323 *Subsidiary industries—Potters.*—There are no weavers. There is a class of potters, of Telugu origin (as their language shows) engaged in making pots for household use, etc. They get the clay for their industry from the banks of the Bharata river (situated to the south of the village). Their wares find a ready market in the neighbouring villages, being very cheap and necessary. The lower castes cook in pots of burnt clay, while the better classes use bronze and other metals, such as copper. The art is the whole time employment of this class. But earnings are not very high, only just affording the means of subsistence. If the art is refined and improved to suit modern conditions and requirements it

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group -- Analyst]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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846
613 event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to
553 the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar
[574] and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

853 "*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the
852 Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, [787] of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

[301] "Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

844 "*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman
352 is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a
[312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from
[515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut
[245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

872 youngster got a mastery of the letters. Then he was taught to read and write short sentences on cadjan leaves (*Ola Ezhutal*). He was made to commit to memory short verses, and lessons in arithmetic were added to his curriculum. Thus the youngster acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in about two years, and was thereafter recommended to an advanced course of studies, which consisted of a study of Sanskrit, the perusal of the *Purânas*, and also arithmetic sufficient to enable him to calculate the position of planets and help him in the casting of horoscopes. Girls also were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were encouraged in the reading of the *Purânas*. Such in brief was the course of instruction imparted in these small institutions.

872 The schools were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture, 876 while the boys sat on small mats or on the floor, which was [346] covered with sand for purposes of writing. The teacher had a 354 raised seat from which he supervised and listened to the loud recitations of the lessons set on the previous evenings. The boys went to him, one by one, repeated their lesson, and received another written by him on the palm leaf, which was to be learnt during the day. The school hours were generally from seven to ten in the morning and again from two to five in the afternoon. During the latter hours, the budding scholars were instructed in the reading of the Ramayana and other *Puranas*; and before the end of the lessons for the day, the boys were made to repeat with one voice, some mathematical formula. At home, the boys revised their work and recited the names of Gods and short verses as prayers to them. They had no work for about 12 days in the month, besides the usual Hindu holidays. [875] Twice during the month, when the fortnightly holidays commenced, *i. e.*, on *Dwddesi* (the 12th day after the full or new moon), the teacher was remunerated by each boy with the payment of an anna or two, and even this was sometimes evaded by the opportune absenting of some pupils. He also received presents of cloth with a rupee or two from some of the richer families to which a few of his pupils belonged. Boys were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; caning was freely resorted to as a mode of correction, and the teacher was often regarded with terror rather than with respect and admiration. Their only books were manuscripts on cadjan leaves; their

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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[facing p. 68]

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
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588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
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[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans*' spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[6] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's
advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where
591 they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
602 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
353

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through 613
their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of 602
their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are 182
conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the [353]
case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal 613
group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the 551
surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivan- 182
drum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group 613
seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal 554
group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his dis- 182
tinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration 613
of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal 554
group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the 593
two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he 182
is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up [586] daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witchcraft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is the highest expression in the temples attached to the wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage 782
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists. People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the great mass of the people of Southern India has not reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibited his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house, to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family to have it done once a year, but could give no account of how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow; some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit be received, he will for ever after have an annual performance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and [357]
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a [354]
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword 796
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the deity who has been induced into him, and he gives oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care in the least, much interested though they were in the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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585
184 at all *Pudamuris* in North Malabar. It is called *Pudamuri*
[787] *Kodukkal* (giving pieces of cloth for dressing), and it is unknown in South Malabar.

Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the *Pudamuri*, the bridegroom visits his *kúranavans* and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nut, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house of the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends, to seats
[431] provided in the *tekkini* or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*dánams*) or money gifts to the Brahmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now the time for the
(787) astrologer to appear and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *patinjáttu* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated and turned into a bed room for the occasion.
[354] There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps and *ashtamangalyam* which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangalyam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, lighted fire and a small round wooden box called a *cheppu* made in a peculiar fashion. They will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his best man enters the room through the western door accompanied by the bride's aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the *ashtamangalyam* and lits up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom are touched, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to
[431] perform another duty. At the *tekkini* or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes and betel leaves and

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

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13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed [843] during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778] pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793] exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789] called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534] which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782] concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787] auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824] of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415] woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* [354] carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early childhood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. 352 [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days furnished with articles of European manufacture, and all their [177] domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard-[356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow-[532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord. [994] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-
[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired
[427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
744 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

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The Sûdra clan, one of the best, supplies the women servants in the Nambûtiris' houses.

We will now pass to a consideration of the physical measures of some of the clans—men, not women unfortunately. It was impossible to measure the women.

Here are given the averages of the various measures of 186 Nâyars—

25 Kiriattil.	25 Vattakkâd.
25 Úrâli.	25 Purattu Chârna.
8 Kurup.	25 Akattu Chârna.
22 Nambiyâr.	25 Sûdra.

Note.—Group A, a non-descript group of a few individuals of eight different clans (see "Nambûtiris"—Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, page 10) is not included here for obvious reasons.

Each index given is the mean of the indices—

	Average of 186 Nâyars.
Stature	165·6
Height, sitting	84·9
Do. kneeling	122·4
Span	175·1
Chest	80·6
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·5
Do. width	8·3
Left middle finger	11·0
Hips	26·0
Left foot, length	25·4
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·2
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	73·1
Bigoniac	10·4
Bizygomatic	13·1
Maxillo-zygomatic index	80·1
Nasal height	4·8
Do. width	3·6
Do. index	76·8
Vertex to tragus	13·1
Do. to chin	19·7
Middle finger to patella	10·1

The physical characteristics of each clan separately will be given first. This table will enable us to see at a glance how the measures of any particular clan differ

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SÛDRA NÂYARS.

We now come to the Sûdra Nâyars, men and women of which clan supply the house servants in the Nambûtiri Brâhmans' houses. It is only a few who are occupied in this way, however, and of all those examined only one is noted as a servant. The subjects were found in various parts of South Malabar, a few from the neighbouring Cochin Native State.

Ages ranging between 22 and 52.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	173·3	151·1	165·9	...
Height, sitting	90·8	78·8	85·8	51·7
Do. kneeling	128·3	110·1	122·9	74·1
Span	186·0	158·3	174·3	105·1
Chest	89·0	76·0	81·1	48·7
Shoulders	43·4	37·4	40·2	24·2
Left cubit	48·6	41·4	46·1	27·3
Left hand, length	20·8	16·8	18·7	11·3
Do. width	8·6	7·3	8·1	...
Left middle finger	12·1	9·9	11·1	...
Hips	27·9	24·0	26·0	15·7
Left foot, length	27·0	23·1	25·3	15·3
Do. width	10·3	7·8	8·9	...
Cephalic length	20·2	17·7	19·2	11·6
Do. width	15·3	13·0	14·1	...
Do. index	86·4	65·0	73·8	...
Bigoniac	11·4	9·4	10·5	...
Bizygomatic	14·1	11·9	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	85·7	76·6	80·3	..
Nasal height	5·4	4·0	4·7	2·83
Do. width	4·2	3·3	3·7	...
Do. index	89·1	67·9	79·4	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·5	13·3	8·0
Do. to chin	21·3	17·7	19·6	11·8
Middle finger to patella	15·7	7·0	9·9	5·97

Note.—The individual whose cephalic index is the maximum was measured in Palghat, where there are many Pattar (East Coast) Brâhmans; his father was, in all probability, one of them. The index of no other equalled 79·0. One broad headed man, whose father was known to have been a Pattar Brâhman, was excluded from the averages.

There were but three subjects whose nasal height was 5 cm. and over.

Face.—Slight prognathism was noticed in one. In another the posterior portion of the parietal was curiously flat.

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certain families from time to time are being looked upon as sub-castes. *Jâtinirnayam*, a Malayalam work of some authority, which gives an account of Malayali castes, limits the number of subdivisions to eighteen, fourteen of which belong to the high caste Sudras, the remaining four being of low caste Sudras. In the last Census Report of the Cochin State, the same number is kept up with slight modifications, to which I am not inclined to agree. It is not possible at this stage to state the exact number of subdivisions, and the following are those that have come under my personal investigation in the State:—

1. *Kiriyattil Nayars.*—They form the highest of all the Nayar subdivisions in the Cochin State as well as south Malabar. The word *kiriyattil* or *kiriyam* is said to be derived from the Sanskrit, *graham*, which means a house. The derivation is doubtful. The members of this subdivision are believed to have been the descendants of the early Brahmans in their union with the Deva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women brought into Kerala by Parasurama, and their duty has been primarily to serve them. The members of the aristocratic class, who still bear the titles of Panikkar, Kurup, Kaimal, Kartha, Menon, and Menokki belong to this class; in this class are included the old *naduvâzhis*, and *desavâzhis*—rulers of *nads* and *desams*—the military leaders, Pattola Menons and other *sthânis* or titled persons. Being superior to the members of other subdivisions, the *Kiriyattil* Nayars can cook for all others. The Nayars of this class are, according to current tradition, connected with the sixty-four families of Vellalas, whom Dr. Oppert has tried to identify with the Pallavas.

2. *Illattu Nayars.*—They are known in Cochin and South Malabar also as Sudra Nayars. They are par excellence the attendants and retainers of the Nambuthiris. In many parts of the State and in Malabar, they have, by close contact with the Nambuthiris, fashioned many of their personal habits after the truly Brahmanical style, and are, on that account, classed among the high class Nayars. Very seldom does a Nambuthiri woman go outside without being accompanied by a maid-servant or *dasi* belonging to this class, and every woman of this class is her constant attendant and is indispensable for her various ceremonies. They are, I understand, found very largely in Travancore also, where they form

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the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illams*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patinálu-ittukar* and [357] *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chárnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[167] 4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chárna Nayars or Chárnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of [582] the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice* [264] *versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[451] 5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

421 was headed by its oldest male member (karanavan) who was the legal guardian of all members and represented them in the local subcaste assembly. When spoken of in its own right the property-group, like the lineage, was called a taravad; when spoken of as a segment of the lineage it was called a tavari (lit. - "mother's line"). Tavari could also be used of any intermediate segment of the lineage or of a minimal segment of one [54] mother and her children within the property-group had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage-name: each individual was called by his taravad-name, property-group name, personal name and caste-title (e.g., Kolangatt Thekkedil Govindan Nayar - "In the place of the bathing pool, the southern side, Govindan Nayar.")

421 Usually, a property-group owned only one
592 house and was simultaneously a dwelling group. In wealthier desavari and naduvari lineages, however, a group which increased in size might build two or more adjacent houses. In some cases a minimal segment descended from one sister occupied each of these houses, and cooking was separate. Much more commonly, the two adjacent houses would be used indiscriminately by all members, cooking being carried on in only one.

592 A traditional house of the retainer or desavari
342 subcastes comprises a central large building with two storeys, separate staircases for men and women, and in the centre of it a separate courtyard open to the sky. The house faces east and is fronted by a spacious verandah used

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
[778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts
[764] cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

592 602 671 few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust towards elders of the taravad.

592 602 695 421 Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of property. If a dispute arose between segments within the group, it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator outside the lineage, and a settlement reached and embodied in a document called a karar, which legally bound all adult members. Such a settlement was likely in the case of a very old karanavan who decided to retire in favour of the second man. In a wealthy taravad he might then by common consent be allotted a small house and pension for the duration of his life. In desavari and naduvari taravads, karars were sometimes made to allot separate houses with lands for the maintenance of each of the old women of the group (often the karanavan's own sisters) to live on with their children and grandchildren. All lands continued to be managed by the karanavan, but he paid a sum of paddy from her allotted lands each year to the senior woman of each segment. If one sibling group in a taravad contained only brothers, a karar was sometimes made to allot to them a separate house with lands for the duration of their lives; this then reverted to the group as a whole after their deaths. Karars are however common only in village headmen's, chiefly or royal taravads: toolittle property is usually 592 involved in the taravads of retainer Nayars. 602 Here effective management is commonly divided

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
595 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
656 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
178 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine 628
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste 688
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the 564
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear 684
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the 682
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the 564
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible 421
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in 476
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. 628

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were 626
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 613
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former 694
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts. 787 782

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are
less influenced by considerations of property than else- [421]
where. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be [127]
attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:——"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [589]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. [692] *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the 613 local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampudiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

264
626 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were per-
564 suaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their
621 village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all
178 matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it
[425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar
351/ house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called
613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women.
[562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns
421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family,
[179] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much [421] as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the [584] girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāri* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 596 But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. [564] Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *kāranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *tavazhi* (*ta*—mother, *vazhi*—line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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613 592 [421] by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *kāranavan*.

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawād* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawād*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *kāranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawād* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The [562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

613 592 82 78 The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *kāranavan* and the other members, the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawād* splits up into *tāvashis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

[562] It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathíyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

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1. Vide pages 18-20.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613
group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name 591
"Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. 175
The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one. 182

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my [421]
study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12*
and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband,
Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to
have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a [594]
considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their
elementary families, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of
family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an 613
elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of 591
the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal 594
activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest 175
daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional 182
visiting marriage; the second daughter also returned to this house after her
husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons
left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with
their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children,
occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional
tarwad, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was
[429] already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters. For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
421 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
175 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their
182 grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 561 461 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighboring groups. [422] Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped [613] them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

613 564 422 423 [427]

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591 [701]

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulies Marco Polo, page 374.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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1. Vide pages 18-20.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

VEHICLE DENSITY

	Per mile of road	Per sq. mile	Per 100,000 Population
Kerala	2.14	1.54	146.6
West Bengal	1.20	0.92	111.1
India	1.20	0.32	104.0

493
171

Kerala comes up with the highest indices, but this is not surprising as the railway serves only certain limited areas and road transport has to serve the other areas.

8.19 Trivandrum and Calicut districts have the largest concentration of goods vehicles on the road ; Alleppey, Ernakulam, and Quilon figure next. As regards the stage carriages, Trivandrum district has the largest fleet ; Trichur, Ernakulam, and Calicut districts also account for large numbers of stage carriages but these are much smaller. The Coimbatore-Cochin route is saturated with goods traffic in cotton bales, fertilizers, planks, tea, tapioca, machinery, hardware, etc., particularly since the opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge replacing the Desom ferry. The traffic was expected to go up by about 50 per cent during 1961. Similarly the traffic between Calicut and Coimbatore, across the Palghat gap and between Calicut and Wynad (timber traffic) bound for destinations in Salem, Madras, Mysore, Tuticorin, etc., has been on the increase. As industrial developments presage considerable increase of traffic on these routes, problems of alignment, bridging, extra lanes, expressway sections, etc., may call for more investment and additional construction. 494

8.20 About 250 trucks are operating between Mysore and Kerala on inter-State routes. They are subject to the restriction that they may not operate on more than three important straight routes, not exceeding 300 miles in each State. Inter-State routing arrangements between Madras and Kerala are yet to be completed.

8.21 The business in goods transport in the State suffers from the preponderance of owner-operators of single trucks (1,717 operators). There are only five operators in the State who own more than 10 trucks. The predominance of the owner-operator of single trucks is likely to prevent the industry from obtaining the economies and advantages of enhanced efficiency resulting from better organization of road transport in the State. [422]

8.22 Among other features of the transport system special mention may be made of chronic over-loading of vehicles and the beginning of movement in truck-trailer combinations in order to circumvent difficulties arising from restrictions of weight over weak bridges and culverts. Study and analysis of road transport problems are rendered more difficult by the paucity of data regarding traffic, the absence of regular departmental road census of vehicles and traffic, etc. A limited degree of nationalization of goods transport by road has been introduced on the Cochin-Mannar route where 10 to 18 trucks carry tea from the estates to Cochin, and rice, manures and machinery from Cochin to the estates.

8.23 Despite an early start, the nationalized road passenger services have not made much headway. About 458 vehicles are on the road, covering 24.9 million miles annually, and carrying about 65.3 million passengers. The larger revenues resulting from increased traffic and higher fares,[1] have not improved the net profits of [652]

[1] The revenues rose by Rs. 31 lakhs.

525 similar powers to those of the feudatory mon-
613 archs, but, though they were accorded the title
631 of Samantans, were considered of lower ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage. Similarly, some nads of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory kings of higher ritual rank than, but administratively subordinate to, the royal lineage, and others by lower ranking Samantan chiefs appointed by the king. Within each kingdom, the Samantan chiefs' lineages formed a single subcaste.

525 Each nad was in turn divided into villages or
621 desams, the basic units of the political system.
423 A desam appears usually to have covered from one to four square miles, comprising one or more stretches of dry garden land surrounded by, or surrounding, flats of alluvial paddy land. The land in each desam was owned by one landlord family of superior ritual rank to the other occupants of the villages. In some villages, the land was owned by a single Nambudiri partilineal extended family whose large house stood in a central position in the village. In others, it was owned by one or other branch of the royal matrilineage which had built a small palace in the village and whose eldest male member acted as a village headman. In other villages, the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineal lineage of the nad, whether this [15] were of feudatory rank of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live in a small palace in the centre of the village and fulfill the role of headman. In other villages, the land was owned by some famous Hindu temple of the kingdom, often

565 at a distance of several miles, and managed by
621 Nambudiri Brahmans. In this case a represen-
423 tative Nambudiri patrilineal family might live in the village and play the role of headman. In yet other villages, which probably comprised about half the villages in the kingdom, the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (desavari) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the nad. The Nayar desavaris of a chiefdom collectively formed a subcaste ritually lower than the subcaste of chiefs of their kingdom. In Walluvanad and Calicut the subcaste of village headmen was called Kiriattil Nayar; in Cochin they were called Vellayma Nayars.

565 The landowning families in all of these types
622 of villages were called janmis. In every case,
423 no matter whether the janmi were of a patrilineal or a matrilineal caste, the eldest man of the extended family had legal guardianship of his own family, and in another sense, of the village lands and the lower caste inhabitants. [16] In addition to his economic rights, the janmi had administrative rights. First, he must sanction marriages of all castes in the village, none of which could be performed without his consent. Second came ambalapadhi or control of ceremonies in the village temple(s); and third urayma or direction of temple lands and servants.
[316] (It should be made clear that each village had its public temple apart from the larger temples of the chiefdom and the kingdom.) While headman of the village and a landowner in a certain sense, however, the janmi could not sell away his lands

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
565 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
[701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

437 (2) The Traditional Economic System

423 The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [436] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
●423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[552] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that they were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages
644 We saw that the traditional property-group of
423 retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every
[427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

613 longer periods.
644 In all the royal and chiefly lineages, political
423 office was normally held by the eldest member irrespective of branch. In several of these lineages, however, including Calicult, Walluvanad and Kolattiri, there existed also separate offices subordinate to that of the kind. In Calicut, the five oldest men of the Zamorin's lineage, irrespective of branch, held five offices or sthanams (occupant = sthani), each with a landed estate, separately from the lands jointly owned by each property-group of the lineage. The eldest sthani was the Zamorin who ruled at Calicut. The second was called Eralpad: he was the naduvari of Ernad, the oldest of the Zamorin's nads, from which his forbears originally sprang. To prevent rivalry with the [89] king, the second sthani was forbidden during his tenure of office to cross over into the Calicut nad until the Zamorin died and he was summoned to perform the funeral rites and receive the crown. The third sthani, the Munalpac, was commander-in-chief of the Zamorin's army: his estate was in Calicut but he travelled throughout the kingdom. The two youngest sthanis held no political office but lived as desavaris or independent landlords in separate villages of the kingdom. When the Zamorin or any of the other sthanis died, those below him in rank moved up one place, and the next eldest man was appointed as the fifth sthani.

From the 14th century until 1792, the Zamorin's lineage was able to cohere as a single property-group without partition between its

613 segments lifted out of their group on to separate
644 estates. The jointly owned land of the royal lin-
●423 eage, in Ernaq, was managed by the sixth man
karanavan after the fashion of an ordinary Na-
[901] yar property-group. As among Nayars, young-
er men of the lineage were trained as soldiers
and fought in the Raja's wars.

However, it also happened that during these centuries, the Zamorin's lineage did not greatly increase in numbers. Indeed, in the 18th century it was obliged to save itself from extinction by adopting three girls from the royal lineage of Nileswaram in South Canara, north of Kerala. In 1792, the Zamorin was conquered by the British and, along with other rulers of what became Malabar District, retired from political office as the head of a large landowning lineage. The British to compensate the royal lineages gave them political pensions, payable in cash sums annually to each male and female. Shortly afterwards, the Zamorin's [90] lineage began to increase in size, and by the mid-nineteenth century had partitioned into three property-groups, Pudiya (New) Tavari which lives in a village in the modern Calicut division of Malabar District, Padinyare (West) Tavari, also in Calicut, and Kirakke (East) Tavari in Ernad Division. Pudiya Tavari has this century partitioned into three new property-groups. The extensive lands of each group are managed by their separate karanavans. The five sthanams with their landed estates are still occupied by the five eldest members of the lineage, who in addition receive their political pensions independently of the rest.

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
●423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

613 is a recent practice which grew out of the de-
644 mands for separate payments of those princes
423 who had left the palace to find modern work outside. Until about ten years ago, the karanavan completely controlled the group's finances and paid maintenance in kind to its members, even to toilet requisites such as oil for bathing and ash for cleaning the teeth. Since they began to receive allowances in cash, several princes have acquired private land and built small houses for their wives and children, where a very few of them now live and eat, despite caste rules against interdining with lower caste kinsfolk. In addition some princes now work in government service or in one of the coast towns or in one of the large cities of India. They return to the palace only for vacations and ceremonies. The lands of the major royal property-groups of Malabar are at present declared impartible by law, but there is dissatisfaction with this law among their younger members. Individual partition of property, in accordance with the new Nayar inheritance laws to be explained below, is expected to take place in most palaces within the next few years, and has already been applied for in some. The royal lineages are in fact now breaking down in precisely the same manner as are retainer Nayar taravads.

It is clear, however, that royal property-groups were traditionally able to comprise more segments and cohere for longer periods than could retainer groups. The differences in structure which made this possible were: 1) the landed estates which were large enough to [93]

613 support many members and, together with the
644 political office, had a sentimental value for
423 them; 2) sthanams, which lifted the five oldest men out of the factionalism of their property-groups; 3) the spacious construction of palaces with privacy for each woman and her descendants, each adult man, and each visiting Nambudiri husband; 4) the very rigid rules of etiquette and avoidance which discouraged quarrels between men and incest between men and women; 5) the ability of the palace to employ separate servants for each adult; and 6) the peculiar residence-arrangements in royal and a few chiefly lineages, which, together with the universal practice of hypergamy, gave the property-group some of the features of a matriclan (14) and enabled it to live for generations on the same site. The existence of Nambudiri Brahmans as a leisure class of ritual specialists, many of whom were free to leave their own estates and live as drones (or "as breeding bulls", as one Calicut prince remarked) in the palaces, was crucial to this, as was the ability of the royal lineage, because of the concentration of wealth and political power in its hands, to maintain a horde of retainer lineages at its doorstep to provide mistresses for the princes and a bodyguard for the king.

613 In spite of these special devices, royal and
644 chiefly lineages did, even traditionally, divide into separate property-groups when their numbers became unwieldy. Unfortunately I lack genealogies to show whether, as in retainer lineages, this regularly occurred at a particular

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

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613 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars di-
592 vided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth
174 century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups
592 must have arisen from the marked increase in population during
161 British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from
174 genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher
[175] proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the
592 amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the
174 size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional
423 retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other
[858] kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early
[863] childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care,
[867] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

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595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
[566] adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made possible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons)
[178] organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE
592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
● 423 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

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ual process of fission. This state of affairs was in harmony with the small amounts of land controlled by retainer property groups and with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to their land. The conditions of kānam tenure not only allowed for changes in the tenures of plots of land within one village, but even permitted segments of an expanding taravād to change their feudal allegiances and if necessary to hive off from their natal village.

The situation was different in the aristocratic lineages of royalty and district chiefs. By jenmam right they owned large domains which could support greater numbers of members. Their members also had a stake in the political office which they were reluctant to surrender. On the whole these lineages tended to cohere for longer periods than did those of retainers. Some of them today number over three hundred members and trace their descent back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When segments of these lineages did move away from their ancestral lands it was usually because they had been conquered and forced to vacate their territories and offices.

In the beginning, when one of these aristocratic lineages rose to power, it did so as a small property group. It did so either (in the case of royals) through conquest or (in the case of chiefs) through being appointed to office by some royal power. When they acquired office these upstart property groups seem to have severed ties with their former lineages and clans and to have conferred on themselves a higher ritual rank as independent castes.

After a few generations such a property group might expand in numbers and separate out into segments. I lack data on the precise point at which aristocratic property groups segmented; it seems to have been always at a later point with them than with retainer Nayars. (Today, some royal and chiefly property groups have a time depth of eight or more generations and over a hundred members.) When fission did occur the segments moved into separate palaces, each taking a portion of the ancestral domain for its maintenance. The oldest man resident in each segment acted as kāranavan and managed its internal affairs. For a time at least, the political office remained vested in the oldest man of the lineage irrespective of branch. When he was able, he kept a tight hold over all the segments, deflecting part of their income to himself for the upkeep of his palace staff, private army, and the larger forces he mustered through his subordinate vassals in war. The office bearer also retained sole right to the customs dues on trade within his chiefdom or kingdom, and to the tribute from village headmen within his area of rule.

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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613 564 422 423 [427]

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591 [701]

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
595 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
656 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
178 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the 778
Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever 776
remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there 782
is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, 796
in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent 776
idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in 776
procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, 782
kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institution [435]
and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about 2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and [423]
gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627
This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627
this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634
when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627
another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634
chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578
being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525]
two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652]
wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chief-
tain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423 ●
to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427
in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178]
the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821]
a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

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* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782]
people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol.
"Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut). . . [763]
after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—
"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

131 North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nāduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nād*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
423 appointed by the Raja or the *nāduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
[614] Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
Nāduvari lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *taravād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
684
851

588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambûdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tâli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambûdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tâli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tâli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambûdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambûdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambûdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tâli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tâli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tâli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tâli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 621 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannâns, called Mannâns in the south) and barbers (Kâvutiyyans, called Vâtthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [422] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangan* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangan* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

Nayar
Tiyyar

796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *sāduvari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
78 ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and
182 pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
881 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards
182 higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emotional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and
564 masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-05) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-45).

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yules Marco Polo, page 374.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features ● 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilized.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS [171]

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5A gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 176

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3A [see p 272, Category 11b -- Analysis]

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala.
241 In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been
423 constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India:
191 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7).[2]

464 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an
241 acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural
[171] areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

* 433 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive
241 is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per
434 cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest
241 to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

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Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas ; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government. [427]

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

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*433 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation
249 in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951–56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

*433 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since
249 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were
423 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

*433 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in
249 Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)*

[17] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

*433 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific
249 manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of
242 these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control
[471] of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter
[249] tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

*[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

to a considerable degree in Malabar and Nelliampathi (Travancore-Cochin) areas. The major concentration of area occurs in the Kozhikode district of Malabar. It had 89 per cent of the total coffee area in the State during 1957-58. Between 1955 and 1958, coffee production in Malabar rose (18%) while that in Travancore-Cochin declined (16%). Similarly, the area under coffee during the same period registered an increase in Malabar (28.3%) but declined in Travancore-Cochin region (15.0%). 433* 245 [438]

2.134 The average yield per acre of coffee in Kerala is rather low. It has been lower than the all-India average and is far below the average yield in Mysore, the principal coffee growing State in India, (1955-56 Kerala, 285 lbs. per acre; all-India, 369 lbs. per acre; and Mysore 395 lbs. per acre). Moreover, while the yields elsewhere in India, especially in Mysore, have been rising, in Kerala they have fallen from 368 to 285 lbs. per acre during 1951–58. Within Kerala, the yields are the highest in Kozhikode district which is largely due to the better management of estates in this district. [71]

2.135 One of the characteristics of coffee plantations in Kerala is the overwhelmingly large number of small estates. In 1958, there were 14,475 registered estates with a total area of 47,675 acres. Of these, 12,412 were of less than five acres in size. There were only 99 estates out of 14,475 with an area over 50 acres. (Table 14)[2] 433* 245 423

2.136 There is a distinct relationship between the size of coffee estates and the output per acre. It is noticed that yields increase progressively as the size of the estates increases. The yield per acre of *Arabica* variety in estates in the size group of 5-10 acres was 0.68 cwts. per acre, while for the estates with 200 acres or more, it was 2.26 cwts. Moreover, the quality of coffee produced on small plantations is also inferior and fetches only 65 per cent of the price of coffee produced on big estates. It is difficult to ascertain the most economic size but it is believed that for effective and profitable functioning, the minimum size would be 50 acres. If this is accepted, then only less than one per cent of coffee estates in Kerala are economic. The question of making these plantations economic through consolidation or extension of area under coffee plantations should, therefore, receive serious attention. Two more points need attention. First, new areas should be planted with coffee *Arabica* rather than coffee *Robusta* since the former gives higher yields. Secondly, as in the case of tea, replantation is also over-due in the coffee plantations. Remedies on the same lines as suggested for tea hold good for coffee also. 433* 245

2.137 Unlike tea, the major portion of which is exported, coffee plantations are substained largely by the demand for internal consumption. Internal demand, however, has not been keeping pace with rise in the output of coffee. At present India has quite a large surplus in coffee and efforts are being made to export the surplus. In spite of an enormous surplus of coffee in South America, efforts in India have yielded good results as shown by an increase in exports from 3,000 tons in 1952-53 to 15,228 tons in 1956-57.[1] Most of our exports go to East European countries. There is scope for stepping up the exports further, in spite of the world 433* 245 439 [438]

[1] SOURCE: Coffee Board, Bangalore.

2 [see p. 279, category 11b -- Analysis]

therefore, does not look attractive to the growers. In addition, in some parts where rubber can be grown, cashew is being slowly replaced by rubber, the latter being more profitable. Under these circumstances, since there is no incentive for farmers either to resort to intensive methods of cultivation or to extend the area under cashewnuts, it may not be possible to achieve any significant increase in their output within Kerala. There may, however, be some scope in Cannanore district, for not more than 10,000 acres. Most of this area would be on Government lands under the jurisdiction of Forest and Land Revenue Departments. It is suggested that the proposed plantation should be from clonal progenies of selected parent trees. 433* 245

2.143 Assuming that 10,000 acres of land is available for cashew planting, total investment necessary to plant this area during 1961–71, at the rate of Rs. 100 per acre, would be Rs. 10 lakhs. The major extension of area under cashewnuts, however, will have to take place in the other States of India, mainly, Andhra Pradesh, Madras and Orissa.

Arecanut

2.144 Arecanut is an important cash crop of Kerala. The State possesses about 50 per cent of total arecanut area in the country. Arecanut is a high value as well as a labour intensive crop. [423]

2.145 The total production of arecanut in the country is about 25 lakh maunds, which falls short of requirements by about one-third. This is made good by imports from Pakistan, Malaya and other countries. The need for conserving foreign exchange resources of India brings out the importance of increasing the production of arecanut.

2.146 Short term as well as long term measures are necessary to raise the output of arecanut. Short term measures are needed to effect a quick increase in the production. Long term measures are necessary for sustaining the gains achieved through short term measures as well as for effecting a progressive increase in the output over a longer period. Adequate manuring, irrigation, and prevention and control of diseases are some of the short term measures, while under-planting or filling in and extending area under the crop are the long term measures. [242]

2.147 Considerable scope exists for raising the output of arecanut by providing irrigation in summer months. It is found that some of the well-managed irrigated gardens yield over Rs. 6,000 worth of produce annually as against Rs. 700 to 800 in unirrigated gardens. At present about 50 per cent of the arecanut area is solely dependent on monsoon rains and only about 25 per cent of the area receives adequate irrigation. Provision of irrigation facilities to arecanut gardens is, therefore, a prime necessity. Since the crop is grown scattered in the valleys and in patches on hill slopes and on small holdings, the irrigation development so far has not benefited the arecanut area to any extent. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should aid arecanut farms by granting long term loans for sinking wells and for the purchase of pumping sets. The gardens being mostly small, it may not be possible for individual garden owners to fully utilize the well and the machinery. This difficulty may perhaps be surmounted by organizing irrigation cooperatives for arecanut gardens. 433* 245 241

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SOME FORESTRY PROBLEMS

Acquisition of Private Forests

4.20 It has been mentioned that forests of Kerala are one of the best managed ones. But this is true only of the reserved forests under Government jurisdiction. In the Malabar area there are about 5 lakh acres of private forests which are maintained very unsatisfactorily. Unlike the reserved forests, there is no adequate protective staff for the care of these forests and no attention is paid to their regeneration or management on scientific lines. This has naturally resulted in an unwarranted depletion of forest wealth in the private forest areas. In the interests of adequate preservation of forest wealth, immediate steps are necessary to acquire the private forests and bring them within unified forest management under the control of the Forest Department. A provision for acquiring the private forests was made during the Second Plan but their acquisition could not be carried out. This must be effected during the Third Plan period.

The Problem of Encroachment

4.21 There is one other disquitening feature about forests in Kerala. Such is the pressure of population in the State that inroads are being made into the forest areas, especially where forests occur in the midland region. This has taken the form of Government deforestation of forest areas in the interests of Grow More Food Campaign. In addition, there have also been illicit encroachments and these areas are still under cultivation, although the State Government have declared them to be revertible. The extent of these areas is not very large compared to the total area under forests. About 9,750 acres fall within the former category and 16,500 acres belong to the category of revertible areas. The gravity of the encroachment situation arises from the fact that in case a lenient view is taken, these will prove a serious menace to proper maintenance of forest potential in the long run.

Regeneration of Evergreen Forests

4.22 The problems referred to above were of an administrative nature; but forestry in Kerala is faced with one or two urgent technical problems as well. One of these is to find out some way of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen species.

4.23 Of late a number of evergreen species have found new uses in the manufacture of plywood logs, railway sleepers, telegraph poles, etc., and these species have all come into prominence. Full potential of the existing evergreen forests cannot, however, be tapped since their natural regeneration takes time. The forest department has, therefore, got to keep control over the working of these forests.

4.24 In case of some species because of difficulties connected with regeneration, there has been a shortage of supply. The problem of regeneration of these forests is intimately connected with the problem of light. Regeneration requires light to

*433
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[423]
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AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	38,347	..	..
Kozhikode	20,045	61,479	14,753	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,336	20,988	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,654	2,890	5,386
Nemmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,467*	*172,678*	*64,100*	*143,353*

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Kerala.

[384] 4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

313 289 4.36 (*ii*) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

*433 314 4.37 (*iii*) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

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India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rates** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	737	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

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11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas.

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities.

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations.

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951.

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.
[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

11: India. G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 6

VALUATION OF FOREIGN EXPORTS FROM THE PORTS OF COCHIN, ALLEPPEY AND CALICUT 439

(Rs. lakhs)

Some important commodities of export	*1953-54*	*1954-55*	*1955-56*	*1956-57**	*1957-58*
Cardamom	22.44	32.84	50.17	54.84	55.90
Cashew(kernels and liquids)	927.55	1,014.52	1,155.12	1,112.02	1,141.82
Coffee	72.39	82.88	93.69	76.50	90.75
Coir and Coir Products	804.00	731.37	856.86	878.09	704.87
Fish and Prawns	102.69	79.34	31.85	123.86	149.33
Ginger	27.94	33.24	58.71	61.40	39.25
Metals, Minerals, Ores	21.56	22.78	28.93	77.10	60.77
Lemon grass oil	72.62	104.73	130.65	147.00	138.41
Pepper	962.13	569.81	378.61	341.69	295.67
Tea	1,912.96	2,196.86	1,992.17	1,974.75	2,434.78
Others	235.72	443.83	591.64	525.75	491.40
Total Value of Foreign Exports	*5,162*	*5,312*	*5,369*	*5,343*	*5,603*
Total Value of Exports to Ports of India	*2,238*	*2,193*	*2,489*	*2,404*	*2,318*
Value of Total Exports	**7,400**	**7,505**	**7,858**	**7,747**	**7,921**

*Value of exports from Calicut includes exports to both foreign and Indian ports.

SOURCE: *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959.

TABLE 7

CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF HOLDINGS AND LAND AREA OF HOLDINGS IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN AREA AND THE MALABAR DISTRICT 423 184

Grade of holdings	*Travancore-Cochin*		*Malabar*	
	No. of holdings	*Area*	*No. of holdings*	*Area*
Up to 1 acre	66.72	16.49	28.91	2.43
Up to 2.50 acres	86.47	36.96	51.52	8.22
Up to 5 acres	94.84	57.07	69.55	17.68
Up to 10 acres	98.35	73.35	83.79	32.30
Up to 20 acres	99.50	83.59	93.91	52.58
Up to 40 acres	99.86	90.15	97.88	68.57
Up to 100 acres	..	..	99.62	82.37
All	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*

SOURCE: *Kerala 1959: An Economic Review*, Government of Kerala (1960).

TABLE 14

THE NUMBER OF REGISTERED COFFEE ESTATES ACCORDING TO SIZE AND AREA AS ON THE 31ST JULY 1958

(Area in acres)

District	Below 5 acres		5 to 10		10 to 25		25 to 50		50 to 100		100 to 200		150 to 200		200 to 250		250 and above		Total	
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area
Malabar	9,121	16,187	1,123	4,936	515	4,956	62	2,272	46	2,965	10	1,218	8	1,293	6	1,336	14	5,650	10,505	40,813
Kottayam	3,130	3,596	185	56	58	57	14	343	5	323	1	159	1	150	..		1	703	3,395	5,367
Cochin	5	..	2	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	125	3	561	2		1	330	15	1,016
Quilon	147	N.A.	2	N.A.	..	30	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	149	30

Source: *Eighteenth Annual Report, 1957-58*, Vol. IV., Coffee Board.

[113]

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as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February. 105 241

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves. 105 427 [423] [104]

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them. [104] [243] [466] [464]

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants [104]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles and interests among the various castes and communities in the state. Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

Kanamdars are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

The aboriginals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are addicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes, and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

We still had time that afternoon, to drive back into the village of Perumpillav and to interview some more polyandrous Tiyas. We drove to a Tiya house to have a talk with a man, a woman and a boy who confirmed to us that they belonged to families practising polyandry. 595*

The man was called Tami; he was fifty six years old and worked as a coolie. He had the *Kudiyiruppu* lease of a house for which he paid three rupees a year to a Mopla, Melethil Kunyuni Haidaros. The latter was himself the *verumpattamdar* of a *janmi* called Cheralayam Nambidi. (I was unable to find out if he was a Brahmin, an Ambalavasi or a Samantan; with the title *Nambidi* which he bore, he could have been any one of the three, but I suspect that he was a Brahmin, as this is the caste which owns the land in north Cochin.) [115] [420] [423]

Tami's household name was Kanadiwalapil, which was also that of his *tarawad*. He and his brother, Narayan, were married to Chidu, alias Sri Devi, a woman now aged fifty. The younger brother was his junior by twenty one years and had been married as second husband to their common wife when he was only five years old. There were five children, of whom the two eldest were girls, now married off elsewhere. All the boys were unmarried, and worked with their fathers as coolies. 595* 601

I found the informant extremely difficult to question. He was continually contradicting himself, and pretended that he knew no names nor ages. Thus I was unable to discover the name of his wife's *tarawad*, how many children his second daughter had had, and the ages of his two eldest sons, Velu and Kutan. I give the genealogy as I struggled to make it, in Table 7, but I fear that it is sadly incomplete and perhaps not even reliable. It was nevertheless of interest to find out something, however little, from a Tiya polyandrous labourer. [115]

We next turned to the woman. She was accompanied by her twelve year old son, Balakrishnan, and at once showed herself, in striking contrast to her predecessor, to be bright and helpful. This was a great relief after the previous painful session. I was able to record the name of her *tarawad*, but did not manage to ascertain that of the household into which she had married.

She told me that she had had five husbands, all of them paid (free) agricultural labourers, living as *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the same Cheralayam Nambidi *janmi*. She did not know the amount of rent paid yearly, but told me that her husbands' family had been settled here for a very long time – for eighty or a hundred years, as she put it. They had little work to do, not enough in fact to keep such a large family alive. They had been toddy tappers once. Kalyany had been married publicly

[Text continues on p. 189]

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179 564 members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

179 564 595 Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheri- [428] tance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

[423] [427] [1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

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406 The mhote too is seldom seen in these parts. The more common sorts of water-lifters are (1) an oval shaped bamboo-basket (costing about As. 2); (2) a wooden groove provided with a handle, costing about Re. 1; (3) and a frame-work consisting of two long bamboos, one small and another big in size balanced on a horizontal beam which is supported by two vertical poles; a picottah is attached to the small-sized bamboo and is drawn up and brought down by one or two persons standing opposite each other on two planks thrown across the middle of the well. The whole frame together with the picottah costs about Rs. 2. The oval shaped basket and the wooden groove are used to spread water from water courses and not from wells. Two persons, generally women, stand opposite each other on the side of a watercourse and pull the basket towards themselves by means of ropes tied round its 'ears' after filling it up with water; the extreme ease and facility with which they carry on the operations, often to the accompaniment of a snatch of song, is wonderful. The wooden groove is allowed to swing on a string and is moved to and fro by a person holding the handle.

651 The classes into which wet and dry lands are divided, the extent of each and the amount of assessment are subjoined.

Classes.	Wet lands.									Dry lands.				
	Single crop.					Double crop.				Single crop.				
	Area.		Assessment.			Area.		Assessment.			Area.	Assessment.		
	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.	ACS. C.	RS.	A.	P.
I ..	35	65	116	7	9	320	74	1,527	5	5	301 48	261	11	3
II ...	4	56	15	10	9	59	72	210	6	3	12 69	3	12	8
III ...	16	0	36	0	7	39	73	114	6	0	212 60	77	5	7
IV ...	21	37	39	9	8	15	51	34	11	2	68 39	17	10	3
V ...	109	59	147	9	11	11	5	17	12	11	207 53	44	6	8
VI ...	18	6	34	10	10	1	24	3	2	5	56 49	3	13	8
VII ...	...		...			...		...			78 3	37	0	3

35 The selling prices of cultivable wet land in the village are approximately Class I Rs. 1,500, Class II Rs. 1,000, Class III Rs. 800 Class IV Rs. 500—600, Class V Rs. 500.

311 The land is classified according to tenure as follows :—

●423

I. 'Pandaravaka Verumpattam' (Sirkar) non-favourable tenure.	Nilams (wet land) (A. 86·73).	109 pattadars.
	Parambas (dry land) (A. 210·88).	
II. 'Pandaravaka Kanam' (Sirkar) favourable tenure.	Nilams (A. 2·19) ...	4 pattadars.
	Parambas (7 cents) ...	
III. 'Puravaka' (outside Sirkar).	Nilams (A. 563·61) ...	54 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 711·80) ...	
IV. Inams (gift tenure).	Nilams (71 cents) ...	6 pattadars.
	Parambas (A. 14·47) ...	

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423 651 The revenue paid to the State varies according to the nature of the tenure. It is only the "Pandaravaka verumpattam" lands which pay the full pattam or share due to the State. The Pandaravaka verumpattamdars have full rights to the soil of the lands they hold and their rights remain undisturbed so long as they regularly pay the State revenue, but the rights to metals and minerals are reserved to the State.

In *Pandaravaka kanam*, the land is held on a lease in consideration of a sum of money supposed to have been advanced to the State, and consequently a certain amount is deducted from the State demand on account of interest on the amount advanced. Before the new settlement was made in 1905 it was the custom to renew the lease every twelve years on the renewal of which the kanamdar was to pay over 20 per cent of the kanam amount, plus half of the full pattam (rent) for one year and a fee of 5 per cent of the kanam amount or Rs. 3-2-0 (whichever is greater) for issuing a fresh renewal. But this practice is now done away with and the tenure is for all practical purposes the same as Pandaravaka verumpattam tenure with this difference only that from the assessment due thereon a deduction of one-third is made.

In Puravaka lands (literally lands which are outside) a third party called the Janmi is recognized as holding proprietorship and therefore entitled to share the produce with the cultivator and the Sirkar. The tenure is assessed by the Sirkar in the case of nilams at half the rates fixed for Pandaravaka verumpattam nilams and in the case of parambas at one-fourth.

Inams are personal grants or grants made in some cases for the performance of certain specified services in religious institutions, etc., and in others for services rendered on some previous occasion or for some other similar reasons either absolutely or on certain specified conditions. The deductions range from free assessment to one-third of the Pandaravaka verumpattam assessment.

In all these cases of tenure a royalty cess of six pies per rupee calculated on Pandaravaka verumpattam assessment is payable to the Sirkar.

427 423 The *Janmis* of Puravaka land let their land under different tenures, viz., verumpattam in which they make full assessment; kanam and inam they treat as favourable, but the rates are not so fixed or settled as those of the Sirkar's tenures. The leases of the kanam * lands of the janmis are also renewed for twelve years, the janmi collecting certain dues from their tenants for the renewal of the same. The title of the tenant of such lands is precarious for the kanamdar can be evicted on the janmi paying back the kanam amount † at the end of the lease of twelve years. This state of affairs was unsatisfactory, and the State Government has recently passed a Bill called the "Cochin Tenancy Bill" of 1914, an extremely moderate measure indeed, passed in the teeth of much opposition from the Janmis. The Regulation intends "to make better provision for the payment of compensation for the improvements made by tenants, and provide for the speedy realization of rent and other customary dues, by investing the District

* [Kanam = lease. Kanamdars = leaseholders.—Ed.]

† I.e., the amount the kanamdar has deposited with the Janmi at the time of taking up the lease.

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427 Munsifs and District Judges with summary jurisdiction in the matter." The provisions in the regulation apply only to "Kanam
423 tenants who, by themselves or through their predecessors in interest, have uninterruptedly held the holding for a period of not less than thirty years prior to the coming into force of this Regulation," and provide some restrictions on the part of the landlord in matters of renewal of kanam holdings, and ejection of kanam tenants; and dispense altogether with the right of *Melkanam*. The Puravaka janmis in Watakancheri number 54, of whom a few are Nambudri Brahmans, the others being of various castes. The Nambudris are the big landlords.

423 These janmis also are in some cases the custodians of "devaswoms" (literally "wealth of the gods"), lands belonging to the local temples; these are treated by them just like their janmam lands, but they keep separate accounts for the same. The Sirkar also manages devaswom lands and there is a department in the State which manages the affairs of the temples and the property belonging to them.

Of the total number of landowners (about 150), only 34 with an area of 194·44 acres cultivate their own lands. The rest sublet.

Of the non-cultivating landowners a few are big janmis like the Nambudri Brahmans and the Paliath Atchan. The Nambudri Brahmans pursue no occupation but that of living in strict conformity with the duties of a Brahman. They study the Vedas and live a pious and cleanly life. Western civilization and ideas have not
[428] penetrated to them. They maintain the joint-property system in which the whole property descends to the eldest male member.
[837] Only the eldest male is allowed to enter into legal marriage, but he can marry two or three women; the rest keep Nayar females as their mistresses.*

The "Paliath Atchan" possesses much land in the State. The head of the family lives in a place near Cranganore. He manages his estates through departments and officials like the Sirkar. He is the biggest landlord in the State, and a powerful hereditary chief.

The small landowners who do not cultivate their lands pursue occupations like retail trade, Government service, law, etc. These generally sublet their lands to tenants who own no lands and try to exact from these latter as much rent as possible. There are also agricultural workers who neither own nor rent land; the caste of "Cherumas" belongs to this class. Also a few of the low
[465] castes, the Mappilas and in some cases the Christians,—male and female—engage themselves in such work. They are low paid. Formerly these wages were in kind, but money wages have begun to prevail; but for harvesting work wages are invariably paid in kind, the worker receiving one para of paddy for every six gathered in.

The rents of paddy lands are paid in kind.

243 *Agriculture.*—Paddy is grown on all the wet lands. Out of the seasons, the cultivators also grow to a small extent such grains as gram and peas in the paddy lands. Area under paddy—653·24 acres.

* [This phrase must not be understood to mean that such Nayar women are maintained in any way by their Nambudri paramours. They depend on their own family property, which descends in the female line. The children of Nambudri Brahmans and Nayar women are reckoned Nayars, and are members of the joint family of the mother, and entitled to maintenance from that family property.—Ed.]

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

•423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

286 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil [791] and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as [783] common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

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MALABAR DISTRICT.

GURUVAYUR (PONNANI TALUK).

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Preliminary.—Guruvayur is situated in the southern part of the Ponnani taluk, and is only 2 miles distant from the Arabian Sea. It is close to the backwater which extends from the northern point of the taluk to Cochin and Travancore. To the east it is only 3 miles distant from the State of Cochin. It is 14 miles away from the capital town of the taluk through which flows the chief river of Malabar. No forests can be seen throughout the whole taluk. The whole taluk is one red sandy mass with no waste lands, no mountains or hills. The chief crop of the village and perhaps of the whole taluk is coconut.

Malabar land tenure.—The system of land tenure that obtains in Malabar is entirely different from that of other districts. No doubt the theory that the Government is the legitimate owner of all the land in India and the people hold the land from the Government to which they pay a rent or tax, obtains its full significance here also. But there is an intermediary landlord, between the Government and the actual occupier of the land. How this intermediary landlord arose requires some explanation.

The origin of Malabar according to tradition is that a demi-god Parasurama reclaimed from the sea the portion of land extending from Gokarnam (Bombay) to Cape Comorin and from the Western Ghats to the sea. This demi-god having killed 21 times all the Kshatriyas, and having surrendered to Rama all his possessions after trial of battle, wanted a place to live in. He ordered the sea to recede and thus formed these lands. Malabar is a portion of that land. What historical facts are concealed in this tradition it is not easy to know but it may be guessed that in the general organizing of the Deccan, a certain number of Aryans * crossed the Western Ghats and reclaimed the lands from forest and wild beasts and made it habitable for civilized men. They may have dominated the original inhabitants by their superior civilization and Parasurama may have been the leader of that little band of Aryans. The tradition says that the demi-god gave all the lands he created to 64 Brahmans who became the leaders of the 64 villages into which the whole of the land was divided. These 64 Brahmans formed the original Malabar Brahmans or Nambudris, and they formed an assembly and decided matters of common concern. Individual villages decided their own matters and in every discussion of their affairs the Brahmana was the president and his opinion had perhaps the force of law. The whole village belonged to him and he was the Uralla or the chief man of the village. As time went on the one important family extended its branches and each branch had an equal voice in the affairs of the village. The one became many. I shall refer later to the remnants of this constitution of the village.

* [This hypothesis is ingenious, but not, in my opinion, probable.—Ed.]

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Each village belonged to the Brahmana family and its branches. They might sell the land and yet they retained a certain right over it. The soil was still theirs, but the products belonged to the buyers, the trees, houses, everything standing on the soil. The right of the original family is called the janmam right, i.e., the right of inheritance from the family to which Parasurama gave the land. Every year this janmam-holder receives a certain sum from the occupier. This janmam right can also be sold, or the janmi may lose the right if he fails to exercise it every twelve years. In such ways the janmam right has in some cases passed into the possession of other castes, but the Nambudri Brahmans are still the chief janmis. It is said that no Sudras held janmam rights before the general confusion due to the invasion of Tippu, when powerful individuals usurped the right. In other cases the Brahmans themselves gave up the janmam right in favour of temples, friends, Sudra wives, or through immoderate living. The selling or leasing of the right to occupy the land must be renewed every twelve years according to the present law. If this is not done the janmi loses his right, and deeds executed by him cease to be valid. This he will never do. So what is generally done is that the janmi at the end of twelve years asks the lessee (or "kanomdar") to give back his land, offering him the value of what stands on the land at the end of twelve years. The kanomdar is helpless. He has worked during the time, by planting trees, building houses, etc. He has not yet enjoyed the result of his labour. The janmi is now offering a very low price. If the kanomdar does not accept it he is dragged to the court, and the court fixes a price according to the Tenants Improvements Act. He must accept the price and give back the land, or make terms with the janmi. The janmi demands a heavy fine for the renewal of the lease. The possessor compares the demand with the work he has done and the annual value of the land. If he thinks it beneficial to him to keep the land for another twelve years after paying the demand, he pays it; otherwise he gives back the land. Sometimes a different person comes to the janmi and bribes him to give the land to him, and offers the actual possessor the value of the products. In spite of the fact that the occupier has worked there twelve years he is now deprived of his home. This is done in so many cases that it is a real grievance to the people.

The result of this system of land tenure is that the agricultural population has no inducement for work, for tenants do not know whether they will retain the land after twelve years or whether the janmi will deprive them of the same. Suppose the kanomdar has worked tremendously and increased the capital invested in the land tenfold, from Rs. 100 to Rs. 1,000. What is the result? The janmi sees the land producing enormously. He knows that the possessor will be very unwilling to lose the land. To the extent of that unwillingness he raises the demand for money to renew the lease. He knows that instead of Rs. 100 he can now demand Rs. 200 or 300 or 500 or even 900 (not of course Rs. 1,000). This is actually done. The possessor cannot but give the money, with the consolation, if it is a consolation at all, that for tenfold work, he gets the opportunity to enjoy one-tenth of the product of his labour. There is yet another danger for a hard worked man, for

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423 his neighbour seeing the improvements resorts to bribery in order to get the land.

242 Further this system results in the disregard of agricultural principles. Supposing only ten coconut palms should be planted in a certain portion of land, the possessor actually plants fifteen or sixteen because at the end of twelve years he will get the value of fifteen or sixteen trees according to the Tenants Improvements Act. If he is content with planting only ten according to agricultural principles, he gets only the value of ten. For many years past there has been no attempt towards scientific cultivation, as a consequence of this, in the whole of Malabar. It is impossible to do so. Disregard of science means gain; regard for it means loss. There is an evident deterioration in the production of the land in Malabar due to absence of security, and disregard of science. Lands which brought a gain of Rs. 1,000 do not now bring even Rs. 400 or Rs. 500. An improvement in this system of land tenure by means of legislation would evidently increase the fertility of Malabar.

Population.—Total population 7,596.*

162 Castes and individuals in each caste—

Name of caste.	Families.	Members.
Nambudri or Malabar Brahmans	36	146
East Coast Brahmans or Brahmans who have emigrated to Malabar from the east ...	107	653
Nayars and their sub-sects	382	1,305
Tiyyas and their sub-sects	437	2,461
Muhammadans	331	2,307
Christians	118	592
Artisan castes, etc.	17	117
Total ...	1,428	7,581

163 Number of children under ten in families—Living 3,490, dead 928.

165 Number of homesteads—1,290.

	1915.	
	Births.	Deaths.
Boys	178	76
Girls	158	80
Total ...	336*	156*

165 The following table of deaths may be useful:—

Children between ages	0—10	87*
Between ages	10—20	2
"	21—25	8
"	26—30	8
"	31—35	6
"	36—40	4

[Birth-rate ... ... 44·2 per thousand.
Death-rate ... ... 20·5 "
Death-rate for children 0—10 ... 259 per thousand births.
Density of population ... ... 3,231 per square mile.—Ed.]

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Between ages	41—50	11
"	51—60	9
"	61—70	9
"	71—80	10
84 years of age		1
92 "		1
		156

It is to be noted that infant deaths are more than half the total deaths and number 87 out of 156 last year.

This information is not fully accurate because the people do not report births and deaths generally to the village officials and consequently they have to ascertain the facts by inquiring and it is possible that some births or deaths escape their notice. The ignorance of the people and the unnecessary fear of post-mortem examination in the case of deaths explain their silence. Probably a considerable number of infant deaths escape report.

Paracheri.—Three families, 15 members.—7 women, 8 men.

Number of dead for the last ten years—

Family No. 1	7
" " 2	5
" " 3	4

The village lana— ACS.

311

Garden lands	792½
Wet lands	360¾
Dry "	135⅝
Government lands	14⅛
Inam lands	201¾
Total	1,504 17/24

There are no waste lands.

The principal fruit trees are mangoes, jacks, plantains, and there are not many though sufficient for the village consumption. 245

There are tanks and wells in plenty. Drinking water is got from wells; and the tanks are used for bathing and for agricultural purposes. 312

Occupation of land and Agriculture.—The number of kanomdars in the village is 385. The large kanomdars do not generally cultivate the land themselves. 423

The land is divided into small strips, each strip containing from 50 to 1,000 coconut palms. The large kanomdar takes his residence on one of these strips, and he himself cultivates the particular strip where he is, and gives to small tenants the remaining strips belonging to him. Consequently only about 180 acres of the whole village are cultivated by the large kanomdars. In addition to these lands three kanomdars cultivate all of their land. Two are Muhammadans and one a Tiyya. The area belonging to these three kanomdars is about 134 acres. The remaining land, 1,200 odd acres, is given to tenants to cultivate. There are also between 200 and 300 small kanomdars belonging to the agricultural classes, who hold land insufficient for their maintenance and also cultivate the lands of big kanomdars. A number of the big [245]

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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

[428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

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The statistics of births and deaths of this desam are obtainable only for the year 1915. They are given below :— 163 165

Births.

Males	50	Hindu	84
Females	43	Muhammadan	9
	93		93

Deaths.

According to age—

Lifeless deliveries	7
Below one year	9
Between 1 and 10	13
" 10 and 20	1
" 20 and 30	7
" 30 and 40	3
" 40 and 50	...
" 50 and 60	3
" 60 and 80	5
	48

According to sex and castes—

Males	24	Hindus	43
Females	24	Muhammadans	5

There is no paracheri in the strict sense of the term. The depressed classes, mostly Cherumas, are still in a state of semi-serfdom, depending for everything on their landlords and masters. 566

Land.—The area of the desam by settlement is 1,803·40 acres. This desam together with Mattupalli, Peringode, Pillakkattiri, Tolukad, Mathur, Alikara, Kuttanad, Perumannur and Chalisseri desams formed the old revenue amsam of Kothachira. Now Kothachira revenue amsam includes only Kothachira, Mathur and Peringode desams. 631

The areas under each description of land— 423 311

—	Wet.	Garden.	Occupied dry.	Unoccupied dry.	Unassessed.	Inam.	Porambokе.	Total.
	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.			ACS. C.
Private Jenmi.	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	...	...	...	1,787 57
Government Jenmi.	...	...	...	...	...		...	...
Unregistered lands.	...	...		...	15 83	...	...	15 83
	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	15 83	...	...	1,803 40

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423 The desam contains 130 survey fields in all. The settlement
651 was first introduced in this desam in fasli 1313.

The following table shows the nature and extent of the holdings and revenue as given in the 'A' register of the village:—

Holdings and Revenue.

Fasli.	Occupied area.								Deduct waste remitted.		Remainder charged.			
	Wet.		Garden.		Dry.		Total.							
	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.	Actual cultivation.	Waste charged.	Total extent charged.	Assessment.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.			ACS.		ACS.	RS. A.
1313	445·27	2,226 5	209·43	502	197·16	157 14	851·86	2,886 3	...	...	851·86	...	851·86	2,886 3

Fasli—*cont.*	Second crop.		Miscellaneous revenue.	Total ryotwari demand excluding waste remitted.	Deduct remission other than waste already shown in column 11.			Net demand for the year.	Amount collected within year.	
	Extent.	Charge.			Occasional remission other than for waste.	Other remissions and deductions.	Total.		Arrear.	Current.
	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)
	ACS.	RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.
1313	8·96	13 11	96 5	2,996 3	...	851 12	851 12	2,144 7	...	2,144 7

312 The ryots mostly depend on the mercy of the monsoon for the watering of fields. But throughout the summer season beginning from the end of December to the end of July, watering is carried on from wells and tanks, especially in the case of garden cultivation. Tanks and wells are not sufficient and those existing are not deep enough and frequently dry up towards March.

241 The chief crops cultivated are coconut, arecanut, paddy, gingelly, pulses, horsegram, plantain and jack.

231 Pasturage is obtainable for the cattle on the unoccupied dry lands. Water for the cattle is obtained from channels, private tanks and wells.

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There is hardly any public tank. One stream (channel) flows along the northern boundary of the desam during rainy seasons when the fields become flooded. But its utility is limited since with the summer the whole channel is dried up. There are private wells in all gardens and sometimes in the fields of corn. But they are shallow for the most part and the water-supply is inadequate. The ryots who are wretchedly poor cannot afford to utilise modern progress in the field of well-boring, nor are they conversant with such developments. 312

There are woods and forests near the desam as we have before mentioned, but they are of no practical use to the people. The forest, which is outside the boundary limit of this desam, is under Government supervision and people are not allowed to cut trees. Other resources of the forest, moreover, are hardly taken advantage of, partly by the general apathy of the cultivator for improvement and partly by its being situated sufficiently far to dissuade them from incurring the necessary loss involved. At the same time it is in a way an influence to the ryots' detriment, for tigers, boars, etc., which the Akalanum and Mattur hills breed occasionally, make nocturnal depredations on the ryots' stock and corn fields. The peasantry are helpless against these enemies. 137 136

Occupation of land.—The private jenmam ryotwari holdings during the year of settlement (fasli 1313) are classified as follows :— 423 427 [651]

Pattadars paying	Number.			Extent.		Assessment.	
	Single	Joint.	Total.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.
Re. 1 and less	2	...	2	...	50	1	8
Rs. 10 and less but over Re. 1	7	2	9	7	71	33	14
" 30 " " " 10 ...	3	2	5	18	21	96	7
" 50 " " " 30 ...	1	...	1	7	8	37	5
" 100 " " " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 250 " " " 100 ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 500 " " " 250 ...	1	...	1	99	56	401	13
" 1,000 " " " 500 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1,000 ...	1	...	1	718	80	2,315	4
Total ...	15	4	19	851	86	2,886	3

Out of 851·86 acres no less than 818·36 belong to the two jenmi landlords. There are no occupants of Government jenmam ryotwari land in the same year.

Almost all kanomdars are themselves cultivators. The two jenmis, who are Brahmans by caste, and nearly 10 other families

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423 who come immediately below in the caste scale, are prohibited
427 from cultivation by their social status, and hence have let or sublet their lands to tenants of lower castes.

427 The landholders themselves, who are in a minority, are fast disappearing. They are chiefly owners of small strips held for the most part by a kanom tenure from a jenmi. The growing indebtedness and the consequent process of alienation of lands which are now going on will ere long reduce these people to the rank of landless labourers. But the landholders must be distinguished from land owners. Strictly speaking those who own land are the pattadars who possess jenmam pattas and those few who hold from them lands on kanom tenure. The ownership of the kanomdar is very precarious, since for the most part the kanom being a small amount, and there being no governmental regulations against the arbitrary action of the jenmis, the kanomdars are at the mercy of their jenmis. The ancient right of usage of lands enjoyed by the people is now being sought to be taken away. The jenmis are oppressive in many ways. All storts of excuses are eagerly clutched at for extorting money from the tenantry. Besides the very high rate demanded at the time of a renewal of tenure (usually these tenures are held for 12 years), there are exactions on the occasion of a death, marriage or other religious festival in the jenmi's household, and fines often in amounts more than Rs. 100 are levied right and left for silly reasons. Various instances have come within the personal knowledge of the writer. One family had to return some lands two years ago to the jenmi because when the term expired and when application was made for a renewal, the fee demanded was so high that 12 years' profit from the land could hardly equal the amount. One man was fined Rs. 100, because he refused to pay 2 annas as a subscription for a religious festival which the jenmi was then conducting. Another case of arbitrary oppression was recently reported to the writer by the sufferers. The jenmi was contemplating a pilgrimage and all tenants were asked to give Rs. 10 each for it within 24 hours! These are actual cases. Up till 1916 no man other than the two jenmis was allowed to tile his house, to build an upstair building, or a gateway; even now it is rash for the ryot to ask for such permission. No woman is allowed to appear before the jenmi with covered breast, no man should approach him with more than single cloth wound round his waist, which should not fall below his knees. Even in these days of British rule these things are in actual existence! I have said so much to give an idea of the relation between the landlord and the tenant in this part of the country.

There are two other dangers to which the landholder is constantly exposed which need mention here, i.e., melcharth, and the recent policy of the jenmi to convert kanom holdings into verumpattam. Melcharth is the jenmi's right to make over by promise at his will to a higher bidder any portion of his land which is being enjoyed by the kanomdar under him on the strength of his right for the land for twelve years. This is constantly exercised by the jenmi and it has a very bad effect both economically and morally over the agricultural population. The other danger is of more recent origin and is the result of the panic created among the jenmis of British Malabar on the passing of the Jenmi-Kutiyan

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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

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427

Less than Re. 1	54
From Re. 1 to Rs. 5	100
„ Rs. 5 to Rs. 10	49
„ Rs. 10 to Rs. 20	22
„ Rs. 20 to Rs. 30	10
„ Rs. 30 to Rs. 50	19
More than Rs. 50	4
	258

Many especially of those paying under Rs. 2 hold only the plots of ground in which their dwellings are erected.

Classification of holdings according to ownership. 423 651

Pattadars paying an assessment of	Number.	Extent.	Assessment.
		ACS.	RS. A. P.
I. Re. 1 and less	2	0·26	0 15 0
II. Over Re. 1 and up to Rs. 10 (inclusive).	22	28·04	95 8 0
III. „ Rs. 10 „ „ 30 „	7	26·44	129 6 0
IV. „ „ 30 „ „ 50 „	6	65·04	234 7 0
V. „ „ 50 „ „ 100 „	3	55·59	196 5 0
VI. „ „ 100 „ „ 250 „	2	106·97	301 4 0
VII. „ „ 250 „ „ 500 „	1	62·15	274 7 0
VIII. „ „ 500 „ „ 1,000 „	...	...	...
IX. Over Rs. 1,000	1	645·04	2,469 1 0

Thus the greater part of the cultivated land is owned by a single pattadar—a Nambudiripad, a very enlightened and sympathetic landlord who has a reputation for fairness and kind treatment. The majority of the other pattadars are also Nambudiris, very often holding the land as trustees of temples.

The following table shows the rate of assessment, area so assessed, with amount of assessment, of wet, dry and garden lands:— 311 651

—	I. Wet land.		II. Garden land.		III. Occupied dry land.		IV. Unoccupied dry land.	
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.
At Rs. 7-8 per acre.	108·49	813 11	...	..	...	...	...	...
„ 6-4 „	194·87	1,215 15	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 6-0 „	0·09	0 9	0·03	0 3	...	...	..	...
„ 5-0 „	109·06	542 11	2·28	11 6	...	...	...	...
„ 4-0 „	39·21	157 5	7·09	28 6	...	...	...	...
„ 3-12 „	7·69	28 15	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 3-0 „	93·37	280 1	14·28	42 14	...	...	...	...
„ 2-0 „	128·00	256 13	36·43	72 14	3·23	6 9	43·53	87 0
„ 1-8 „	...	...	..	...	61·87	92 5	122·82	184 3
„ 1-0 „	...	...	49·48	49 14	98·84	99 0	288·66	288 11
„ 0-12 „	...	...	...	...	38·57	28 15	643·77	482 13
„ 0-10 „	...	...	...	...	3·42	2 3	148·42	92 12
Total	680·78	3,296 0	109·59	205 9	205·93	229 0	1,247·20	1,135 7

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actually go without the needed food and keep body and soul together as best they can. Well may economists and others speak of the power of resistance of the Indian peasant, his power of doing without! I wish I had some photographs of the living skeletons who call forth this praise!! But they are proud; they will never tell you the whole story. The village schoolmasters tell me that boys do not attend school regularly (though it is free) owing to actual starvation, cold hunger takes away all appetite for study. There are practically very few who do not owe something to the village money-lenders. Tenants are always in arrears with their rents; they sometimes even consume the grain reserved for seed. Villagers come begging for small loans just to tide over difficulties from day to day. The high rate of interest includes a large percentage of insurance for risk. Debts vary from a few rupees to hundreds. Exact information is not available. 426 735

Causes of indebtedness.—Poverty is of course the chief cause; other causes are want of suitable work, especially for women of the lower classes, the low rate of wages, due in its turn to inefficiency and weakness in bargaining, which exist side by side with improvident habits of the labourers, who are as a rule ignorant (though intelligent) and stoic; the growth of population without a proportionate increase in agricultural products and foodstuffs; the high, almost ruinous rates of interest, often as high as 36 per cent, which are both a cause and a result of poverty; an all round rise in prices, especially in foodstuffs; fast living and improvident habits among the richer—though this is rare—due to the desire to better their standard of life in response to western influences coming from cities. The Brahmans borrow largely to educate their sons and to marry their daughters. General extravagance is however unknown especially in food and dress. Many of the poorer villagers beg you to give them a meal or one of your old used up cloths.

Only a very small percentage, not more than 10 per cent, of the debtors have liberated themselves from debt. The tendency is for a perpetuation of debts. Debt is driving many villagers to other and distant places. When they have earned a small sum they return, but are soon forced into their old state. Of course provident habits do not always exist.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

There is no communal income of any sort in the village.

Selling prices of land.—Owing to the prestige and social importance of landownership, the landowning class never sell their lands even for good prices unless driven to it by necessity. This raises the price of land. The rights of ownership peculiar to Malabar, known as janmam, are very complete and thorough and not ordinarily found in ryotwari areas. Janmam land yields very low rates of interest on the price paid for it; prices are so high, having risen 25 to 50 per cent in recent times. Janmam land is usually let out on lease, usually for twelve years renewable at the option of the owner, if the due renewal fees are paid. Even Kanom tenure rights have risen in value, though they depend so much on the good will of the landlord, the tenants having no legal protection against eviction, or arbitrary enhancement of rents. Kanom lands 435 423

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423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry. The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the
435 land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

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land is the chief source of a livelihood and industries do not exist. 178
What is the conclusion? The increasing emigration to other 511
places points in the same direction. The fact that the emigrants
return as soon as they earn something shows that they are [167]
not likely to leave home unless hard-pressed. The increasing indebtedness of the villagers and the growth in the number of assignments and mortgages are other evidence. But population has increased only 7 per cent between 1901 and 1911. Wages are very low and have not risen in proportion to prices. Prices of food-stuffs have in many cases doubled within my own personal knowledge. Articles like milk, ghee, etc., have doubled in price within the last ten years. The price of grain has risen enormously in a generation. I have been told on good authority that some fifty years ago grain was four times as cheap as to-day. Only the land-owning classes and those who have surplus grain to sell have profited from this high rise. Many independent owners of land have been forced to sell their land to keep themselves free from debt and to pay the Government taxes. Taxation is much heavier: when the settlement was introduced into the village some twelve years ago the assessment was doubled and many villagers suffered. Against all this evidence of deterioration one must place the improvement in the standard of living of some classes and the growth of education, though unsatisfactory in many respects.

As for possibilities of economic improvement and the opportunities therefor, it may be said that the former are many, the latter few (as things now are) unless the villagers get help from outside—from the Government. In the sphere of agriculture improvement is badly needed, though the means of bringing it seem to be lacking, methods of cultivation could be improved and the use of scientific manure introduced. But all this requires capital and that is conspicuous by its absence. The advantage must be practically demonstrated to the cultivator and to the landlord, who alone can take the initiative herein. It seems to be impossible to introduce scientific farming so long as the system of
scattered and strip holdings continues. The landlord must get his [423]
lands continuous; as it is as many as half a dozen landlords may have strips of land in one survey division of half a dozen acres. A man holding 10 acres may have it in 20 parcels, a distance of a mile from one plot to another is not uncommon.

About the possibility of extending the area of irrigated land 312
only an expert could speak with confidence. As it is, out of a total area of 2,380 acres only 680·78 acres are wet land and 110 acres garden land—the rest coming under 'uno[illegible] or occupied dry.' It would be a very good thing if m[illegible] could be brought under cultivation than at presen[illegible] not appear that many more wells could be sunk with [illegible] At present the wet and garden lands abound in wells, [illegible] land being without any. It would not pay to sink wells in [illegible] take out water according to the existing methods. If cheaper and more efficient methods are possible, then it would be worth attempting.

Something might be done—must be done, if the village is to 600
improve—to ameliorate the general condition of the villagers and

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnittu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Bráhmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purinic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

101 been after the Brāhmans changed their title to Aiyar (father), by which name the non-Brāhman people invariably referred to them, that Sūdras began to be termed Pillai. We find that the Vellālas of the Tamil country and the Nāyars of Travancore called themselves Pillai from very early times. The formal ceremony of paying down a sum of money, and obtaining a distinction direct from the Sovereign was known as tirumukham pitikkuka, or catching the face of the king, and enabled the recipients to add, besides the honorary suffix Pillai, the distinctive prefix Kanakku, or accountant, to their name. So important were the privileges conferred by it that even Sanku Annavi, a Brāhman Dalava, obtained it at the hand of the reigning Mahārāja, and his posterity at Vempannūr have enjoyed the distinction until the present day. The titles Pillai and Kanakku are never used together. The name of an individual would be, for example, either Krishna Pillai or Kanakku Rāman Krishnan, Rāman being the name of the Karanavan or the maternal uncle. A higher title, Chempakaraman, corresponds to the knighthood of mediæval times, and was first instituted by Mahārāja Marthanda Varma in memory, it is said, of his great Prime Minister Rāma Aiyyan Dalawa. The individual, whom it was the king's pleasure to honour, was taken in procession on the back of an elephant through the four main streets of the fort, and received by the Prime Minister, seated by his side, and presented with pān-supāri (betel). Rare as this investiture is in modern times, there are many ancient houses, to which this title of distinction is attached in perpetuity. The title Kanakku is often enjoyed with it, the maternal uncle's name being dropped, *e.g.*, Kanakku Chempakaraman Krishnan. Tambi (younger brother) is another title prevalent in

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13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

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184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is
[574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by
[424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain
[643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is
[782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

Murder among the Nayars

627 613 628 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196). Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown. [635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village, [582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order [608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised 614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's 564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally 591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters [425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
595 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
656 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
178 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[161] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it; and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their
825 powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends
776 also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

264 626 564 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were persuaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

621 178 The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it [425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar 351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called 613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women. [562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns 421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family, [177] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Tāliketta kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

[P. 52]

CHAPTER III.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

592 613 [611] Inheritance. The Nayars follow the *marumakkathâyam* law of succession, *i. e.*, the law which regulates succession through the female line. The senior male member called the *kâranavan* is entitled to the full possession of the property, and is absolute in its management. The junior members, on the other hand, have a claim to residence and maintenance in the family house. They cannot call for an account except as an incident to a prayer for the removal of the manager for gross misconduct, nor claim any specific share of the income, nor even require that the maintenance provided for them should be in proportion to the income of the *tarawâd*. An absolute discretion in this direction is vested in the manager who is the legal guardian of every member of the family.[1] He is not accountable to any member in the *tarawâd* in respect of its income, nor can a suit be maintained for an account of the *tarawâd* property in the absence of fraud on his part. He is under no obligation to support any member of his *tarawâd* by his own labour or from his self-acquisitions. The only restraint on him in the management is, that he cannot alienate the lands of the family except with the consent of all the other members and without proper necessity.[2] If a family has so far increased in the number of its members that they cannot conveniently live under the same roof any longer, it divides itself with the consent of the senior member into *tâvazhis* to each of which is assigned a portion of the property for maintenance, and such *tâvazhis* may reside in separate houses or farm-houses belonging to the family and appropriating from the lands newly assigned to them an income sufficient to maintain themselves. In the partition of

[425]

1. Vide Mayne's Hindu Law, sec. 268.
2. I. L. R. II, Mad. 328.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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175 The
564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days
during which every method of torture known to the keepers of
the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued
in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore
that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty
person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into
a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted
guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form
of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not
confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a
mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrap-
ped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was
guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of
alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom
seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a
cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Ucharal is the date on which all agricultural leases should expire, and demand for surrender of property should not be made at any other time, but the courts, by a liberal interpretation, have extended the term up to the day of *Vishu*. Special *Ucharal* festivals are held at Cherpulasseri in the Walluvanad Taluk and near Shoranur, at which straw models of cattle are taken in procession to the temples of Bhagavati.

241
425
[692]
[184]

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10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[426] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings
525 by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts subscribed by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of persons agree that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by periodical instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, should take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all being returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some
[301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* [i.e., on the death of a man his property is equally divided among his sons.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being 454
no openings for the same.

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, 426
much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the [691] Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to [582] be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substan- [871] tial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming.

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The 621
Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement 653
in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out.

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local 796
temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival.

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

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796 beat the drums according to their 'science' for two or three hours. The figure of the God or Goddess is taken on the back of the middle elephant in the row. There is a display of fireworks at night.

794 A few temples in the village are managed by private people or Janmis, usually Nambudri Brahmans. Such temples have landed property managed by these Janmis who generally make use of the profits. Recently the Government has been trying to encroach upon the temple properties in its capacity of *melkoyma*; this is very much resented by the Nambudri Jánmis.

The common people as a rule have no part or lot in temple management or expenditure.

426 *State loans.*—Only one person in the village has borrowed from the Government a loan of Rs. 400 to be paid back in ten instalments of Rs. 40 each with interest at 5 per cent. The small landholders do not approach the Government for help; the mediocre landholders rent their land to others; while the few big ones have money of their own if they want to make any improvement. The fact is that agriculture is routine work with many people; no permanent improvements are thought of by the majority.

Sanitary condition.—Plague and tuberculosis are not heard of. 164 Malaria only affects those who resort for agricultural purposes to the foot of the hills four or five miles east from the village. Attacks of cholera frequently occur among the local Muhammadans, who are as a rule quite insanitary, poor, living in low and ill-ventilated thatched huts or hovels; one is sick of the stinking smell when one approaches their huts. The local Christians, though equally poor, are better in this respect. The houses of most of the Brahmans and the majority of the Nayars are decent. The hovels of the lower castes and working men again are poor and insanitary. [361] As the houses are not built in rows, but separate, each having a compound big or small, epidemic diseases such as small-pox when they come at all are easily avoided. But the case is different in the quarters of the Muhammadans and Christians, who build their houses in streets.

The chief endemic diseases are fever, rheumatism, attacks of bile.

759 There are plenty of snakes in the village everywhere. One sometimes hears of deaths caused by snake-bites. There are however a few who pretend to cure snake-bites by incantations aided by medicines.

There is a Government free dispensary established in the 'town' where the Apothecary is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. But most people resort to native (ayurvedic) physicians or vaidyans. Ayurveda, or the Hindu science of medicine, makes use of vegetable drugs both in the raw and dried state. The physician comes to your house and prescribes a certain mixture according to the directions laid down in his code which he has committed to memory in the form of verses. The drugs can be got from the market, or from a neighbouring hill, or even from one's own compound.

This science is handed down from father to son in certain families in Malabar who form even now some of the most distinguished native physicians in Malabar. Even in a petty village

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agricultural classes but only to the well-to-do and that in a lump sum, such as Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 or even Rs. 10,000. The chief purposes for which the well-to-do borrow are (1) to displace tenants by paying off the cost of improvement as explained in the introduction on land, (2) in the case of Brahmans for marriage of their daughters, (3) to rich debauchees, and they are not very few, on mortgage of their lands, thus in the end taking away the mortgaged land, (4) to big merchants who carry on the export trade in oil and coconuts and others who are engaged in trade. 452

The passion for jewellery which in former days was present only among Brahmans in Malabar—not so in other districts—is unfortunately spreading among other classes too, and a large amount of money is yearly spent on it. At the present time every man of means will have at least Rs. 200 worth of ornaments and, in a rich man's house, Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000 is the usual amount. The total amount of jewellery may be estimated at Rs. 1,00,000. This is the much talked of 'hoarded wealth' of the village, though the jewels are in daily use and not hidden. Nobody has hidden anything. 301 454

It is not possible to get the exact amount of agricultural indebtedness. I have already stated that the landowners and other rich persons do not lend to the agricultural classes. But who lends to the agricultural classes? The sowcar or the professional money-lender, the middle class man who is not rich but just earns enough for maintenance and some small saving. The number of professional money-lending shops is twelve, and a large number of persons of the middle class are also engaged in the same occupation. A rough estimate of the amount of money lent by the people may be made by a reference to the account books of these money-lenders. They have together lent about Rs. 1,50,000. The money lent by others must amount to more, since they are more lenient than the sowcars, and only when the poor cannot get money from others do they apply to the sowcar. It has been probably estimated at two lakhs. 452

A little explanation of how money is lent may not be out of place here. Suppose a man wants to borrow Rs. 50. The interest that is demanded is 2½ per cent per mensem; there is deducted from the amount lent an allowance called the bank allowance, generally 10 per cent, and also six months' interest or Rs. 6-4-0. So the amount actually paid to the borrower is only Rs. 38-12-0 and he executes a promissory-note for Rs. 50. If a man actually wants Rs. 50 he must incur a debt of Rs. 65. By the third year the man must pay the whole amount and the interest. By that time the total amount would have reached nearly Rs. 90. The poor man is not able to pay the money since the very purpose for which he borrowed is to maintain himself and not for productive purposes. He rewrites the note. For what amount? Rs. 65 plus interest for 2½ years plus compound interest plus bank allowance plus six months' further interest plus a commission (which is a new innovation since last year) mounts up to nearly Rs. 125, i.e., nearly double the original amount. In three years he has paid six months' interest and yet he has to pay double the amount he borrowed. This is an ordinary case, but interest at the rate of 3 or 3½ per cent per mensem is not uncommon. 426

Very few of the poor once in debt ever release themselves. On the other hand the number who are in debt is increasing from year to year. Any amount of money that is in the possession of the

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426 money-lenders is absorbed in no time. In the last five years the number of money-lending shops has doubled and their funds invested by this means have trebled. There is yet a demand for money which is unsatisfied.

Another method of supporting, as it were, the poor, is to lend the seed for sowing on the promise that for every 100 measures lent they will return after the first crop, i.e., after four months from the time of lending, 120 or 130 measures. This means an interest of 60 per cent per annum. The cultivators do not as a rule save their own seed, because when they have no means of living they natually use their seed for food. I am told this is the case with every paddy cultivator excepting the three rich agriculturists who are landowners. It must be confessed here that without such borrowing the cultivation itself could not at present be carried on.

The village is free from padials. The debtors only pay interest, but in the Palghat taluk the system of padials survives.

The causes of indebtedness are not far to seek. Economic backwardness is the primary cause. Waste of money on drink and evil habits is not uncommon. In some cases debt is due to ambi-
[585] tious schemes which fail. Excessive display in marriage is not common in Malabar as in eastern districts. Non-Brahmans, especially the castes below the Nayars, pay only Rs. 20 or Rs. 30, according to their means, to the bridegroom, and sometimes not even that. Another Rs. 25 will raise a marriage above the ordinary level. Taking into account that a marriage will be performed in a family only once in five or six years this expenditure of Rs. 50 or so cannot be deemed great.

The ordinary labourers, who number about 500, maintain themselves by their daily work and they are never in debt. It is the agricultural classes and those who are engaged in petty trade that
[427] are in debt. The only asset of the tenants is that they have to pay as advance one year's rent to the landowners and they receive for the advance 6 per cent interest. Even this is paid in some cases by borrowing.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

476 *Communal life.*—The Brahmans of this village have formed
794 themselves into a society for mutual aid and convenience. This organization of the society is on the model of the old village republics. It exists for social purposes only. Two persons are elected biennially to look after the affairs and the income of the society. Every house is represented by its head in the village assembly and that assembly elects the persons. The sources of income to the society are--

(1) the interest on the already existing property which is about Rs. 3,000;

(2) for all social functions such as marriage, etc., the society as a whole has a claim for a fixed sum. The total income from these two sources may be estimated at Rs. 350.

The duty of the society is to appoint the village priest, village barber, village trumpeter and other persons essential for the performance of social or religious functions.

The whole income is spent on the worship of God. The particular ways in which it should be spent have been fixed long ago, and comprise a special feast for the Brahmans once a year, provision of a burial-ground and other public and necessary places

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178 426 The increase in the number of families must not be taken for a sign of prosperity. I have sought out its causes. It has both a social and an economic cause. The breaking up of the old 'Tharvads' into small homesteads, owing to want of harmony among the members, mismanagement of property due to ignorance and rank illiteracy, growing indebtedness of the once rich Tharvads to the local money-lenders or the landlord, are the causes of the downfall of the great Tharvads of old which half a century ago were gracing this desam; the stories yet current in those parts of men of high worth and talents who belonged to them, and the occasional ruined foundations of their family houses alone remain. Indeed joint families have almost all broken up and the Tharvad properties all absorbed by the local 'Jenmis.' The people are day by day being reduced to want and dependence on the landlord and the creditor.

564 The desam cannot be called a 'caste' desam strictly speaking. There are no separate quarters allotted on the basis of caste difference. In spite of the rigorous observance of the 'system of pollution' between caste and caste, peculiar to the Malabar country, all castes hold lands, work, and have families promiscuously throughout the land. For example, every landholding farmer, who is usually a Nayar, has in his family precincts (indeed far enough away to be out of reach of pollution) small homesteads of his labourers who are generally Cherumas or Pulayas * by caste.

There are—

3	Brahman	families ...	24	individuals.
3	Ambalavasi	" ...	36	"
137	Nayar	" ...	956	"
85	Tiyya	" ...	584	"
80	Cheruma	" ...	390	"
24	Muhammadan	" ...	27	"
1	Christian family	...	6	"

[463] The *Tiyya* class includes the families of the artisans—'Asari' (carpenter—two families), 'Karuvan' (blacksmith—one family), 'Kollan' (shoemaker—two families), 'Thattan' (goldsmith—one family), 'Mannan' (washerman of the lower class—one family), 'Panikkan' (stone-mason—one family).

Children living	... ...	642		
" dead	... ...	188	}	Born within the last ten years.
" born lifeless	... ...	67	}	

Children below ten are alone included in this. This has been ascertained by enquiry among the mothers.

342 Homesteads number 266. The homesteads of the villagers are miserable looking and squalid, frequently being only mud hovels of eight by five feet, more or less. Not more than 40 houses out of 333 are houses worthy of the name. The rest are simply hovels, often the very picture of poverty and famine.

* Between these two depressed castes there are only minute differences.

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west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around [291] the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to [435] five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476] along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

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465 Wages are paid both in money and in kind; more often in kind since they find it more to their immediate advantage. The rate of wages is two annas six pies or its equivalent in corn at the standard price, for an unskilled labourer; and four and at times five annas for skilled artisans.

435 The price of paddy varies in different seasons. In the harvest season and sometimes after it, the price ranges between 2½ and 2 paras a rupee. But towards June and July the price goes up to between 1 and 1½ paras a rupee. This is the only food which [262] can be called staple. In times of scarcity the poorer people depend on jack fruits, mango and fish, of which the latter alone need be purchased, and that is cheaper than other foods.

454 Excepting the jenmis who are large zamindars, there are but six houses which have made savings. The bulk of the families are unable to liberate themselves from the grasp of the creditors.

The capital saved by these families is employed in lending to the needy agriculturists. A microscopically small amount has gone on jewellery among these middle class families, but with the jenmi the case is different. It looks as though the capitalist knows no way to employ his capital except lending to neighbours.

426 *Debt.*—The extent of indebtedness cannot be definitely ascertained by enquiry. But from what I have been able to gather from the accounts of two capitalist families, I have been able to make an almost correct estimate of the state of things with the agriculturist. Ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 800 one family account consists of the names of thirty debtors from Kothachira. These are all standing debts and the interest on these varies from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Twelve per cent is the current rate of "polite" interest, as people call it. But there are capitalists who lend money even at 24 and 30 per cent in the neighbourhood. The capital thus employed, however, is not the result of direct saving but is ancestral property bequeathed by their fathers, who were the heads of a jenmi family.

511 Thus we find that capitalists who have money at all to lend, have got the money by other sources and not by saving. The 426 agriculturist has many difficulties to meet with. He has no land and not enough stock and implements. His family is large and the expense is ordinarily far beyond his income. From his field cultivation, after all expenses have been deducted, he gets very little for himself. The rents are very high. The capital employed in stock is vital to him and yearly his lot is to lose by death of cattle either by disease or by wild beasts. Last year there were two cases of the latter. Those who have garden cultivation have this profit to utilize. But the majority own no gardens. The population has grown but not the means of subsistence, and no family except the few named find it possible to maintain their family purely from the proceeds of their toil. Thus they incur debt, but debt once incurred hangs heavy on the debtor. Not only is he unable to find means to pay the high rate of interest on the previous year's debt, but he must borrow at all costs again if he is to avoid absolute starvation of his family. This is regularly continued. Litigation follows and an additional and unprofitable expense is thus laid on his head. Law interferes and whatever property he has is lost. But the law does not kill the people, and

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so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [517] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1 ...	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

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563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

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actually go without the needed food and keep body and soul together as best they can. Well may economists and others speak of the power of resistance of the Indian peasant, his power of doing without! I wish I had some photographs of the living skeletons who call forth this praise!! But they are proud; they will never tell you the whole story. The village schoolmasters tell me that boys do not attend school regularly (though it is free) owing to actual starvation, cold hunger takes away all appetite for study. There are practically very few who do not owe something to the village money-lenders. Tenants are always in arrears with their rents; they sometimes even consume the grain reserved for seed. Villagers come begging for small loans just to tide over difficulties from day to day. The high rate of interest includes a large percentage of insurance for risk. Debts vary from a few rupees to hundreds. Exact information is not available. 426 735

Causes of indebtedness.—Poverty is of course the chief cause; other causes are want of suitable work, especially for women of the lower classes, the low rate of wages, due in its turn to inefficiency and weakness in bargaining, which exist side by side with improvident habits of the labourers, who are as a rule ignorant (though intelligent) and stoic; the growth of population without a proportionate increase in agricultural products and foodstuffs; the high, almost ruinous rates of interest, often as high as 36 per cent, which are both a cause and a result of poverty; an all round rise in prices, especially in foodstuffs; fast living and improvident habits among the richer—though this is rare—due to the desire to better their standard of life in response to western influences coming from cities. The Brahmans borrow largely to educate their sons and to marry their daughters. General extravagance is however unknown especially in food and dress. Many of the poorer villagers beg you to give them a meal or one of your old used up cloths.

Only a very small percentage, not more than 10 per cent, of the debtors have liberated themselves from debt. The tendency is for a perpetuation of debts. Debt is driving many villagers to other and distant places. When they have earned a small sum they return, but are soon forced into their old state. Of course provident habits do not always exist.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

There is no communal income of any sort in the village.

Selling prices of land.—Owing to the prestige and social importance of landownership, the landowning class never sell their lands even for good prices unless driven to it by necessity. This raises the price of land. The rights of ownership peculiar to Malabar, known as janmam, are very complete and thorough and not ordinarily found in ryotwari areas. Janmam land yields very low rates of interest on the price paid for it; prices are so high, having risen 25 to 50 per cent in recent times. Janmam land is usually let out on lease, usually for twelve years renewable at the option of the owner, if the due renewal fees are paid. Even Kanom tenure rights have risen in value, though they depend so much on the good will of the landlord, the tenants having no legal protection against eviction, or arbitrary enhancement of rents. Kanom lands 435 423

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includes hardly any females. Some 12 per cent can write the vernacular. Nearly one per cent can talk and read and write English. There are some ten pandits or others who have made a special study of grammar, logic and rhetoric, medicine, astronomy and astrology, all according to Sanskrit works. Two are able Sanskrit scholars, both Brahmans. All the Brahman scholars—some four in all—are well versed in Vedic lore. But no one cares nowadays for such learning, and in consequence their scholarship is miserably inadequately rewarded. They have given up the idea of bringing up their sons in their own fashion and instead send them to English schools. There is one boy in Madras in the Presidency College and some eight others in colleges in Calicut and Palghat, reading in the High School or college classes. 871 [212]

Most of the Brahman boys proceed to advanced schools; there are about ten such now. No Brahman girls proceed to higher schools. But with the advent of an elementary school in the village, they attend that. Formerly they learnt at home or in pial schools with boys. Social difficulties stand in the way of their advanced study. Non-Brahman boys also now go in small numbers to advanced schools. They number not more than a dozen, and none of them has reached a high standard.

One or two of the more advanced students get scholarships covering the school fees; all of them manage with great difficulty to defray their expenses, by borrowing money at high rates of interest, by starting what are called "Kuris," i.e., loans which are paid back by instalments; by selling any property they possess, etc. There is no one in the village who can easily maintain his son at school. Fathers, however, spend their all on their sons' education, hoping that they will get remunerative employment afterwards. [426]

A few boys from the village who have passed through secondary schools have obtained small jobs; none has a good situation. Poorly paid schoolmasters, railway employees and clerks make up the list of the small number of such persons—not more than a dozen. It is more and more difficult for persons who have not got high educational qualifications to get suitable employment. Boys of the village who have received a secondary education and cannot proceed further complain of getting no satisfactory work and having to stay at home or return to their old occupations, which they have very likely neglected and forgotten during their school life. So farmers complain that such education is no good to their sons and we can say nothing in reply, unless we can guarantee situations for the educated. "What is the use of all this fine education," they ask, "if it does not procure a living and makes the boys unfit for what work they know? We would much rather keep them at home to stick to that work and earn a living." How can one urge the cultural and other benefits of education in the face of this practical argument? The quality and kind of education must be improved, made more practical and a better preparation for life.

There are some private libraries of Sanskrit books and palm-leaf manuscripts with the pandits numbering perhaps some 500 in all. The school has a little library where magazines (in the vernacular) and books (English and vernacular) to the number of about 100 are kept. Some of the more advanced students—there are only two or three—have small libraries of English books, 217

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[For information on tenancy reform legislation in Travancore-Cochin see 39: Patel, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 345-350.]

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
● 427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord.
[794] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-
[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired
[427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
794 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[264] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
[611] "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
[783] ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandrv, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[439] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
564 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
•427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washerman's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property group - - Analyst]

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that they were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages

644 We saw that the traditional property-group of
423 retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every
[427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants." 564

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. 564 554 [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran*. In most villages the men of retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs. 621 613 564 566 471 427

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristocratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They 564 794

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[357] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

357 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 564 422 423

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some [427] garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal [701] residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

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In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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423 613 429 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head- [634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambûdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tâli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambûdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tâli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tâli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambûdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabâr, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambûdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambûdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tâli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tâli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tâli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tâli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [62] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannâns, called Mannâns in the south) and barbers (Kâvutiyyans, called Vâtthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [420] [423] Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13¼ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 99 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11¼ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulles Marco Polo, page 374.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas ; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government. [427]

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February.

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves.

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them.

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants

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105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the
[423] past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and
[864] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state.
564 Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[929] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[903] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[963] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[864] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aborigipals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
954 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, The reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

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Tiyas
Thandans

*595 [114] With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The [611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they [920] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they [35] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green [34] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him. [51] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

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Tiyas

could get Panju to say at first was that she "did not look after us enough". However, when I insisted, I heard that she did not satisfy them sexually, which again might be either that Ramon got the lion's share of the marriage or that the two younger men did not find their elder brother's wife very attractive. Anyhow, they asked their maternal uncle (their father had died in the meantime) to find them another wife. After a show of resistance in which he said that it was not right and that they should remain with Kuniyama as tradition dictated, their mother's brother again gave in and got Nani for them; they married her when they were twenty and fifteen respectively. They were now forty and thirty five, and their common wife was thirty five. They had put up a separate household, to leave Raman and Sankara in the main building, and theirs was the smaller house on the other side of the yard, wholly within the same compound, however, so that the *tarawad* property was not completely torn asunder.

The land upon which the family lived was theirs, and not rented. After the death of their father, their mother inherited it, and when she died, it was divided up between the sons. Mayadi was also gone, but Raman junior, his son, and the four surviving brothers, Raman senior, Sankara, Panju and Narayana, each received one fifth of the whole. There was a meeting in the big house, they told me, about a year after the death of their mother (they presumably inherited the property undivided until then), and it took them three days to come to an agreement. Influential neighbours, the elders of the *tarawad* and the two brothers-in-law, Kunyadi and Maniken, also attended. The whole property, paddy fields, cattle, grain and seeds, agricultural tools, implements, the house and the household requisites and furniture, was evaluated in money and divided into five equal shares. Panju and Narayana did not split their shares; they kept the two fifths they received undivided, as they constituted a polyandrous household. The women did not inherit anything because they had been married off to others. Women among the Thandans can inherit from their parents, I heard, if there are no male heirs.

On the 27th of October 1949, I visited a Tiya (Thiyya) polyandrous family at Kadevelur in Tallapilli taluk of north Cochin. These people were *kanam* tenants of a Nambudri Brahmin, to whom they paid thirty rupees a year in rent, plus eight hundred measures of rice per crop.[1]

[1] I was told eight hundred *parahs*, but this is hardly possible as: 1 Cochin *parah* = 10 *edangalis* = 40 *nalis* = 1,720 *tolas*; as 42½ Cochin *tolas* = 1 lb., 1 Cochin *parah* = c. 40½ lbs. Eight hundred *parahs* would then = 40½ × 800 = 32,400 lbs. The measure may have been a smaller one, an *edangali* or even a *nali*.

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Tiyas

We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this

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Tiyas

We still had time that afternoon, to drive back into the village of Perumpillav and to interview some more polyandrous Tiyas. We drove to a Tiya house to have a talk with a man, a woman and a boy who confirmed to us that they belonged to families practising polyandry. 595*

The man was called Tami; he was fifty six years old and worked as a coolie. He had the *Kudiyiruppu* lease of a house for which he paid three rupees a year to a Mopla, Melethil Kunyuni Haidaros. The latter was himself the *verumpattamdar* of a *janmi* called Cheralayam Nambidi. (I was unable to find out if he was a Brahmin, an Ambalavasi or a Samantan; with the title *Nambidi* which he bore, he could have been any one of the three, but I suspect that he was a Brahmin, as this is the caste which owns the land in north Cochin.) [115] [427] [423]

Tami's household name was Kanadiwalapil, which was also that of his *tarawad*. He and his brother, Narayan, were married to Chidu, alias Sri Devi, a woman now aged fifty. The younger brother was his junior by twenty one years and had been married as second husband to their common wife when he was only five years old. There were five children, of whom the two eldest were girls, now married off elsewhere. All the boys were unmarried, and worked with their fathers as coolies. 595* 601

I found the informant extremely difficult to question. He was continually contradicting himself, and pretended that he knew no names nor ages. Thus I was unable to discover the name of his wife's *tarawad*, how many children his second daughter had had, and the ages of his two eldest sons, Velu and Kutan. I give the genealogy as I struggled to make it, in Table 7, but I fear that it is sadly incomplete and perhaps not even reliable. It was nevertheless of interest to find out something, however little, from a Tiya polyandrous labourer. [115]

We next turned to the woman. She was accompanied by her twelve year old son, Balakrishnan, and at once showed herself, in striking contrast to her predecessor, to be bright and helpful. This was a great relief after the previous painful session. I was able to record the name of her *tarawad*, but did not manage to ascertain that of the household into which she had married.

She told me that she had had five husbands, all of them paid (free) agricultural labourers, living as *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the same Cheralayam Nambidi *janmi*. She did not know the amount of rent paid yearly, but told me that her husbands' family had been settled here for a very long time – for eighty or a hundred years, as she put it. They had little work to do, not enough in fact to keep such a large family alive. They had been toddy tappers once. Kalyany had been married publicly

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tarawad name was Neripatta, and the property now belonged to the old woman and her sons. They were *verumpattam* cultivators for a Nayar *kanamdar*, the Shoranur *desammangalam* (village headman) whom I had met. They paid a rent of five rupees. 595* 601 [427]

I heard that of the old generation, the four brothers, Paini, Krishna, Raman, Aiyappan and Narayan, were dead – although there was some doubt about Narayan, the last one. As he had emigrated to Singapore and had never come back, they presumed that he had died there. They had all been wed polyandrously to Kali when she was seventeen, and she was now left with her four sons, who had begun by being polyandrous, but who had eventually taken wives of their own, the common wife, Paru, having stayed with the eldest, Velandi. The property had, however, not been split up, and they lived in the mansion-sized house, which was happily large enough to contain them all. Presumably it was also sufficiently big to keep the women from quarrelling and dragging the men into their squabbles – something which people who live in polyandry seem particularly to fear. Of the third generation, the two grandsons, Velu and Krishna, had also lived polyandrously, having taken one Kalyany as a common wife. Like their two sisters they had, however, died, aged thirty and twenty respectively, leaving a couple of boys with their widow to look after. There had thus been three generations of polyandrous marriages in this family. [167]

Another point of interest was the fact that two of Kali's sons, Paragnoden and Krishna had broken away, the former after having first been married with his elder brothers to Paru. They had married their fathers' sisters' daughters, Vali in the first case, and Janeki in the second. When I enquired why this was so, I found it difficult to get a precise answer. I was told that was because this was a "right" marriage, and that if possible, marriage with a *machchunan* is "best". But I evoked only silence and some quizzical looks when I asked why then Paragnoden was first married polyandrously to Paru. It seemed to me – although this is only my personal impression and I was not told so – that the polyandrous marriage was gone through with because it was customary in those days, when the elder brother got married, for the younger ones to join in. Later, when Paragnoden, for reasons which he did not impart to me, felt like putting up a household of his own, he naturally turned to his cross-cousin, on his fathers' side. He was eighteen when he married Paru, with his brothers, and twenty two when he left her and took Vali to wife. This would not account, however, for Krishna, the youngest, not having also been married to Paru. It may be, of course that he was 595* 582 601

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*595 the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to
564 Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In con-
[361] trast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the
Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather
[342] miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite
loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs
[241] about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now
[231] also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps
in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

*595 We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged
[601] fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their
wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by
[574] us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of
hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to
drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the
[611] Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected,
[614] and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only
observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom
*595 they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple
●427 *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-
293 mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the
harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from
the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work"
[464] (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to
raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and
*595 they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of
[326] goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given
[436] this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they
asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached
Rs. 77?

[601] Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) =
[804] 866.40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866.40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

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thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

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kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappana near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

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Kolla-Kurups

428 524 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

429 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 56 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise [305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather [288] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-
349 kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the [485] south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated [351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, [291] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[Text continues on P. 206]

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Kolla-Kurups

614 564 The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in [428] the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

*595 601 I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing [126] at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

*595 ●427 465 The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

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Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his employees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the verandah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once polyandrous union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breastfeeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 [868] [126] Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 614 [428] Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

*595 [429]

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

564 950 901

[Text continues on p. 214]

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Pulluvans

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
T Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

177 564 members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

177 564 595 Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. [428] Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheritance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

[423] [427] [1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

423 The revenue paid to the State varies according to the nature of the tenure. It is only the "Pandaravaka verumpattam" lands 651 which pay the full pattam or share due to the State. The Pandaravaka verumpattamdars have full rights to the soil of the lands they hold and their rights remain undisturbed so long as they regularly pay the State revenue, but the rights to metals and minerals are reserved to the State.

In *Pandaravaka kanam*, the land is held on a lease in consideration of a sum of money supposed to have been advanced to the State, and consequently a certain amount is deducted from the State demand on account of interest on the amount advanced. Before the new settlement was made in 1905 it was the custom to renew the lease every twelve years on the renewal of which the kanamdar was to pay over 20 per cent of the kanam amount, plus half of the full pattam (rent) for one year and a fee of 5 per cent of the kanam amount or Rs. 3-2-0 (whichever is greater) for issuing a fresh renewal. But this practice is now done away with and the tenure is for all practical purposes the same as Pandaravaka verumpattam tenure with this difference only that from the assessment due thereon a deduction of one-third is made.

In Puravaka lands (literally lands which are outside) a third party called the Janmi is recognized as holding proprietorship and therefore entitled to share the produce with the cultivator and the Sirkar. The tenure is assessed by the Sirkar in the case of nilams at half the rates fixed for Pandaravaka verumpattam nilams and in the case of parambas at one-fourth.

Inams are personal grants or grants made in some cases for the performance of certain specified services in religious institutions, etc., and in others for services rendered on some previous occasion or for some other similar reasons either absolutely or on certain specified conditions. The deductions range from free assessment to one-third of the Pandaravaka verumpattam assessment.

In all these cases of tenure a royalty cess of six pies per rupee calculated on Pandaravaka verumpattam assessment is payable to the Sirkar.

•427 The *Janmis* of Puravaka land let their land under different tenures, viz., verumpattam in which they make full assessment; 423 kanam and inam they treat as favourable, but the rates are not so fixed or settled as those of the Sirkar's tenures. The leases of the kanam * lands of the janmis are also renewed for twelve years, the janmi collecting certain dues from their tenants for the renewal of the same. The title of the tenant of such lands is precarious for the kanamdar can be evicted on the janmi paying back the kanam amount † at the end of the lease of twelve years. This state of affairs was unsatisfactory, and the State Government has recently passed a Bill called the "Cochin Tenancy Bill" of 1914, an extremely moderate measure indeed, passed in the teeth of much opposition from the Janmis. The Regulation intends "to make better provision for the payment of compensation for the improvements made by tenants, and provide for the speedy realization of rent and other customary dues, by investing the District

* [Kanam = lease. Kanamdars = leaseholders.—Ed.]

† I.e., the amount the kanamdar has deposited with the Janmi at the time of taking up the lease.

427 Munsifs and District Judges with summary jurisdiction in the matter." The provisions in the regulation apply only to "Kanam
423 tenants who, by themselves or through their predecessors in interest, have uninterruptedly held the holding for a period of not less than thirty years prior to the coming into force of this Regulation," and provide some restrictions on the part of the landlord in matters of renewal of kanam holdings, and ejection of kanam tenants; and dispense altogether with the right of *Melkanam*. The Puravaka janmis in Watakancheri number 54, of whom a few are Nambudri Brahmans, the others being of various castes. The Nambudris are the big landlords.

423 These janmis also are in some cases the custodians of "devaswoms" (literally "wealth of the gods"), lands belonging to the local temples; these are treated by them just like their janmam lands, but they keep separate accounts for the same. The Sirkar also manages devaswom lands and there is a department in the State which manages the affairs of the temples and the property belonging to them.

Of the total number of landowners (about 150), only 34 with an area of 194·44 acres cultivate their own lands. The rest sublet.

Of the non-cultivating landowners a few are big janmis like the Nambudri Brahmans and the Paliath Atchan. The Nambudri Brahmans pursue no occupation but that of living in strict conformity with the duties of a Brahman. They study the Vedas and live a pious and clean ly life. Western civilization and ideas have not
[428] penetrated to them. They maintain the joint-property system in which the whole property descends to the eldest male member.
[837] Only the eldest male is allowed to enter into legal marriage, but he can marry two or three women; the rest keep Nayar females as their mistresses.*

The "Paliath Atchan" possesses much land in the State. The head of the family lives in a place near Cranganore. He manages his estates through departments and officials like the Sirkar. He is the biggest landlord in the State, and a powerful hereditary chief.

The small landowners who do not cultivate their lands pursue occupations like retail trade, Government service, law, etc. These generally sublet their lands to tenants who own no lands and try to exact from these latter as much rent as possible. There are also agricultural workers who neither own nor rent land; the caste of "Cherumas" belongs to this class. Also a few of the low
[465] castes, the Mappilas and in some cases the Christians,—male and female—engage themselves in such work. They are low paid. Formerly these wages were in kind, but money wages have begun to prevail; but for harvesting work wages are invariably paid in kind, the worker receiving one para of paddy for every six gathered in.

The rents of paddy lands are paid in kind.

243 *Agriculture.*—Paddy is grown on all the wet lands. Out of the seasons, the cultivators also grow to a small extent such grains as gram and peas in the paddy lands. Area under paddy—653·24 acres.

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* [This phrase must not be understood to mean that such Nayar women are maintained in any way by their Nambudri paramours. They depend on their own family property, which descends in the female line. The children of Nambudri Brahmans and Nayar women are reckoned Nayars, and are members of the joint family of the mother, and entitled to maintenance from that family property.—Ed.]

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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

● 427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

[428]

* [i.e., a Nayar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

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426 money-lenders is absorbed in no time. In the last five years the number of money-lending shops has doubled and their funds invested by this means have trebled. There is yet a demand for money which is unsatisfied.

Another method of supporting, as it were, the poor, is to lend the seed for sowing on the promise that for every 100 measures lent they will return after the first crop, i.e., after four months from the time of lending, 120 or 130 measures. This means an interest of 60 per cent per annum. The cultivators do not as a rule save their own seed, because when they have no means of living they natually use their seed for food. I am told this is the case with every paddy cultivator excepting the three rich agriculturists who are landowners. It must be confessed here that without such borrowing the cultivation itself could not at present be carried on.

The village is free from padials. The debtors only pay interest, but in the Palghat taluk the system of padials survives.

The causes of indebtedness are not far to seek. Economic backwardness is the primary cause. Waste of money on drink and evil habits is not uncommon. In some cases debt is due to ambi- [585] tious schemes which fail. Excessive display in marriage is not common in Malabar as in eastern districts. Non-Brahmans, especially the castes below the Nayars, pay only Rs. 20 or Rs. 30, according to their means, to the bridegroom, and sometimes not even that. Another Rs. 25 will raise a marriage above the ordinary level. Taking into account that a marriage will be performed in a family only once in five or six years this expenditure of Rs. 50 or so cannot be deemed great.

The ordinary labourers, who number about 500, maintain themselves by their daily work and they are never in debt. It is the agricultural classes and those who are engaged in petty trade that [427] are in debt. The only asset of the tenants is that they have to pay as advance one year's rent to the landowners and they receive for the advance 6 per cent interest. Even this is paid in some cases by borrowing.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

476 *Communal life.*—The Brahmans of this village have formed themselves into a society for mutual aid and convenience. This 794 organization of the society is on the model of the old village republics. It exists for social purposes only. Two persons are elected biennially to look after the affairs and the income of the society. Every house is represented by its head in the village assembly and that assembly elects the persons. The sources of income to the society are--

(1) the interest on the already existing property which is about Rs. 3,000;

(2) for all social functions such as marriage, etc., the society as a whole has a claim for a fixed sum. The total income from these two sources may be estimated at Rs. 350.

The duty of the society is to appoint the village priest, village barber, village trumpeter and other persons essential for the performance of social or religious functions.

The whole income is spent on the worship of God. The particular ways in which it should be spent have been fixed long ago, and comprise a special feast for the Brahmans once a year, provision of a burial-ground and other public and necessary places

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There is hardly any public tank. One stream (channel) flows along the northern boundary of the desam during rainy seasons when the fields become flooded. But its utility is limited since with the summer the whole channel is dried up. There are private wells in all gardens and sometimes in the fields of corn. But they are shallow for the most part and the water-supply is inadequate. The ryots who are wretchedly poor cannot afford to utilise modern progress in the field of well-boring, nor are they conversant with such developments. 312

There are woods and forests near the desam as we have before mentioned, but they are of no practical use to the people. The forest, which is outside the boundary limit of this desam, is under Government supervision and people are not allowed to cut trees. Other resources of the forest, moreover, are hardly taken advantage of, partly by the general apathy of the cultivator for improvement and partly by its being situated sufficiently far to dissuade them from incurring the necessary loss involved. At the same time it is in a way an influence to the ryots' detriment, for tigers, boars, etc., which the Akalanum and Mattur hills breed occasionally, make nocturnal depredations on the ryots' stock and corn fields. The peasantry are helpless against these enemies. 137 136

Occupation of land.—The private jenmam ryotwari holdings during the year of settlement (fasli 1313) are classified as follows :— 423 427 [651]

Pattadars paying	Number.			Extent.		Assessment.	
	Single	Joint.	Total.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.
Re. 1 and less	2	...	2	...	50	1	8
Rs. 10 and less but over Re. 1	7	2	9	7	71	33	14
" 30 " " " 10 ...	3	2	5	18	21	96	7
" 50 " " " 30 ...	1	...	1	7	8	37	5
" 100 " " " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 250 " " " 100 ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 500 " " " 250 ...	1	...	1	99	56	401	13
" 1,000 " " " 500 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1,000 ...	1	...	1	718	80	2,315	4
Total ...	15	4	19	851	86	2,886	3

Out of 851·86 acres no less than 818·36 belong to the two jenmi landlords. There are no occupants of Government jenmam ryotwari land in the same year.

Almost all kanomdars are themselves cultivators. The two jenmis, who are Brahmans by caste, and nearly 10 other families

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423 who come immediately below in the caste scale, are prohibited
427 from cultivation by their social status, and hence have let or sublet their lands to tenants of lower castes.

427 The landholders themselves, who are in a minority, are fast disappearing. They are chiefly owners of small strips held for the most part by a kanom tenure from a jenmi. The growing indebtedness and the consequent process of alienation of lands which are now going on will ere long reduce these people to the rank of landless labourers. But the landholders must be distinguished from land owners. Strictly speaking those who own land are the pattadars who possess jenmam pattas and those few who hold from them lands on kanom tenure. The ownership of the kanomdar is very precarious, since for the most part the kanom being a small amount, and there being no governmental regulations against the arbitrary action of the jenmis, the kanomdars are at the mercy of their jenmis. The ancient right of usage of lands enjoyed by the people is now being sought to be taken away. The jenmis are oppressive in many ways. All storts of excuses are eagerly clutched at for extorting money from the tenantry. Besides the very high rate demanded at the time of a renewal of tenure (usually these tenures are held for 12 years), there are exactions on the occasion of a death, marriage or other religious festival in the jenmi's household. and fines often in amounts more than Rs. 100 are levied right and left for silly reasons. Various instances have come within the personal knowledge of the writer. One family had to return some lands two years ago to the jenmi because when the term expired and when application was made for a renewal, the fee demanded was so high that 12 years' profit from the land could hardly equal the amount. One man was fined Rs. 100, because he refused to pay 2 annas as a subscription for a religious festival which the jenmi was then conducting. Another case of arbitrary oppression was recently reported to the writer by the sufferers. The jenmi was contemplating a pilgrimage and all tenants were asked to give Rs. 10 each for it within 24 hours! These are actual cases. Up till 1916 no man other than the two jenmis was allowed to tile his house, to build an upstair building, or a gateway; even now it is rash for the ryot to ask for such permission. No woman is allowed to appear before the jenmi with covered breast, no man should approach him with more than single cloth wound round his waist, which should not fall below his knees. Even in these days of British rule these things are in actual existence! I have said so much to give an idea of the relation between the landlord and the tenant in this part of the country.

There are two other dangers to which the landholder is constantly exposed which need mention here, i.e., melcharth, and the recent policy of the jenmi to convert kanom holdings into verumpattam. Melcharth is the jenmi's right to make over by promise at his will to a higher bidder any portion of his land which is being enjoyed by the kanomdar under him on the strength of his right for the land for twelve years. This is constantly exercised by the jenmi and it has a very bad effect both economically and morally over the agricultural population. The other danger is of more recent origin and is the result of the panic created among the jenmis of British Malabar on the passing of the Jenmi-Kutiyan

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427 regulations in the sister states of Cochin* and Travancore, which have placed a decided check on the arbitrary dealings of the landlord over the tenant in those countries. The fear of governmental interference in the near future to regulate the relations of the landlord and the tenant (for it is well known that this problem is an old one in Malabar, and even as far back as 1885, the popular administration of Mr. Logan had made a draft regulation on the same subject which was only abandoned for want of adequate support by the country and which formed the basis on which Cochin and Travancore could afterwards proceed) has stimulated the process of converting kanom lands into verumpattam, i.e., tenure at will. By this the jenmi has a double advantage. The lands are under his direct ownership, and as they are given to cultivation by annual contracts, he can at any time refuse, withhold or do what he likes with his lands. The lands also being as it were put to auction, will produce a higher rate of income than would be the case by giving it on kanom tenure. There is also a recent tendency on the part of the jenmi to raise the kanom amounts because in Cochin and Travancore this is made the basis for the regulation of rent. Till now the policy was to give lands on a nominal kanom, the advantage being in the facility with which they might reclaim the lands at pleasure.

241 465 The Cherumas (the submerged class) are the agricultural labourers who neither own nor rent land. They work for their masters who give them a meagre allowance of 2 edangalis, i.e., 1/5 para (the standard measure) of paddy. With this he supports his wife and family. They are attached to their masters and loath to leave them.

427 Rents are always paid in kind and are high enough particularly in the case of annual holdings. Eighty per cent of the produce will go as rent to the landowner. The sole advantage for which tenants take up lands are, they say, (1) a few days' maintenance after the harvest, (2) the possession of straw, and (3) employment. But sometimes they have to pay rent in money and this is chiefly in seasons of crop failure. This is met in these ways:—(1) Direct borrowing, (2) profit of garden cultivation and (3) the institution of chit-fund,† which is widely prevalent among them.

241 463 The barber and the washerman of the desam are illustrations of how customary occupations are modified by practical necessity. These people, while they perform their traditional occupations to the society and receive for it the fixed remunerations, have long taken to agriculture as their chief source of income. And they are among the chief farmers. There are two manufacturers of

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* Vide p. 116.

[454] † [A chit-fund is similar to our Slate-clubs. The members meet periodically, usually every month, and each pays a defined sum into the fund. If it be an 'auction-chit,' the money so collected is given to the member who, not having received it previously, offers to give back the largest amount, e.g., if there be Rs. 100 in the chit, one member may offer to take Rs. 75 only. The remaining Rs. 25 is then divided among the other members. Security is then taken from the recipient of the Rs. 75 that he will continue to pay his monthly contributions till every member has had his turn. In the other variety of chit, the monthly sum is ballotted for. It is the same as Kuri, described on p. 124.—Ed.]

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311 *Land.*—

	ACS.
Wet land	681·07
Occupied dry land	231·12
Unoccupied dry land	1,221·92
Garden land	109·59

137 Woodlands cover an area of about 150 acres. Shrubs and thickets, as well as rank undergrowth are found almost everywhere. Big trees, scattered and in groves, are also abundant.

Fruit trees and scattered shade trees are abundant. Among the former may be mentioned the mango, jack, coconut and areca-nut palms, the palmyra palm (yielding toddy), etc. There are numerous kinds of shade trees, many of which can be used as timber. Among timber trees specially may be noted the teak and the jack-tree.

312 Tanks and wells are very numerous. Wells indeed are too numerous to be enumerated. Every house has one or more and there are several in the fields, about one in an acre. There are more than 50 tanks, though some of them are mere ponds, dry in most months. A few tanks yield water unfailingly for irrigation on a small rate. They may be 6 to 20 feet deep and of varying lengths, from, say 10 to 100 feet. Some are of irregular shape. The wells are either circular or rectangular and from 10 to 40 feet deep--often deeper still. If circular their diameter measures from 5 to 10 feet and if rectangular they are from 6 to 10 feet broad and 8 to 16 feet long. A few are dry in summer, but many wells yield an abundant and unfailing supply of water for domestic and agricultural purposes.

There is a small channel passing through the village which is full during the rains, but mostly dry in the hot months. A dam is however put across it in some places and the scanty water stored up for future use. But there is not any very considerable quantity.

●427 *Occupation of land.*—Most of the cultivated area is sublet to tenants. This is characteristic of Malabar, where most of the landlords do not themselves cultivate the land, but let it to others on short leases of 12 years called *kanom* leases. The kanom lease-holders in turn sublet the land, though a few of them actually cultivate it.

There are nominally 50 patta-holders and all of them come under the head of non-cultivating landowners. The richest have no particular occupation. Many are Nambudiri Brahmans not resident in the village, and they have comfortable positions as priests, preceptors, etc. The biggest landowners, who almost monopolise the land, are two or three in number and they live in ease on the revenues of their lands.

The great body of tenants own no land; they simply rent it on kanom lease or are tenants at will. There may be one or two among the landowners who are also the kanom tenants of some other landlord. But as a rule the kanom tenant owns no land.

There is a growing body of landless agricultural labourers.

By the census of 1901 there were 383 landholders (tenants) in that year. This number declined to 258 in 1917, paying land-revenue as stated below (note that the superior occupier contracts with his tenants that the latter pay the kist).

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427

Less than Re. 1	54
From Re. 1 to Rs. 5	100
„ Rs. 5 to Rs. 10	49
„ Rs. 10 to Rs. 20	22
„ Rs. 20 to Rs. 30	10
„ Rs. 30 to Rs. 50	19
More than Rs. 50	4
	258

Many especially of those paying under Rs. 2 hold only the plots of ground in which their dwellings are erected.

Classification of holdings according to ownership. 423 651

Pattadars paying an assessment of	Number.	Extent.	Assessment.
		ACS.	RS. A. P.
I. Re. 1 and less	2	0·26	0 15 0
II. Over Re. 1 and up to Rs. 10 (inclusive).	22	28·04	95 8 0
III. „ Rs. 10 „ „ 30 „	7	26·44	129 6 0
IV. „ „ 30 „ „ 50 „	6	65·04	234 7 0
V. „ „ 50 „ „ 100 „	3	55·59	196 5 0
VI. „ „ 100 „ „ 250 „	2	106·97	301 4 0
VII. „ „ 250 „ „ 500 „	1	62·15	274 7 0
VIII. „ „ 500 „ „ 1,000 „	...	...	...
IX. Over Rs. 1,000	1	645·04	2,469 1 0

Thus the greater part of the cultivated land is owned by a single pattadar—a Nambudiripad, a very enlightened and sympathetic landlord who has a reputation for fairness and kind treatment. The majority of the other pattadars are also Nambudiris, very often holding the land as trustees of temples.

The following table shows the rate of assessment, area so assessed, with amount of assessment, of wet, dry and garden lands:— 311 651

—	I. Wet land.		II. Garden land.		III. Occupied dry land.		IV. Unoccupied dry land.	
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.
At Rs. 7-8 per acre.	108·49	813 11	...	..	...	...	...	...
„ 6-4 „	194·87	1,215 15	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 6-0 „	0·09	0 9	0·03	0 3	...	...	..	...
„ 5-0 „	109·06	542 11	2·28	11 6	...	...	...	...
„ 4-0 „	39·21	157 5	7·09	28 6	...	...	...	...
„ 3-12 „	7·69	28 15	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 3-0 „	93·37	280 1	14·28	42 14	...	...	...	...
„ 2-0 „	128·00	256 13	36·43	72 14	3·23	6 9	43·53	87 0
„ 1-8 „	...	...	..	...	61·87	92 5	122·82	184 3
„ 1-0 „	...	...	49·48	49 14	98·84	99 0	288·66	288 11
„ 0-12 „	...	...	...	...	38·57	28 15	643·77	482 13
„ 0-10 „	...	...	...	...	3·42	2 3	148·42	92 12
Total .	680·78	3,296 0	109·59	205 9	205·93	229 0	1,247·20	1,135 2

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311 The assessment under IV. Unoccupied dry is the potential
651 amount, i.e., it would be levied if the whole area were cultivated. About one-third or one-half of it may have been at one time or another under cultivation, but the area cultivated in any single year is very small.

[427] Rents are generally paid in kind, though of recent years there is a tendency in some cases (e.g., when the tenant lives at a distance) to commute it for money at current market rates.

The village is assessed for land revenue at a permanent charge of Rs. 3,759-3-0, to which must be added (to obtain the total revenue demanded upon the village, for the year) the charges on the 'unoccupied dry land' actually under cultivation in the year. This last will vary from year to year; the possible maximum is above Rs. 1,000. There is a local cess of 1¼ anna in the rupee of kist levied by the Taluk Board for roads, etc.

241 *Agriculture—Area under principal crops.*—The area under this head varies from year to year according as more or less of the
311 unoccupied dry land is taken into cultivation. For the year ending March 1916, the following figures are given in the village accounts but they are less exact than they appear, being partly estimates by the village officials.

Paddy—First crop, 847·20 acres; second crop, 460·51 acres.			
Pulses and grains		122·47	acres.
Oil-seeds, gingelly		155·89	"
" castor		12·59	"
Spices, etc.		87·23	"
Fuel and timber trees...		63·00	"
Betel leaves		5·00	"
Vegetables and garden products made up of—			
Vegetables	59·41		
Plantains and bananas	29·57		
Coconuts	17·00		
Mangoes	23·00		
Arecanuts	9·00		
Jack fruits	8·00		
		145·98	

According to the 'A' Register the area of one crop wet land is 271 acres. In some years it appears that this area is smaller, because part of this is *potential* double-crop land, two crops can be raised on it under favourable conditions. But it may safely be said that some 150 acres of wet land yield only one crop. Such portion of the 'unoccupied dry' land which is cultivated in any year also yields but one crop—even that with difficulty, after lying fallow for one, two or more years.

The minimum available area of two-crop land is 409·73 acres. In some years (according to the weather and seasonal conditions) this may increase to some 525 acres. If irrigation could be extended more of the single crop area could be made to yield two crops.

243 Some fifteen to twenty-five acres may yield three crops, under favourable conditions.

All the wet land is utilized for paddy cultivation. Paddy is sown in May soon after the first rains. By the end of September or the beginning of October the first crop is harvested. The seed-

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601, 113, 59, 58, 611, 428

[For information pertaining to the above categories, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 252-270.]

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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

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613 tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal 576 etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates 591 a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. 593 The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various 591 particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some 582 of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's [428] [593] descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or 591 widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. 593 Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at [844] the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravad.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more [593] usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North [584] Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's [184] niece.

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of
585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system
[428] mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564] [587]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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daughter never calls you by any name which, in the Hindu code of manners, is done only with regard to the husband. She is your *a priori* wife, if such an expression could be used. She is spoken of as the *Mura Pennu* (*Mura* = customary, and *Pennu* = female or wife, meaning customary wife). 582

Unlike other Hindus a Nāyar may marry a girl from a lower sub-caste as long as she also is a Nāyar. He cannot marry a woman whose caste is higher than his own without the wife losing her caste. A Nāyar lady can choose her husband either from among the allied families or others, provided they are of the same or superior sub-caste. Also, she can marry from anyone of the higher castes, *i.e.*, either from the Brahmins or from the Kshatriyas. The alliance between the Malabar Brahmins and the Nāyars is a social fact of very great interest. In no other part of India is a Brahmin allowed to marry out of his own caste. In Malabar, on the other hand, among the Nambudiris or the Aryan immigrants, only the eldest member of the family can marry among the Brahmins, the others being forced to marry among the Nāyars. The permanence through ages of matrilineal descent among the Nāyars is due to this fact. The Brahmins, being of a superior caste, and the Nāyar wife of the Brahmin being unable to live in her husband's family, the system tended to be matrilineal as well as matrilocal. Also, since the children of such a marriage are Nāyars and not Brahmins, though the father is a Brahmin, the system remained wholly unilateral without any definite bilateral development. It is only the very highest among the Nāyars that have connection with the Brahmins. Through their influence the custom preserved all its strength in the lower classes as well. 582 564

The peculiar custom of the Malabar Brahmins of not allowing their junior members to marry among their own caste introduces a complication into the Nāyar system. The idea underlying such a prohibition is evidently the preservation of the big estates which the Nampudiris own. Since the Nāyar sons of the Malabar Brahmins do not inherit anything from their fathers, their estates remain undivided and descend only to the eldest son. Primogeniture has been the custom in every country where the preservation of big landed property in the hands of a few was aimed at. The undivided family among the Nāyars is also meant to conserve their possession of the land and maintain the political influence resulting from it. A point of utmost importance which should always be kept in mind in this connection is the interaction of economic and social forces. The interest of the Nampudiris to keep their property undivided led to their custom of primogeniture, and this again induced them to use their temporal power and sacerdotal influence to perpetuate the matrilineal system among the Nāyars. Also, the desire to preserve the family estates as a whole, kept the Nāyar families from being divided, making thereby a change to patrilineal system altogether impossible. 428 564 582

the Todas also *Mechuna* (or cross-cousin) marriage is the orthodox custom. See p. 512, Rivers, *The Todas*. Also Appendix, "Similarities between the Nāyars and the Todas." 582 171

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 138.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 85.

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631 and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and plea-
643 sure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many
[644] of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws of the country.

646 Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by
[203] right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were
[428] despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

643 The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were
646 conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuo-
578 sity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly
[687] sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nad*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désavázhi.

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not 105
wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. 564
Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always 576
praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya 291
factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of 104
the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and 105
of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their 564
mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. 614
Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and [611]
through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in [428]
matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in [613]
principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, mar- [587]
riage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in [591]
the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. [611]
They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and [613]
patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden [582]
days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his
caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons 105
were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devo- 564
tees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as [588]
sambandham to which we shall revert in a moment. They were main- [463]
tained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a [582]
meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by [428]

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

105 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger
564 Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam*
581 property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger
428 sons.

105 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar
564 and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow
611 artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the
[428] case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are
[592] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of
[115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative
564 such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child
[58] after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within
[588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle
564 of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort
588 with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions
[428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible.

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish.

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

*595 I was in that town for only a very short time. I shall begin by giving a description of the little remaining Nayar polyandry that I was able to find.

114 Research, in this case, was the very opposite of easy. When I was in
*595 Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk in 1949, and had made that town the centre of my activities, all the influential local Nayars, most of them *wakils* or lawyers, got together and, threatening the severest punishments if anyone disobeyed them, decided that none of their caste would give me any information at all regarding their alleged polyandry. The town is one from which many of the most prominent Nayars in Government service in New Delhi today have originally come, and in which members of their *tarawads* and immediate families still live. It is therefore understandable that they should have taken this line, it being considered by them today that any hint of their being polyandrous is insulting and degrading. Later, I heard that I had been accused in the Indian capital of stating that Nayars were descendants of the most primitive aboriginals. There was, naturally, absolutely no truth in this, but it is easy to see how the rumour originated.

*595 On the 28th of August, 1939, I went to a Nayar household which I have marked down in my notes as bearing the name of Tsingepuram
[351] Kailott. It was in the outskirts of Tellicherry, a large house in a garden compound, with a smaller building some distance away from it. There I met a man called Apunayar and his brother Kamarnayar, and the latter who seemed to be the most talkative, told me through my interpreter that he was the youngest of the two, while his brother, the other man, was the eldest of the whole family. There were four brothers, he explained, the two other ones, junior to this pair, lived in the smaller house in the compound: their names were Kunjiramanayar and Narayannayar. Their mother, Amalu of Tsingepuram kailott *tarawad* had recently died. She had been polyandrous, and the four brothers and a daughter who was also dead now had been born and brought up in the big house by their maternal uncles. The latter had died before their
•[428] mother, and they had inherited the property. They had given up polyandry and now lived each of them with a wife. Households had been split, and the younger brothers had built themselves the smaller house in the garden, and lived there with their respective wives, while the two elder men had remained in the ancestral mansion. Apunayar had four children, two boys and two girls, Karanayar one girl, while in the smaller household, there were only a little boy and a little girl, both the children of Narayannayar.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans
Tiyas

* 595 601 could get Panju to say at first was that she "did not look after us enough". However, when I insisted, I heard that she did not satisfy them sexually, which again might be either that Ramon got the lion's share of the marriage or that the two younger men did not find their elder brother's wife very attractive. Anyhow, they asked their maternal uncle (their father had died in the meantime) to find them another wife. After a show of resistance in which he said that it was not right and that they should remain with Kuniyama as tradition dictated, their mother's brother again gave in and got Nani for them; they married her when they were twenty and fifteen respectively. They were now forty and thirty five, and their common wife was thirty five. They had put up a separate household, to leave Raman and Sankara in the main building, and theirs was the smaller house on the other side of the yard, wholly within the same compound, however, so that the *tarawad* property was not completely torn asunder.

• 428 The land upon which the family lived was theirs, and not rented. After the death of their father, their mother inherited it, and when she died, it was divided up between the sons. Mayadi was also gone, but Raman junior, his son, and the four surviving brothers, Raman senior, Sankara, Panju and Narayana, each received one fifth of the whole. There was a meeting in the big house, they told me, about a year after the death of their mother (they presumably inherited the property undivided until then), and it took them three days to come to an agreement. Influential neighbours, the elders of the *tarawad* and the two brothers-in-law, Kunyadi and Maniken, also attended. The whole property, paddy fields, cattle, grain and seeds, agricultural tools, implements, the house and the household requisites and furniture, was evaluated in money and divided into five equal shares. Panju and Narayana did not split their shares; they kept the two fifths they received undivided, as they constituted a polyandrous household. The women did not inherit anything because they had been married off to others. Women among the Thandans can inherit from their parents, I heard, if there are no male heirs.

* [595] On the 27th of October 1949, I visited a Tiya (Thiyya) polyandrous family at Kadevelur in Tallapilli taluk of north Cochin. These people [407] were *kanam* tenants of a Nambudri Brahmin, to whom they paid thirty rupees a year in rent, plus eight hundred measures of rice per crop.[1]

[804] [1] I was told eight hundred *parahs*, but this is hardly possible as: 1 Cochin *parah* = 10 *edangalis* = 40 *nalis* = 1,720 *tolas*; as 42½ Cochin *tolas* = 1 lb., 1 Cochin *parah* = c. 40½ lbs. Eight hundred *parahs* would then = 40½ × 800 = 32,400 lbs. The measure may have been a smaller one, an *edangali* or even a *nali*.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India.

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first.

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns.

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.")

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Tiyas

regulation. They said that they were starving and that they had had nothing to eat that morning. When I asked them how they would solve their problem, they replied that it was better that I "did not ask". Evil times had befallen them in their old age, and they really did not know what they could do about it; they might hire themselves out as labourers, if they were not so old and feeble. They agreed with me that the increase in population in Kerala over the years had made the difficulty of feeding so many people increasingly great.

Their two elder sons, called Ayapakuti and Pangha, lived polyandrously, I heard, some few miles away, on a bit of land which their fathers had given them fourteen years ago, in the fifth year of their marriage and after the birth of their fourth child. The common wife, Paru, was now alone with the thirty five year old second son, as the elder had died two years ago, also at the age of thirty five. It seemed that Kandapan had originally been part of the polyandrous household but that, tiring of living in this way, he had found a wife for himself, Lakshmi, with whom he had returned to the parental house to live, after the last renewal of the lease, four years ago.

With the old folk and Kandapan's family, was also Kunyu, a daughter, twenty five years old and divorced ten years ago. She had been married at the age of fourteen to Velahu, a man eighteen years her senior. She was childless and had not remarried. She lived in the larger house with her parents.

I took photographs of the family and a group picture of them can be seen in Fig. 10. I also made their genealogy, which is attached herewith in Table 6. I stayed on and discussed various problems with these people for part of the afternoon (having provided for them to have lunch in the meantime, which was most welcome to them in their starved condition). They told me that even if polyandry was now prohibited since the Act passed in 1940, it had been dying out for some years in any case. The legislation – of which they really had no idea at all – was only the confirmation and the consecration of a *de facto* state of affairs. Concerning the inheritance of girls in Tiya families, I may mention that, since the passing of the Act, property would have to be divided. Girls would also get their share which would be half that of the boys; they would pass it on to their own children and, since they were *makkathayam*, it would become merged with that of the latter's fathers. If there were no boys and only girls in the household, its property would cease to exist after the girls had been married off, for each of them would take her part away in accordance with the above.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally[1] boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[1] i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

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Kammalans

*595 lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names,
601 and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave
614 village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.
[564] After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan
[584] would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

614 I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad*
564 names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they
[582] observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed
[582] exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for
● 428 those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*,
564

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 204]

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Kammalans
Kolla-kurups

428 524 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

427 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 564 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*. [305] [282]

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lakkidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building. 342 [287] [351]

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies. [291]

[Text continues on P. 206]

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Kolla-Kurups

614 564 The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in [423] the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

*595 601 I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing [126] at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

*595 425 465 The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

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Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

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Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595*
Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601
to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [115] [551]
helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614
obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564
be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582]
matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428]
was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564
Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 410
but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465
ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564
upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 79
went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293]
umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595*
thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342]
dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595*
androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601
to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast-
feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year [868] old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph [126] the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 614 Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house *595 was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve [829] annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our 564 959 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans. 771

[Text continues on P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Pulluvans

*595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 614 ●428 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text Continues on P. 216]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married.

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well.

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union.

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collectively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595 851 late the time back from the moment of birth; but they only laughed at my insistance and said that they could not. Obviously, the right thing to do was not to make any distinction, to accept the children as collectively theirs, without individual claims on them.

This is the public attitude which self-respecting polyandrous people must apparently take. Privately, things can be quite different, and from the information which I gathered from Panju and Nani, it is obvious that human nature reasserts itself even in this situation, in spite of cultural interdictions. Asked confidentially if he had any preference for one of his four boys, Panju replied that he believed that the two elder ones, Kumaran and Madhavan, were his because they were "more fond" of him than of Narayana. To emphasize this belief, he added that outside people thought that Sridaran and Raghavan resembled their younger father, while the other two were physically more like him. I heard, later, that Nani, in private, never in front of her husbands or even before the other children, would say to Kumaran: "Go on, be a man like your *achan* (father, the name given to Panju). He is a fine fellow whom you should take after!" There seemed to be no doubt that, behind the scenes and the facade which had to be maintained socially in this polyandrous society, a great amount of preference and distinction was shown for the individual, would-be, "real" father.

*595 601 Panju claimed that he looked after the children more than his brother because he had more affection for them than Narayana. Here again, he seemed to be claiming a preferred position that could not fail to strike me. I asked him what names the children used for their fathers, and he gave me not only those for himself and his co-husband, but also (without my asking) for Raman and Sankara, who were considered to be uncles (fathers' brothers) because they were not part of the polyandrous household. Raman was called *wariachan*, "big father"; Sankara, *wawuachan*, "sickly father", because he had some kind of chronic stomach ailment (this reminded me of the "opium-eating father" in Ceylon, see p. 149); Panju, *achan*, "father"; and Narayana, *kutiachan* or "small father". In other words, even those brothers of the fathers who were no longer fathers in parental status were called "father", a classificatory term which obviously had no other reality after the break-up of the old association of all the brothers married to a common wife.

597 [928] If a family has no issue, adoption of a child is possible, the latter then having exactly the same status as if it were one's own. The child has, however, to be legally registered with the authorities if it is to be an heir. Cases of such adoptions are extremely rare; my informants

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177 564 members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

177 564 595 Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheri- [428] tance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

[423] [427] [1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

177 595 Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

671 *Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.*

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

101 564 458 Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

585 Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

671 [585]

e) by mutual consent evidenced by a registered instrument attested by not less than two witnesses."

Art. 12: "A polyandrous marriage performed after this Act shall be void." [595]

Chapter III. Maintenance and Guardianship. Three articles.

Chapter IV. Succession.

Five articles on testamentary succession.

Art. 26: "For the purpose of succession there is no distinction between the self-acquired property and the ancestral property or between the property of a male and that of a female except as otherwise provided by this Act." 671 428●

Eight articles on Intestate succession.

Art. 28: "Property in respect of which a Thiyya has died intestate devolves upon the wife or husband or upon those who are of the kindred of the deceased in this order and according to the rules herein prescribed."

Art. 29: "When the intestate had left more than one widow, the distribution of inheritance referred to in sections 30, 31, 32 and 33 shall be made as if there is only one widow, all the widows together taking equally one widow's share."

Art. 30. "When the intestate has left a widow, if he has also left a son, or lineal descendant of a son, a share equal to that of a son shall belong to the widow."

Eleven articles on distribution of intestate's property.

Art. 39, (b): "If some of them (lineal descendants) are his (the intestate) sons and others are his daughters, each daughter shall take a half of the share of a son if the intestate is a male, and if the intestate is a female all children shall take equally."

It should be remembered that this legislation is that of a former princely state which has ceased to exist as a separate unit. Today, since the coming into being of the State of Kerala, made up of Malabar, Mahe, Cochin and Travancore, this Act has been superseded by the provisions of the India Code in force now in the whole of the Indian Republic. In accordance with the stipulations of the Code, a larger share of inheritance is granted to daughters and widow than was formerly allowed by the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act. [648]

[PP 240-594 not Processed]

hardie as to come into that house. The king's children 595
shall not inherite the kingdom after their father, because [201]
they hold this opinion, that perchance they were not begotten of the king their father, but of some other man, therefore they accept for their king one of the sonnes of the king's sisters, or of some other woman of the blood roiall, for that they be sure that they are of the blood roiall."

In his "New Account of the East Indies, (1727)" 595
Hamilton wrote: "The husbands," of whom, he said, 833
there might be twelve, but no more at one time, "agree very well, for they cohabit with her in their turns, according to their priority of marriage, ten days more or less according as they can fix a term among themselves, and he that cohabits with her maintains her in all things necessary for his time, so that she is plentifully provided for by a constant circulation. When the man that cohabits with her goes into her house he leaves his arms at the door, and none dare remove them or enter the house on pain of death. When she [428]
proves with child, she nominates its father, who takes care of his education after she has suckled it, and brought it to walk or speak, but the children are never heirs to their father's estate, but the father's sister's children are."

Writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, 595
Grose says * that "it is among the Nairs that principally prevails the strange custom of one wife being common to a number; in which point the great power of custom [152]
is seen from its rarely or never producing any jealousies or quarrels among the co-tenants of the same woman. Their number is not so much limited by any specific

* Travels to the East Indies.

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

K 131 595 596 428 591

Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas, living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

Ti 123 To 123 K 123

General Conclusions. I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

Ti 155 To 155 K 155

As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182

As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

427 Munsifs and District Judges with summary jurisdiction in the matter." The provisions in the regulation apply only to "Kanam
423 tenants who, by themselves or through their predecessors in interest, have uninterruptedly held the holding for a period of not less than thirty years prior to the coming into force of this Regulation," and provide some restrictions on the part of the landlord in matters of renewal of kanam holdings, and ejection of kanam tenants; and dispense altogether with the right of *Melkanam*. The Puravaka janmis in Watakancheri number 54, of whom a few are Nambudri Brahmans, the others being of various castes. The Nambudris are the big landlords.

423 These janmis also are in some cases the custodians of "devaswoms" (literally "wealth of the gods"), lands belonging to the local temples; these are treated by them just like their janmam lands, but they keep separate accounts for the same. The Sirkar also manages devaswom lands and there is a department in the State which manages the affairs of the temples and the property belonging to them.

Of the total number of landowners (about 150), only 34 with an area of 194·44 acres cultivate their own lands. The rest sublet.

Of the non-cultivating landowners a few are big janmis like the Nambudri Brahmans and the Paliath Atchan. The Nambudri Brahmans pursue no occupation but that of living in strict conformity with the duties of a Brahman. They study the Vedas and live a pious and cleanly life. Western civilization and ideas have not
[428] penetrated to them. They maintain the joint-property system in which the whole property descends to the eldest male member.
[837] Only the eldest male is allowed to enter into legal marriage, but he can marry two or three women; the rest keep Nayar females as their mistresses.*

The "Paliath Atchan" possesses much land in the State. The head of the family lives in a place near Cranganore. He manages his estates through departments and officials like the Sirkar. He is the biggest landlord in the State, and a powerful hereditary chief.

The small landowners who do not cultivate their lands pursue occupations like retail trade, Government service, law, etc. These generally sublet their lands to tenants who own no lands and try to exact from these latter as much rent as possible. There are also agricultural workers who neither own nor rent land; the caste of "Cherumas" belongs to this class. Also a few of the low
[465] castes, the Mappilas and in some cases the Christians,—male and female—engage themselves in such work. They are low paid. Formerly these wages were in kind, but money wages have begun to prevail; but for harvesting work wages are invariably paid in kind, the worker receiving one para of paddy for every six gathered in.

The rents of paddy lands are paid in kind.

243 *Agriculture.*—Paddy is grown on all the wet lands. Out of the seasons, the cultivators also grow to a small extent such grains as gram and peas in the paddy lands. Area under paddy—653·24 acres.

* [This phrase must not be understood to mean that such Nayar women are maintained in any way by their Nambudri paramours. They depend on their own family property, which descends in the female line. The children of Nambudri Brahmans and Nayar women are reckoned Nayars, and are members of the joint family of the mother, and entitled to maintenance from that family property.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[426] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings 525 by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts subscribed by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of persons agree that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by periodical instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, should take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all being returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some [301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* [i.e., on the death of a man his property is equally divided among his sons.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

• [428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is
837 prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female.
[586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make
[585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children
[428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre-
[587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is
[595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private
persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517.
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

APPENDIX.

I. A Possible Improvement.

By deepening the stream that flows in rainy season along the northern boundary of this desam, the lands that lie along them which now yield only a single crop can be made double crop lands. 000

II. Emigration.

There are five men in Ceylon working as labourers and sending small sums to their aged parents. These return at intervals of two or three years. There is also the annual emigration of the carpenters to Calicut. 167

III. A Typical Family.

The family is not composed of a husband, wife and children. The people follow the 'Marumakkattayam' form of inheritance, i.e., inheritance along the line of the nephew. Thus the family consists of an aged mother or grandmother and her sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters of these sisters and their progeny, and so on. The eldest male member is the 'Karnavan,' the guardian and manager of the family, all the rest are 'Anandravans' who pay allegiance to the head. The male members of one family marry the females of another and vice versa, but each lives apart and they only join occasionally. The system, however, is rudely breaking up under modern conditions. 596 [428]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[594] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

603 took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It
[869] was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles'
[861] displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to
[858] maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

604 A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' chil-
429 dren, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was respon-
604 sible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste,
86 in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

604 Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural mat-
[561] ters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout
[613] their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior
[969] generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

[576] The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy rctained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the taravāds might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranavan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

In this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar 121
tarwad (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself.

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already 613
well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, [591]
and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] [593]
The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* [429]
was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*.

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nam- 613
budri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land 182
holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the [564]
function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the [491]
disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the

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1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) [114]
carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which [122]
my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey.

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic [113]
change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105.

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was
[429] already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters. For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
421 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
175 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their
182 grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[8] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I: cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[8] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

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tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifestations of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middlemen in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, [776]
bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, [613]
and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign [586]
that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food [585]
shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād.

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

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843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
●431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would
684 consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obliga-
[431] tion. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[837] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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000 574 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. [593] Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob- [604] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of 582 this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often [593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a [764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his [848] wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

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585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of [264] grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [844] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [613] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, [431] to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. [595] Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

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593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never
184 polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

855 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but
613 their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

585
184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the
[564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[574] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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the lit-up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and the bridegroom, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. 585 184 [431]

"This is an unvarnished account of a 'Putamuri.' Next morning the Vettilakkettu or Salkâram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is a feasting, etc., in honour of the occasion.

"Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídáram Kayaral is a peculiar form of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the description given above, that the Putamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people generally resort to the less costly ceremony of Uzhamporukkuka or Vídáram Kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as Putamuri; but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The toasting is confined to the relations of the married couple. The particular incident attached to this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular Putamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídáram Kayaral ceremony, and with grown-up children being the issue of such marriage, undergoing the Putamuri ceremony some 15 or 20 years after Uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally.

"The Sambandham of South Malabar, and the Kidakkora-kalyánám of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of Putamuri, except the presenting of the cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also *Salkâram* ceremony, wanting in South Malabar as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

But all this formality and ceremonial is not the rule. The Sambandham is always a matter for careful arrangement, in which the wishes of the parties to it are considered, and which it is expected will bring mutual benefit to the two Taravâds concerned.

In South Malabar the girl or woman never lives in her husband's house; she lives on in her own Taravâd house and is there visited by her husband. The ordinary huggermugger, which sometimes stultifies all pleasure in existence, is thus avoided. In North Malabar the woman 591 184

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585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the
[574] men and women are separate; at different ends of the house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior
613 woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
602 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu, Thiruvathira she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

824 765 782 613 775 825 231 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 613 574 783 824 When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

184 431 It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 613 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

783 Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

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THE ÔNAM FESTIVAL.

796 The popular festival of Malabar is the Ônam, occurring in the last days of August or early in September. [43] It is the great occasion for general rejoicing, when every one gives and receives presents, when the children are to be seen roaming everywhere gathering flowers, to make the flower carpets which are a distinctive feature of this happy season. For the Ônam is not merely a one-day festival. It lasts three days at least, and the ten days preceding it are occupied in preparations and in games—Ônam games. A writer (a Malayali evidently), in the "Calcutta Review" for January 1899, thus describes the Ônam season:—

796 539 "There are a great many of these Ônam ballads; but most of them are of a piece with the specimen given. It is a delight to hear them chanted in the early morning hours by bands of light-hearted children with clear bell-like voices;—

Chembil house maiden, little maiden,
What did he give you who yesterday came?
A new dress he gave me, a small dress he gave me,
A lounge likewise on which to recline,
A tank to disport in, a well to draw water from, a compound
To gambol in, a big field to sing in.
Freshen up flowers, oh freshen for me.
On the south and the north shore, in the compound of Kannan, there grew up and flourished a thumba flower plant.
Out of this plant were fifty boats gotten; at the head of each boat a banyan tree grew.
From the banyan there grew a tiny little babe, and a drum and a stick for the baby to play with.
The drum and the drum-stick, the household domestic, all together they flew away and they vanished.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.
A measure and a half measure, and elephant's chains and earrings, who goes under the flower tree beneath which the elephant passes?
It is no one at all, it is no one at all; it is the Kuttikat baby god; when we went forth to pluck of ripe fruit, a mischievous urchin sprang up and bit us.
With bitten foot when we went to the Brahmin's, the Brahmin lady, we found, had been injured.
With bitten foot then we went to the house of Edathil, whose lady with fever lay stricken.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

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At noon of Attam day a bamboo fresh sprouted, and therewith we made us a good fish trap. 796 539

And when to the tank a fishing we went, we baited a minnow.

By its tail did we hold it, on the *bund* did we dash it, and of cocoanuts, with milk full, eighteen we ground.

With elephant pepper we dressed it; with asafœtida we filled it, right up to the elephant's head.

Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

Having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the little children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M.; and then the daily decorations begin. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers and one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. Among the flowers that contribute to the exquisite design may be named the common red, as well as the rarer variegated, lantana, the large red shoe flower *(Hibiscus rosa sinensis)* an indispensable feature of the cultivated vegetation in a Malayali's homestead, the yellow marigold, the yellow aster, the scarlet button flower, the sacred *tulsi (Ocimum sanctum)*, the wee, modest *thumber* (a vermifugal member of the Nepetæ tribe), the common *tagara* (yellow wild Cassia), the beautiful bluebell, and another common species of Cassia which the natives call the "Ônam flower." In addition, various little violet and purple wildlings that adorn the margins of rice fields, and beautiful specimens of the lily and allied orders of tropical plants are requisitioned by the weavers of these remarkably handsome, but, alas, quickly perishable, carpets. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork. This object is peculiar to the naturally well favoured province of Kéralam; and it serves to remind us that the people who possess the refined taste to produce such a pretty work of art must have long enjoyed a very high order of civilisation." 796 824

It has been noticed already under description of Nambûtiri Brahmans (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1), that the cloths given as "Ônam presents" are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sunworship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest 796 431 796

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611
therefore one belonging to the community at large—in 562
South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance 182
through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little 127
book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of 796
the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a 796
remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden [651]
days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of [648]
oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much [182]
of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained [431]
further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It [777]
is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58. [113]

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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

[843] [851] [431]

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite.* Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam.* This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar. Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

[842] [788]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

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Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession., when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

588 [593] [613]

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

[788]

588 613 824 564 184 833 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the *muppiala*, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
301 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a
789 silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnittu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Brahmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purinic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *tâli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Athizham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass-lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Brâhmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *tâli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpâd in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the mate[illegible] or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and bri[illegible] who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with [illegible]
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. S[illegible] seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes pres[illegible]
[326] cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *tâli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Brâhmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Asán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *táli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pán supári*, scented sandal paste, jasmine flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the
[431] relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries,
[262] *pdyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremony the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *táli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkákkarappan* temple and tie the *táli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahádévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpád is the *táli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *táli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tálikettu kalyánam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tálikettu*

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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *válkannáti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 9.

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvváthira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, 585
that the principal features of this *sambandham* ceremony all 184
over Keralam, are, in the main, the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the [787]
examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether the stars agree astrologically, the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony, the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place, the presentation of the *dánam* (gifts) to the Brahmans, the sumptuous banquet, the meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are the features which will invariably be found in all well conducted *sambandhams* in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state, that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all *sambandhams* among respectable Nayars, and I would further say, that they ought to be gone through at every *sambandham*, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of *sambandham*, with the particular incident attached to certain forms of *sambandham* in South Malabar. I shall describe the *Pudamuri* or *Vastraddnam* as celebrated in North Malabar, and show how the other forms of *sambandham* are related to it. I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The preliminary ceremony in every *Pudamuri* is 585
the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom 184
by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride 787
in the presence of the relations of the bride and the bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculation on a piece of palmyra leaf with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's *káranavan* and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bride- [574]
groom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the [431]
former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth, and this preliminary ceremony is invariably performed

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184 at all *Pudamuris* in North Malabar. It is called *Pudamuri*
[787] *Kodukkal* (giving pieces of cloth for dressing), and it is unknown in South Malabar.

Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the *Pudamuri*, the bridegroom visits his *káranavans* and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nut, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house of the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends, to seats
[431] provided in the *tekkini* or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*dánams*) or money gifts to the Brahmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now the time for the
(787) astrologer to appear and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *patinjáttu* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated and turned into a bed room for the occasion.
[354] There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps and *ashtamangalyam* which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangalyam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, lighted fire and a small round wooden box called a *cheppu* made in a peculiar fashion. They will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his best man enters the room through the western door accompanied by the bride's aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the *ashtamangalyam* and lits up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom are touched, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to
[431] perform another duty. At the *tekkini* or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes and betel leaves and

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the 184
place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom re- [431]
tires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkàram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a mar- 585
riage in the legal or sacramental sense of the 564
term. The views of the members of the 184
orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The [p31]
aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and 586
ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kdranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who [562]
denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37,

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants 422
caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells. 825

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme 634
powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the 585
country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction
who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even [182]
now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the [431]
celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part
of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and
bought his consent with presents. For without such consent
no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His [574]
consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living 595
with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, 634
adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ,
giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus
even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's
power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a 588
girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the 634
local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkáshcha* and other 421
things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return
the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised
to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a
one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect 634
buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the 342
inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile
thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed
only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ
issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restric- [369]
tions are not totally inoperative. In the State His High- [182]
ness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social 643
matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a 566
similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands.
Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies 634
were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the [493]
only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1] [564]
[553]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkákarappan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *káranavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nentranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*.

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and
[431] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

(3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national
[804] festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam
[777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kāranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Pūrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 298.

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supposed to take part under the supervision and guidance of the Srikandath Panikkar, whose family is the military instructor and leader of the people of Chittur. The Panikkar's duty is to train the youths of the 100 houses in the military arts. The performance referred to is, more or less, an exhibition of the bodily prowess of the youths trained by the Panikkar, and at the end of it he receives presents from the *Nâduvâzhi* and one hundred fanoms—one fanom for each house—from his pupils. The amount of one hundred fanoms is still paid to him every year, and is defrayed out of the collection made for the Kongapada festival for which the Panikkar's family is exempted from the payment of all subscriptions. The training of the youths of the place is begun a few weeks before the Kongapada festival in the *kalari* (military gymnasium) of the Srikandath Panikkar, and the Panikkar takes a prominent part in all the functions connected with the festival from beginning to end.

The "Pana" festival of Chittur.

Once in a few years and commencing on an auspicious day after *Vishu*, this ceremony is performed on a grand scale, in which the Nayars of the town (one male member from almost every house) organised themselves into parties, one party for singing songs in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati, another for dancing before her, and the third for playing on musical instruments. These men have, during this period, to bathe early in the morning, cook their own food and remain under a vow to be ever in devotion to the deity. Preliminary to the celebration of the actual festival, which sometimes run for a number of days, the men are given 41 days' training in the several courses of dancing in the Porayattu family house, one of the four *Pramânakkars* (leading members) of the place, and the final performance takes place in the Pokkumarath house.

In the court-yard of the latter house a large pandal supported on 64 posts, is put, up and in its middle is drawn a floral diagram (*padmam*) over which a lighted brass lamp, and in front of it a stool, are placed with a metal pot of water surmounted by a full pod of cocoanut flowers and a washed cloth arranged in the form of a beautiful crown. The Goddess, who is supposed to be located therein by means of holy *mantrams*, is propitiated every night between 9 and 12 P. M., with offerings and *pujas*, to the accompaniment of drumming, singing,

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawád* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawád*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawád*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Decksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

stool in the pandal. A male member of the family, 588 generally a brother or maternal uncle of the girl, washes 184 the feet of the bridegroom. The girls are covered with new cloths of cotton or silk, and brought into the pandal, and seated screened off from one another. After the [431] distribution of money presents to the Brāhmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the tāli, or thin plate of gold shaped like the leaf of aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), and tacked on to a string, to the Tirumulpād, who ties it round the neck of the girl. A single Tirumulpād often ties the tāli round the neck of two, three, or four girls. He is given one to eight rupees per girl for so doing. Sometimes the tāli is tied by the mother of the girl. The retention of the tāli is not at all obligatory, nay it is seldom worn or taken care of after the ceremony. These circumstances clearly show the purely ceremonial character of this form of marriage. The Karamel Asan, or headman of the village, is an important factor on this occasion. In a conspicuous part of the marriage pandal [622] he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which a grass mat, a black blanket, and white cloth are spread one over the other. Before the tāli is tied, his permission is solicited for the performance of the ceremony. He is paid 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 puthans (a puthan = 10 pies) per girl, according to the means of the family. He is also given rice, curry stuff, and pān-supāri. Rose-water is sprinkled at intervals on the males and females assembled on the occasion. With the distribution of 574 pān-supāri, scented sandal paste and jasmine flowers to 588 the females of the village and wives of relatives and 184 friends, who are invited for the occasion, these guests return to their homes. The male members, one or two from each family in the village, are then treated to a sumptuous feast. In some places, where the Enangu

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
[574] day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During
[536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

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sambandham ceremony all over Kēralam are in the main 585
the same. As there are different local names denoting 184
marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examina- [787]
tion, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically; the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony; the usual hour at which the ceremony takes place; the presentation [431]
of dānam (gifts) to Brāhmans; sumptuous banquet; the [574]
meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted sambandhams in all parts of Kēralam alike. But here I would state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all sambandhams among respectable Nāyars; and I would further state that they ought to be gone through at every sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the pudamuri or vastradānam as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of sambandham, I consider the pudamuri the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The prelimi- [787]
nary ceremony in every pudamuri is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the [574] Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

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however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

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Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787]
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day
he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of
the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife).
They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl
with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of
her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right
leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a
burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede
her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice,
and some plantains are placed before her. One of the
younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece
of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called
madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then
sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or
cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house.
After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house
on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 575
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely
the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the
Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her
share of whatever good things may be going. Hence
the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind
her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

A sambandham ceremony at
585 Calicut is recorded by Mr. Fawcett, at which there were
[574] cake and wine for the guests, and a ring for the bride.

In connection with sambandham, Mr. N. Subramani
[184] Aiyar writes from Travancore that "it is known in different localities as gunadosham (union through good or evil), vastradānam or putavakota (giving of cloth), and uzhamporukkal (waiting one's turn). It may be performed without any formal ceremony whatever, and is actually a private transaction confidentially gone through in some families. The bridegroom and his friends assemble at the house of the bride on the appointed night, and, before the assembled guests, the bridegroom presents the bride with a few unbleached cloths. Custom enjoins that four pieces of cloth should be presented, and the occasion is availed of to present cloths to the relatives and servants of the bride also. The girl asks permission of her mother and maternal
[431] uncle, before she receives the cloths. After supper, and the distribution of pān-supāri, the party disperses. Another day is fixed for the consummation ceremony.
[574] On that day the bridegroom, accompanied by a few friends, goes to the bride's house with betel leaves and nuts. After a feast, the friends retire."

It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that one name for the sambandham rite is kitakkora, meaning
881 bed-chamber ceremony. In the same report, the following account of a puberty ceremony is given. "The tirandukuli ceremony is practically a public declaration that a girl has reached the age of maturity. When a girl attains puberty, she is seated in a separate room, where a lamp is lit, and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass called vālkannādi, literally a looking-glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by korava

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(shouts of joy by females). The females of the neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, "when a sambandham has been registered in the manner

would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogde of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

15. Thurston & Rangachari 2-4, 3 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. 788 In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror 796 in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, [776] all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and [783] sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respec- [431] tive homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, 526 "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time 875 when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice 564 physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in 526 a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a
[431] gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sin-
[171] halese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely dimi-
[613] nution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

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613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
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[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
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A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
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433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one 771
becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" 177
or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyin* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which [114]
lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. 241
The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of 242
excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific 245
skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme [177]
fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut 245
cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by 471
the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the [361]
Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. 241
Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. [438]
It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the [432]
market.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

3/3 sold to purchasers for extraction of major forest produce but the extent of this is very limited in Kerala, Whereas for the whole of India about 75 per cent of major forest produce is extracted by the purchasers, in Kerala only about 15 per cent of forest is extracted by the purchasers directly, the rest being entrusted to departmental extraction.

[432] 4.14 The procedure in case of sale of timber and poles is to offer them first to the Government Departments and to sell only the surplus by open auction. The result is that while the Government Departments are able to obtain timber at reasonable negotiated rates, the trade obtains timber at very heavy rates.

4.15 In case of firewood, Messrs Forest Industries (Travancore) Ltd. (F.I.T.) have been given a concession for extraction of firewood for supply to M/s Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Ltd., Alwaye. The latter are now switching on to oil and, therefore, other uses shall have to be found for firewood extracted by the F.I.T. whose concession has still to run a number of years. Firewood supplies to the main cities come from the forest coupes which are sold to purchasers in auction after extraction of the timber. No area is managed purely for raising firewood as in some other States of India.

4.16 Unlike the major forest produce whose removal is done mainly through the Government agency, extraction of minor forest produce is mostly done through the purchasers. As may be seen from Appendix 6 Government earned only Rs. 50,000 as [651] revenue through sale of minor produce while it earned about Rs. 5 lakhs in the form of royalties from purchasers.

Silvicultural Systems

3/3 6.55 4.17 Kerala is unique in having working plans for all the Government owned forest areas in the State. Since all the Government forests are managed under the latest scientific systems, there is hardly any danger of over-felling in the public sector forests.

4.18 With a wide variety of forests, both natural and artificial, the systems of silviculture practised are suited to the types. The Selection System[1] is the one that is being applied in all the evergreen forests and only the trees of little economic importance are extracted under the simple felling rules. The complex nature of the vegetation and difficulty of regeneration of evergreen species, together with the danger of heavy wild growth have caused these forests to be worked under the Selection System.

4.19 In the other timber forests clear-felling with natural regeneration, supplemented by artificial planting, is being undertaken. The climate and soil conditions are so favourable that there is generally no difficulty in obtaining natural regeneration. The only exception, and it is quite an important one, exists in case of the evergreen forests which are being worked more and more heavily as demand for new species arises in the market. Their regeneration is not keeping pace with the removals.

[1]. Under the Selection System trees are selected for felling uniformly all over the forest. Under simple felling rules patches of forests are completely cleared in rotation irrespective of age, type or growth of trees contained in that patch.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

443 Of these paddy is mostly bought by outsiders and non-agricultural labourers, such as carpenters or blacksmiths. Most labourers
438 indeed get their wages in paddy. Metallic articles are mostly
[465] bought by blacksmiths, both in this village (to a very small extent) and by outsiders. So, too, in regard to coconut oil, gingelly oil, tobacco, sugar and all other articles, large quantities are purchased by persons coming from other villages, where there are no shops. Probably about 50 per cent of the total sales are to outsiders.

As regards the quantities of these articles consumed, the shopkeeper says that there is no difference between what is sold now and what was sold 25 years ago when the shop was started. Only the prices have risen. One or two new articles of consumption have however been introduced, e.g., coffee, the sale of which is increasing. Iron and other metallic articles began to be sold some 15 years ago and the sales are increasing, though very little is consumed in the village. Besides the articles mentioned the shop deals in sundry small articles of consumption in the village, such as medicinal products, garlic and onions (consumed by the
438 Cherumas and the lower castes), chillis, spices and the like. An important commercial product is pepper. The village produces about Rs. 2,000 worth of it and the shop buys about Rs. 1,000 worth from other villages. Very little of this is sold in the village. It is sent to the towns and commercial centres. The trade is very profitable and may be extended.

The commodities sold in the village are brought from the nearest towns or trading centres, like Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Ponnāni. The usual means of transportation are bullock carts. It does not pay to bring small quantities by railway and there is also the risk of delay and damage. The villagers also sometimes buy their clothing and other articles in towns or at the Vaniamkulam fair. About a thousand rupees worth of vegetable and garden produce is also taken to the fair in a year for sale, with the proceeds of which the villagers buy cattle and implements or commodities for consumption. The local prices of commodities are 10 per cent higher than prices in towns, about 4 per cent representing cost of carriage and the remainder interest and profit. After deducting interest on capital invested at 9 per cent, the owner of the shop makes a fair sum as wages of superintendence and profits—about Rs. 400 per annum, excluding the profits from the pepper trade which are at least as much again as this. The shop also sells paper and other articles of stationery for the use of villagers at fair prices.

435 As regards the rise in retail prices in recent years, the village accounts show a general rise in prices of nearly 100 per cent—salt alone having fallen in price. The rise is most marked in foodstuffs and other articles of immediate consumption, and in metallic articles. Betel leaves have not risen much in price. Paddy, which used to sell at 2½ to 3 paras per rupee 25 years ago, now sells at 1·2 to 1·8 or 2 paras. Oils have generally risen at least 100 per cent in 25 years. So also sugar, tobacco and the like.

•432 If one compares the total value of purchases by different classes, one will find that the many purchases of the few well-to-do persons and the few small purchases from day to day of the great majority of poor persons roughly equal one another. The Cherumas and

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village. 432

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer. 465

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one-and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days. [804]

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters. 566

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and 563 463

* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]

[For additional information on the growth of plantation agriculture see category 311, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

437 (2) The Traditional Economic System
423 The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [120] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
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3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

/For further information on economic development and planning, including the part and potential productive capacity of agriculture and various industries in Kerala, see category 116, pp. vi-viii, 9-13, 15-21, 25, 28-65, 72-125, 128, 130, and 133-138./

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories. [113]

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

162 464 The fall in the participation ratio between 1931–51[1] may be attributed to three factors:

(i) Rise in the sex ratio in favour of females.
(ii) Increase in the school-going population.
(iii) Slow growth in employment opportunities.

11.17 The force of the first two factors, however, is not sufficient to explain the steep [161] decline in the participation rate. A fall of the magnitude, as shown in the above [433] table, primarily indicates that the increase in opportunities for gainful employment has not been keeping pace with the growth of population which had increased by over 40 per cent between 1931 and 1951 without any corresponding growth of industries or development in other sectors.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN POPULATION DENSITY AND MANPOWER

[161] 11.18 Kerala is the most thickly populated State of India having an average density of 1,125 persons to a square mile according to the Census of 1961. The population, however, is not uniformly spread out as may be noticed from the district density figures in Table 58.[3] Malabar is less thickly populated than the Travancore-Cochin area. But the proportion of working force to total population, that is, the participation rate is also lower in the Malabar area. Generally, it is expected that participation rate would be lower in the more congested areas, because an over-crowded agricultural sector naturally offers limited scope for employment. The comparison of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, however, seems to belie this conclusion. The [288] reason for this contrast perhaps lies in the fact that the major part of the coir industry, the most labour-intensive industry of Kerala, is concentrated mostly in the Travancore-Cochin region.[2] Absence of this industry on a large scale in Malabar seems to account for a lower participation rate in that area.

Occupational Distribution

162 464 433 11.19 Occupational pattern generally gives a broad idea as to the stage of economic development attained by a country or a region. The distribution of working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, is given separately for the rural and urban sectors, in Table 59.[4] A comparison with the all-India occupational distribution brings out a marked contrast in the case of Kerala. Whereas 71.8 per cent of the working force was engaged in agricultural occupations in the whole of India, in case of Kerala the proportion was only 51.4 per cent. In fact in Kerala the proportion of its population dependent upon non-agricultural activities turns out to be the highest in the whole of India.

[1] The difference in the concepts used in 1931 and 1951 Censuses perhaps exaggerates the extent of decline in the participation rates, but it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years.

[2] Both these aspects have also been dealt with in Chapter 1.

3,4 [see p 310, category 116 -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas.

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities.

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations.

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951.

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.
[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Supply of Labour

11.36 In addition to the current back-log of unemployment, the two sources of future labour supply would be : (*i*) growth of population, (*ii*) changes in labour force population ratio. Of these, by far the most important source will be the growth of population. Long run changes in the labour force population ratio are difficult to predict. For the comparatively short period of next 10 years, this ratio may be assumed to remain constant at about 37.9 per cent or so.

11.37 A look at the population figures in Kerala over the last few decades shows that this State has witnessed a higher rate of growth of population than India as a whole and that during 1941–51 it was higher (22.82%) than in any other State.[1] There are indications to believe that the rate of growth of population during the coming decade may not be so fast. The following table gives the projections for growth of population[2] and the labour force arising out of it during the period 1956–71.

GROWTH OF POPULATION—PROJECTIONS FOR 1956—71

Year	*Population* (million)	*Increase in Population over the previous five years* (million)	*Increase in the labour force (Labour force population Ratio—37.9 per cent)* (million)
1956	15.01	..	..
1961	16.68	1.67	.633
1966	18.34	1.66	.629
1971	20.12	1.78	.674
			1.936
Backlog of unemployment in 1956			.660
			2.596
Less jobs created during the Second Plan			.200[3]
Additional labour supply during 1961–71			2.396

[3] *Employment Trends and Prospects*—Planning Commission. Approximate estimates of employment created during the Second Plan may also be derived from investment figures. On this basis we get a smaller figure for employment generated during the Second Plan period. Public sector investment during the Second Plan was about Rs. 75 crores. Adding 50 per cent for private investment the total comes to Rs. 112.5 crores. Assuming that an investment of roughly Rs. 8,000 is required to create an additional job, the number of jobs created during the Second Plan comes to about 1.4 lakhs.

11.38 The above figures may be taken to be only rough approximations, since the projections of population and labour force ratios are based on certain assumptions. However, the magnitude of the problem is well illustrated by the fact that during the coming decade an additional 23.96 lakh jobs will have to be created if something approaching the standards of full employment has to be achieved. This figure is almost 50 per cent of the existing working force.

[1] *1961 Census*—Provisional Population figures.

[2] Based on NCAER population projections. It may be noted that the NCAER projections would have to be slightly modified in the light of the 1961 Census data. However, the extent of difference would not be so large as to make any substantial difference to our calculations.

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TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

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District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	*16,875,109*	*1,125*

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	*172.5*	*49.1*	*4,520.0*	*45.6*
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0		44.9
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	70.0	
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6	60.0	0.5
B. Secondary Incomes	*52.3*	*14.9*	*1,530.0*	*15.5*
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.3	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	*126.8*	*36.3*	*3,810.0*	*38.3*
1. Communications	..			
2. Railways	3.5			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	35.9			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	3.5			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	31.3			
6. Public Authorities	14.6			
7. House Property	18.0			
TOTAL	*351.6*	*100*	*9,940*	*100*
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

II: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-56)

	Working force			*Net value added per worker* (Rs.)	
	Kerala		*India*	*Kerala*	*India*
	*Lakhs**	*Per cent*	*Per cent*		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	..	413	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	*50.3*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*700.00*	*651.00*

* Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Integrated Sample Survey. According to this, estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Integrated Sample Survey are given below:

	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	*24.5*
2. Secondary Sector	*9.4*
(a) Mining	0.5
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	*12.4*
TOTAL	*46.3*

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 10

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AREA AND PRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA
(1950-51[a] AND 1958-59[b])

	Area under crops ('000 acres)		Percentage increase or decrease	Production of crops ('000 tons)		Percentage increase or decrease
	1950-51	1958-59		1950-51	1958-59	
Rice	1,901	1,894	— 0.36	715	939	+ 31.3
Jowar	6	4	— 33.3	3	7	+ 133.3
Ragi	11	12	+ 9.1	5	7	+ 40
Other millets	30	14	— 53.3	3	2	— 33.3
Total cereals	1,948	1,924	— 1.2	726	954	+ 31.4
Tur	7	21	+ 200	1	4	+ 300
Other pulses	23	89	+ 286.9	1	13	+1200
Total pulses	30	110	+ 266.6	2	17	+ 750
Cereals & pulses	1,978	2,034	+ 2.8	728	971	+ 33.3
Sugarcane	2	21	+ 950	4	35	+ 755
Ginger	30	22	— 26.7	10	7	— 30
Chillies	8	8		2	2	
Tobacco		1			..	
Groundnuts	28	33	+ 17.8	14	15	+ 7.1
Sesamum	8	50	+ 525	1	5	+ 400
Total oilseeds	36	83	+ 130.5	15	20	+ 33.3
Cotton	18	21	+ 16.6	6	7	+ 16.6
Tapioca	506	553	+ 11	1,500	1,569	+ 4.6
Total field crops	2,578	2,718	+ 5.4	2,263	2,869	+ 26.6
Black pepper	173	224	+ 29.5	18	24	+ 33.3
Cardamom	63	69	+ 9.5	1	1	
Rubber	132	246	+ 86.3	12,998	22,158	+ 70.4
Tea	92	98	+ 6.5	24,514	39,737	+ 62.0
Coffee	28	41	+ 46.4	2,951	6,961	+ 135.8

[113]

[a] *Agricultural Statistics of Reorganised State (1956)*, Government of India.
[b] Agricultural Department, Kerala.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 11

PER ACRE YIELDS OF PRINCIPAL CROPS IN KERALA

Crops	Yields Per Acre (Lbs.)		
	1950-51	1955-59	Per cent (+)/(—)
1	2	3	4
1. Rice	829	1,108	+ 33.6
2. Jowar	1,120	560	— 50.0
3. Ragi	1,008	1,307	+ 30.0
4. Small Millets	224	448	+ 100.0
5. Total Cereals	829	1,008	+ 21.5
6. Tur	314	1,403	+ 28.3
7. Other Pulses	90	336	+ 273.3
8. Total Pulses	157	358	+ 128.0
9. Cereals and Pulses	896	963	+ 7.5
10. Sugarcane	4,480	35,616	+ 695.0
11. Ginger	739	806	+ 9.1
12. Chillies	..	..	..
13. Tobacco	..	..	..
14. Groundnuts	1,120	1,008	— 10.0
15. Sesamum	291	269	— 7.6
16. Total Oilseeds	918	582	— 36.6
17. Cotton	131	157	+ 19.8
18. Tapioca	6,640	6,352	— 4.3
19. Total Field Crops			
20. Black Pepper	224	246	+ 9.8
21. Cardamom			
22. Rubber	221	273	+ 23.5
23. Tea	597	791	+ 32.9
24. Coffee	236	407	+ 72.5

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 12

AREA IRRIGATED ACCORDING TO SOURCES

(In '000 acres)

Source	*1950-51*	*Per cent to total*	*1956-57*	*Per cent to total*	*Per cent (+)/(—) (4)/(1)*
1	2	3	4	5	6
Government Canals	321	43.15	343	41.38	+ 6.8
Private Canals	68	9.14	71	8.57	+ 4.4
Total Canals	*389*	*52.29*	*414*	*49.95*	+ 6.4
Tanks	82	11.03	77	9.28	— 6.1
Wells	26	3.49	29	3.49	+11.5
Other sources	247	33.19	309	37.28	+25.1
TOTAL	*744*	*100.00*	*829*	*100.00*	*+11.4*

TABLE 13

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AREA AND PRODUCTION OF RUBBER IN KERALA

Year	*No. of estates on 31st December*	*Area abandoned during the year* (In acres)	*New extension during the year including re-planting included in areas abandoned in the previous year*	*Total area under rubber during the year* (In acres)	*Area that has been tapped during the year* (In acres)	*Quantity of dry rubber produced* (Tons)
1951	9,026	1,856	4,386	141,759	99,078	13,800
1952	9,186	2,180	3,819	143,448	103,762	15,568
1953	14,231	1,489	1,555	163,254	143,263	19,830
1954	14,336	460	1,769	165,834	17,711	18,768
1955	14,386	2,386	4,963	168,412	132,831	21,605
1956	18,082	4,381	13,785	177,826	150,005	21,079
1957	43,783	4,230	31,699	246,793	167,421	21,496
1958	5,005	2,726	26,558	270,625	169,492	22,159

11: India G-4,.5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 62

EMIGRATION FROM AND IMMIGRATION TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

Year	Number of		Percentage of population		
	Immigrants	Emigrants	Immigrants	Emigrants	Balance
1901	82,023	16,346	2.18	0.43	1.75
1911	83,278	26,112	1.91	0.60	1.31
1921	88,603	29,025	1.78	0.58	1.20
1931	164,389	48,503	2.61	0.77	1.84
1951	206,823	205,816	2.25	2.22	0.01

SOURCE: *Census of India, 1951*, Travancore-Cochin, Part 1 A, Report.

TABLE 63

INVESTMENT DURING THE COMING DECADE (1960-61 to 1970-71)

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Items	State sector (Rs. crores)	Centre and private (Rs. crores)	Total (Rs. crores)	Percentage share to total investment	Percentage share, All-India Third Plan
1. Agriculture	51.7	56.0	107.7	10.8	20.8
2. Plantations	50.6	129.0	179.6	18.1	
3. Forests	5.7	..	5.7	0.6	
4. Animal Husbandry	2.6	..	2.6	0.3	
5. Fisheries	2.5	8.3	10.8	1.1	
6. Minerals	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.1	
PRIMARY SECTOR	*113.6*	*193.7*	*307.3*	*30.9*	
7. Factory Industries	31.2	114.1	145.3	14.6	28.8
8. Small Scale Sector	14.0	28.0	42.0	4.3	
9. Non-factory Sector	..	18.6	18.6	1.9	
SECONDARY SECTOR	*45.2*	*160.7*	*205.9*	*20.8*	
10. Power	102.0	..	102.0	10.3	9.5
11. Transport	70.0	28.4	98.4	9.9	16.2
12. Social Services*	65.0	100.8	165.8	16.6	16.9
13. Inventories	15.0	60.0	75.0	7.5	7.8
14. Rural Public Works	40.0	..	40.0	4.0	
TERTIARY SECTOR	*292.0*	*189.2*	*481.2*	*48.3*	*50.4*
GRAND TOTAL	450.8	543.6	994.4	100.0	100.0
	+47.0	—47.0			
Loans from State Government to the Private Sector	497.8	496.6			

* Investment in social services has been derived from the Third Plan estimates (all-India) by assuming the same per capita investment as in all-India.

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Appendix 6

Statement Showing Outturn of Minor Forest Products During 1958-59

Items	Unit	By Government agency		By purchasers		Total Amount (Rs.)
		Quantity	Amount (Rs.)	Quantity	Amount (Rs.)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A. Cardamom lease	lbs.	159	320		21191.68	23512.18
B. Honey (Big bees)	Tons	..	..	244		..
-do- (Small bees)		..	..	..	..	..
Wax		..	..	..	..	..
C. Ivory-Tusks	lbs.	1565.75	32483.00	..	..	32483.00
Serivelloes	lbs.	31.80	226.00	..	..	226.00
Elephant teeth	lbs.	88.00	25.62	..	..	25.62
Bamboo	No.	6607	620.12	6617.08	66720.99	67341.11
D. Bamboos						
,, Chillies	Head loads	..	..	163	7.24	7.24
,, Chillies	No.	..	..	29100	582.00	582.00
,, Thorns	Head loads	..	..	324	40.00	40.00
,, Thanayam Bamboo	No.	..	..	50	1.50	1.50
,, Local Mongal	No.	..	..	109800	6588.00	6588.00
,, Kalmongal	No.	..	..	54800	4392.00	4392.00
Split Bamboo	No.	..	..	2950	142.50	142.50
Sale of bamboo coupes		..	..	..	20355.00	20555.00
Reeds (Paas)	No.	4050	20251	1860393	72698.64	72718.89
(Air dry)	No.	..	..	1600025	6000.42	6000.62
(Air dry)	Tons	..	..	3975-1796	11928.67	11928.67
				Tons Cwt. lbs.		
(Ticket)	No.	..	..	227010	908.04	908.04
(Leases)	No.	..	..	9750	5130.50	5130.50
E. Rattans (Round)	No.	25	0.50	765970	13812.70	13813.20
(Split)	No.	..	..	73315	41313.90	41313.90
Sales of Rattan coupes		..	..	..	31580.00	31580.00
F. Miscellaneous						
(1) Vekka			..	..	4845.89	4845.89
(2) Vekka fibre	Head loads	..	..	2706	985.25	985.25
(3) Kynansticks	Cart loads	..	..	5	3.75	3.75
(a) -do- fibre	Head loads	..	..	3	0.57	0.57
(4) Kulavoo oil	..	..	..	..	..	..
(5) Manwoo leaves	Head loads	..	..	5078	311.06	311.06
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	966	966.00	966.00

(Continued)

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Appendix 6 (*Continued*)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(6) Metal	Cart loads	..	..	42400	477.00	477.00
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	1077.5	576.25	576.25
(7) Rubber		..	..	..	2826.85	2826.75
(a) -do-	lbs.	..	..	1418	708.75	708.75
(8) Gravel	Cart loads	..	..	287	71.75	71.75
(9) Laterite	Cart loads	..	..	1081.5	32.87	32.87
(10) Sand and Earth	Cubic feet	..	..	9475	146.12	146.12
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	593	148.25	148.25
(11) Thatching grass	Cart loads	..	..	279.5	279.86	279.86
(a) -do-	Head loads	416	26.0	999	351.17	371.17
(12) Grassing fee			437.00		37169.75	37606.75
(13) Minor forest produce lease		..	735.00	..	83611.38	83611.38
(14) Rubber Dn. Lease		..	..	..	2123.00	2123.00
(15) Taungya Lease			8291.10	..	49627.50	57918.60
(16) Cashew plantation lease		..	5635.00	..	2401.00	8036.00
(17) Food production lease		..	..	..	28258.94	28258.94
(18) Miscellaneous lease			580.88		2147.38	2728.26
(19) Koona leaves	Head loads	..	..	25	1.56	1.56
(20) J.N. Poles	No.	25	20.00	5820	1580.00	1600.00
(21) J.N. Twigs				..	..	..
(22) Creepers						
(23) Thai Posts						
(24) Fodder grass						
(25) Eauthal Leaves						
(26) Penning fee						
(27) Kanakamukw	No.	..	..	117943	1179.25	1179.25
(28) Wild plantation leaves		..	..	5	0.31	0.31
(29) Ginger		..	..	..	..	..
(30) Groves & bondlers	cft.	..	..	8950	181.00	181.00
(31) Coconut tope lease		..	..	..	11873.00	11873.00
(32) Tac	lbs.	192.00	192.00	..	..	192.00
(33) Seeds	lbs.	378	94.50	..	..	94.50
(34) Grass and leaves	Shraves	49250	493.00	..	..	493.00
(35) Elephant tail lair	No.	200	300.00	..	..	300.00
(36) Land lease	Acres	..	..	368.68	2236.31	2239.31
(37) Site lease		..	..	6.70	30.00	30.00
(38) Road tax	..	..	..	..	4150.00	4140.00
(39) Elephant liver	..	..	..	..	163.34	163.34
(40) Vekka drag ropes	Nos.	..	..	30881	7720.25	7720.25
(41) Value of pit fallen animals		..	..		57.00	57.00
(42) Azolala	Head loads	..	..	4	0.25	0.25
(43) Ithy Bowek	No.	..	..	6	1.50	1.50
(44) Miscellaneous sales	..	..	93.00	..	..	93.00
(45) Teak stump	..	..	..	2	20.00	20.00
(46) Departmental compound Lease		..	..	..	780.23	780.23
(47) Pepper	lbs.	..	..	30	30.00	30.00
(48) Bamboo 30' (Export)	No.	..	..	5800	1044.00	1044.00
(49) Reeds (export)	No.	..	..	245700	2456.00	2456.00
(50) Other items	..	..	..	..	1393.66	1393.66
TOTAL			60,296.47		519,061.98	569,357.45

[Pp. 334 — 367 not processed]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p 199]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Literary and place-name evidence points to continuing growth of the land within proto-historic or even historic times. It seems likely that there were at least two phases of relative upward movement, represented by erosion surfaces in the laterite at around 250 and 600 ft, while the last stage—that reflected in legend and literature—added the eight miles or so between the existing shore and a line of villages of whose names 'sea' or 'island' is a component; some places mentioned by Ptolemy as sea-ports now lie at a similar distance inland. But all these are near the great Cochin backwater, which suggests—as do the large-scale maps—that normal prograding on a low shoreline of emergence is responsible for this accretion, rather than an actual change of levels. Probably associated with this are the Malabar mudbanks, which lie off all the river mouths. They are up to eight miles long, and their extremely finely comminuted lateritic mud forms as it were an emollient which deadens the ocean swell; in their lee are safe roadsteads for the small ports of the coast. 133

The general tripartite longitudinal division is found: alluvial coastland, low lateritic plateaus and foothills, gneissic highlands. The division is indeed rather more clear cut than in the more complex Nn lowlands, but each zone has certain peculiarities. In the alluvium is the great development of lagoons and backwaters, saline or fresh, which, with some artificial cuts, form splendid waterways for some 150 miles from the Ponnani mouth to Trivandrum. The largest of these, behind Cochin, widens out Swds into Vembanad Lake. The laterites (including the ?Pliocene Warkalais) form plateaus at 200–600 ft, with much grass and scrub; into them project spurs of the Anaimalai-Cardamom Hills which, S of Palghat, have a very strong SE–NW trend, shown by the Periyar Valley. The hills themselves, rain-swept and forested, will be treated in the next chapter, but it may be noted here that the plantation agriculture of Kerala is confined to them, and the development of hydro-electricity from Pallivasal is of great importance to the agriculture and industry of the lowland. [433] [377]

The Ponnani, the headwaters of which rise on the Nn slopes of the Anaimalais, leads up to the Palghat Gap, nearly 20 miles wide and not much over 1100 ft on its broad sill, which lies beyond the regional limits. Farther S the higher (nearly 1500 ft) and much narrower Shencottah Gap gives access to the extreme S of Madras. It is noteworthy that in both these gaps there were exclaves of Cochin and Travancore territory, extending well E of the watershed in the latter; these, with the ancient walls across the Comorin lowland, emphasise the importance of these sole easy points of contact between Kerala and Tamilnad.

Climate and Agriculture

The climate represents the nearest approach in India to equatorial conditions. Maximum temperatures rarely exceed 90° F., minima rarely fall 132

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks, [46] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the [312]
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[46] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 269.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Tamil AW
Kerala AW

atypical. Much of it indeed revolves around the hill-station of Ootacamund, lying under the highest point of the plateau, Dodabetta (8760 ft). 'Ooty' and its satellites Wellington and Coonor have the usual hills layout of straggling bungalows; they are reached by a metre-gauge rack-railway with gradients of 1 in 12½. There is a little local industry of the kind associated with resort functions: breweries (now presumably under a cloud), sodawater factories, and so on; tea, quinine, and eucalyptus oil are processed, and at Wellington the Government cordite factory had one of the earliest hydro-electric installations in India. Of much greater importance is the power station at Pykara Falls, with an installed capacity of 38,750 kW; large extensions are planned, and in addition the utilisation of the Pykara tail-water over a 1200-ft drop in the Moyar Valley, to produce another 36,000 kW, forming a new link with Mettur. This is in the future; but already the leisure resort of S India has become one of the most vital nodes in its workaday life.

(b) *The Anaimalais, Palnis, and Cardamoms*

This remarkable group of hills (Figs. 121, 150) is more complex than the Nilgiris, and in Anaimudi itself they have the highest peak of the Peninsula, 8841 ft. The front to the Palghat Gap is remarkably steep and in the E remarkably straight; the SE flanks of the Palnis, overlooking the upper Vaigai re-entrant, are also remarkably abrupt, as are the Cardamoms and their protrusions (Varushanad Hills) S of the Vaigai. But to the NW the hills fray out into long SE–NW ridges; and indeed over much of the area this trend is most marked, the rivers (e.g. the Periyar) having longitudinal stretches of such straightness as to suggest control by faults, with transverse gorges producing a perfect trellis-pattern. Between 10° N and the Shencottah Gap the active streams of the exposed Arabian Sea front have pushed the watershed back to within 4 or 5 miles of the En edge of the hills: here the change from jungle-clad mountains to the tank-pitted Tamilnad Plain is very sudden (Fig. 150).

Again, apart from the shifting cultivation of tribes some of whom (e.g. Cochin Kadars) are hardly more than hunters and gatherers, the economy is atypical: forests, plantations, hydro-electricity. The most exploited forests, served by special light railways, are in the NW, the Cochin slopes of the Anaimalais. As for plantations, these are not confined to the Wn flanks but are more numerous there, where there is a broader plateau development than on the E. A little coffee and tea are grown in Cochin and in Madura Dt (Madras), but the major share of the plantations (78,000 ac. tea, *c.* 6000 coffee) is in Travancore, which is also by far the most important rubber-producing area of India, with nearly 100,000 ac. bearing against 13,000 in Malabar and 10,000 in Cochin (1945). It is grown on the lower slopes generally below 1000 and never above 2000 ft, with 80–120 ins.

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avunculocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward neolocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matrilocally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves
56 of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly remained serfs in spite of the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the
796 Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people;
[441] but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

This is mostly due to two reasons: 434
First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [182]
without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245]
on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511
fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613]
the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182]
their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262
beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vizhakkū Kari yuntoru vaku*
> *Bhata Bhojana matu Kootāttilā.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nayars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264
people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262
as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291
2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal in South 184
Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439]
richer classes go in for Benares silk.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

178
gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign 564
Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate
of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharavad* (or the joint undivided
family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically 178
massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is 613
much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intel- 434
ligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is
most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following: 178

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patri-* 591
local system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families.
The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying
with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency
among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal.
The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very
much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women
were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people.
Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the
right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open
to the *Karanavas* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his
wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patri-
local system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to 178
patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am 611
inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other
communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started
on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved
is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change im itself
so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either
legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch
the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and
powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at
present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next
quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution willl be it
is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real
patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars." 101

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of
the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

and one with less than that number was called a *Désavízhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavízhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyána* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulles Marco Polo, page 374.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
656 the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad*
occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad*:

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

(434) This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there
* 433 been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades. In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial
47 sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
● 434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

rate of growth if economic and social stability is to be attained within a reasonable period. 433*

Growth of this magnitude can be achieved in a balanced manner over the decade through an increase of about 60 per cent in the income from primary sector, 175 per cent from the industrial sector, and 103 per cent from the tertiary sector. Sectoral growth rates of this magnitude would bring about structural changes in the economy. Over the decade the proportion of income contributed by agriculture and other primary activities would decline from 48.2 per cent to 42.8 per cent while that from secondary sector would increase from 15.7 per cent to 21.2 per cent. Income from the tertiary sector would remain more or less constant around 36 per cent. Similarly the inter-sectoral distribution of working force would undergo changes. By 1971 the proportion of employment in the primary sector would decline from 54.9 per cent in 1956 to 42.2 per cent while in the secondary and tertiary sectors it would increase from 19.3 per cent to 24.6 per cent and 25.8 per cent to 33.2 per cent, respectively. 433* 464

In planning the strategy of growth for Kerala two important factors need to be stressed: (*a*) a proper system of crop priorities in the sphere of agricultural development and (*b*) technological improvements in the industrial sector. 433*

In the sphere of agriculture, the trend of thinking up till now has been to emphasize the need for achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains within the State. This has led to a sizable increase in the area under foodgrains at the expense of high value adding cash crops, despite the fact that Kerala offers highly favourable conditions for cash crop cultivation. The right policy for the State Government to adopt would be (*a*) to meet its foodgrains deficit by import from surplus States and (*b*) to reserve to the maximum extent all new lands coming under cultivation, for cash crops.

For raising the yield of foodgrains, a programme of widespread use of improved seeds, intensive use of fertilizers, control of soil erosion and provision of major and minor irrigation have been suggested. It is estimated that over the decade the various measures contained in the report would raise the output of foodgrains by 7.28 lakh tons. By 1970-71, the output of foodgrains would be about 16.5 lakh tons leaving a big gap to be filled by imports from other surplus States.

This report does not agree with the view sometimes propounded that the need for providing irrigation facilities is less in this State because rainfall is high. Irrigation is essential for double or triple cropping, stabilization of crops and for effective application of fertilizers. Moreover, in view of the terrain of Kerala, it is also necessary to develop irrigation facilities through minor irrigation schemes. Irrigation projects suggested in the report therefore require an investment of Rs. 39 crores in major works and Rs. 20 crores in minor works.

The need for a faster pace of industrialization than achieved hitherto is particularly urgent in Kerala in view of the high man-land ratio already attained in this State. There is a limit beyond which employment in the agricultural sector cannot be increased. A solution to the key problem of Kerala, viz., high degree of unemployment, can therefore be attempted only by further industrialization of the State. Industrial development will also be the main spearhead of overall growth of the State economy.

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COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	*Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons*
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

[744]

Rural-Urban Breakdown

162 1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

36 1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

434 1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,980 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] *See* Appendix 2 for details.

1.2 per cent of the total area of India, this contribution is quite significant. Yet the per capita income of Kerala in 1955-56 (Rs. 234.4) was lower than the all-India average (Rs. 261) by about Rs. 27, that is, 10.3 per cent. 434 [171]

1.22 The distribution of output and employment between primary, secondary and tertiary activities gives a broad indication of the stage of development an economy has attained. As a general rule, the more advanced the stage of economic development, the higher the proportion of income and employment originating in the secondary and tertiary activities. In Kerala the sectoral distribution of output and employment presents somewhat of a contrasting picture (Tables 3 and 4).[2] In terms of employment, the proportion of working force engaged in agriculture and allied occupations (55%) is much smaller than the corresponding all-India proportion (71.8%). This would seem to indicate that Kerala has perhaps reached a level of development somewhat comparable to that of a country like Japan. But the picture presented is quite different when one looks at the proportion of income contributed by the various sectors. The major share (49.1%) of output still originates in the primary sector (all-India: 45.4%). The secondary and tertiary sectors taken together contribute 50.9 per cent of the output against 54.6 per cent in the case of all-India. 433* 434 464 171

1.23 Thus, while the sectoral distribution of population seems indicative of a diversified structure of the economy, the sectoral distribution of income does not. Two factors seem to provide a plausible explanation for this contrast. In view of the high density of population, the possibilities of providing gainful employment in the agricultural sector are naturally limited. Super-imposed upon this is the fact that as a result of the predominence of perennial crops, especially the coconuts, in the agricultural sector, the cropping pattern in Kerala is comparatively less labour-intensive. As a result of the operation of these forces, a large section of the population appears to have been forced to turn to some sort of non-agricultural activity or the other. But this seems to be of a "make-work" character. The technology of the secondary sector is traditional and its productivity is appallingly low. 433* 464 434)

1.24 In fact, productivity in Kerala's secondary sector is even lower than in the primary sector. This reversed position of Kerala only points to one of the strange paradoxes that occur in an under-developed economy. Ultimately, it is not so much the sectoral distribution of working force as the sectoral levels of productivity that are the determinants of growth. Productivity, in turn, is a function of the level of technology. Table 4 shows that the net output per worker in the secondary and tertiary sectors is lower than the average for all-India. As may be observed, low productivity is especially marked in the secondary sector which mostly covers the industries (Kerala—Rs. 539 ; all-India—Rs. 1,294). 433* [171]

Agriculture and Plantations

1.25 On the other hand, the primary sector in Kerala is comparatively better developed. This is a distinct feature of the State economy. Primary sector comprises agriculture, plantations, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries. As may be seen from Table 4, labour productivity in the primary sector of Kerala is roughly 433* 241

2 [see pp. 270-271, category 116 -- Analysis]

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against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[3] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

[3] [see p 272, Category 11b -- Analysis]

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258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total 491 route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

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survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 161

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head ; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

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*434

STATE INCOME (RS. IN CRORES)—AT 1955-56 PRICES

	1955-56	1960-61	Proportionate increase (per cent)
Primary Sector	172.5	193.2	12.0
Secondary Sector	52.3	62.6	19.7
Tertiary Sector	126.8	144.2	13.7
TOTAL	351.6	400.0	13.7
Per capita income	Rs. 234.4	Rs. 240.0	

*433 1.63 As a result of the various measures for increased agricultural production, the value added by this sector has increased but not by any spectacular amount. Output of rice increased from 7.5 lakh tons in 1952-53 to 8.7 lakh tons in 1955-56 and 9.8 lakh tons in 1959-60, the increase between 1956-60 being 8 per cent. Other important increases during the period 1955-56 to 1958-59 were: tapioca 15 per cent; sugarcane 3 per cent, arecanut 5 per cent, rubber 6 per cent, cashewnuts 22 per cent, coconut 3.2 per cent and bananas 120 per cent. On the basis of these increments in output and shift towards a superior cropping pattern, it is estimated that the net value contributed by the agricultural sector increased by about 10-12 per cent between 1955-56 and 1960-61. A rate of growth of 12 per cent is assumed for the whole of the primary sector over the Second Plan period.

1.64 Estimates of increase in the output of industry can be made only with the help of indirect indicators. There is generally a high correlation between increase in the consumption of electrical energy and output from the organized factory sector. [377] On the basis of data for the utilization of electric energy in industries, factory output has been estimated to have increased from Rs. 18 crores in 1955-56 to Rs. 24.4 crores[1] in 1960-61.

1.65 Non-factory sector output is estimated to have increased from Rs. 32.3 crores to Rs. 35.5 crores.[2] The rate of increase of output from the secondary sector as a whole, therefore, comes to be 19.7 per cent. The rate of industrial growth may have been higher but for the fact that during the Second Plan period industries could not develop at the anticipated pace as a result of non-execution of all the power projects planned earlier. Foreign exchange difficulties were the main obstruction in the way of implementation of Plans for power projects. Consequently effective

[1] During 1955-56, the relationship between factory sector output and electricity consumption works out to Rs. 0.8/kWh. According to NCAER's study *Demand for Energy in India* this coefficient is likely to decrease with the passage of time both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and through the expansion of electric-intensive industries. By 1960-61, the co-efficient in case of Kerala is expected to have decreased to Rs. 0.65/kWh. The industrial consumption of electricity by 1960-61 is expected to have reached 376 m. kWh. On the basis of the co-efficient of Rs. 0.65/kWh, the output from factory sector is estimated to have reached Rs. 24.4 crores, by 1960-61.

[2] Non-factory sector output is assumed to have increased in the same ratio as gross purchasing power. Gross purchasing power depends upon rise in population as well as the rise in per capita income, that is, it is correlated with increase in over-all level of income. Since output from the non-factory sector mostly caters to the needs of the local village population, it is not very unreasonable to assume that output from this sector has increased at the same rate as income originating from agriculture, which roughly represents the level of purchasing power in the rural areas.

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capacity increased from 89.6 MW to only 100 MW during the Second Plan period. 433*
Total availability of electrical energy increased from 347.1 million kWh (1955-56) [372]
to 515 million kWh (1958-59) mainly through an increase in the load factor.

1.66 Tertiary incomes generally grow at about the same pace as the commodity 433*
output, that is, output of the primary and secondary sector combined. Tertiary 434
income is assumed to have risen at 13.7 per cent, the same as the State Income. On these premises projections for sectoral increase in the State Income (at 1955-56 prices) of Kerala have been given in table under paragraph 1.62. State income is expected to have increased by 13.7 per cent but most of this rise has been absorbed by the increase of population. Consequently the per capita income at constant prices is likely to have arisen from Rs. 234.4 (1955-56 prices) to only Rs. 240.7 in 1960-61.

1.67 This has been rather a slow rate of development. Obviously Kerala needs 433*
a higher rate of growth, much bigger plans that would generate it, and a strategy of development that would ensure it These aspects are considered and discussed in the chapters that follow. The picture which emerges out of the aggregation of [128]
sectoral plans is discussed in Chapter 12 dealing with the pattern of growth.

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 241 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 191 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [434] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

231 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 235 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] [164] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 231 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 231 234 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs. (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter [369] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%). 137 311

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth. 137 [245]

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging. 313 434 313 464

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well 137 132

[1]. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Artificial Plantations

4.10 As mentioned already, in addition to the natural forests, Kerala also ranks high among the Indian States in respect of artificially raised plantations of valuable species. In fact the teak plantations were first raised in Nilambur as far back as 1842. The planting work had been regularly carried out with the result that there were about 75,000 acres under this species at the end of 1959. 245

4.11 Although Kerala can claim to have been a pioneer in the matter of teak plantations, a beginning with the other plantations has been made only very recently with the onset of the era of planning in the State. During the First Plan period forestry could be paid little attention. Effective beginning may, therefore, be said to have been made only during the Second Plan. Some of the plantations which have been recently started in the State are:

(i) *Cashewnut plantations*: Covering an area of 1,100 acres.
(ii) *Softwood plantations*: An area of 9,220 acres had been covered by the end of the Second Plan.
(iii) *Wattle plantations*: A beginning for raising this very valuable tanbark tree has been made recently in the Hamilton Plateau of the Devicolam range.
(iv) *Eucalyptus grandis*: Plantations of this species were started in the high ranges in Peermade and Munnar and have been showing very encouraging results. They form the raw materials for making pulp, which is used for manufacturing newsprint and rayon.

It will thus be seen that Kerala has made considerable progress in its plantation programmes and leads the other States, especially in respect of its teak plantations.

Forest Produce—Its Extraction and Utilization

4.12 Total quantity of major forest produce extracted from the forests of Kerala during 1958-59 through Government Agency as well as through purchasers is given below: 313

MAJOR FOREST PRODUCE EXTRACTED FROM KERALA, 1958-59

	Government Agency (cu. feet)	*Purchasers*
Rough logs	3,950,567	5,06,079 c.ft.
Rough poles	410,202	1,088 c.ft.
Sawn and Squared timber	144,802	—
Fuel	22,791	25,576 tons
Miscellaneous	1,626	Rs. 1,224,460 worth

The gross revenue through actual sales amounted to Rs. 2.44 crores and royalties on coupes sold to purchasers earned another Rs. 0.64 crores. [434]

4.13 Extraction and stocking in the depots are undertaken by contractors but the actual disposal is done departmentally by means of auction. Standing coupes are also

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [171] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [464] [581] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25).[2] Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[2] [Tables 25+26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ana]

Il: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

Chapter 6

Minerals

FROM THE POINT of view of its industrial development, Kerala's mineral resources are a weak link in the State's economy. With a share of only 1.7 per cent in the all-India production of the minerals, Kerala lags behind most other States in the output of minerals. During 1955-56, the net value contributed by the minerals (Rs. 1.95 crores) was 0.6 per cent of the State income against one per cent of country's income. 433* 135 [434]

6.2 The important minerals of the State are beach sands comprising ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, zircon, china-clay and tile-clay. Among these ilmenite and china-clay are the most prominent. The reserves of these minerals are adequate to last more than 20 years and may, therefore, be classified as "minerals with adequate reserves". Graphite, iron ore and mica are also found, though only in very small quantities. The deposits of limeshells occur in lakes and along the coast, but are rather modest in content. The metallic minerals and fossil fuels, however, are almost completely absent. It is the deficiency of these minerals which presents an obstacle to the growth of large scale industries.

6.3 Apart from beach sand collection and limeshell winning from the lakes and estuaries, there are eleven workings, all open cast. These do not include tile-clay working about which no data is available. The number of persons engaged in all these 11 mining enterprises (inclusive of beneficiation) is roughly 6,900. However, according to 1951 Census, the number of persons employed in mining as well as in stone-quarrying is about 18,000, i.e., 0.3 per cent of total working force (all-India 0.4%). 316 317 464

6.4 Table 28 gives the output of minerals from the various workings and their value. In 1955, the value of minerals production was Rs. 1.35 crores. Next year, the value of production went upto Rs. 1.95 crores, representing an increase of approximately 37 per cent. This steep rise was mainly due to the increase in ilmenite production, which went upto 314,348 tons in 1956 from 231,585 tons in 1955. Production registered a further increase of about Rs. 20 lakhs during the next year, (that is, 1957), reaching a level of Rs. 2.1 crores. This was maintained during the next two years, that is, 1958 and 1959. In 1960, however, there was a setback as one of the mineral sand companies had since closed down; and it is likely that the value of the output might not have exceeded Rs. 1.3 crores. 433* 316 317

[Text continues on p. 92]

* [Table 28 appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin. 489

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc. 489 439

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The Transport System

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores. [464] [434]

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport. [433]*

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average 496 171 496

[1] 1951 Census figures.

[Text continues on p. 127]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	*16,875,109*	*1,125*

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	*172.5*	*49.1*	*4,520.0*	*45.4*
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0		44.9
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	70.0	
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6	60.0	0.5
B. Secondary Incomes	*52.3*	*14.8*	*1,550.0*	*15.5*
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.3	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	*126.8*	*36.3*	*3,810.0*	*38.3*
1. Communications	3.5			
2. Railways	55.9			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	3.5			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	31.3			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	14.6			
6. Public Authorities	18.0			
7. House Property				
TOTAL	*351.6*	*100*	*9,880*	*100*
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

smiths, masons, etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work. 465

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20. 465 326

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise. 465

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown. [462]

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure. 435 [804]

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000. 454

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of 434

* [180 lb.—Ed.] † [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India

Kerala AW11

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which Rs. 6,411-7-0 goes as land revenue and another Rs. 3,500 as income-tax to the Government, leaving Rs. 2,40,000 for the village. There are 385 landowners and these people get Rs. 90,000 a year for their land. The amounts earned by the great merchants may be estimated at Rs. 25,000, and this amount is shared by nearly 600 families. This amount largely comes from parts outside the village and by exportation of coconuts. The profits these people get from the village itself are not calculated under this heading since it forms no income to the village. But that may be estimated at Rs. 5,000 only. Thus all that remains to the agricultural classes after deducting the incomes of the landowners and traders, is about Rs. 1,25,000 which must be shared by 805 families of 6,000 people, an average of Rs. 20-13-9 per head per annum. The total earning of an agricultural family on an average comes to nearly Rs. 146 a year or Rs. 12-2-8 a month or As. 6-6 a day. Taking a rough estimate of what a family has to spend according to the present standard of living, which is in itself a low one, we may estimate the expense of a family to be at 10 annas a day. From personal experience I have found that the cost of giving artisans working in the house the one meal a day which is customary, is 2 annas per man; we made no difference between their meal and ours. Something, but not much, can be saved on this in quality, and, making all allowances for children, I infer that a family of seven members will have to spend at least 10 annas a day for food or Rs. 228 a year. Making an allowance of Rs. 20 for clothes and for religious and social functions—it is only a small amount for a year—they will have to spend Rs. 248 a year for food, in order to maintain their body and soul without suffering, leaving out of consideration luxuries, pleasure, etc. What do they get now? Only Rs. 146. So what they get is sufficient only for one meal. I was told by the carpenters and blacksmiths who worked in my house that they could not provide themselves with meals during the nights and what they do is only to drink rice water, and even that very rarely. They manage with the meal given from the house and what they get as wage is spent on their wives and children with a small saving for contingencies. This economic suffering is the main cause for the physical deterioration in India, and this is the cause of infant mortality, and this accounts for much of ignorance and filthy and insanitary habits, since with every one first food, then other matters. The case of agricultural people is much worse than artisans; they are paid lower and they are rarely given the one meal in addition as are the artisan class. Ordinary labourers if they do not get work have to starve literally.

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It is evident from the previous statement of facts that no money can be saved at the present time by the tenants for agricultural capital, or for manure. Further there is no organized industry of any kind. The oil-pressing and rope-making industries, which are the most important, are carried on with primitive tools which require no capital. It has been already stated that the landowners get Rs. 90,000 a year, of which they spend for their maintenance a sum of nearly Rs. 40,000. The remaining Rs. 50,000 are spent on loans to neighbours, jewellery, house-building, education of their children, charity, religious and social festivities such as marriage. Loans to neighbours take away more than half, education nearly Rs. 10,000, and the rest for the other expenses. Money-lending

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6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institution and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about 2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the [782] drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniyáttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 228 435 654 5.33 The introduction of about 1,600 mechanized boats during the next decade is not likely to subject Kerala's fishing grounds to undue pressure. A beginning may be made with 600 such boats during the Third Plan. The cost of a new mechanized boat (engine, fishing gear and equipment) would be about Rs. 29,000. It is desirable to continue with the present pattern of financial help to the fishermen for boats and gears in the form of loans and subsidies for some time to come.[1] A subsidized mechanized boat would cost about Rs. 19,000. This amount should be advanced to the fishermen by the Government as a long-term loan. On this basis, the total capital cost of putting 1,600 mechanized boats into operation during the next 10 years will be of the order of Rs. 4.64 crores (Rs. 1.76 crores as subsidy and Rs. 2.88 crores as loan). The consequential annual production is expected to be of the order of 30,000 tons by the end of the Third Plan, and 80,000 tons by the end of the Fourth Plan. The value of the additional production of 80,000 tons will be Rs. 2 crores.

*433 228 5.34 These mechanized boats should be operated from a select number of Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, each centre being provided with such basic facilities for the fishing industry as the supply of oils and lubricants, refrigeration, processing, etc. The establishment of a number of such Integrated Centres should be the utilimate aim. The Indo-Norwegian Project has already developed an Integrated Centre at Neendakara. About 15 of these centres may be established during the next two Plans. Among other places, Quilon, Alleppey, Cochin, Azhikode, Ponnani, Beypore, Tellichery, Cannanore and Balliapatam would provide good sites for developing such centres.

5.35 The introduction of 1,600 mechanized boats will create employment opportunities directly for about 6,400 fishermen. In order to obviate the unemployment situation, the Government may undertake a programme of supplying about 6,000 indigenous boats which will create employment for about 22,000 fishermen by the end of the Fourth Plan. The average cost of an indigenous boat with the necessary gear would be Rs. 2,000 (Rs. 1,000 for the craft and an equivalent amount for the gear). A subsidy of 25 per cent on the cost of the boat and another 33⅓ per cent on the cost of gear may be given to the fishermen. The total capital cost on 6,000 boats would be about Rs. 1.2 crores. The additional catch from these indigenous boats is expected to be of the order of 60,000 tons per annum by the end of 1970-71, valued at Rs. 1.5 crores.

5.36 The existing boats can increase their catches considerably if they are provided with better fishing gear. At present there are about 22,000 indigenous crafts in the coastal waters of Kerala. Initially, at least a third of these boats should be supplied with better gear. The cost of such a programme would be about Rs. 85 lakhs. At the present rate of subsidy of 33⅓ per cent, the Government's share in this cost will be Rs. 28 lakhs. An additional production of 25,000 tons of fish valued at Rs. 62.5 lakhs may be expected by the end of the Fourth Plan.

5.37 Thus, the development of coastal fisheries would entail a total investment of about Rs. 7 crores, of which Rs. 3 crores would be required during the Third Plan. As a result of this investment, an additional annual production of 80,000 tons valued

[1] A subsidy of 50 per cent is given on the cost of engine, 25 per cent on that of hull, and 33⅓ per cent on that of gear and tackle.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres. 489 439 [496] [491]

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans. 438 494 605

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres. 433* 438 489

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers. 442 [335] [426] [471] [465] [437]

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number; and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha. [435] [504] [366] [103]

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one. [366] [251] [262] 443 366

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both 433* 442 443

MINERAL RESOURCES: SIZE OF DEPOSITS AND EXTRACTION COST

6.5 In the following pages the importance of the mineral resources, the size of the deposits, costs of extraction—and allied factors, as they affect the industrialization programmes for Kerala, are discussed at some length. 128

Ilmenite

6.6 Foremost among the mineral resources of the State are the beach sand deposits in Quilon district which contain large concentrations of heavy minerals like ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite and zircon. Some of the ilmenite is of inferior quality due to leucoxenization, particularly along the Neendakara—Azhiyikkal bar. 317 [438]

6.7 The heavy mineral occurrences are of three types:

(*i*) Back beach sand dunes, which form a wasting asset.
(*ii*) Beach washings, which are renewed seasonally during the monsoons.
(*iii*) Sand bar.

In general, the beach washings have a higher content of ilmenite and other heavy minerals than the dunes and the sand bar. The extent of the variations in this respect may be seen in the table below:

	Beach washing (Per cent)	*Dunes (Per cent)*	*Sand Bar (Per cent)*
Ilmenite	75/78	60/70	40
Other heavy minerals	15/20	10/25	—
Quartz	around 50	10/15	60

6.8 Of these, the dune deposits are rapidly being used up; and as for the washings, it is not possible to predict the quantities that are likely to be available from time to time. The main reliance for ilmenite has, therefore, to be placed on the sand bar, the total reserves from which are estimated at 34.08 million metric tons.[1] Another estimate places the reserves at 50 million tons. In addition, there are a few minor occurrences in the lake deposits, and in the interior of the country beyond 500 feet of the shoreline. 433* 317

6.9 At present, however, nearly half the requirements of raw sand come from the washings and the other half from the dunes. The collection of raw sand is done through contractors who supply the sand to the mineral companies. The dune sand is worked manually with a wooden scraper and the pools are very often not backfilled. Beach washings are merely scraped off the beach wherever they accumulate. The cost of the raw sand from these sources works out to nearly Rs. 8 a ton.[2] [435] [113]

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, Geneva, 1958, p. 106.
[2] *Quartz sand at Pallipuram*—pits mouth value Rs. 1.50 a ton.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

135 concentrates from Chavara, the Manavalakkurichi (in Madras State) material being preferred because of its higher thorium content.

317 6.23 A rare earth factory is located in the State at Alwaye, which processes 1,500 tons of monazite a year ; but it obtains its requirements from Manavalakkurichi in 328 the Madras State. This factory produces Thorium Oxide, rare earth salts and [439] Trisodium Phosphate. The Chavara Monazite may be considered for use in the rare earth factory instead of the monazite from Manavalakkurichi in Madras State, particularly in view of the fact that monazite would be a byproduct of ilmenite which is won in larger quantities in Kerala and may, therefore, prove cheaper.

Rutile

317 6.24 Rutile is another titanium mineral occurring in smaller quantities in the beach sands. The beach washings contain, on an average, about 4 per cent of rutile. A portion of the sand bar at Neendakara is estimated to contain 740,125 tons of the mineral.[1] Kerala is the only State in India producing rutile.

317 6.25 At present only one of the mineral sand factory units produces this mineral. 328 Electro-static separators are used in concentrating rutile from the non-magnetic tailings after the extraction of ilmenite. Recovery is one-fifth of the rutile content of raw sand and the rest is allowed to go into the tailings for lack of equipment.

*433 6.26 Only small quantities of rutile are produced. During 1959, 482 tons valued 317 at Rs. 4.75 lakhs were beneficiated. The current price is Rs. 1,000 a ton. The mi- 328 neral is not utilized in the State, but is sent to Bombay and Calcutta for the manufac- [439] ture of welding rods. During 1957, 155 tons of rutile were imported to meet the requirements of this industry. Future requirements of welding rods within India is [435] estimated to go up from 417 m. ft. in 1960-61 to 2,022 m. ft. in 1970-71.[2] To meet this rise in demand, output of rutile would have to be stepped upto 6,750 tons by 1970-71. An expansion in capacity of this order would require an investment of the order of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Sillimanite and Zircon

135 6.27 Sillimanite as well as zircon occur in small amounts in beach sands in association with ilmenite and other heavy minerals. They average 5.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively of the beach washings. In addition, 1,916,260 tons of sillimanite and 799,350 tons of zircon are estimated to form a part of the Neendakara bar.[3] Only experimental production of either of these minerals has been taken up so far.

*433 6.28 Sillimanite is mainly used in refractories, but the internal requirement of 317 sillimanite refractories is very small. Moreover, the material from Assam which is of a massive variety can be shaped into blocks and used directly. Export possibilities are also dim and due to the development of artificial mulite bricks from domestic kyanite in the USA. Exports have dropped from 20,000 tons to 6,000 tons in 1957.

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, P. 102.
[2] NCAER estimates.
[3] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Op. Cit, p. 102.

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) [435]

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 [439]

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 [464]

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31.† 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon.

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

† [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

As explained earlier, the effective capacity could not be increased beyond 84.5 MW mainly on account of foreign exchange difficulties. 433* 377

7.14 The relative shares of various consumers in the coming years will naturally depend on the pace of economic development. Nevertheless, it can be reliably forecast that the relative proportions will not significantly change and industry will retain its predominant place since it is expected that the industrial development will continue to be considered the pivot for economic growth of Kerala.

7.15 Per capita consumption of electrical energy in the State was about 27.75 kWh in 1959-60, which was slightly less than the all-India level of 30.45 kWh.

Regional Distribution of Electricity Facilities

7.16 There is some imbalance in the distribution of electricity in Kerala. The southern districts which were part of the former progressive State of Travancore-Cochin, are more developed from the standpoint of industry and power, whereas the northern districts constituting the Malabar area are comparatively backward. The relative position of different districts in this regard is indicated in Table 34.† 377 184

7.17 Similarly, the network of transmission and distribution lines also depicts a concentration of electrical facilities in the south or south-central region. Naturally, this has led to a clustering of industries in this area. However, it is possible to even out the position in future by undertaking the extension of transmission lines to the northern parts of Kerala as well. The present programme of extending 110 KV line to the north is a step in the proper direction.

Cost of Power Generation

7.18 One of the outstanding features of power development in Kerala is the low cost of generation. Generally investment per kW of installed capacity is higher in the case of hydro schemes than in the case of thermal power stations. In Kerala, however, the figure for investment per kW of installed capacity is Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 for hydro schemes which is no higher than in the case of thermal stations. Most of the hydro sites are still unexploited and are ideally suitable for hydel generation. Since the catchment areas of hydel projects receive rain from both the south-west and north-east monsoons, the storage capacity required per kW of generating capacity is relatively small which in turn reduces the overall capital cost per kW. It is because of these factors that the initial investment normally incurred in case of hydro-electric schemes in Kerala, excluding transmission and distribution, is as low as Rs. 750 to Rs. 900 per kW of installed capacity against the all-India average of Rs. 1,500 to Rs. 2,000. Not only investment per kW of installed capacity is about the same for hydro and thermal projects in Kerala, the foreign exchange component of investment on hydro schemes up to generation, will also be of the order of only 25 per cent whereas in case of thermal schemes it is about 50 to 60 per cent. 377 435

7.19 Since the capital cost of hydro-power in Kerala is exceptionally low, the average cost of generation from the existing hydro stations is only 1.7 nP per unit. In the case of schemes under execution as well as the schemes already investigated,

† [Table 34, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit. 435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35[2] presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as 432 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity [438] system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis 377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more [328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[113] 1 *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.

2 [Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWU Kerala AWU

Eleven per cent non-productive consumption contributes nearly 60 per cent of the total revenue. This is much more than its reasonable share. This amount of subsidy cannot be easily justified. Domestic consumption alone forms only a little over 7 per cent of the total consumption, contributes over 51 per cent of the total revenue from the sale of power. This is much too high a share. 433* 377 651

7.39 There was a small, generally upward, revision of rates in December 1958, without materially altering the structure of the tariff. The above conclusions, therefore, still hold good. 433* 377 435

7.40 Amongst the non-productive classes of load, item iv (Table 36) Public Water Works and Sewage Pumping is billed at "Industrial Rates" and classified as industrial loads for the purpose. In respect of item iii (Table 36) Public Lighting, the revised tariff of December, 1958 provides a rate of "15 nP per kWh for lamps for the first 6 hours of burning and 12 nP per unit for the remaining hours". This rectifies the high average rate per kWh in 1957-58, as seen in the above statement. The average unit rate per kWh of domestic consumption comes to as much as seven times the average selling rate of the total consumption through all categories of load. It is 15 times the average rate for productive consumption. The tariff revision of December, 1958 does not relieve this position. This is important. The structure of the domestic tariffs could induce optimum utilization of installed capacity with better load factor, but the domestic rates themselves have to be reduced substantially. In a State which leads the rest of the country in economic power generation, this should not be difficult. The "power surplus" position of the State can also enable the State to take effective steps to make cheap power (though costlier than productive power) available for domestic consumers extensively and may substantially raise the total domestic consumption to a higher level. In the light of the above observations, it is recommended that the State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales.

POSSIBILITY OF POWER SHORTAGE

7.41 It is learnt that power shortage is adversely affecting some of the existing big industries which are heavily dependent upon adequate power supply for their full production. Besides, starting of new industries may be hampered unless adequate power supply is forthcoming, or at least, the present power shortage is removed. 433* 377

7.42 A careful analysis of the power situation in Kerala shows that there will be no danger of a prolonged serious power gap. On the generation side, according to the present plans the Panniar Power Station with an installed capacity of 30,000 kW and the Sholayar Power Station with an installed capacity of 54,000 kW are expected to be commissioned in 1963 and 1964 respectively. Two of the six generating units of 50,000 kW each in the Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) Power Station are also expected to be commissioned by the end of 1964 by which time the State will reach a very comfortable position in regard to power supply.

7.43 Any suggestion for setting up thermal power stations in the State to bridge the likely gaps in power supply will have to be examined in this context. As already pointed out, thermal power generation costs more, both in terms of the cost of genera- 433* 375

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

sufficiency, Kerala should play the role of a net exporter of electric energy to these States. A zonal grid which is now planned to be laid in the South, is essential to make the most economic use of the power generating potential of the Southern States. Since the cost of electric generation is much lower in Kerala than in Madras or the other neighbouring States even after including transmission costs, Kerala may also be in a position to earn net revenue through export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States. This revenue could be utilized for capital formation within Kerala.

7.49 The State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales specially with reference to consumption of power for domestic purposes.

11: India . G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 9

VALUE YIELDED PER ACRE

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Name of commodity	*Percentage value contributed*	*Percentage of gross cropped area occupied*	*Average value of produce per acre* (in Rs.) (1956)
Paddy	25.0	35.8	211.9*
Pulses	0.2	2.3	33.0
Tapioca	4.3	10.2	140.0
Banana	4.7	2.1	732.8
Sugarcane	0.7	0.3	722.2
Pepper	4.0	3.9	331.7
Ginger	1.6	0.4	1077.0
Cardamom	1.7	1.3	434.8
Arecanut	5.5	2.6	687.5
Cashewnut	2.1	1.7	408.6
Coconut	27.5	20.2	446.2
Groundnut	0.5	0.6	242.4
Rubber	3.8	2.9	425.0
Coffee	0.9	0.8	390.2
Tea	7.9	1.5	1434.3
Others	11.8	13.2	294.0
	100	*100*	*Gross Average = Rs. 337*

TOTAL GROSS VALUE = Rs. 180 crores. TOTAL CROPPED AREA = 5466 thousand acres.

* Figures given in this column are average values produced per acre gross of costs of cultivation and hence are not comparable with the net average of Rs. 361 per acre mentioned previously.

TABLE 17

GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT FROM ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN KERALA

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(Rs. lakhs)

Item	*1955-56*	*1956-57*	*1957-58*
Milk consumed as such	531	540	561
Other milk products	593	604	608
Beef	56	58	62
Buffalo flesh	18	19	20
Mutton	93	97	98
Hides and Skins	29	30	31
Bones and Horns	6	7	7
Eggs	84	121	136
Poultry	72	78	84
Dung	321	381	394
Increment in stock	96	113	116
Miscellaneous	4	4	3
GROSS VALUE OF OUTPUT	*1903*	*2052*	*2120*

SOURCE: *Regional Income of Kerala* (At current prices) 1955-56 to 1957-58: Government of Kerala (1960). [113]

TABLE 18

LIVESTOCK POPULATION OF KERALA—MAJOR CATEGORIES, 1951 AND 1956

231

Category	*Total*		*Percentage of increase (+) or decrease (—) in 1956 over 1951*
	1951	*1956*	
Cattle	2,151,522	2,510,376	+ 16.7
Buffaloes	444,968	487,653	+ 9.7
Sheep	423,513	97,820	— 76.9
Goats	423,345	955,570	+ 125.7
Horses and Ponies	518	1,690	+ 226.2
Mules	14	2	— 85.7
Donkeys	689	1,415	+ 105.2
Pigs	117,932	113,711	— 3.6
TOTAL LIVESTOCK	*3,561,901*	*4,168,237*	+ *17.1*
Fowls	3,854,319	6,462,799	+ 67.6
Ducks	263,147	322,085	+ 26.2
Others	..	161	..
TOTAL POULTRY	*4,117,466*	*6,785,045*	+ *65.1*

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SOURCE: *Statistical Outline of Kerala State, 1960.* [113]

[Pp. 280-282 not Processed]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII
11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

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Appendix 6

Statement Showing Outturn of Minor Forest Products During 1958-59

Items	Unit	By Government agency		By purchasers		Total Amount (Rs.)
		Quantity	Amount (Rs.)	Quantity	Amount (Rs.)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A. Cardamom lease	lbs.	159	320.50		21191.68	23512.18
B. Honey (Big bees)	Tons	..	..	244		..
-do- (Small bees)		..	..	..	..	..
Wax		..	..	..	..	..
C. Ivory-Tusks	lbs.	1565.75	32483.00	..	..	32483.00
Serivelloes	lbs.	31.80	226.00	..	..	226.00
Elephant teeth	lbs.	88.00	25.62	..	..	25.62
Bamboo	No.	6607	620.12	6617.08	66720.99	67341.11
D. Bamboos						
" Chillies	Head loads	..	..	163	7.24	7.24
" Chillies	No.	..	..	29100	582.00	582.00
" Thorns	Head loads	..	..	324	40.00	40.00
" Thanayam Bamboo	No.	..	..	50	1.50	1.50
" Local Mongal	No.	..	..	109800	6588.00	6588.00
" Kalmongal	No.	..	..	54800	4392.00	4392.00
Split Bamboo	No.	..	..	2950	142.50	142.50
Sale of bamboo coupes		..	..	..	20355.00	20555.00
Reeds (Paw)	No.	4050	20251	1860393	72698.64	72718.89
(Air dry)	No.	..	..	1600025	6000.42	6000.62
(Air dry)	Tons	..	..	3975-1796	11928.67	11928.67
				Tons Cwt. lbs.		
(Ticket)	No.	..	..	227010	908.04	908.04
(Leases)	No.	..	..	9750	5130.50	5130.50
E. Rattans (Round)	No.	25	0.50	765970	13812.70	13813.20
(Split)	No.	..	..	73315	41313.90	41313.90
Sales of Rattan coupes		..	..	..	31580.00	31580.00
F. Miscellaneous						
(1) Vekka			..	..	4845.89	4845.89
(2) Vekka fibre	Head loads	..	..	2706	985.25	985.25
(3) Kynansticks	Cart loads	..	..	5	3.75	3.75
(a) -do- fibre	Head loads	..	..	3	0.57	0.57
(4) Kulavoo oil	..	..	..	..	..	..
(5) Manwoo leaves	Head loads	..	..	5078	311.06	311.06
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	966	966.00	966.00

(Continued)

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Appendix 6 (*Continued*)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(6) Metal	Cart loads	..	..	42400	477.00	477.00
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	1077.5	576.25	576.25
(7) Rubber		..	..	..	2826.85	2826.75
(a) -do-	lbs.	..	..	1418	708.75	708.75
(8) Gravel	Cart loads	..	..	287	71.75	71.75
(9) Laterite	Cart loads	..	..	1081.5	32.87	32.87
(10) Sand and Earth	Cubic feet	..	..	9475	146.12	146.12
(a) -do-	Cart loads	..	..	593	148.25	148.25
(11) Thatching grass	Cart loads	..	..	279.5	279.86	279.86
(a) -do-	Head loads	416	26.0	999	351.17	371.17
(12) Grassing fee			437.00	.	37169.75	37606.75
(13) Minor forest produce lease		..	735.00	..	83611.38	83611.38
(14) Rubber Dn. Lease		..	..	..	2123.00	2123.00
(15) Taungya Lease			8291.10	..	49627.50	57918.60
(16) Cashew plantation lease		..	5635.00	..	2401.00	8036.00
(17) Food production lease		..	..	..	28258.94	28258.94
(18) Miscellaneous lease			580.88		2147.38	2728.26
(19) Koona leaves	Head loads	..	..	25	1.56	1.56
(20) J.N. Poles	No.	25	20.00	5820	1580.00	1600.00
(21) J.N. Twigs				..	..	..
(22) Creepers						
(23) Thai Posts						
(24) Fodder grass						
(25) Eauthal Leaves						
(26) Pruning fee						
(27) Kanakamukw	No.	..	..	117945	1179.25	1179.25
(28) Wild plantation leaves		..	..	5	0.31	0.31
(29) Ginger		..	..	..	..	..
(30) Groves & boodlers	cft.	..	..	8950	181.00	181.00
(31) Coconut tope lease		..	..	..	11873.00	11873.00
(32) Tae	lbs.	192.00	192.00	..	..	192.00
(33) Seeds	lbs.	378	94.50	..	..	94.50
(34) Grass and leaves	Sheaves	49250	493.00	..	..	493.00
(35) Elephant tail hair	No.	200	300.00	..	..	300.00
(36) Land lease	Acres	..	..	368.68	2236.31	2239.31
(37) Site lease		..	..	6.70	30.00	30.00
(38) Road tax	..	..	..	..	4150.00	4140.00
(39) Elephant liver	..	..	..	..	163.34	163.34
(40) Vekka drag ropes	Nos.	..	..	30881	7720.25	7720.25
(41) Value of pit fallen animals		..	..		57.00	57.00
(42) Azolala	Head loads	..	..	4	0.25	0.25
(43) Ithy Beeck	No.	..	..	6	1.50	1.50
(44) Miscellaneous sales	..	..	93.00	..	..	93.00
(45) Teak stump	..	..	..	2	20.00	20.00
(46) Departmental compound Lease		..	..	..	780.23	780.23
(47) Pepper	lbs.	..	..	30	30.00	30.00
(48) Bamboo 30' (Export)	No.	..	..	5800	1044.00	1044.00
(49) Reeds (export)	No.	..	..	245700	2456.00	2456.00
(50) Other items	..	..	..	..	1393.66	1393.66
TOTAL			50,896.47		519,061.98	569,361.45

[Pp. 334 — 369 not processed]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p. 199]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neighbouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent [435] head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India'
Kerala AW11

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

286 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil [791] and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Labour cost of cultivation of one acre of paddy.

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For this area 8½ paras * of seed will be used.

Nature of work.	Rate of wages.	Total number of days.	Total amount of wages.	In kind or money.	Remarks.
			RS. A.		
Ploughing ...	3 as. or 3 ed. of paddy per half-day.	25	4 12	Both customery.	The ploughman works only during the first half of the day. He is expected to plough three times over an area of one para of seed capacity in a half day; and the land requires nine ploughings. [466]
Plucking for replanting.	5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	8	2 8	Do.	Women chiefly employed. One person plucks one para-seed-area per day and is paid 5 ed. of paddy. [462]
Replanting.	Earns 5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	4	1 4	Do.	Half the labour of plucking.
Weeding ...	4 as. or 4 ed. of paddy per para.		2 2	Do.	Only when transplantation does not take place.
Water-inspection.	4 as. per day ...	for 3 months.	1 13	Do.	One person can supervise 12½ acres.
Safe-keeping of matured paddy.	4 paras of paddy (Rs. 2) for 15 days.	15 to 20	2 0	Do.	At the period of harvest he is paid in kind.
Harvesting (including mowing, thrashing, etc.).	For every six paras of paddy gathered one para is paid.				Women chiefly engaged.

Note.—The yield per para is 10 to 20 fold †; and in specially favoured lands even more. In this table the price of 1 *edangali* of paddy is taken to be 1 anna (which was the market rate 1916-1917). [241]

Statement showing the prices of staple food-grains in the Cochin State for the year 1915-6. 435

Articles.	Prices per maund of 82⅔ lb. 1914-5. RS.	A.	P.	1915-6. RS.	A.	P.
Rice (husked)	6	8	11	6	5	10
Wheat	5	14	1	5	15	11
Peas	5	10	6	5	12	1
Dholl	6	8	11	7	5	2
Gram	3	8	0	3	10	7
Gingelly	9	9	7	8	6	1
Green peas	3	5	11	5	7	5
Bengal gram	5	15	2	5	15	9

* [Approximately 180 lb., an excessive quantity. "Transplanted, 20 lb. in 7 cents of land will plant up one acre. But this seed-rate is usually very largely exceeded, up to 150 lb. per acre being used" Wood, Notebook of Agricultural Facts, p. 52.—Ed.]

† [I.e., 16 to 32 cwt. per acre, worth about Rs. 50 to 100. With the lower yield the net return is Rs. 31 per acre, with the higher Rs. 75, from which cost of seed must be subtracted. —Ed.]

31: Slater
31: Slater 5-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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smiths, masons etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work. 465

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20. 465 326

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise. 465

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown. [412]

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure. 435 [804]

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000. 454

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of 434

* [18 lb.—Ed.]

† [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and [291]
cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is [435]
not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476]
along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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465 Wages are paid both in money and in kind; more often in kind since they find it more to their immediate advantage. The rate of wages is two annas six pies or its equivalent in corn at the standard price, for an unskilled labourer; and four and at times five annas for skilled artisans.

435 The price of paddy varies in different seasons. In the harvest season and sometimes after it, the price ranges between 2½ and 2 paras a rupee. But towards June and July the price goes up to between 1 and 1½ paras a rupee. This is the only food which [262] can be called staple. In times of scarcity the poorer people depend on jack fruits, mango and fish, of which the latter alone need be purchased, and that is cheaper than other foods.

454 Excepting the jenmis who are large zamindars, there are but six houses which have made savings. The bulk of the families are unable to liberate themselves from the grasp of the creditors.

The capital saved by these families is employed in lending to the needy agriculturists. A microscopically small amount has gone on jewellery among these middle class families, but with the jenmi the case is different. It looks as though the capitalist knows no way to employ his capital except lending to neighbours.

426 *Debt.*—The extent of indebtedness cannot be definitely ascertained by enquiry. But from what I have been able to gather from the accounts of two capitalist families, I have been able to make an almost correct estimate of the state of things with the agriculturist. Ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 800 one family account consists of the names of thirty debtors from Kothachira. These are all standing debts and the interest on these varies from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Twelve per cent is the current rate of "polite" interest, as people call it. But there are capitalists who lend money even at 24 and 30 per cent in the neighbourhood. The capital thus employed, however, is not the result of direct saving but is ancestral property bequeathed by their fathers, who were the heads of a jenmi family.

511 Thus we find that capitalists who have money at all to lend, have got the money by other sources and not by saving. The 426 agriculturist has many difficulties to meet with. He has no land and not enough stock and implements. His family is large and the expense is ordinarily far beyond his income. From his field cultivation, after all expenses have been deducted, he gets very little for himself. The rents are very high. The capital employed in stock is vital to him and yearly his lot is to lose by death of cattle either by disease or by wild beasts. Last year there were two cases of the latter. Those who have garden cultivation have this profit to utilize. But the majority own no gardens. The population has grown but not the means of subsistence, and no family except the few named find it possible to maintain their family purely from the proceeds of their toil. Thus they incur debt, but debt once incurred hangs heavy on the debtor. Not only is he unable to find means to pay the high rate of interest on the previous year's debt, but he must borrow at all costs again if he is to avoid absolute starvation of his family. This is regularly continued. Litigation follows and an additional and unprofitable expense is thus laid on his head. Law interferes and whatever property he has is lost. But the law does not kill the people, and

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443 Of these paddy is mostly bought by outsiders and non-agricul-
438 tural labourers, such as carpenters or blacksmiths. Most labourers indeed get their wages in paddy. Metallic articles are mostly
[465] bought by blacksmiths, both in this village (to a very small extent) and by outsiders. So, too, in regard to coconut oil, gingelly oil, tobacco, sugar and all other articles, large quantities are purchased by persons coming from other villages, where there are no shops. Probably about 50 per cent of the total sales are to outsiders.

As regards the quantities of these articles consumed, the shop-keeper says that there is no difference between what is sold now and what was sold 25 years ago when the shop was started. Only the prices have risen. One or two new articles of consumption have however been introduced, e.g., coffee, the sale of which is increasing. Iron and other metallic articles began to be sold some 15 years ago and the sales are increasing, though very little is consumed in the village. Besides the articles mentioned the shop deals in sundry small articles of consumption in the village, such as medicinal products, garlic and onions (consumed by the
438 Cherumas and the lower castes), chillis, spices and the like. An important commercial product is pepper. The village produces about Rs. 2,000 worth of it and the shop buys about Rs. 1,000 worth from other villages. Very little of this is sold in the village. It is sent to the towns and commercial centres. The trade is very profitable and may be extended.

The commodities sold in the village are brought from the nearest towns or trading centres, like Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Ponnāni. The usual means of transportation are bullock carts. It does not pay to bring small quantities by railway and there is also the risk of delay and damage. The villagers also sometimes buy their clothing and other articles in towns or at the Vaniamkulam fair. About a thousand rupees worth of vegetable and garden produce is also taken to the fair in a year for sale, with the proceeds of which the villagers buy cattle and implements or commodities for consumption. The local prices of commodities are 10 per cent higher than prices in towns, about 4 per cent representing cost of carriage and the remainder interest and profit. After deducting interest on capital invested at 9 per cent, the owner of the shop makes a fair sum as wages of superintendence and profits—about Rs. 400 per annum, excluding the profits from the pepper trade which are at least as much again as this. The shop also sells paper and other articles of stationery for the use of villagers at fair prices.

435 As regards the rise in retail prices in recent years, the village accounts show a general rise in prices of nearly 100 per cent—salt alone having fallen in price. The rise is most marked in foodstuffs and other articles of immediate consumption, and in metallic articles. Betel leaves have not risen much in price. Paddy, which used to sell at 2½ to 3 paras per rupee 25 years ago, now sells at 1·2 to 1·8 or 2 paras. Oils have generally risen at least 100 per cent in 25 years. So also sugar, tobacco and the like.

432 If one compares the total value of purchases by different classes, one will find that the many purchases of the few well-to-do persons and the few small purchases from day to day of the great majority of poor persons roughly equal one another. The Cherumas and

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563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

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actually go without the needed food and keep body and soul together as best they can. Well may economists and others speak of the power of resistance of the Indian peasant, his power of doing without! I wish I had some photographs of the living skeletons who call forth this praise!! But they are proud; they will never tell you the whole story. The village schoolmasters tell me that boys do not attend school regularly (though it is free) owing to actual starvation, cold hunger takes away all appetite for study. There are practically very few who do not owe something to the village money-lenders. Tenants are always in arrears with their rents; they sometimes even consume the grain reserved for seed. Villagers come begging for small loans just to tide over difficulties from day to day. The high rate of interest includes a large percentage of insurance for risk. Debts vary from a few rupees to hundreds. Exact information is not available. 426 735

Causes of indebtedness.—Poverty is of course the chief cause; other causes are want of suitable work, especially for women of the lower classes, the low rate of wages, due in its turn to inefficiency and weakness in bargaining, which exist side by side with improvident habits of the labourers, who are as a rule ignorant (though intelligent) and stoic; the growth of population without a proportionate increase in agricultural products and foodstuffs; the high, almost ruinous rates of interest, often as high as 36 per cent, which are both a cause and a result of poverty; an all round rise in prices, especially in foodstuffs; fast living and improvident habits among the richer—though this is rare—due to the desire to better their standard of life in response to western influences coming from cities. The Brahmans borrow largely to educate their sons and to marry their daughters. General extravagance is however unknown especially in food and dress. Many of the poorer villagers beg you to give them a meal or one of your old used up cloths.

Only a very small percentage, not more than 10 per cent, of the debtors have liberated themselves from debt. The tendency is for a perpetuation of debts. Debt is driving many villagers to other and distant places. When they have earned a small sum they return, but are soon forced into their old state. Of course provident habits do not always exist.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

There is no communal income of any sort in the village.

Selling prices of land.—Owing to the prestige and social importance of landownership, the landowning class never sell their lands even for good prices unless driven to it by necessity. This raises the price of land. The rights of ownership peculiar to Malabar, known as janmam, are very complete and thorough and not ordinarily found in ryotwari areas. Janmam land yields very low rates of interest on the price paid for it; prices are so high, having risen 25 to 50 per cent in recent times. Janmam land is usually let out on lease, usually for twelve years renewable at the option of the owner, if the due renewal fees are paid. Even Kanom tenure rights have risen in value, though they depend so much on the good will of the landlord, the tenants having no legal protection against eviction, or arbitrary enhancement of rents. Kanom lands 435 423

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423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry. The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the
435 land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

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EXPENSES AND PROFITS OF A WORKING TENANT.

Estimates for 1 acre under paddy.

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Fertile two-crop land.—(On two-crop land the tenant pays the kanomdar the whole of the first crop, which is always more than the second crop, and averages about 60 per cent of the total of the two together, kanomdar paying kist.)

Cost of cultivation—

	Paddy. PARAS.	Money. RS.	A.	P.
Seed for first sowing	5			
Seed for second sowing	7			
Wages for sowing	15			
Manure, 125 baskets of cow-dung with ashes and green manure ...		3	8	0
Reaping and threshing wages (10 per cent)	13			
Allowances to village craftsmen ...	1½			
Allowances to labourers for festivals, child birth, etc.	1½			
Clothes to labourers		0	8	0
Use of oxen		5	0	0
Renewals of agricultural implements		1	2	0
Total ...	43 and	10	2	0

Estimated crop—190 *paras*—

Distribution of crop—

	PARAS.
Kanomdar's share, estimated at 60 per cent	114
Sub-tenant's share (gross)	76
	190

	PARAS.
Cultivation expenses in grain	43
Sub-tenant's grain surplus	33
	76

	RS.	A.	P.
Money value of 33 paras	22	0	0
Cultivation expenses in money	10	2	0
Sub-tenant's profit and wages of supervision ...	11	14	0

The working tenant also has the straw, and the wages that he may save by his own labour and that of his family.

Moderately good paddy land—

Costs—

	PARAS.	RS.	A.	P.
Seed for two sowings (7½ paras) ...	15			
Reaping and threshing wages	10			
Other expenses as before	18 and	9	6	0
	43 and	9	6	0

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Product—150 *paras*—

	PARAS.	RS.	A.	P.
Kanomdar's share	90			
Tenant's share	60			
,, grain surplus, 17 paras, worth ..		11	6	0
,, money expenses		9	6	0
,, money profit		2	0	0

Good one-crop land—

	PARAS.			
Posts—				
Seed	8			
Wages for sowing	8			
Reaping and threshing wages	6			
Allowances	2			
Money expenses		6	0	0
Total ...	24 and	6	0	0

Product 88 paras, tenant's share being 44 paras.

Grain surplus 20 paras, worth Rs. 14, leaving a money profit of Rs. 8.

Inferior one-crop land.—Here the produce falls to about 72 paras, of which the sub-tenant may get 36 paras. The money profit is Rs. 2.

A small share of the straw is paid to the kanomdar, but the working tenant keeps about nine-tenths. This is not much more than sufficient to feed his oxen.

A small extra rent, in the large Malabar variety of banana, is paid to the kanomdar in the *Onam* festival by each sub-tenant, of an estimated value of eight or nine annas, irrespective of the size of holding.

511 *The annual budget of a typical well-to-do Nayar, a leading kanomdar.*

Income—

	PARAS.
The probable income from lands wet and dry together having an extent of 27 and 40 acres, respectively.	4,600 to 5,000

Expenses—

Food for the family of eight members, two male servants and one female servant	700
Cherumas' wages for the year	950
Seeds	400
Bran, oil-cake and other food for cattle purchased in addition to what is found in the house	75
Janmi's michavaram (rent)	600
Government assessment at two paras for a rupee ...	400
Extra expenses such as salts, oil, etc.	90
Feasts in the temple	60
Charity, such as giving alms and pujari's wages ...	50
The village festivals	10
Sradhas (six in all) (dead relations)	30
Seven kuris	710
Interest on loans (calculated as above) on Rs. 1,500 ...	270

437 (2) The Traditional Economic System
423 The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [436] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

legend "made in Austria." The Nâyars wear none but the gold, "mounted" as they call it (the mounting being much as the upper portion of one section of the necklace, in the plate), strung together through the mounting just as the necklace: a very effective ornament for the neck. The brass imitations of the sequin are worn by the women of the inferior races of whom we shall have some description hereafter. If one asks the ordinary Malayali, say a Nâyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rama and Sita; between them a cocoanut tree! 301 177 564*

Turkish coins, French half louis, and German 10 mark pieces are also used in the same way, each one being known by a distinctive vernacular name, and no corruption of its nomenclature in European coinage, so that it is always easy to identify one of these coins by its vernacular name. For instance, every Malayali knows what an "Amâda" is: it is what we know to be a real or imitation Venetian sequin.* The half louis of the empire is known as the "pakshikkas," probably from the eagle on the reverse. And so on.†

Ornaments are never worn on the ankles or on the waist, as is the rule in other parts of Southern India. 564* 301

Dress, men.—This is very simple; ordinarily one cloth round the loins, the ends overlapping a foot or two in front. It is not tucked between the legs, which is the fashion practically all over India, but hangs straight to the ground. It should touch the ground, or very nearly do so. Wearing a cloth in such fashion carries with it dignity to the wearer. A Tlyan, or a man of any inferior 291 564*

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* I have never heard any explanation of the word Amâda in Malabar. The following comes from Tinnevelly: "Amâda was the consort of Bhagavati and he suddenly appeared one day before a Shânár (the caste devoted to climbing the palms and drawing off the juice) and demanded food. The Shânár said he was a poor man with nothing to offer but toddy, which however he gave in a palmyra leaf. Amâda drank the toddy and performing a mantram over the leaf it turned into gold coins which bore on one side the pictures of Amâda, the Shânár and the tree; and these he gave the Shânár on a reward for his willingness to assist him. This explains the two names—Shânár caste (as they are called in Tinnevelly, but where they are not very common), and Amâda." [773]

† It is scarcely right to say any of these coins, even the sequin, is not current. The value of each is known everywhere to a nicety. It must be remembered that throughout Malabar copper coins of the English and Dutch East India Companies, of Mysore, and of almost every former dynasty of South India are to be found amongst the coins actually current with the people, while in the rural parts reckoning is always in fanams: not in annas. [436]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodierthamana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[264] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
"good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
[611] two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
[783] ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandrv, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[437] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
564 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washer-man's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

564 ritual pollution decreed that the several lower
783 castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

564 Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a
[361] separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas
437 and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. The Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas
[783] and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not
[611] interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes
361 there were and are in Kerala large groups of
563 Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

427 (2) The Traditional Economic System

423 The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [436] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, hav
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was however, extremely restricted in inland villages and surplus cash was converted into gold ornaments or other objects of ostentation. Among
[583] the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605-614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
241 ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts, and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter ● 439 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is 438 highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilized.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the popu-
[162] lation in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians
[651] were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth
[564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupa-
[463] tions and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and
[592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the
471 village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western
592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell
566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one 771
becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" 177
or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyān* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which [114]
lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. 241
The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of 242
excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific 245
skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme [177]
fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut 245
cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by 471
the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the [361]
Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. 241
Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. [438]
It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the [432]
market.

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and urder-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there
* 433 been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades. In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial
47 sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aded the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 248 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most 249 important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is 438 highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilised.

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India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (*i*) and (*ii*) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

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its success to the persevering efforts of the State Agriculture Department. The department has made a successful drive for pulse cultivation with a view to (*i*) raise the production of pulses in which the State is grossly deficit, (*ii*) to increase crop intensity, and (*iii*) to enrich soils by including a legume in the rotation.

2.16 During the same period the area under oilseeds rose by about 131 per cent. The area under all the millets, except ragi which rose by about 9 per cent, has registered a decline ; jowar area has declined by 33 per cent, and small millets by 53 per cent. Perhaps the increase in the area under some of the higher value crops such as oilseeds and sugarcane was at the expense of inferior and low value millet crops. This is another indication of the growing preference for high value crops. (Table 10)

2.17 Land productivity is generally high in Kerala and compares very favourably with that in the other States of India. Yield of rice, the principal crop, was 1,108 lbs. per acre in 1958-59, which is about 20 per cent higher than the all-India average. Only the States of Madras and Andhra have higher yields. During 1951–59 the rice yield has increased by about 25 per cent (Table 11) as a result of increased application of fertilizers, improved seeds and better agricultural practices. Similarly ragi is another high yielding crop with a yield of 1,290 lbs. per acre (1958-59)—the highest in India.

2.18 On the whole the yield rates for most of the crops have improved between the years 1951–59. For cotton and ragi, as in the case of paddy, the increase has been quite significant. On the other hand, there was a decline in the yield rate of jowar, groundnut and sugarcane. (Table 11)

2.19 The latest districtwise disposition of area and production show that Palghat has the largest concentration of important food crops grown in the State. In 1958-59 it accounted for 29.2 per cent of the area under rice and one-third of rice production in the State. Palghat also leads in the production of millets and pulses. The district of Kottayam leads in plantation crops as well as in some of the other cash crops, for example, it had 32 per cent of area under ginger, 29 per cent of area under turmeric and 16.9 per cent of area under sugarcane.

2.20 There is a considerable degree of regional specialization in some of the minor field crops. For example, Palghat accounts for over 90 per cent of the area for the production of cotton and groundnut in Kerala. Similarly sesamum is concentrated in Alleppey (61%), tur (56%) and smaller millets (69%) in Palghat, and chillies (51%) and tobacco (95%) in Cannanore. This specialization is due to favourable conditions for the cultivation of these crops in the areas where they are being grown.

Future Development

2.21 It is generally known that agriculture aids economic development in three different ways. By providing a surplus of food requirements, it sustains a growing urban population. Secondly, agriculture is an important source of industrial raw materials and, in under-developed regions, generally forms the base for a large number of industries. This is particularly so in Kerala where over 70 per cent of the factory workers are employed in agro-based industries. Lastly, higher agricultural yields

[see p 276, category 116 -- Analyst]
[see p 277, category 116 -- Analyst]

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134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conser-
[464] vation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
447 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In
[656] this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

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per cent of over 200,000 acres planted from 1902 onwards belonged to non-selected and low yielding strains. The Board has also estimated that more than half the rubber area contains trees that have outlived their economic life. Therefore, about 164,000 acres need immediate replantation. The total area planted till 1958 was 45,194 acres and of this replanting accounted for only 7,060 acres. To tone up the yields as well as to keep the trees in a good condition, it is necessary to replant at least 20,000 acres annually. A programme of this magnitude would need an investment of Rs. 50 crores at the rate of Rs. 2,500 per acre. 433* 249 242

2.112 In certain well managed estates in Kerala, the yields are reported to be as high as 1,600 lbs. per acre. A large number of estates yield between 700 to 1,000 lbs. This shows the potentialities of raising the yields if the gardens are properly managed. There are also instances of estates, which yielded only 150 lbs. per acre, which have yielded 500 to 600 lbs. per acre after reorganization and improvement of the estates. 433* 249

2.113 India is the only country in the world which is a producer and at the same time an industrial consumer of natural rubber. The indigenous production of natural rubber in India at present meets about half the needs of the country, the other half being met by imports. The demand for rubber is increasing at a very fast rate and is estimated to be 55,000 tons by 1961, 82,000 tons by 1966 and 125,000 tons by 1971.[1] This means that by 1971 the demand for natural rubber would be about eight times the present level of production. It is, therefore, suggested that utmost possible effort should be put in to step up the production of natural rubber in Kerala. 433* 249 438 439

2.114 Rubber production can be raised by increasing the yields as well as by extending the area under the crop. An increase in the yields is a short term measure which can be realized, say, by the end of the Third Plan, provided the necessary measures are quickly implemented. Adequate annual application of fertilizer mixtures (NPK) coupled with soil conservation measures, working the soil and regulated tapping are some of the important measures that may be adopted. These measures can be undertaken more effectively and economically if the holdings are of larger size. Efforts at intensive cultivation should, therefore, be co-ordinated with increase in the size of small holdings—especially the small ones with less than 15 acres. This could be best achieved through the formation of cooperatives. The Government and the Rubber Board should initiate future development on these lines. 433* 249

2.115 In addition to replantation, as suggested above, a regular plantation programme is necessary for a sustained increase in output. Raising new plantations to the extent of 300,000 acres may be suggested as the target for the next two Plans. A higher target would be only too desirable. There may, however, be some difficulties in implementing the plantation programme owing to scarcity of land. The exact scope for extension of area under rubber is not known. Various sources put the likely extent of this area to be between 2.25 lakh and 7.5 lakh acres. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture and Forestry should conduct a joint survey to make an accurate estimate of the extent of such land in the State. However, it is necessary to emphasise that the proposed plantations should consist of

[1] NCAER estimates.

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2.122 The development of pepper has not been receiving adequate attention. The crop was practically neglected during the First Plan. However, the high price of pepper which prevailed during early fifties provided a good incentive for extension of the area under pepper. The main work during the Second Plan was directed towards establishment of nurseries, extending the area under the crop and replacement of unthrifty vines with better ones. A total of 2,000 acres have been replanted so far. 433* 244

2.123 It is possible to increase the yield of pepper from the present level of above one lb. to 2 or 3 lbs. per standard through intensive cultivation, better manuring, better varieties, and plant protection measures, especially against *pollu* disease. Manuring of pepper has been a neglected field and with the application of fertilizer mixtures (3 cwts. of ammonium sulphate + 4.5 cwts. of super phosphate + 1 cwt. of muriate of potash per acre) the existing yields could be almost doubled within a year. Moreover, some extension of area under pepper vines can also take place in house compounds, as an inter-crop in small holdings and in tea and rubber plantations on land unsuited for the main crop.

2.124 Since pepper is primarily an export commodity, 75 per cent of the produce being annually sent out of India, its future scope is very much dependent on the foreign markets. After the last war, India emerged as a major exporter of pepper in the world. The USA was our largest importer, accounting for over 70 per cent of our exports. But, of late, other countries such as Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya have begun to export larger quantities and as a consequence, the USA, now accounts for only about 20 per cent of our exports. The prices have also fallen from a peak of Rs. 4,158 per candy during 1951 to Rs. 677 in 1959. 433* 244 433

2.125 The above evidence points to an increasing degree of competitiveness in the world markets for pepper, and India is fast losing ground to the new entrants. So far India has been able to maintain the volume of exports because of large off-take by USSR and other East European countries. However, demand from these countries cannot be expected to fully compensate for the likely fall in future exports to the USA and other Western countries. It may, therefore, be seen that for maintaining the existing level of exports, not to speak of increasing it, it is essential that Indian prices should be competitive.

2.126 Prospects for internal demand, on the other hand, seem quite bright. Between 1952 and 1958, internal demand rose by about 25 per cent from a level of 5,000 tons. In view of rising population and fast developing food processing industry, future internal demand is likely to maintain this trend. 433* 244 [438]

2.127 Oleorisin, a pharmaceutical product, is extracted from pepper. A considerable amount of pepper in the western countries is used for extraction of this alkaloid. Oleorisin could be extracted in Kerala and an export trade developed out of this. This aspect needs further investigation. [278]

Cardamom

2.128 Cardamom is the most expensive as well as the most delicious of all the spices. India produces about 70 per cent of the world output of cardamom. The 433* 245

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433 total area under cardamom in the State during 1957-58 was 69,658 acres, i.e., 245 about 54 per cent of total acreage under the crop in India. It is grown in high ranges at altitudes varying from 2,000 to 5,000 feet under the shade of trees as an under-storey. The crop requires more or less the same natural conditions for growth as pepper or tea.

2.129 Production of cardamom in the State during 1957-58 (1,242 tons of dry pods), however, was about 65 per cent of the total output of the country, which shows a higher per acre yield in Kerala than in the rest of India. Even within Kerala, [438] cultivation of cardamom is highly localized, Kottayam accounting for over 80 per cent of the area under cardamom in the State. The major cardamom growing areas in the State are: the *Cardamom Hills*, Nelliampathi, Wynad, and Vembanad.

2.130 There has been a noticeable increase in the rate of yield in Kerala during the last decade. It rose from 30 lbs. per acre in 1952 to 40 lbs. per acre in 1958. This increase has been largely due to better cultivation practices and manuring.

2.131 There was no plan for cardamom development prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan period research and development schemes for improvement of cardamom were initiated. It was proposed to evolve high yielding varieties and also to devise ways and means of controlling and eradicating pests and diseases which do harm to the crop. These are comparatively long term measures. To help further intensification of work on cardamom development, it is suggested that 10 additional nurseries should be established for raising and distribution of disease-free plants as well as for studying the local problems. Five to eight of these nurseries may be established in Kottayam and the rest in other cardamom growing areas. Cardamom yields could be raised by at least 100 per cent during the coming decade, provided the crop is adequately manured and reasonably protected against diseases and pests. There is a disease locally known as *Kattee* which does great damage to the crop. More vigorous steps should be taken to control and prevent this disease through intensification of efforts as well as through widening the scale of operations.

2.132 There is scope for extending the area under cardamom within the existing rubber and tea plantations, since some parts of unoccupied area in these plantations are suitable for cardamom. There are also some lands suitable for cultivation of cardamom under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department, mostly in the Silent Valley. It is suggested that the State should start cardamom plantations in such lands and, 20,000 acres may be put as the target for the area to be covered during the Third and Fourth Plans. At the rate of Rs. 200 per acre, the total investment for covering 20,000 acres with cardamom would be Rs. 40 lakhs.

Coffee

2.133 Kerala is the third largest coffee producing area in the country. With 41,123 acres and 3,000 tons of output per annum in 1957-58 it accounted for about 15 per cent of the area and 17 per cent of coffee production in the country. Coffee thrives in the tropical belt lying between 25°S and 30°N of equator. It requires a [132] rainfall of 60 to 90 inches per annum with a distinct rainy and dry season and an average temperature of 70°F. The conditions required for coffee growth are present

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to a considerable degree in Malabar and Nelliampathi (Travancore-Cochin) areas. The major concentration of area occurs in the Kozhikode district of Malabar. It had 89 per cent of the total coffee area in the State during 1957-58. Between 1955 and 1958, coffee production in Malabar rose (18%) while that in Travancore-Cochin declined (16%). Similarly, the area under coffee during the same period registered an increase in Malabar (28.3%) but declined in Travancore-Cochin region (15.0%). 433* 245 438

2.134 The average yield per acre of coffee in Kerala is rather low. It has been lower than the all-India average and is far below the average yield in Mysore, the principal coffee growing State in India, (1955-56 Kerala, 285 lbs. per acre; all-India, 369 lbs. per acre; and Mysore 395 lbs. per acre). Moreover, while the yields elsewhere in India, especially in Mysore, have been rising, in Kerala they have fallen from 368 to 285 lbs. per acre during 1951–58. Within Kerala, the yields are the highest in Kozhikode district which is largely due to the better management of estates in this district. [171]

2.135 One of the characteristics of coffee plantations in Kerala is the overwhelmingly large number of small estates. In 1958, there were 14,475 registered estates with a total area of 47,675 acres. Of these, 12,412 were of less than five acres in size. There were only 99 estates out of 14,475 with an area over 50 acres. (Table 14)[2] 433* 245 423

2.136 There is a distinct relationship between the size of coffee estates and the output per acre. It is noticed that yields increase progressively as the size of the estates increases. The yield per acre of *Arabica* variety in estates in the size group of 5-10 acres was 0.68 cwts. per acre, while for the estates with 200 acres or more, it was 2.26 cwts. Moreover, the quality of coffee produced on small plantations is also inferior and fetches only 65 per cent of the price of coffee produced on big estates. It is difficult to ascertain the most economic size but it is believed that for effective and profitable functioning, the minimum size would be 50 acres. If this is accepted, then only less than one per cent of coffee estates in Kerala are economic. The question of making these plantations economic through consolidation or extension of area under coffee plantations should, therefore, receive serious attention. Two more points need attention. First, new areas should be planted with coffee *Arabica* rather than coffee *Robusta* since the former gives higher yields. Secondly, as in the case of tea, replantation is also over-due in the coffee plantations. Remedies on the same lines as suggested for tea hold good for coffee also. 433* 245

2.137 Unlike tea, the major portion of which is exported, coffee plantations are substained largely by the demand for internal consumption. Internal demand, however, has not been keeping pace with rise in the output of coffee. At present India has quite a large surplus in coffee and efforts are being made to export the surplus. In spite of an enormous surplus of coffee in South America, efforts in India have yielded good results as shown by an increase in exports from 3,000 tons in 1952-53 to 15,228 tons in 1956-57.[1] Most of our exports go to East European countries. There is scope for stepping up the exports further, in spite of the world 433* 245 439 438

[1] Source: Coffee Board, Bangalore.

[2] [see p. 279, category 11b -- Analysis]

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in the early years has been due to the fact that either the sanctions from the Government were received late or the staff was not appointed in time. The shortfall in performance during the Second Plan period emphasises the need for devoting greater attention to forest development programmes during the Third Plan period.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY

4.29 Forests are an important source of raw material for industry in Kerala. Their importance is brought out by the fact that forest-based industries are more predominant in the economy of Kerala compared to the position they occupy in the industrial structure of India as a whole.[1]

4.30 In view of the important position occupied by the forest-based industries in Kerala, the policy towards forest resources should aim at long-run enhancement of the forest potential so that an increasing surplus of raw materials could be made available to industry. Forest development policy in the State should, therefore, be guided by the following objectives :

(*i*) Utilization of resources as yet untapped.
(*ii*) Raising the long-run forest potential through:
  (*a*) acceleration of the process of conversion of poor deciduous forests into valuable teak and softwood plantations.
  (*b*) extensive reclamation of grasslands on the basis of experimental Eucalyptus plantings carried out during the Second Plan.
(*iii*) Incorporation of technical improvements in the methods of logging, etc., so that wastage could be reduced. These aspects are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Existing Potential

4.31 In Kerala, the existing potential of forest resources is being exploited comparatively much better than in many other States of India. Due to easy accessibility provided by the numerous rivers and roads, many of which serve the forests, extraction has been very much facilitated. The importance of the role of river transport in exploitation of forest wealth is shown by the fact that two big centres of forest produce, viz., Kallai and Chalakudy are both located by the side of rivers. Although the general picture as regards exploitation of existing resources is quite bright, some pockets still remain untapped. These are discussed below:

4.32 (*i*) *Bamboo Resources*: In spite of a large bamboo potential in the State, this source remains completely unutilized for industrial purposes. Out of the total available supply, about two-thirds is utilized for local requirements of construction, etc. The position regarding the quantum of surplus available is as follows.

[1] See Chapter on Industries.

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*433 313 [423] [438]

AVAILABILITY OF SURPLUS BAMBOO RESOURCES

Name of Division	Government Forests		Private Forests	
	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos	Area in acres	Field in tons of air-dry bamboos
Wynad	18,667	38,347	..	..
Kozhikode	20,045	61,479	14,755	32,391
Nilambur	18,865	46,336	20,988	24,015
Palaghat	3,090	8,654	2,890	5,586
Nemmara	6,800	18,054	25,460	81,361
Total	*67,487*	*172,878*	*64,100*	*143,353*

Source: Department of Forests, Kerala.

[384] 4.33 Out of the above surplus, it was recently agreed to supply 1,60,000 tons to M/s Gwalior Rayons for setting up a Rayon factory. They have also been promised an additional 1,00,000 tons when the factory is in full production. The latter amount could only be made available after the private forests have been acquired by the Government. *No extraction has so far been started owing to the flowering* that has taken place over a wide area in the forests.

4.34 On the basis of the above estimate of available and committed supplies, there still remains a balance of about 56,000 tons which could be utilized as raw material for paper manufacture. However, the paper mill project can be undertaken only after full regeneration in the flowered areas has taken place.[1]

4.35 During this interval it would be advisable to undertake surveys of other bamboo-bearing areas in the Travancore-Cochin area. At the same time efforts should be made to divert a part of bamboo at present being utilized for local requirements to industry. Far too high a proportion (about 66%) is being utilized for non-industrial uses.

313 289 4.36 (*ii*) *Eta Reed Resources* : The two reeds *Ochlandra travancorica* and *Ochlandra Rheedi* occur in forests of the State. These reeds are at present being supplied under a concession granted to Punalur Paper Mills Ltd. The reeds in these coupes flowered from 1953–57 and, consequently, the Punalur Mill is getting only about 5,000 tons of reeds from the allotted coupes against their annual requirements of 25,000 tons of green reeds. After full generation takes place in the flowered area, the available supply of eta reeds would be roughly 50,000 tons. The surplus of 25,000 tons may by utilized by the Punalur Paper Mills which is planning to double its present capacity during the Third Plan.

*433 314 4.37 (*iii*) *Minor Forest Produce* : A large number of medicinal plants exist in the State. But the potential is hardly being utilized. Against a gross revenue of Rs. 3.1 crores from the forests, minor forest produce was responsible for only Rs. 5.2 lakhs, that is, 1.7 per cent. This is unlike the neighbouring States of Mysore and Madras where minor forest produce contributed a substantial part of the revenue. A phyto-chemical plant is being set up at Neriamangalam. It will require a large

[1] Further details of a paper factory are discussed in the Chapter on Industries.

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Second Plan, 9,220 acres had been covered by artificial plantations of these species. In view of the current shortage, it is proposed that another 45,000 acres be added to these plantations. 3,000 acres out of these may be kept apart for the matchwood species.

Sandalwood Plantations

4.43 During the Third Plan period, it is proposed to take up 1,000 acres of this plantation at Nachivayal, Marayr, and Maunanthura, in the Devicolom range. The general prospects for sandalwood in the State are not very bright but if some additional suitable areas could be located, they may be taken up for plantation during the Fourth Plan period.

Bamboo Plantations

4.44 The existing resources (para 4.32) are largely being consumed for local uses leaving only one-third of the overall supply as surplus for industrial utilization. In order to augment the existing supplies, it is proposed to raise Burma bamboo over an area of 1,000 acres during the Third Plan, by under-planting it in teak plantations in Nilambur area. During the Fourth Plan another 2,000 acres may be taken up.

PLANTATIONS OF FAST-GROWING SPECIES

4.45 So far, the trend of thinking has favoured an emphasis on the growth of plantations of hardwood species like teak and rosewood which find a ready demand but have got a long rotation period. Attention has only recently been focussed on the fast-growing species. In view of the growing pace of industrialization and the consequent steep rise in demand for forest materials, it would be desirable to supplement the long rotation species with fast-growing types which give the yields much more quickly. The three main species of this type which can be grown in Kerala are *Eucalyptus Grandis*, cashewnut and wattle.

4.46 The whole of the area under *shola* grass is suitable for conversion into *Eucalyptus Grandis* and wattle plantations. The productivity of these grasslands will be very much enhanced if these economic species are planted there. The success which has already attended the planting of eucalyptus promises a bright future for this species. These plantations can be extended over 25,000 acres during the next 10 years. The State Government proposes an allocation of Rs. 75 lakhs for the purpose of raising this plantation during the Third Plan period. The economic importance of eucalyptus plantations arises from the fact that they form the raw material for mechanical pulp and rayon industry.

4.47 The seeds for these plantations were first obtained from Australia. It is suggested that the advice of an Eucalyptologist may be sought through the Colombo Plan and the State officers may also be sent to Australia for training. This will help in perfecting the technique of raising these valuable plantations all over the grasslands in the State.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

MINERAL RESOURCES: SIZE OF DEPOSITS AND EXTRACTION COST

6.5 In the following pages the importance of the mineral resources, the size of the deposits, costs of extraction—and allied factors, as they affect the industrialization programmes for Kerala, are discussed at some length. 128

Ilmenite

6.6 Foremost among the mineral resources of the State are the beach sand deposits in Quilon district which contain large concentrations of heavy minerals like ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite and zircon. Some of the ilmenite is of inferior quality due to leucoxenization, particularly along the Neendakara—Azhiyikkal bar. 317 [438]

6.7 The heavy mineral occurrences are of three types:

(*i*) Back beach sand dunes, which form a wasting asset.
(*ii*) Beach washings, which are renewed seasonally during the monsoons.
(*iii*) Sand bar.

In general, the beach washings have a higher content of ilmenite and other heavy minerals than the dunes and the sand bar. The extent of the variations in this respect may be seen in the table below:

	Beach washing (Per cent)	*Dunes (Per cent)*	*Sand Bar (Per cent)*
Ilmenite	75/78	60/70	40
Other heavy minerals	15/20	10/25	—
Quartz	around 50	10/15	60

6.8 Of these, the dune deposits are rapidly being used up; and as for the washings, it is not possible to predict the quantities that are likely to be available from time to time. The main reliance for ilmenite has, therefore, to be placed on the sand bar, the total reserves from which are estimated at 34.08 million metric tons.[1] Another estimate places the reserves at 50 million tons. In addition, there are a few minor occurrences in the lake deposits, and in the interior of the country beyond 500 feet of the shoreline. 433* 317

6.9 At present, however, nearly half the requirements of raw sand come from the washings and the other half from the dunes. The collection of raw sand is done through contractors who supply the sand to the mineral companies. The dune sand is worked manually with a wooden scraper and the pools are very often not backfilled. Beach washings are merely scraped off the beach wherever they accumulate. The cost of the raw sand from these sources works out to nearly Rs. 8 a ton.[2] [435] [113]

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, Geneva, 1958, p. 106.
[2] *Quartz sand at Pallipuram*—pits mouth value Rs. 1.50 a ton.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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326 [465] father is usually the teacher of his children in the hereditary caste. A good workman can earn from about 8 annas to 10 annas per day.

438 *Village trade.*—Iron ware used for domestic utensils and for agricultural purposes is got from Trichur, the nearest town. There are however a few retail shops in the 'town.' All articles of consumption are bought from retail shops, the retail keepers themselves getting their wares from either Trichur or Palghat.

Rice is the principal commodity. Arecanut and to some extent pepper and bamboos form important items of sale. There is a fair half a mile to the north of the 'town' which meets once a week (every Wednesday), for the sale of arecanut and pepper. Merchants from various parts of Malabar and even from the east of the Ghats come here to buy arecanuts. Vegetables and sundries also are exposed for sale for the use of the villagers only.

361 491 The main metalled road which passes from Shoranur to Trichur passes through the middle of the 'town.' Another road from the west touches the main road to the north of the 'town.' The Shoranur-Cochin Railway touches this place. The commercial town of Trichur is only ten miles to the south.

474 Co-operation in trading as well as in most other affairs is conspicuous by its absence. A Registrar of Co-operative Societies has recently been appointed in the State, and, I am told, gave one or two lectures in the place, but nothing came of it. I have hopes that a co-operative credit society will be started within a few years. I may mention that such credit societies have been opened in three places in the taluk and are receiving much help from the State. The co-operative principle as yet is not extended to trading, but with the development of knowledge and culture this may come.

Economic condition—

465 Statement showing wages (in *money*) for the whole State.

Workers.	Minimum.		Maximum.		Maximum in villages.	
	RS.	A.	RS.	A.	RS.	A.
Carpenters	0	6	1	0	0	8
Blacksmiths	0	6	0	12	0	8
Masons	0	6	0	14	0	8
Bricklayers	0	7	0	12	0	8
Sawyers	0	10	1	0	Piece-worker.	
Coolies—						
Male	0	4	0	10	0	6
Female	0	3	0	6	0	3
Boys	0	2	0	4	0	2

To Cherumans payment is made in kind (see above). Also wages are paid in kind to agricultural workers in the village area especially during the harvest season.

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245 eight miles from the village, but the primitive oil mill is chiefly used, worked by two oxen. It is very cheap. Perhaps two rupees would be enough excepting for the oxen.

438 *The village trade.*—The chief articles consumed are rice, fish, vegetables, cereals and spices. The price of the total quantity consumed in the village may be estimated at Rs. 2,50,000, the total sales of the shop being Rs. 3,50,000, of which one lakh is to outsiders.

The quantity of produce taken to the market is not very great. The rice and cereals and spices necessary for consumption come from Palghat and consequently must be bought from the bazaar All other articles that are necessary, e.g., vegetables, fish, salt, chillies, oil, straw, fodder, fuel, etc., are brought to the house by petty traders or by the actual producers. In addition to this there is a weekly fair where local produce to the value of about Rs. 1,000 is sold weekly. A smaller quantity, which may be estimated at Rs. 36,000 per annum, is sold to shopkeepers and they sell to other villages. The people sell to shopkeepers only when they cannot sell in any other way, for the shopkeepers offer only a low price.

491 The main road comes from the Cochin State and passes through the northern and the western side of the village and bends and passes through the southern side. One branch road runs from the west and passes through the centre and ends at the eastern extremity of the village. The road system is not satisfactory. Other branch roads are wanted and those that are made have not been repaired at all for many years, though tolls are collected. People once complained of this to the Taluk Board but to no effect, although thousands of pilgrims visit this place every year on account of the sanctity of the temple. There are numerous by-ways.

498 The nearest railway stations are Pattambi, Trichur, and Watak-
505 kancheri, each twenty miles away. People go to Trichur by boat through the backwaters, and the steam boat that runs from Ponnāni to Tirur is availed of by many and it is cheap. There is backwater communication to Ponnāni and Cochin.

438 Copra, coir, etc., are taken or sent to Cochin and the people get in return rice, cloth, and cereals and other luxuries. Fish can be got from the sea, which is very near the village. The fishermen go every day in the morning and return in the evening.

465 *Economic condition of the village.*—Wages for artisans are always paid in money; for agricultural work both in kind and in money.

Money wages.—The ordinary labourers are always paid in money. In short all those kinds of labour which do not immediately bring fruit to the owner are paid in money. A labourer, for a full day's work, is now paid four annas; five or six years ago three annas. For short work such as carrying weights, etc., the wage is fixed for the moment and will vary according to the distance they have to go, etc. Generally two annas must be paid for one mile as an average. For carrying a bag of rice a high wage is demanded because of high weight.* Woman's labour costs three annas per day now, formerly 2½ annas, a boy's labour 2½ annas now, formerly 2 annas.

Carpenters get six annas a day, boy carpenters three annas, formerly four annas and two annas. Other artisans such as black-

[160 lb.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around [291]
the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is [435]
not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476]
along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

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323 would be better paid. Some of these potters are employed by tile works producing pottery and glazed earthenware and are there paid Rs. 10 or so a month.

Carpenters.—There are five families of carpenters. There is
322 steady demand for their labour, which is well paid. The occupation is hereditary and confined to the caste of 'Asaris', as they are called, a division of the Thiyyas. Full time is spent on the craft, which follows very old traditions. Earnings average about 6 annas a day. The carpenters go out to other villages for work.

Goldsmiths, blacksmiths.—Two or three families of each combine
326 their traditionary crafts with agriculture, and are better off than most other low caste families. In the agricultural seasons they work morning and evening in the fields; and only at noon at their crafts. So they earn wages in money and in kind. The goldsmith earns Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 in this way per month; the blacksmith Rs 5 to Rs. 10.

Moulders.—There is one family making vessels of bell-metal for
325 all sorts of uses—domestic utensils, temple bells, etc. They are very skilled workers and well paid, owing to the great demand for their productions. Some cups, bowls, etc., made by these are very beautiful and exquisitely designed and polished. Earnings Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per month, according to state of business.

Basket-makers.—Baskets, mats, etc., are made out of the bamboo
285 by the Parialas. Very useful, but cheap. Only a local market and mostly made to order, as most business is in the village. Only spare time is spent in this occupation; it is miserably ill paid owing to weakness in bargaining. There is scope for development.

Umbrella makers.—Umbrella making is the hereditary occupation
293 of the Panans. The umbrellas are made of palm leaves and bamboo, and much used in the village. Until recently imported umbrellas were not seen. The indigenous article costs only a few coppers and gives better protection against rain, but is unwieldy. The earnings of the Panans from this source are very low, and they are now taking to agricultural labour.

[262] *The Chettis* make what are called *Pappatams*—the thin cakes to be fried in oil, for which Malabar is famous. The Chettis are also cartmen and take goods and passengers to neighbouring
[276] places. The *Paravans* make slaked lime for chewing. About half the adults chew a mixture of betel, areca, and slaked lime.

438 *Village trade.*—The village buys every year agricultural implements such as ploughs, spades, levelling boards, harrows, *kuzhi kutti*. Most of these are made to order by the village craftsmen. Some are bought at neighbouring fairs. Seed is usually preserved by the cultivator out of his produce, but sometimes he is forced by poverty to consume it and then borrows it or buys it with borrowed money. Live stock is bought at the weekly fair of the neighbouring village of Vaniamkulam.

The villagers buy the articles of ordinary consumption like salt, sugar, kerosene oil, gingelly and coconut oil, as well as the various grains and pulses at the village shop. Sugar is a luxury to all but the richest villagers. More than Rs. 600 worth of toddy is sold in the village, the Cherumas, Pariahs and Panans being the chief consumers. They pay in paddy, out of their wages. Clothing is bought at neighbouring fairs or in the nearest trading centre.

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Sale of village produce.—Paddy, coconuts, bananas, plantains, arecanuts, pepper, vegetables, medicinal plants and roots are sent to market in larger or smaller quantities. 438

Paddy is not taken to the market, but traders come to the houses or the village shop to buy. Pepper is bought by Muhammadan traders early in the season, while not yet ripe, and afterwards sold at a great profit, often 100 or 200 per cent. All the other articles are taken by the producers to the market, chiefly to the Vaniamkulam weekly fair and sold at greater or smaller profit. A part of the produce is consumed in the village.

The trunk road from Palghat to Ponnani passes through the middle of the village. It leads to the two railway stations of Shoranur (the junction for the South Indian Railway and the Cochin Railway) and Pattambi, which are almost equidistant. The road also passes through Vaniamkulam, 6 miles east of the village, where there is the most important fair in Malabar. The town of Ottappālam (where there is a High School and a Munsif's Court) which is a small commercial centre, also lies on the road, some nine miles east of the village. Palghat is thirty miles east. Ponnāni, 22 miles distant, is a small coast town and a commercial centre and it is the western terminus of the road, which is also connected with Angadipuram, the taluk headquarters. The stream which passes through the village is full during the rains and is accessible to boats from the Ponnāni river. Some trade is thus carried on. Carts are the usual vehicles of transport. There are four in the village itself. 491 498

Village trade and consumption.—There is only one important shop in the village and it is therefore possible to get some idea of the amount of commodities bought by villagers from the accounts of the shop. The shop was started in 1892 and was at that time the only one in those parts. Since then a few petty shops have been started, but the business done by them is not very considerable. They deal mostly in those common articles of every-day consumption which are purchased in small quantities from day to day by the poorer classes. On the other hand the one important shop mentioned supplies the needs not only of the inhabitants of this village but of other villages as well. Some allowance must be made on this score when considering the consumption of commodities by this village, so that the total sales of the village shop may not be taken as representing the purchases of the inhabitants of this place. 443 438

The total sales of the shop amount in value to about Rs. 12,000 a year. The chief items are—

	RS.
Paddy	2,500
Salt	2,000
Coconut-oil	1,500
Iron bolts, bars, screws and other metallic articles	1,000
Kerosene oil	750
Tobacco	750
Gingelly oil	500
Dhall, grains, pulses, etc.	1,500
Betel leaves and nuts	500
Castor oil	250
Sugar	200

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443 Of these paddy is mostly bought by outsiders and non-agricultural labourers, such as carpenters or blacksmiths. Most labourers
438 indeed get their wages in paddy. Metallic articles are mostly
[465] bought by blacksmiths, both in this village (to a very small extent) and by outsiders. So, too, in regard to coconut oil, gingelly oil, tobacco, sugar and all other articles, large quantities are purchased by persons coming from other villages, where there are no shops. Probably about 50 per cent of the total sales are to outsiders.

As regards the quantities of these articles consumed, the shopkeeper says that there is no difference between what is sold now and what was sold 25 years ago when the shop was started. Only the prices have risen. One or two new articles of consumption have however been introduced, e.g., coffee, the sale of which is increasing. Iron and other metallic articles began to be sold some 15 years ago and the sales are increasing, though very little is consumed in the village. Besides the articles mentioned the shop deals in sundry small articles of consumption in the village, such as medicinal products, garlic and onions (consumed by the
438 Cherumas and the lower castes), chillis, spices and the like. An important commercial product is pepper. The village produces about Rs. 2,000 worth of it and the shop buys about Rs. 1,000 worth from other villages. Very little of this is sold in the village. It is sent to the towns and commercial centres. The trade is very profitable and may be extended.

The commodities sold in the village are brought from the nearest towns or trading centres, like Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Ponnāni. The usual means of transportation are bullock carts. It does not pay to bring small quantities by railway and there is also the risk of delay and damage. The villagers also sometimes buy their clothing and other articles in towns or at the Vaniamkulam fair. About a thousand rupees worth of vegetable and garden produce is also taken to the fair in a year for sale, with the proceeds of which the villagers buy cattle and implements or commodities for consumption. The local prices of commodities are 10 per cent higher than prices in towns, about 4 per cent representing cost of carriage and the remainder interest and profit. After deducting interest on capital invested at 9 per cent, the owner of the shop makes a fair sum as wages of superintendence and profits—about Rs. 400 per annum, excluding the profits from the pepper trade which are at least as much again as this. The shop also sells paper and other articles of stationery for the use of villagers at fair prices.

435 As regards the rise in retail prices in recent years, the village accounts show a general rise in prices of nearly 100 per cent—salt alone having fallen in price. The rise is most marked in foodstuffs and other articles of immediate consumption, and in metallic articles. Betel leaves have not risen much in price. Paddy, which used to sell at 2½ to 3 paras per rupee 25 years ago, now sells at 1·2 to 1·8 or 2 paras. Oils have generally risen at least 100 per cent in 25 years. So also sugar, tobacco and the like.

432 If one compares the total value of purchases by different classes, one will find that the many purchases of the few well-to-do persons and the few small purchases from day to day of the great majority of poor persons roughly equal one another. The Cherumas and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of south-west India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

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177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at [487] the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe culti- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[244] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[701] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

● 439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[437] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

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Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

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175 about Quilon (Ricci, 1931: 326–330; Logan, 1951, I: 282–283). Chi-
439 nese trade declined in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,
635 but that of Muslim Arabs (who had visited the coast from the eighth century) greatly increased. In the fourteenth century a third Nayar kingdom around Calicut, in the center of the coast, had expanded with the help of Arab merchants (Major, 1857: 13–18). By the time the Portuguese arrived, in 1498, Calicut practically monopolized the Arab trade, and the Zamorin (king) of Calicut held overlordship from Pudupattanam south to Porakkad (Logan, 1951, I: 293–294; Ayyar, 1938: 273, 291). Trickles of trade continued in Kolattunad and Travancore, but the kings there had grown weak by comparison with the Zamorin. Kolattunad had become divided into three virtually independent little kingdoms, and the Travancore ruler had surrendered large powers to the subordinate local chiefs of his realm. Two other small kingdoms remained independent in the interior to the east of Calicut: Walluvanad and Palghat.

The period 1498 to 1792 was one of bitter struggle between Euro-
175 pean and Middle Eastern powers, who formed shifting alliances with
439 native rulers for control of the pepper trade. By 1600 the Portuguese
648 had practically abolished the Arab trade, but they were themselves driven from the coast by the Dutch in 1663. The English reached Kerala in 1615 and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or another Nayar ruler and took part in successive battles until, in 1766, the northern half of the coast was overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean occupation ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the English East India Company and the establishment of the British bureaucratic political system (Logan, 1951, I: 404–473).

175 Shortly before the Mysorean invasions Kerala was divided into nine
648 small kingdoms and a number of border chiefdoms owing only ten-
635 uous allegiance to some king. The British after 1792 amalgamated the seven northern kingdoms (Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Kadattunad, Calicut, Walluvanad, and Palghat) to form the Malabar District of Madras Province, pensioned their rulers, and brought them under a British district officer responsible to the government of Madras. Cochin, a small kingdom in the center of the coast, remained a native state under its own ruler subject to the advice of a British Resident. So also did the southernmost kingdom of Travancore, whose ruler had already in the 1730's established a standing army, dispossessed his Nayar nobles, and formed a bureaucratic government. Kerala remained divided in this way until after the in-

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lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

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originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

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lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I: cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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701 702 634 564 castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and 726 the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use [411] after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized [177] (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

726 Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the 177 Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic [436] feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

564 692 Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with [681] members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders [567] were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then be- [439] came the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

564 621 Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This [692] area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; [623] we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its
241 subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to
[465] juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
[496] the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564 Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
[566] in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

564 the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

175 As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since
564 Marco Polo travelled in Asia.
701 "In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po ! po ! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

175 Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of
439 Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

129 But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer
1:4 examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

113 [1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

This is mostly due to two reasons: 434
First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [182]
without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245]
on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511
fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613]
the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182]
their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262
beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Kaiel vizhakkā Kari yunioru vaku*
> *Bhaṭa Bhojana matu Koottillā.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a bear."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264
people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262
as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291
2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184
Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439]
richer classes go in for Benares silk.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyána* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulies Marco Polo, page 374.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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796
184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or
796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora-
184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali,
773 widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati,
776 in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after
173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra-
796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the
184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, corian-
[439] der, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities
[492] used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

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173
laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam,
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and [492]
goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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*433 375 tion and foreign exchange requirements. Besides, the construction of a thermal station even if immediately taken up, cannot be completed before two to three years. This time lag considerably reduces its value for alleviating the immediate problem of power shortage. Under such circumstances, there is no case at all for considering any thermal power stations in Kerala.

*433 377 7.44 At present, the best solution would be to arrange for the staggering of power load and to encourage the working of industries during the off-peak hours. Another possibility is that the Governments of Kerala and Madras may get together to alleviate the power problem of Kerala to whatever extent it is possible through the zonal grid.

INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS

7.45 Kerala's installed capacity by the end of the Second Plan was 147.5 MW. To build it up to 400 MW by the end of the Third Plan as suggested in this report an additional installed capacity of roughly 250 MW will be necessary. According to current estimates, approximately Rs. 1,600 per kW will be required in Kerala for generation, transmission and distribution. On this basis, about Rs. 40 crores will be required during the Third Plan. During the Fourth Plan, installed capacity is envisaged to increase from 400 MW to 800 MW. At the same rate of investment per kW as mentioned above, investment requirements for the Fourth Plan would be about Rs. 64 crores. Thus Kerala State would require the sum of about Rs. 104 crores over the Third and Fourth Plan periods to satisfy its own power needs. Requirements of neighbouring States for Kerala's power would require additional investment over and above this figure.

CONCLUSIONS

7.46 The abundant water resources of the State, which can be utilized for generation of hydro-electric energy, form one of the strong points of Kerala economy. Apart from the large hydro-electric potential which is estimated to be of the order of 1,589 MW, the important feature of power resources of Kerala is the low cost of generation per unit. This is due to the favourable nature of the terrain and the high degree of rainfall which Kerala receives.

7.47 In the absence of any coal or oil deposits in Kerala or in nearby regions, hydro-electric power has to be the chief source of energy requirements of industry. The favourable position of Kerala in this respect should be utilized as a factor helping industrialization. For this purpose harnessing of the hydro-electric potential should be properly planned in advance so that an adequate amount of well-assured electric supply could be guaranteed to the industrialists. In this context the State would be well-advised to plan for a power surplus.

[439] 7.48 In view of the fact that Kerala is in a position to generate electric energy in excess of its requirements, while the neighbouring State of Madras has almost exhausted its domestic resources and Mysore and Andhra are just on the verge of self-

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades.
* 433 In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial
49 sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

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*433 50 per cent higher than at the all-India level. Agricultural crops and the plantations, 241 which form the main component of the primary sector, are largely produced for the market and are the basic factors responsible for imparting a high level of productivity to this sector.

241 1.26 Agriculture in the State is characterized by a high value yielding cropping pattern, good physical yields, a high intensity of cropping and superior cultivation [171] techniques. During 1956-57 the intensity of cropping[1] was 119 per cent (all-India—113%). However, if field crops alone are taken into account, the cropping intensity shoots up to 150 per cent. It is the latter percentage which is the more relevant one, since the area covered by the perennial crops is irrelevant from the point of [171] view of double or triple cropping. All these factors combine to make the agricultural sector of Kerala highly productive, the average level of agricultural output per net cultivated acre in Kerala being about Rs. 360 against Rs. 125 for the whole of India.

245 1.27 Kerala owes the superiority of its cropping pattern to the large number 249 of high value yielding plantation crops grown in the State. Coconuts, the most important among these, occupy about 20 per cent of the gross cropped area and * [433] yield Rs. 450 per acre on an average. Other cash crops in the order of their importance in terms of area covered are pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom, and coffee. Taken as a whole, they cover approximately 40 per cent of the gross cropped area.

*433 1.28 Apart from the high productivity aspect of the plantation crops, they are 245 of significance to the economy from two other angles. First, these crops provide the 249 raw material for some of the key industries of the State. Coir making, the most important industry of the State, utilizes the outer husks of the coconuts. Similarly, [288] cashewnut industry, the second most important industry of Kerala, also draws its raw material from the agricultural sector. Besides these, Kerala holds almost a complete all-India monopoly in the production of rubber, which is another important ● [439] industrial raw material. Secondly, plantation crops derive their prominence from the fact that a large number of crops grown in Kerala find a good export market and are, therefore, very good foreign exchange earners.

*433 1.29 One other feature of the Kerala economy which owes its origin to the 439 agricultural sector may also be pointed out. Unlike the rest of India, where barter 438 trade is still prevalent on a significant scale in the rural areas, Kerala economy is highly monetized. The large number of cash crops grown in the State are all brought to the market for sale. Secondly, since a high percentage of food requirements are obtained from the other parts of India, they are again channelled through the market. A high degree of commercialization of Kerala economy is one of the factors responsible for absorption of a large section of the population in the tertiary sector.

241 1.30 Otherwise agriculture in Kerala carries with it all the disquieting features 423 common to Indian agriculture. The pressure of population on land is even severer here. The average size of holdings in Kerala has dwindled down to 1.5 acres

[1] Intensity of cropping is the ratio between gross cropped area and net sown area. It gives the degree to which a given piece of land is utilised.

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and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

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Imports and Exports

439 1.53 Reference has already been made to the fact that Kerala is very much of an exchange economy. On the one hand it has to import a substantial part of its foodgrain requirements from the other parts of India. No exact estimates of total import of foodgrains into the State are available. The total amount of rice arriving in Kerala by train was 3.8 lakh tons during 1958 and 4.8 lakh tons during 1959.[1] This does not, however, include imports by roads or by the sea. In addition to foodgrains, almost all the industrial raw materials like coal, alumina, iron and steel, salt, etc., are obtained from the other parts of India.

1.54 On the other hand, Kerala also contributes substantially to India's export trade. As may be seen from Table 6, the total value of goods exported from the ports of Kerala to the other parts of the world is roughly Rs. 55 crores per annum, but the figure has been rising over the last few years. This is quite a substantial amount, being about 10 per cent of the overall foreign exchange earnings of India. Since this State occupies only 1.2 per cent of the total area of India, in relation to its area it may be claimed to be eight to nine times more productive in terms of its foreign exchange earnings than the whole of India.

1.55 The main export commodities of Kerala are listed in Table 6. It will be seen that the three major items which contribute about 75 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings of Kerala are tea, cashewnuts and coir and coir products. Except for fish, prawns and ilmenite, all other exportable commodities originate in the agricultural sector.

439 178 1.56 Whereas exports of most of the commodities have been rising, the trend in the case of coir, pepper and ginger has not been a promising one. Of these three commodities, pepper shows the most serious decline in foreign exchange earnings. In physical quantity the export of pepper has not declined much. It was 3,3 lakh cwts. in 1951-52 and 3.2 lakh cwts. in 1958-59. The decline in foreign exchange earnings from the export of pepper has been due to a drastic fall in the world price of pepper. The crash in prices has, in turn, been primarily due to a large increase in the production of pepper in other competing countries like Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya. Similarly, in case of ginger and coir products no preceptible rise in exports has taken place due to competitive pressure in the foreign markets.

Unemployment

464 1.57 According to the Census of 1951, Kerala had a working force[2] of 4.54 million persons out of a total population of 15 million, giving a participation ratio (i.e., working force divided by total population) of 33.5 per cent. Since a participation rate of the order of 33.5 per cent is one of the lowest in the whole of India, it gives a fair indication of the very high degree of unemployment prevalent in Kerala. A low participation rate reflects the lack of adequate opportunities for gainful employment. These conclusions are borne out by the results of an unemployment

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[1] *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959: Government of Kerala.

[2] Working Force is equal to the sum of earning dependents and self-supporting persons. For a detailed note see Appendix 3.

3 [see p. 273, category 116 -- Analyst]

intensity of cropping since the area covered by perennial crops, which is quite large in the case of Kerala, is irrelevant from the point of view of double or triple cropping. It will thus be seen that not only is the proportion of cultivable area to total area high in Kerala, but the degree of utilization of the cultivated area is also quite high. 311

FIELD CROPS

2.12 The techniques of cultivation as well as the economics of field crops differ widely from that of commercial plantation crops. The field crops are generally characteristic of the subsistence economy whereas the latter are largely market-oriented. Moreover, unlike field crops the plantation crops are perennial and do not require annual repetition of preliminary agricultural operations like ploughing, sowing, etc. The returns too vary widely. Field crops and plantations are, therefore, discussed separately in the pages that follow. 241 128

Cropping Pattern and Yields of Field Crops

2.13 Rice, the most important field crop, occupies a prominent place in the agricultural economy of Kerala. In 1958-59, it covered 1.9 million acres out of 2.7 million acres under field crops. The production of rice in the same year was 939,000 tons. While the rice acreage fell by only 0.4 per cent during 1951–59, its production during the same period leapt up by over 31 per cent. Increase in the yield rate during the same period was from 829 to 1,108 lbs. per acre (Table 11).[1] The growing appreciation among farmers of the utility of fertilizers, improved seeds and better techniques of cultivation is largely responsible for this steady improvement. 433* 243

2.14 Next to rice, tapioca is the most important field crop of Kerala. During 1951–59, the area under the crop increased from 506,000 acres to 553,000 acres, that is by 11 per cent. The production of tapioca in 1958-59 was 1.5 million tons, that is, an increase of 4.6 per cent over 1950-51. 433* 244

2.15 Tapioca and rice considered together, account for over 54 per cent of the net sown area which is the same as 90 per cent of the area under field crops. Among the remaining field crops, ginger, groundnut, sesamum, sugarcane and pulses are the most important ones. Ginger is primarily an export crop, and its fortunes fluctuate with the trend of foreign markets. During the recent years, the area under ginger has steadily declined from 30,000 acres in 1950-51 to 22,000 acres in 1958-59. Other field crops, however, have shown significant increases in area over the same period. The rate of increase is the highest for sugarcane, where it rose from mere 2,000 to 22,000 acres—an increase of 1,000 per cent in less than a decade. This is due to the commissioning of a sugar factory (900 tons crushing capacity per day) at Thiruvella in 1954. The output of sugarcane, however, rose by only 775 per cent. The next highest increase has been in pulses where the area rose by 287 per cent between 1951 and 1959. Pulses, with the exception of *tur* (*Cajanus indica*), are now increasingly raised as second or even third crop by availing of the moisture left in the soil after the harvest of paddy. This development owes 433* 241 [439] [257]

[1] [see p. 277, category 116 — Analyst]

[text continues on p. 28]

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ensure a better return to the farmer. This creates an incentive for achieving a still higher level of production. And at the same time, the rise in agricultural income provides a substantial purchasing power for absorbing consumer goods output of the industrial sector. The need for an emphasis on agricultural development is, therefore, very much inter-related with steady industrial growth. 433* 241

2.22 Agricultural development in Kerala can follow two possible directions. First, the aim could be to raise the yield rate and output of the existing crops with a special emphasis on increasing the food production. Alternatively, the policy could be directed towards bringing about a modification in the existing cropping pattern by giving greater weightage to the commercial crops and thus ensuring better returns from the land. On the basis of available evidence; it seems that for Kerala the latter course of action would be the more appropriate one. It has already been pointed out that it is not necessary for each State to try to achieve, complete self-sufficiency in foodgrains. 433*

2.23. A wide gap in food requirements of the extent which exists at present in the State, can be covered only through extension of area under paddy in addition to increase in the yield per acre. Whereas efforts at raising the yield rate are justified by all means, it would be unwise to divert land from commercial crops to the cultivation of paddy. Apart from direct importance of cash crops to the industrial growth of Kerala in the form of raw material supply, commercial crops make a substantial contribution to the industrial effort of India through the large amount of foreign exchange earnings they bring in annually. Export of commodities like tea, pepper, cardamom, cashewnut and coconut products from Kerala earn foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 55 crores every year—roughly one-twelfth of overall foreign exchange earnings of the entire country. It would, therefore, be in the interest of the State economy to maximize returns from land by growing higher value crops in place of low value crops like tapioca and small millets in as much area as possible. This would require a reversal of the policy pursued so far in favour of attaining self-sufficiency in food within the State. The gap in food requirements which cannot be covered through intensive measures of paddy cultivation could continue to be met by imports from the other parts of India. Since the relative advantage lies in the cultivation of commercial crops, some of which can be grown only in Kerala, attention should be focussed on the development of cash crops whereas the problem of wiping out the food deficit can be relegated to a secondary place for the present. 433* 262 439

2.24 The extension of the area under commercial crops should be undertaken on a scientific and planned basis. Considerations such as gross value of product per unit area and demand for the crop and suitability of soil are some of the important aspects that have to be examined in this connection. It is not possible to state the exact extent and nature of substitution without an intensive land use potential survey of different regions. A survey of this type was being carried out by the State Agriculture Department. However, the future scope for some of commercial field crops is analysed below on the basis of whatever information is available. The possibilities of commercial plantation crops are discussed in the last part of this chapter. 433*

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

ginger should be stepped up. The proposed phyto-chemical plant at Munnar would also consume large quantities of raw ginger. The area under ginger cultivation can be extended by 20,000 acres and attempts should be made to raise productivity to one ton per acre through better cultivation techniques, seed selection and use of higher dosage of fertilizers. The likely annual increase in output from these measures is expected to be of the order of 33,000 tons in terms of dry ginger. 433* 249

Oilseeds

2.33 Oilseeds, other than coconut, account for only a very small proportion of the cropped area, but there is scope for raising the yields and extending the area under these crops as a substitute crop in tapioca fields and in young coconut gardens. In addition, castor cultivation may be introduced in the State along field borders which are considerably wide on the banks of rivers and streams and on the borders of gardens and plantations. Assuming that the measures for increased production are reasonably well implemented, the additional production of edible oilseeds by 1971 would be of the order of 20,000 tons annually.

Banana

2.34 Since bananas need frequent irrigation, cultivation of this crop is quite popular in Kerala, especially on the banks of the rivers and near other sources of water. In view of the very high calorific value of bananas as well as good future demand prospects, the production of bananas should be increased. It is not possible to give an exact idea of the extent to which the area under this crop can be increased but there is scope for growing the crop more intensively in compounds attached to residential houses and in areas which receive the benefits of perennial irrigation. 433* 245

Pineapple

2.35 There is quite a large demand for pineapples from Kerala, as they are good both in size and in quality. Location of a few additional canning units in the State is likely to add further to the demand. Steps should, therefore, be taken to increase pineapple production. There is scope for fresh plantings in the hilly slopes of Malabar, which at present contain only wild growth.

Lemon Grass

2.36 Lemon grass owes its importance to lemon grass oil which is extracted from the grass. Kerala produces over 88 per cent of the world output of lemon grass oil, most of which is exported. It is a good foreign exchange earner. The output of lemon grass oil has been increasing year after year in spite of unsteady and fluctuating market conditions. From a mere nine tons in 1920, the output rose to 1,400 tons in 1957. 433* 249 [439]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 245 [439] 2.85 The country is deficit in the output of coconuts and annually imports about Rs. 15 crores worth of copra and coconut products. This is a heavy drain on foreign exchange resources of the country. Even after imports the total available supply of coconuts is not enough and the oil millers are, therefore, hard hit by this shortage. The demand for this commodity is increasing year after year while the production has been more or less stagnant at 3,100 million nuts. If this situation is allowed to drift unchecked, imports of coconuts will have to be increased progressively. In view of these factors, measures to increase productivity and the output of coconut are of extreme urgency.

2.86 Coconut cultivation in the State today faces a multitude of problems. The average yields are only about 40 nuts a tree per annum, that is, 3,000 nuts an acre, as against 60 to 100 nuts per tree in Philippines and some of the other Far Eastern countries. Moreover, the yield has shown no tendency to increase over the last 10 years. The focal point of coconut development programme, therefore, should be to break through the stagnant levels of productivity of coconut. The following discussion follows this line of argument.

*433 245 241 2.87 Poor yields are largely due to the absence of regular and adequate manuring. The crop needs large quantities of manure. But the farmers, majority of whom are poor, cannot afford to spend on fertilizers which in the case of coconuts show results only after two or three years. Farmers, therefore, prefer to invest whatever resources they have in manuring the field crops which bring in quicker returns. Coconuts thus get neglected. In addition to starving the coconut trees of fertilizers, many farmers grow exhaustive crops such as banana and tapioca as an understorey. This practice exhausts the soil and it needs large funds and a long period ranging from 3 to 5 years, to rehabilitate such gardens.

[647] 2.88 To raise the yields, an intensive application of fertilizers containing NPK has been recommended by the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The Committee is of the opinion that fertilizers are more suited to acidic soils on which coconut is generally grown in Kerala. It estimates the cost of requisite fertilizers to be of the order of Rs. 93 per acre per annum but that is beyond the means of a small farmer. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should arrange to advance loans for the purchase of fertilizers, and these loans may be recovered after three years. To start with, 30 per cent of the area may be brought under this programme. The annual requirement of fertilizers would be about 26,000 tons of superphosphate. The programme would cost Rs. 3 crores per year, that is, Rs. 9 crores for the first three years after which the loans may be granted out of the recoveries. The programme may be extended to cover 75 per cent of the area earmarked for coconut during the Fourth Plan. Better manuring coupled with the necessary cultural operations, can raise the yields from 40 nuts to 60 or 70 nuts per tree which would thus amount to an increase of 50 to 75 per cent over the present rate of production.

*433 245 242 2.89 Coconut crop is subject to a heavy incidence of diseases and pests. The diseases such as "leaf rot" and "root diseases" are rampant and widespread and have spread to six districts affecting over 50 per cent of the trees in the State. The annual loss of production due to these diseases is estimated at Rs. 2 to 3 crores. There is already a scheme in force to spray about 7 million trees in the infected pockets.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Tea

*433 245 [439] 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

[132] 2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees. [133] The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is [171] higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution. [452] The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

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per cent of over 200,000 acres planted from 1902 onwards belonged to non-selected and low yielding strains. The Board has also estimated that more than half the rubber area contains trees that have outlived their economic life. Therefore, about 164,000 acres need immediate replantation. The total area planted till 1958 was 45,194 acres and of this replanting accounted for only 7,060 acres. To tone up the yields as well as to keep the trees in a good condition, it is necessary to replant at least 20,000 acres annually. A programme of this magnitude would need an investment of Rs. 50 crores at the rate of Rs. 2,500 per acre. 433* 249 242

2.112 In certain well managed estates in Kerala, the yields are reported to be as high as 1,600 lbs. per acre. A large number of estates yield between 700 to 1,000 lbs. This shows the potentialities of raising the yields if the gardens are properly managed. There are also instances of estates, which yielded only 150 lbs. per acre, which have yielded 500 to 600 lbs. per acre after reorganization and improvement of the estates. 433* 249

2.113 India is the only country in the world which is a producer and at the same time an industrial consumer of natural rubber. The indigenous production of natural rubber in India at present meets about half the needs of the country, the other half being met by imports. The demand for rubber is increasing at a very fast rate and is estimated to be 55,000 tons by 1961, 82,000 tons by 1966 and 125,000 tons by 1971.[1] This means that by 1971 the demand for natural rubber would be about eight times the present level of production. It is, therefore, suggested that utmost possible effort should be put in to step up the production of natural rubber in Kerala. 433* 249 438 [439]

2.114 Rubber production can be raised by increasing the yields as well as by extending the area under the crop. An increase in the yields is a short term measure which can be realized, say, by the end of the Third Plan, provided the necessary measures are quickly implemented. Adequate annual application of fertilizer mixtures (NPK) coupled with soil conservation measures, working the soil and regulated tapping are some of the important measures that may be adopted. These measures can be undertaken more effectively and economically if the holdings are of larger size. Efforts at intensive cultivation should, therefore, be co-ordinated with increase in the size of small holdings—especially the small ones with less than 15 acres. This could be best achieved through the formation of cooperatives. The Government and the Rubber Board should initiate future development on these lines. 433* 249

2.115 In addition to replantation, as suggested above, a regular plantation programme is necessary for a sustained increase in output. Raising new plantations to the extent of 300,000 acres may be suggested as the target for the next two Plans. A higher target would be only too desirable. There may, however, be some difficulties in implementing the plantation programme owing to scarcity of land. The exact scope for extension of area under rubber is not known. Various sources put the likely extent of this area to be between 2.25 lakh and 7.5 lakh acres. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture and Forestry should conduct a joint survey to make an accurate estimate of the extent of such land in the State. However, it is necessary to emphasise that the proposed plantations should consist of

[1] NCAER estimates.

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large estates. The small holdings, as explained before, are not economical and have low yields. It is, therefore, necessary to make adequate safeguards against the creation of small units.

2.116 Moreover, care should be taken to see that all future plantings are done with improved clones. This can be much better ensured if departmental planting and working of the estates by Forest Department is undertaken instead of leasing the land under Government ownership to individual growers. It may be assumed that out of 3 lakh acres of proposed plantations, 2 lakh acres would be under Government management and the rest would be planted by private growers. The programme may be phased at the rate of 30,000 acres per year. The total investment for the whole programme would thus be Rs. 75 crores.

2.117 In well-managed estates, the trees begin to yield after seven years. Assuming that the new plantings yield at an average rate of 700 lbs. of rubber per acre, the output of rubber from these would increase progressively from 9,380 tons to 37,520 tons in 1971. Full results from the proposed 3 million acres of new plantings would be visible only from 1978 onwards at the rate of additional 93,800 tons per annum.

Pepper

2.118 The cultivation of pepper in India is almost entirely concentrated in this State which produces over 95 per cent of the country's total output. During 1958 India produced about 27,000 tons of pepper, approximately 45 per cent of the overall world production. Before World War II, Indonesia was the leading producer and exporter of pepper, but since then India has assumed that role. Between 1939 and 1951 production of pepper in the country increased by 16 per cent.

2.119 Large scale cultivation of pepper is confined only to the submountain tracts on or below the Western Ghats. It is also grown in the plains but as a protected garden crop in the compounds of houses and not as a plantation crop. Pepper is a perennial climbing crop and lasts for 20 to 30 years. There are on an average 300 to 400 standards (pepper bushes) per acre. On an average, each standard under plantation conditions yields 1 to 2 lbs.; but it is not uncommon to find standards in house compounds yielding even 40 to 50 lbs.

2.120 As in the case of coconut, it is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate of the area under pepper. The estimate prepared by the Directorate of Statistics in Kerala is of the order of 224,658 acres for 1957-58. Of this, Malabar region accounted for 136,854 acres and the rest were in Travancore-Cochin area. The output of pepper during the same year was 26,020 tons in the whole of Kerala, of which the share of Malabar region was 42 per cent. Malabar with over 60 per cent of the area under pepper produces only 42 per cent of the output.

2.121 Per acre yield was the highest in Alleppey and Quilon (402 lbs. per acre) followed by the districts of Trichur, Ernakulam, Trivandrum and Kottayam (375 to 381 lbs. per acre). Malabar region has comparatively very low yields (180 lbs. per acre). This may, perhaps, be due to cultivation of pepper in Malabar on extensive rather than on intensive lines.

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2.122 The development of pepper has not been receiving adequate attention. The crop was practically neglected during the First Plan. However, the high price of pepper which prevailed during early fifties provided a good incentive for extension of the area under pepper. The main work during the Second Plan was directed towards establishment of nurseries, extending the area under the crop and replacement of unthrifty vines with better ones. A total of 2,000 acres have been replanted so far. 433* 244

2.123 It is possible to increase the yield of pepper from the present level of above one lb. to 2 or 3 lbs. per standard through intensive cultivation, better manuring, better varieties, and plant protection measures, especially against *pollu* disease. Manuring of pepper has been a neglected field and with the application of fertilizer mixtures (3 cwts. of ammonium sulphate + 4.5 cwts. of super phosphate + 1 cwt. of muriate of potash per acre) the existing yields could be almost doubled within a year. Moreover, some extension of area under pepper vines can also take place in house compounds, as an inter-crop in small holdings and in tea and rubber plantations on land unsuited for the main crop.

2.124 Since pepper is primarily an export commodity, 75 per cent of the produce being annually sent out of India, its future scope is very much dependent on the foreign markets. After the last war, India emerged as a major exporter of pepper in the world. The USA was our largest importer, accounting for over 70 per cent of our exports. But, of late, other countries such as Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya have begun to export larger quantities and as a consequence, the USA, now accounts for only about 20 per cent of our exports. The prices have also fallen from a peak of Rs. 4,158 per candy during 1951 to Rs. 677 in 1959. 433* 244 437

2.125 The above evidence points to an increasing degree of competitiveness in the world markets for pepper, and India is fast losing ground to the new entrants. So far India has been able to maintain the volume of exports because of large off-take by USSR and other East European countries. However, demand from these countries cannot be expected to fully compensate for the likely fall in future exports to the USA and other Western countries. It may, therefore, be seen that for maintaining the existing level of exports, not to speak of increasing it, it is essential that Indiam prices should be competitive.

2.126 Prospects for internal demand, on the other hand, seem quite bright. Between 1952 and 1958, internal demand rose by about 25 per cent from a level of 5,000 tons. In view of rising population and fast developing food processing industry, future internal demand is likely to maintain this trend. 433* 244 [438]

2.127 Oleorisin, a pharmaceutical product, is extracted from pepper. A considerable amount of pepper in the western countries is used for extraction of this alkaloid. Oleorisin could be extracted in Kerala and an export trade developed out of this. This aspect needs further investigation. [278]

Cardamom

2.128 Cardamom is the most expensive as well as the most delicious of all the spices. India produces about 70 per cent of the world output of cardamom. The 433* 245

to a considerable degree in Malabar and Nelliampathi (Travancore-Cochin) areas. The major concentration of area occurs in the Kozhikode district of Malabar. It had 89 per cent of the total coffee area in the State during 1957-58. Between 1955 and 1958, coffee production in Malabar rose (18%) while that in Travancore-Cochin declined (16%). Similarly, the area under coffee during the same period registered an increase in Malabar (28.3%) but declined in Travancore-Cochin region (15.0%). 433* 245 [438]

2.134 The average yield per acre of coffee in Kerala is rather low. It has been lower than the all-India average and is far below the average yield in Mysore, the principal coffee growing State in India, (1955-56 Kerala, 285 lbs. per acre; all-India, 369 lbs. per acre; and Mysore 395 lbs. per acre). Moreover, while the yields elsewhere in India, especially in Mysore, have been rising, in Kerala they have fallen from 368 to 285 lbs. per acre during 1951-58. Within Kerala, the yields are the highest in Kozhikode district which is largely due to the better management of estates in this district. [171]

2.135 One of the characteristics of coffee plantations in Kerala is the overwhelmingly large number of small estates. In 1958, there were 14,475 registered estates with a total area of 47,675 acres. Of these, 12,412 were of less than five acres in size. There were only 99 estates out of 14,475 with an area over 50 acres. (Table 14)[1] 433* 245 423

2.136 There is a distinct relationship between the size of coffee estates and the output per acre. It is noticed that yields increase progressively as the size of the estates increases. The yield per acre of *Arabica* variety in estates in the size group of 5-10 acres was 0.68 cwts. per acre, while for the estates with 200 acres or more, it was 2.26 cwts. Moreover, the quality of coffee produced on small plantations is also inferior and fetches only 65 per cent of the price of coffee produced on big estates. It is difficult to ascertain the most economic size but it is believed that for effective and profitable functioning, the minimum size would be 50 acres. If this is accepted, then only less than one per cent of coffee estates in Kerala are economic. The question of making these plantations economic through consolidation or extension of area under coffee plantations should, therefore, receive serious attention. Two more points need attention. First, new areas should be planted with coffee *Arabica* rather than coffee *Robusta* since the former gives higher yields. Secondly, as in the case of tea, replantation is also over-due in the coffee plantations. Remedies on the same lines as suggested for tea hold good for coffee also. 433* 245

2.137 Unlike tea, the major portion of which is exported, coffee plantations are substained largely by the demand for internal consumption. Internal demand, however, has not been keeping pace with rise in the output of coffee. At present India has quite a large surplus in coffee and efforts are being made to export the surplus. In spite of an enormous surplus of coffee in South America, efforts in India have yielded good results as shown by an increase in exports from 5,000 tons in 1952-53 to 15,228 tons in 1956-57.[1] Most of our exports go to East European countries. There is scope for stepping up the exports further, in spite of the world 433* 245 439 [438]

[1] SOURCE: Coffee Board, Bangalore.

2 [see p. 279, category 11b -- Analysis]

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*433 glut since the better type of plantation coffee, for which India is well known, is in 245 demand at a premium in the continental markets. At the same time internal market, [439] about half of which is in North India is yet to be explored. This should also be developed.

2.138 Higher production can be achieved both through higher yields and through the extension of area under coffee. Increase in cultivated area under coffee is possible by fuller utilization of the estate areas. It is estimated that there were about 21,000 acres of land at the end of 1957-58 attached to the estates which were not being utilized for coffee cultivation. These could be planted with coffee. The cost of planting coffee and bringing it to the bearing stage is about the same as that in the case of tea, that is, Rs. 2,500 per acre. The total investment required, therefore, comes to Rs. 5.2 crores, which may be provided to the growers in the form of loans and the Government and the Central Coffee Board should help farmers in securing the necessary credit. The productivity per acre can be raised to 400 lbs. per acre by better manuring, larger application of fertilizers and efficient management of the estates. Efficient management, however, could become effective only after the size of the farms has been increased to a basic minimum.

Cashewnut

[258] 2.139 Cashewnut forms the main raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala. The cashewnut industry stands in importance next only to that of coir in the Kerala economy. In view of current shortage of raw nuts, which is adversely affecting the local cashew industry, measures to supplement indigenous supply are of great importance.

2.140 Cashew is grown on a wide variety of soils—ranging from coastal sandy to laterite hill top soils. It is hardy and drought-resistant but very susceptible to frost. In 1957-58, the total area under cashew in Kerala was 109,000 acres which is about 44 per cent of the total area under cashew in the country. Of this, the former Travancore-Cochin area alone accounted for over 71 per cent (77,481 acres), the rest being in the Malabar region. The production of raw cashewnuts in 1957-58 was 68,000 tons as against 54,000 tons in 1952-53, showing an increase of 26 per cent. The area under cashewnuts during the same period increased by only 1.8 per cent.

2.141 Cashewnut, at present, is rarely grown on a plantation scale. It is grown in compounds of houses, inter-spersed with coconuts, mangoes and arecanuts, and in outlying areas which are considered unsuitable for the growth of any other crop. When grown on plantation scale, about 60 to 70 trees can be planted in an acre, but it is not rare to find as many as 200 trees per acre in certain areas of Kerala. Such congestion, however, has adverse effect on output. Consequently, current yield per acre of cashewnuts (1,400 lbs. per acre) is much lower than what it could have been, had cashewnuts been grown on plantation scale. Under good conditions and in good season an acre may even yield up to one ton.

2.142 The scope for increase in the output of cashewnuts, through increase in yields or through extension of area, seems to be rather limited in Kerala. Raw nut is a low value commodity. Manuring the trees and spending on their maintenance,

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

urban households and this is due to better management. Scientific goat-rearing should be encouraged in the State by educating the people about the techniques and economics of goat-rearing. For the sake of convenience and better implementation, goat development may form a part of the Key Village Programme. This would effect saving in costs and also reduce the need for additional personnel. Through this programme, the local stock can be upgraded with the desirable outside milk breeds as Bikaner or Jamunpari after studying their performance and suitability.

Rearing of Pigs

3.22 Pig-rearing is not popular in Kerala, even though conditions such as climate and rainfall are favourable. The pig population has even fallen by 3.6 per cent during the period 1951–56. Piggery development did not receive any attention during the First and Second Plans and this, perhaps, is partly responsible for the decline of interest in pig-rearing in Kerala.

3.23 Pig-rearing needs to be encouraged in the State, as it is the quickest means of increasing meat production. But there has not been any research or studies on pig-rearing which could be applicable to the conditions prevailing in Kerala. It is suggested that the State should undertake research on these problems without any delay. In the meantime, this avocation may be developed on the lines suggested by the Department of Animal Husbandry for the Third Plan through the creation of piggery development blocks. In addition, the State should also provide certain facilities such as the supply of feed, provision of processing, grading, storage and marketing facilities and supply of credit on easy terms.

Supply of Feed

3.24 As a result of measures proposed for agricultural development, the production of cereals, pulses and oilseeds would increase by about 100 per cent during the next decade. Since livestock, especially the bovines, are fed on byproducts of agriculture (stalk, straw, husk, bran, etc.), the availability of basic feeds would also increase. Rice straw, the principal roughage in the State even may be surplus. Concentrates will, however, continue to be in deficit despite the large likely increase in the output of pulses and cereals. The situation of course, would change if oilcake, the byproduct of oil-crushing industry, is not allowed to move out of the State. This is a matter of all-India policy as the coconut oilcake is an important item that is marketed outside the State in large quantities and is even exported. Assuming, therefore, that situation regarding oilcakes does not alter, the State should do the needful towards making concentrates easily available to the farmers. This deficiency could partly be reduced by supplying concentrates (ready-to-feed mixtures) in dehydrated form. Different ready-to-feed mixtures should be evolved for cattle, poultry and other livestock. The composition and formulae for such mixtures should be worked out on the basis of nutritional experiments. In anticipation of demand for the mixtures, it is suggested that three ready-to-feed mixture factories of 200,000 tons capacity each, may be started in the State during the Third Plan.

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*433 231 234 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 235 474 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 235 439 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 23 452 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

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number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [311]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them.

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26.

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon.

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species.

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries.

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture.

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Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

rest of the production is exported to various countries, the bulk of it going to the USA and the UK. Export figures are given in Table 29 for the period 1956–59.

6.17 Irregular supplies made through the Koilthottam port, mainly due to labour difficulties, have resulted in the loss of contracts with importers in the USA. Export possibilities of ilmenite are now limited only to two contracts to UK totalling 1,50,000 tons per year. This setback has occurred in spite of the fact that the Chavara ilmenite has a high TiO_2 content (55-60%) and is cheaper when compared to Malayan ilmenite (about 45% TiO_2) which, however, finds a ready export market.

6.18 India, which at one time used to hold almost a monopolistic position in the export of ilmenite has now to face competition. Side by side with the expansion of titanium industry, other world sources for supply of ilmenite have come into operation as in Norway, Canada, Malaya, Australia, South Africa, etc. Whereas in 1940 India used to contribute 90 per cent to world production of ilmenite, now its share is only 25 per cent.

6.19 In view of the rapid expansion of India's steel industry, the consumption of TiO_2 pigment is itself expected to go up. The total requirements of ilmenite by 1965-66 would be 150,000 tons a year for export and 36,000 tons a year for the manufacture of TiO_2 pigment, on the basis of proposal for expansion of Titanium Dioxide plant at Trivandrum incorporated in this report. Table 30 gives demand for Titanium Dioxide pigment from steel industry and various other sources. The two existing companies can produce about 160,000 tons a year. Extra capacity of 30,000 tons a year will have to be installed, and this along with certain improvements suggested earlier may require an investment of Rs. 20 lakhs. Very little increase in labour force is envisaged. The existing labour force itself appears to be excessive, since the output per man per shift works out to a low level of 0.4 tons.

6.20 During the Fourth Plan period, steel production is expected to double itself. Therefore, by 1970-71, the demand for Titanium Dioxide may also be expected to be roughly double of the demand in 1965-66. This would necessitate another 30,000 tons of ilmenite per annum. Total requirement of ilmenite by 1970-71 would thus be 220,000 tons a year, comprising of 150,000 tons for export and 60,000 tons for the manufacture of Titanium Dioxide. This would involve further additional outlay of Rs. 10 lakhs. Even this order of expansion can be achieved with the existing labour at an output of one ton per man per shift which would measure a fairly reasonable level of productivity.

Monazite

6.21 Monazite is a phosphate of thorium and cerium with rare earth elements and small quantities of Uranium Oxide. It constitutes a source of the radio-active element, thorium being used for atomic energy purposes. Monazite was first discovered in India, by C.W. Von Sohomberg, a German citizen, in 1909 along the beach at Manavalakkurichi.

6.22 Monazite occurs along with other heavy minerals in the beach sands. Reserves of the order of 6.7 million tons are estimated to be present in the bar between Neendakara and Kayarkulam. There is, however, no production of monazite

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135 concentrates from Chavara, the Manavalakkurichi (in Madras State) material being preferred because of its higher thorium content.

317 6.23 A rare earth factory is located in the State at Alwaye, which processes 1,500 tons of monazite a year ; but it obtains its requirements from Manavalakkurichi in the Madras State. This factory produces Thorium Oxide, rare earth salts and Trisodium Phosphate. The Chavara Monazite may be considered for use in the rare earth factory instead of the monazite from Manavalakkurichi in Madras State, particularly in view of the fact that monazite would be a byproduct of ilmenite which is won in larger quantities in Kerala and may, therefore, prove cheaper.

Rutile

317 6.24 Rutile is another titanium mineral occurring in smaller quantities in the beach sands. The beach washings contain, on an average, about 4 per cent of rutile. A portion of the sand bar at Neendakara is estimated to contain 740,125 tons of the mineral.[1] Kerala is the only State in India producing rutile.

317 6.25 At present only one of the mineral sand factory units produces this mineral. Electro-static separators are used in concentrating rutile from the non-magnetic tailings after the extraction of ilmenite. Recovery is one-fifth of the rutile content of raw sand and the rest is allowed to go into the tailings for lack of equipment.

*433 6.26 Only small quantities of rutile are produced. During 1959, 482 tons valued at Rs. 4.75 lakhs were beneficiated. The current price is Rs. 1,000 a ton. The mineral is not utilized in the State, but is sent to Bombay and Calcutta for the manufacture of welding rods. During 1957, 155 tons of rutile were imported to meet the requirements of this industry. Future requirements of welding rods within India is estimated to go up from 417 m. ft. in 1960-61 to 2,022 m. ft. in 1970-71.[2] To meet this rise in demand, output of rutile would have to be stepped upto 6,750 tons by 1970-71. An expansion in capacity of this order would require an investment of the order of Rs. 10 lakhs.

Sillimanite and Zircon

135 6.27 Sillimanite as well as zircon occur in small amounts in beach sands in association with ilmenite and other heavy minerals. They average 5.9 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively of the beach washings. In addition, 1,916,260 tons of sillimanite and 799,350 tons of zircon are estimated to form a part of the Neendakara bar.[3] Only experimental production of either of these minerals has been taken up so far.

*433 6.28 Sillimanite is mainly used in refractories, but the internal requirement of sillimanite refractories is very small. Moreover, the material from Assam which is of a massive variety can be shaped into blocks and used directly. Export possibilities are also dim and due to the development of artificial mulite bricks from domestic kyanite in the USA. Exports have dropped from 20,000 tons to 6,000 tons in 1957.

[1] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Proceedings of the Second International Conference, P. 102.
[2] NCAER estimates.
[3] *Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy*, Op. Cit, p. 102.

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*433 317 the extensive horizontal spread of this horizon, mining operations are capable of considerable lateral expansion.

[655] 6.34 The china-clay from Quilon and Trivandrum districts is mostly consumed within the State by the Government-run ceramic factory at Kundara and the other privately owned ceramic factories, as well as by the rubber, paper, insecticide and cement (for white cement) industries in the State. A few hundred tons are supplied [439] to consumers in the neighbouring States and a small quantity is also (75 tons in 1959 and 44 tons during Jan.—August 1960) exported to Ceylon. The crockery and sanitaryware plants in the State consume about 1,900 tons of refined clay and another 1,700 tons are used by the insecticide, rubber and paper factories in the State. The china-clay produced from Cannanore district is mostly exported to other parts of India.

6.35 It is worth noting here that India imports textile grade china-clay. Import figures for 1956 and 1957 are 7,282 tons and 4,354 tons respectively. The State could very well fill this gap particularly in view of the excellent quality of the material it possesses. Increase in output to meet this demand should be undertaken from the Quilon district, where large reserves are available.

6.36 Demand for china-clay (in terms of crude material)[1] is likely to be as under by 1965-66:

	(Tons)
For ceramics, inclusive of insulators	9,000
For the rubber, paper and insecticide industries	10,000
For the textile industry	15,000
For white cement manufacture	12,000

6.37 During the period 1966–71, china-clay requirements are likely to go up still further as a result of setting up of another high tension insulator factory and increase in demand from the paper, textile and insecticide industries, and are estimated to reach 70,000 tons in terms of unwashed clay by 1970-71. To meet this rise in demand, mining in the public sector at Kundara can be expanded to produce an additional 13,500 tons by 1965-66. This would hardly involve any mechanization. Along with this, the capacity of the washing plant will have to be increased to 30 tons a day. The expansion of mining operations and installation of additional washing capacity proposed would roughly involve a capital outlay of Rs. 5 lakhs.

6.38 Reopening and development of the mines at Chathanoor should also be considered at a rate of exploitation of 22,000 tons of crude clay per year. A washing plant with a capacity of 30 tons a day would be required at this mine. This mine and washing plant may be operated in the private sector. The capital outlay required would be of the order of Rs. 5 lakhs and the mine and washing plant would together provide employment for 310 persons.

6.39 In order to produce an anticipated 70,000 tons per year by 1970-71, representing an increase of 24,000 tons a year over the Third Plan period, a further expansion of mining operations and additional washing capacity of the extent of 20 tons a day will have to be considered either at Kundara or Chathanoor. The additional

[1] Refined china-clay is roughly one-third the weight of crude china-clay.

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) [435]

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 [439]

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 [464]

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31.[1] 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon,

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

[1] [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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377 the cost of generation as estimated at present would rarely exceed 2 nP per unit.
435 As against this, the cost per unit of thermal power is estimated to vary between 6 nP to 10 nP for stations which are far from coal fields, as would be the case if Kerala were to go in for thermal generation. Table 35 presents some factual data regarding the cost of hydro-power generation.

377 7.20 Development of thermal power resources sometimes becomes necessary as
132 a stabilizer for fluctuations in generating capacity of hydro dams caused by variations in the extent of rainfall. This problem does not arise in case of Kerala since a high level of rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well distributed over the year, is practically assured. As pointed out in another chapter, the co-efficient of mean deviation for annual rainfall in the case of Kerala is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

371 7.21 On account of these factors, electric energy from hydro resources would continue to occupy a predominant place in Kerala. The possibility of generating nuclear power within the foreseeable future can almost be ruled out for Kerala. Investment in nuclear power stations is of the order of Rs. 1,800 to Rs. 2,500 per kW of installed capacity, which is higher than those for thermal and hydro stations. Since Kerala has plenty of untapped hydro-power potential, the question of using nuclear energy does not arise.

DEMAND FOR AND SUPPLY OF POWER

377 7.22 The simultaneous maximum demand, as recorded on the State electricity
[433] system, reached a peak of 94 MW during September, 1960. Over and above this, purchase from Madras State for Kerala system was about 8.6 MW and from Kerala to Madras was about 2.6 MW. So the net draw from the Madras system during September, 1960, was of the order of 6 MW. Hence the latest recorded demand on the State may be taken to be of the order of 100 MW during Sepember, 1960, as against the available firm capacity of 84.5 MW.

*433 7.23 In this context, an independent forecast may be attempted here on the basis
377 of projections for industrial output made in the chapter on Industries. Factory sector is the main industrial consumer of electricity accounting for roughly 65 per cent of energy generated. The net output of factory industry is projected to increase from Rs. 24.4 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 89.2 crores in 1970-71. In 1955-56, power consumption by industries corresponding to net factory output of Rs. 18.40 crores was 224 million kWh. In other words 1.24 units of electricity were used to produce one rupee worth of net output in industries. The corresponding ratio for the country was 0.8 kWh/Rupee. The relatively higher coefficient in Kerala reflects the more
[328] power-intensive industrial structure. This is mainly due to the location of aluminium and other electro-chemical industries in Kerala.

7.24 According to NCAER's projections[1], the power intensity of industries may be expected to increase both as a result of the spread of power-using equipment and

[113] [1] *Demand for Energy in India* (1960—75), NCAER.
[2] [Table 35, appearing on p. 293 of the text, has not been processed — Ed.]

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power generation will naturally be restricted. It is, therefore, essential that in the interests of the national economy, hydro-power generated at low cost in Kerala flows abundantly, and in bulk, to Madras State.

LIMITATIONS AND OBLIGATIONS OF EXFORT SALE OF POWER

7.34 The generation and export sale of the surplus electricity potential of the State, as a business proposition with a definite profit motive, just like any other industrial undertaking, has certain limitations and obligations which should be understood in advance. It is not as if this surplus generation places the State in a comfortable position of meeting any unanticipated demands of sizable magnitudes within the State itself at any time and gives it the option to export only whatever is in surplus to its needs from time to time. Export commitment is a definite contract and, except in the case of valid *force majuri* conditions, contractual obligations have to be met even when there is an acute power shortage within the State itself due to normal causes of development. Electricity industry is capital-intensive and involves the use of sizable foreign exchange for capital equipment. Electricity projects also take a long time to materialize. In a planned economy for the country as a whole, the available resources are equitably distributed for maximum regional growth. Therefore, when the economic surplus power potentials of the State are exploited for export to the neighbouring State, on considerations of overall national economy, corresponding provision for power generation in the neighbouring State is at the same time avoided and it is made to depend on import of power for its needs. These long-term commitments have, therefore, to be firmly and clearly understood in advance.

Rates for Export Sale of Power

7.35 Viewed as a commercial proposition, the maximum price which can be demanded for this exported power will have to be just less than what it would have cost the neighbouring State if it were left to its own costly thermal generation. In addition, the selling State should surrender a small prefixed margin of its profit to the purchasing State in order to make the purchase attractive and worthwhile. In the case of Madras, there can be no difficulty at all. It will have to pay for Kerala power what it pays for Neyveli power. There is also an added advantage for Madras in taking Kerala power at thermal rates. Neyveli will give only a firm power all through the year and can serve only as a base load station. Excepting the hydro stations in Nilgiris, all other hydel stations of Madras are tied up with irrigation regulations and the varying seasonal outputs have to be largely firmed up by an integrated operation of all these stations. There are limitations in this when seasonal power growth tends to assume sizable proportions and the full utilization of the seasonal discharges for power generation may not be possible. Luckily the position is different in Kerala. The large hydro potentials of Kerala are predominantly for power generation. Integrated operation of the hydel stations of Kerala with the Madras grid is possible and it can effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of Madras State. This will also

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*433 377 439 result in mutual advantage to both the States and optimum exploitation and utilization of the water resources of the region as a whole. Kerala can thus give Madras varying power through all the seasons of the year and effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of the State. This operational aspect has also to be kept in view while planning projects for an integrated operation and export of surplus power of Kerala to Madras. Hence, Kerala power at average kWh rates of Neyveli supply, is more advantageous to Madras than Neyveli power. It benefits Kerala also.

Rates for Sale of Power to Consumers within the State

*433 377 7.36 From the economic standpoint, the use to which power is put is just as important as its production. The two chief aspects of electricity consumption are: (i) Consumption of electricity as a factor in production in the field of industry, agriculture and traction. This can be termed "productive" power, or power in relation to productivity which activates the production and distribution circuits on which the increase of a country's wealth depends. (ii) Consumption of electricity for the direct, collective and individual needs of the people that is energy as a consumer good. This can be termed "non-productive" power.[1]

7.37 In Kerala, productive consumption (industrial power, irrigation and agricultural de-watering) formed about 85 per cent of the total in 1959-60 and non-productive power (domestic, light and small power commercial light, and small power public lighting and water works) formed the remaining 15 per cent. The domestic consumption alone came to about 10.7 per cent. The corresponding figures for all-India (1959-60) were 77.9 per cent (productive), 22.1 per cent (non-productive) and 11.1 per cent (domestic consumption alone). But this small percentage of non-productive consumption contributed much more (than its reasonable share to the total revenues) from the sale of power.

*433 377 651 7.38 For ready comparison, the consumption of energy distributed by Kerala State Electricity Board to its consumer within the State (i.e., excluding bulk supplies to Distributing Licencees and to the neighbouring Madras State) and the revenue thereof are given in Table 36 for the year 1957-58. The statement is revealing.

[1] "Productive" power helps to raise the standard of living of the community while "non-productive" power rather serves to measure the standard achieved. The rate-fixing policy must take into account these two distinct categories of consumption. Generally speaking, the policy should be one of cheap "productive" power for such productive cycles as would lead to a rise in wages so that it would then become possible for "non-productive" power to be sold at normal rates. In fixing higher rates for "non-productive" consumption, the ultimate objective of raising the standard of living of the community as a whole should not be lost sight of. The rate itself should not be unduly high to deny the service altogether to the bulk of the community living in an electrified locality. To this end, the rate fixed for "non-productive" power should also take into account the capacity of the community to pay. One of the objects of a sound rate-fixing policy would be to maintain within a given community a reasonable relation between "productive" and "non-productive" power consumption. Both in productive and non-productive uses of electricity where power replaces labour, power consumption will rise in proportion to its cheapness as compared to the cost of labour. In other words, the potential expansion of power consumption in a region may to a certain extent, be measured by the ratio of labour costs to power costs in the area. A policy of power expansion, if the costs remain high in relation to the cost of labour, cannot, therefore, achieve all the desired beneficial results; lowering of power costs, therefore, becomes more imperative where labour is cheapest.

[Table 36, appearing on p. 299 of the text, has not been processed -- Analysis]

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sufficiency, Kerala should play the role of a net exporter of electric energy to these States. A zonal grid which is now planned to be laid in the South, is essential to make the most economic use of the power generating potential of the Southern States. Since the cost of electric generation is much lower in Kerala than in Madras or the other neighbouring States even after including transmission costs, Kerala may also be in a position to earn net revenue through export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States. This revenue could be utilized for capital formation within Kerala.

7.49 The State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales specially with reference to consumption of power for domestic purposes.

Chapter 8

Transport

In the context of a developing economy, the transport system has a special role to fulfil. Apart from opening up the country and linking all areas with each other, it has to meet the growing movement of raw materials on account of more rapid development of industry and rising levels of consumption and distribution. The particular relations of production, consumption and distribution obtaining in the State and changing, according to the emphasis of the Plans, entail certain characteristic tasks for the transport system of the State. In Kerala, for example the persistent food deficit of the State, necessitates movements of rice and other cereals by road and rail from adjacent States,[1] and foreign or coastal imports[2] through ports such as Cochin, Calicut or Trivandrum. Fish and fish-products are distributed from the ports by road, rail and waterways in local and inter-State interchange. From her fields and plantations orginate exports of coconuts, copra, pepper, ginger, cardamom, cashew kernels, tapioca, tea, coffee and rubber. The State's forests covering about a fourth of its area, furnish varieties of timber for clearance from one of the biggest timber markets in the world ; countryside distribution and foreign exports take place from Kallayi and Calicut. Exports of mineral ores, such as ilmenite, have to be handled from ports like Quilon or Chavra. The transport media serve continually, except for the interruption of the monsoon, in the carriage of raw materials, fuels, and essential construction and other goods such as cement, iron and steel, sugar and textiles. In particular, the transport network has to cater daily to the needs of industrial establishments, e.g., rubber and titanium factories at Trivandrum ; cashew industry at Quilon, the aluminium and ceramic industries at Kundara, paper and plywood factories at Trichur ; the coir and coir products of Alleppey ; the cement and sugar factories at Kottayam, the rayon factory at Perumbavoor ; the industrial complex at Alwaye comprising fertilizer, chemical, textile, glass and aluminium industries ; the saw mills and timber-based industries, soap, etc., in the Calicut area ; the big plywood factory at Baliapatam; the tile industry at Quilon, Trichur, Feroke, Calicut and other centres.

8.2 As regards passenger traffic, the Southern Railway carried 16.2 million passengers in 1959, the pressure of traffic being notable at Calicut, Quilon, Ernakulam, Alwaye and Trivandrum Central. The nationalized road transport services carried 65.3 million passengers in 1959. The passenger motor-boat services operating on the inland waterways carry 27,700 passengers daily. About 1,100 passengers

[1] Over 600,000 tons.
[2] About 80,000 tons in a recent year.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin. 489

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc. 489 439

The Transport System 489

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores. [464] [434]

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport. [433]*

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average 496 171 496

[1] 1951 Census figures.

[Text continues on p. 127]

for Indian Airlines Corporation.[1]

8.38 The absence of an air-link between Calicut and Trivandrum is being keenly felt, as other forms of travel including railways to and from Kerala's capital involve a long and time-consuming journey with the difficulties attendant on the break-of-gauge at Ernakulam.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS IN KERALA DURING 1961-71

8.39 An assessment of traffic that the implementation of the programmes proposed elsewhere in this survey will generally indicate that an additional overall traffic of 5 million tons can be anticipated during 1970-71. The nature, magnitude and composition of the anticipated traffic are set out in Table 41.

8.40 The estimate does not take into account traffic in certain items, for example, coconuts and certain types of consumer goods. An allowance of 10 per cent may be made for these omissions. Further, the transport system of the State, besides meeting the additional demands of its own traffic, will have to bear the burden of traffic of other States, such as Madras or Mysore, which is handled for them at Kerala's ports[2] and on roads and railway sections[3] within the territory of the State; the additional traffic on this account may amount to 1 or 1.5 million tons by 1970-71. The overall growth in traffic may thus be between 60 and 65 per cent over the present level.[4] The transport arrangements in the State have thus to be planned and developed to meet an additional traffic of 6.5 to 7 million tons by 1971.

8.41 There may be some changes in the character of the traffic. For instance, there may be a decline in the traffic in firewood by about 100,000 tons as oil and other fuels are coming in as substitutes. Changes in technology in the Fourth Plan period presage the disappearance of the traffic in gypsum (145,000 tons) to Alwaye and substitution by imports of sulphur (100,000 tons) *via* Cochin. Decline in foreign imports of foodgrains is anticipated, while increased imports from more distant sources inside the country are envisaged.

8.42 The distribution of the State's additional traffic between different media (including the demand for ports' services) as anticipated, is presented in the table below. The heavy dependence of Kerala on the import of materials for industry from outside is reflected in the preponderant inter-State rail traffic. By 1971 the increase in the rail traffic in the State over its traffic in 1958-59 may be about 60 per cent.[5]

[1] An Air Traffic Survey has since been completed by NCAER for the Indian Airlines Corporation. Besides estimating the traffic potential of the circular route in the Southern Region, the Survey has recommended air linking of Calicut, inclusion of Trivandrum in the Madras—Tiruchirapalli, Madurai—Colombo air route, location at Thirukakara of an airport for Cochin and Alwaye, terminal facilities at the Cochin Airport, etc.
—Vide *Air Traffic Survey—Southern Region*, NCAER, 1962

[2] Predominantly at Cochin.

[3] Mostly on the highway and railway section between Ernakulam and Shoranur.

[4] The current traffic by road, rail and waterways is estimated at 10.8 million tons.

[5] The cross traffic to or from Cochin and from or to other States is taken into account.

[Table 41, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed--Analyst]

11: India. G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 6

VALUATION OF FOREIGN EXPORTS FROM THE PORTS OF COCHIN, ALLEPPEY AND CALICUT
(Rs. lakhs)

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Some important commodities of export	*1953-54*	*1954-55*	*1955-56*	*1956-57**	*1957-58*
Cardamom	22.44	32.84	50.17	54.84	55.90
Cashew(kernels and liquids)	927.55	1,014.52	1,155.12	1,112.02	1,141.82
Coffee	72.39	82.88	93.69	76.50	90.73
Coir and Coir Products	804.00	731.37	856.86	878.09	704.87
Fish and Prawns	102.69	79.34	31.85	123.86	149.33
Ginger	27.94	33.24	58.71	61.40	39.23
Metals, Minerals, Ores	21.56	22.78	28.93	77.10	60.77
Lemon grass oil	72.62	104.73	130.65	147.00	138.41
Pepper	962.13	569.81	378.61	341.69	295.67
Tea	1,912.96	2,196.86	1,992.17	1,974.75	2,434.78
Others	235.72	443.83	591.64	525.75	491.40
Total Value of Foreign Exports	*5,162*	*5,312*	*5,369*	*5,343*	*5,603*
Total Value of Exports to Ports of India	*2,238*	*2,193*	*2,489*	*2,404*	*2,318*
Value of Total Exports	**7,400**	**7,505**	**7,858**	**7,747**	**7,921**

*Value of exports from Calicut includes exports to both foreign and Indian ports.

SOURCE: *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959.

TABLE 7

CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF HOLDINGS AND LAND AREA OF HOLDINGS IN TRAVANCORE-COCHIN AREA AND THE MALABAR DISTRICT

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Grade of holdings	*Travancore-Cochin*		*Malabar*	
	No. of holdings	*Area*	*No. of holdings*	*Area*
Up to 1 acre	66.72	16.49	28.91	2.43
Up to 2.50 acres	86.47	36.96	51.52	8.22
Up to 5 acres	94.84	57.07	69.55	17.68
Up to 10 acres	98.35	73.35	83.79	32.30
Up to 20 acres	99.50	83.59	93.91	52.58
Up to 40 acres	99.86	90.15	97.88	68.57
Up to 100 acres	..	..	99.62	82.37
All	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*100.00*

SOURCE: *Kerala 1959: An Economic Review*, Government of Kerala (1960).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW1(

Towns

369 439 The towns of Kerala are for the most part either ports or crossing-points on the backwaters. There is virtually no indigenous maritime tradition, but from very early times spices attracted traders from E and W: Arabs, Graeco-Romans, Chinese.[51] With the Discoveries the Malabar coast became the scene of a fierce struggle between the Portuguese and their Muslim and European rivals. Relics of the era of European conflict are the tiny French settlement of Mahé (26 sq mls, poptn (1941) 14,092) and the exclaves of former British territory at Cochin itself and in Travancore

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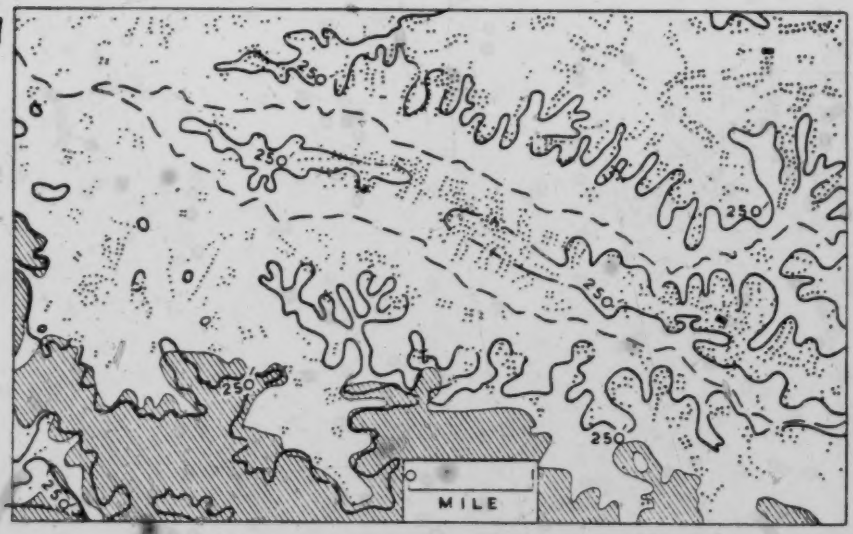

Fig. 123.—KERALA: INLAND SETTLEMENT. 5–10 mls SE of Palghat town; lateritic foothills in approach to Palghat Gap. Dots, habitations surrounded by groves; shaded, forest; blank, cultivation; broken lines, seasonal streams. SOI 58 B/10; courtesy SOI.

at Anjengo and Quilon (Tangasseri), which last had an area of 99 acres!

369 439 In Malabar Dt Tellicherry (36,320) exports most of the Coorg coffee and some pepper and copra; Calicut (158,724) has a similar trade but is more important administratively. Both ports are mere roadsteads, ships lying two or three miles offshore and lighters working from one or two piers, but at Tellicherry the shelter of offshore reefs enables some traffic to be carried on during the monsoon.

369 Cochin is far more important: it really consists of two adjacent towns, ex-British Cochin (26,320) and Cochinese Cochin or Mattancheri (53,346). Cochin is in fact the oldest European settlement in India; on Christmas

[51] On the Chinese shipping, see Ibn Battuta, *ed. cit.*, 235–6.

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Kerala AW11
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Maldives AZ5

K 369
K 504

Day 1500 Cabral arrived, and from then until the Dutch supplanted them in 1663 the Portuguese were in alliance with the rulers of Cochin against the Muslim Zamorin of Calicut. The port has considerable locational advantages: it is central on the backwaters, the Palghat Gap lies about 125 miles (by rail) to the NE, and it is about 300 miles nearer Aden and Durban than is Bombay. It may even rival Colombo as a transit port, as a call at Cochin adds only 40 miles to the Aden-Fremantle run.[52] The development of the modern port was for long impeded by its curious political situation; it lies on a breach in the long spit separating the great backwater from the sea, but while the major installations and the approaches lie in what was British territory, the inner harbour—in which much of the trade is carried on—is in Cochin state, and much of the backwater was Travancorean. Real development—including the cutting of a channel through the bar across the natural breach, and much reclamation—began only in 1920–23; later a 3-mile approach channel was dredged to a width of 450 and a depth of 37 ft, so that the inner harbour is now accessible to any ship which can pass Suez. Rail and road bridges cross the backwater, and a large airport has been built on reclaimed land; the old metre line to the SIR through the Palghat has been changed to BG. The volume of trade increased from 450,000 tons in 1920 to about 1,250,000 in 1950, while the number of ships using the port has more than trebled. Normally rice from Burma and Indo-China formed two-fifths in bulk of the total trade; mineral oil is also a major import. The exports are the usual Kerala ones: coconut products, especially coir and copra, tea, rubber, cashew nuts. Across the backwater is Ernakulam (46,790), capital of Cochin, with important soap factories, the largest owned (naturally) by Tatas: rice milling, as at Mattancherri, is also important. Trichur (57,524), the largest town of Cochin, has cotton spinning and weaving mills and tile factories; it shares with Palghat (55,160) command of the gap.

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504

Travancore is less urbanised than Cochin, but Trivandrum (**186,931**) is the capital of Travancore–Cochin state. Alleppey (**116,278**) and Quilon are ports of ancient fame now decayed; mere roadsteads, they still carry on a considerable backwater traffic. Alleppey, protected by a mudbank, is slightly the better port, but Quilon has the advantage of its situation on the metre line from Trivandrum through the Shencottah Gap.

The Maldive and Laccadive Islands

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These groups of coral atolls extend from the Equator to about 15° N, 180–300 miles from the Malabar coast. The Laccadives and Minicoy are attached to Madras, the Maldives (which have their own Sultan and constitutional government) to Ceylon: these affiliations represent historical accident merely.

[52] *Handbook of Commercial Information for India* (Delhi, 1937), 79; personal information from Sir Robert Bristow.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 56 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly remained serfs in spite of the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 796 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 [441] The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people; but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

437 (2) The Traditional Economic System

The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [436] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be
[464] Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conservation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
647 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should
[656] be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 246 3.25 The supply of succulent green fodder throughout the year also needs to be improved. The farmers should be induced to grow leguminous and perennial fodders like elephant and napier grass in the field corners or on waste lands. Distribution of seeds and cuttings to the farmers and demonstration of fodder cultivation on the fields of cultivators would go a long way in improving the production of green fodder. Municipalities and panchayats may also organize fodder farms for utilizing sewage and city compost.

*433 234 3.26 The development measures and aids proposed here, when implemented, would increase the output of animal husbandry products. Proper feeding of cattle and buffaloes can bring about an immediate increase of about 50 per cent in the production of milk.[1] Egg production may increase by over 100 per cent of the present output. Similar increases may be expected in other items too. This would give rise to the problem of suitable utilization of the additional output. Surprisingly enough, even the existing production is not being suitably utilized. For instance, even though milk output in the State is very low and there is an acute scarcity of fluid milk in the urban areas, as much as 41 per cent of the milk is processed into ghee.[2] In a State like Kerala which has a shortage of milk, it would have been more appropriate to consume the maximum possible amount of milk in a fluid state rather than in the form of milk products, since fluid milk is more wholesome and the processing of [142] milk partly destroys its vital nutritional content. This situation is due to lack of purchasing power with the rural people together with absence of facilities to market the milk in the urban areas. Since milk is a highly perishable commodity, the next best course for producers to follow in such a situation is to process it into the comparatively non-perishable ghee. But this is a wasteful process and the profits are also low.

*433 235 442 3.27 It is also gathered that 15 to 25 per cent of the total egg production in the State is wasted by breakage and spoilage due to defective and inadequate marketing facilities. Unless adequate and prompt measures are taken to remove drawbacks in the marketing system, the measures proposed here cannot be expected to yield full benefits and the producers cannot be expected to take a sustained interest in these. The solution to this problem lies in providing at least some of these facilities, the most urgent being the organization of marketing and processing facilities and services for dairy and poultry products.

DAIRY DEVELOPMENT

*433 234 3.28 Dairy development on scientific lines is a pressing need. This was a neglected field prior to the Second Plan. During the Second Plan, however, dairy development received some attention. Two schemes for processing 150 maunds of milk per day, one each in Trivandrum and Calicut, were taken up during the Second Plan. Each

[113] [1] *Third Five Year Plan, Draft Outline*, Government of Kerala, 1960.

[2] In 1956 the total production of milk in Kerala was 4,940 thousand maunds, of this 2,332 thousand maunds (47%) were consumed in the fluid state and 2,020 thousand maunds (41%) converted into ghee.

[113] (SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*: Issued by the Economic and Statistical Adviser, Ministry of Food and Agriculture).

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres. 489 439 [496] [491]

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans. 438 444 605

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres. 433* 438 489

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers. 442 [235] [426] [471] [465] [437]

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha. [435] [804] [366] [103]

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one. [366] [251] [262] 443 366

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both 433* 442 443

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

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Cooperatives

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474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

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655 cially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by deciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, [133] were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres. 489 439 [496] [491]

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans. 438 494 605

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres. 433* 438 489

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers. 442 [235] [426] [471] [465] [437]

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha. [435] [404] [366] [103]

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one. [366] [251] [262] 443 366

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both 433* 442 443

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and [291]
cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is [435]
not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476]
along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Sale of village produce.—Paddy, coconuts, bananas, plantains, arecanuts, pepper, vegetables, medicinal plants and roots are sent to market in larger or smaller quantities. 438

Paddy is not taken to the market, but traders come to the houses or the village shop to buy. Pepper is bought by Muhammadan traders early in the season, while not yet ripe, and afterwards sold at a great profit, often 100 or 200 per cent. All the other articles are taken by the producers to the market, chiefly to the Vaniamkulam weekly fair and sold at greater or smaller profit. A part of the produce is consumed in the village.

The trunk road from Palghat to Ponnani passes through the middle of the village. It leads to the two railway stations of Shoranur (the junction for the South Indian Railway and the Cochin Railway) and Pattambi, which are almost equidistant. The road also passes through Vaniamkulam, 6 miles east of the village, where there is the most important fair in Malabar. The town of Ottappālam (where there is a High School and a Munsif's Court) which is a small commercial centre, also lies on the road, some nine miles east of the village. Palghat is thirty miles east. Ponnāni, 22 miles distant, is a small coast town and a commercial centre and it is the western terminus of the road, which is also connected with Angadipuram, the taluk headquarters. The stream which passes through the village is full during the rains and is accessible to boats from the Ponnāni river. Some trade is thus carried on. Carts are the usual vehicles of transport. There are four in the village itself. 491 498

Village trade and consumption.—There is only one important shop in the village and it is therefore possible to get some idea of the amount of commodities bought by villagers from the accounts of the shop. The shop was started in 1892 and was at that time the only one in those parts. Since then a few petty shops have been started, but the business done by them is not very considerable. They deal mostly in those common articles of every-day consumption which are purchased in small quantities from day to day by the poorer classes. On the other hand the one important shop mentioned supplies the needs not only of the inhabitants of this village but of other villages as well. Some allowance must be made on this score when considering the consumption of commodities by this village, so that the total sales of the village shop may not be taken as representing the purchases of the inhabitants of this place. 443 438

The total sales of the shop amount in value to about Rs. 12,000 a year. The chief items are—

	RS.
Paddy	2,500
Salt	2,000
Coconut-oil	1,500
Iron bolts, bars, screws and other metallic articles	1,000
Kerosene oil	750
Tobacco	750
Gingelly oil	500
Dhall, grains, pulses, etc.	1,500
Betel leaves and nuts	500
Castor oil	250
Sugar	200

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

443 Of these paddy is mostly bought by outsiders and non-agricultural labourers, such as carpenters or blacksmiths. Most labourers
438 indeed get their wages in paddy. Metallic articles are mostly
[465] bought by blacksmiths, both in this village (to a very small extent) and by outsiders. So, too, in regard to coconut oil, gingelly oil, tobacco, sugar and all other articles, large quantities are purchased by persons coming from other villages, where there are no shops. Probably about 50 per cent of the total sales are to outsiders.

As regards the quantities of these articles consumed, the shopkeeper says that there is no difference between what is sold now and what was sold 25 years ago when the shop was started. Only the prices have risen. One or two new articles of consumption have however been introduced, e.g., coffee, the sale of which is increasing. Iron and other metallic articles began to be sold some 15 years ago and the sales are increasing, though very little is consumed in the village. Besides the articles mentioned the shop deals in sundry small articles of consumption in the village, such as medicinal products, garlic and onions (consumed by the
438 Cherumas and the lower castes), chillis, spices and the like. An important commercial product is pepper. The village produces about Rs. 2,000 worth of it and the shop buys about Rs. 1,000 worth from other villages. Very little of this is sold in the village. It is sent to the towns and commercial centres. The trade is very profitable and may be extended.

The commodities sold in the village are brought from the nearest towns or trading centres, like Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Ponnāni. The usual means of transportation are bullock carts. It does not pay to bring small quantities by railway and there is also the risk of delay and damage. The villagers also sometimes buy their clothing and other articles in towns or at the Vaniamkulam fair. About a thousand rupees worth of vegetable and garden produce is also taken to the fair in a year for sale, with the proceeds of which the villagers buy cattle and implements or commodities for consumption. The local prices of commodities are 10 per cent higher than prices in towns, about 4 per cent representing cost of carriage and the remainder interest and profit. After deducting interest on capital invested at 9 per cent, the owner of the shop makes a fair sum as wages of superintendence and profits—about Rs. 400 per annum, excluding the profits from the pepper trade which are at least as much again as this. The shop also sells paper and other articles of stationery for the use of villagers at fair prices.

435 As regards the rise in retail prices in recent years, the village accounts show a general rise in prices of nearly 100 per cent—salt alone having fallen in price. The rise is most marked in foodstuffs and other articles of immediate consumption, and in metallic articles. Betel leaves have not risen much in price. Paddy, which used to sell at 2½ to 3 paras per rupee 25 years ago, now sells at 1·2 to 1·8 or 2 paras. Oils have generally risen at least 100 per cent in 25 years. So also sugar, tobacco and the like.

432 If one compares the total value of purchases by different classes, one will find that the many purchases of the few well-to-do persons and the few small purchases from day to day of the great majority of poor persons roughly equal one another. The Cherumas and

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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564

the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illáms*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patináluvittukar* and [357] *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chárnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[167] 4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chárna Nayars or Chárnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of [582] the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice* [264] *versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[451] 5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others. 533 554 [644]

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar.[1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play. [874]

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *avan*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British [451]

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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634 553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 **Village organisation and village life.** The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Náduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. [634]

622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Náduvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

634 [622] [701] [451] [651] 621 [564]

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conser-
[464] vation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
449 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In
[656] this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and net value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Tea

*433 245 [439] 2.94 Tea is foremost among the exports of Kerala and the second most important cash crop of the State in terms of net value contributed. It also employs the largest number of persons among the plantation crops. In 1957-58, out of the total exports worth Rs. 56 crores from the ports of Kerala, tea alone accounted for Rs. 24.3 crores.

[132] 2.95 The growth of tea plant is very much influenced by natural factors such as temperature and rainfall. A warm and moist climate with a temperature range of 55°-95°F, and an aggregate of 100 to 250 inches of well distributed rainfall are ideal conditions for the growth of tea bushes. It is grown at altitudes of over 2,000 feet above sea level and requires a well drained soil for anchorage and share of trees. [133] The Wynad range (3,000 ft. elevation) of Malabar and Kannan Devan Hills (5,000 ft. elevation) of Travancore-Cochin area possess all these attributes.

2.96 Between 1951 and 1958 the area under tea in the State increased from 93,000 to 97,000 acres, that is, by 5.4 per cent. On the output side, the production of tea in the State during 1958 was 80.0 million lbs. as against 66.4 million lbs. in 1951, registering an increase of 35 per cent. The increase in production has thus been largely due to increase in yields between 1951 and 1958. By 1958 the yield rate reached a record level of 957 lbs. per acre. This increase has been steady and is [171] higher than the corresponding all-India rise. However, even at present the average yield per acre in Kerala is lower than that in the case of other principal tea growing States of India such as Assam, West Bengal and Madras.

2.97 Higher prices and increased demand after the last world war gave an inducement to the planters to adopt intensive techniques of cultivation such as application of large dosage of fertilizers, better management and care. These have been primarily responsible for a larger outturn per acre. However, this trend is not likely to continue indefinitely as the bushes are getting aged. Experienced planters feel that with further improvements in cultivation techniques and increased application of fertilizer mixtures, it would be possible to raise the average yield to 1,000 lbs. per acre.

2.98 *Replantation*: The economic life of a tea bush ranges from 40 to 60 years and this makes it necessary to have a planned programme of replantation. Nearly half of the tea acreage in South India was planted during the early part of the century using Assam seeds. The remainder is the old China hybrid. Till 1953 only 0.72 per cent of the tea area had been replanted.

2.99 Replanting of tea had been neglected till recently. Most of the plantation estates were distributing the major part of their profits and there was very little ploughing back. The need for replanting on an appreciable scale received recognition only about 10 years ago but the situation has not improved still. Since no profits had been ploughed back to build up reserves, absence of replantation is largely explained by the lack of financial resources with the planters. Government aid in the form of long term loans for plantation, therefore, seems to be the only solution. [452] The Plantation Enquiry Committee examined this problem in detail and recommended the creation of a fund for replantation. No action seems to have been taken so far.

*433 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such
231 as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.
234

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there
235 are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin
474 area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all
235 the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view
439 of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans
23 from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great
452 help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

[428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

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434 which Rs. 6,411-7-0 goes as land revenue and another Rs. 3,500 as income-tax to the Government, leaving Rs. 2,40,000 for the village. There are 385 landowners and these people get Rs. 90,000 a year for their land. The amounts earned by the great merchants may be estimated at Rs. 25,000, and this amount is shared by nearly 100 families. This amount largely comes from parts outside the village and by exportation of coconuts. The profits these people get from the village itself are not calculated under this heading since it forms no income to the village. But that may be estimated at Rs. 5,000 only. Thus all that remains to the agricultural classes after deducting the incomes of the landowners and traders, is about Rs. 1,25,000 which must be shared by 805 families of 6,000 people, an average of Rs. 20-13-9 per head per annum. The total earning of an agricultural family on an average comes to nearly Rs. 146
511 a year or Rs. 12-2-8 a month or As. 6-6 a day. Taking a rough estimate of what a family has to spend according to the present standard of living, which is in itself a low one, we may estimate the expense of a family to be at 10 annas a day. From personal experience I have found that the cost of giving artisans working in the house the one meal a day which is customary, is 2 annas per man; we made no difference between their meal and ours. Something, but not much, can be saved on this in quality, and, making all allowances for children, I infer that a family of seven members will have to spend at least 10 annas a day for food or Rs. 228 a year. Making an allowance of Rs. 20 for clothes and for religious and social functions—it is only a small amount for a year—they will have to spend Rs. 248 a year for food, in order to maintain their body and soul without suffering, leaving out of consideration luxuries, pleasure, etc. What do they get now? Only Rs. 146. So what they get is sufficient only for one meal. I was told by the carpenters and blacksmiths who worked in my house that they could not provide themselves with meals during the nights and what they do is only to drink rice water, and even that very rarely. They manage with the meal given from the house and what they get as wage is spent on their wives and children with a small saving for contingencies. This economic suffering is the main cause for the physical deterioration in India, and this is the cause of infant mortality, and this accounts for much of ignorance and filthy and insanitary habits, since with every one first food, then other matters. The case of agricultural people is much worse than artisans; they are paid lower and they are rarely given the one meal in addition as are the artisan class. Ordinary labourers if they do not get work have to starve literally.

454 It is evident from the previous statement of facts that no money can be saved at the present time by the tenants for agricultural
452 capital, or for manure. Further there is no organized industry of any kind. The oil-pressing and rope-making industries, which are the most important, are carried on with primitive tools which require no capital. It has been already stated that the landowners get
452 Rs. 90,000 a year, of which they spend for their maintenance a sum of nearly Rs. 40,000. The remaining Rs. 50,000 are spent on loans to neighbours, jewellery, house-building, education of their children, charity, religious and social festivities such as marriage. Loans to neighbours take away more than half, education nearly Rs. 10,000, and the rest for the other expenses. Money-lending forms their chief profession These landowners do not lend to the

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agricultural classes but only to the well-to-do and that in a lump sum, such as Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 or even Rs. 10,000. The chief purposes for which the well-to-do borrow are (1) to displace tenants by paying off the cost of improvement as explained in the introduction on land, (2) in the case of Brahmans for marriage of their daughters, (3) to rich debauchees, and they are not very few, on mortgage of their lands, thus in the end taking away the mortgaged land, (4) to big merchants who carry on the export trade in oil and coconuts and others who are engaged in trade. 452

The passion for jewellery which in former days was present only among Brahmans in Malabar—not so in other districts—is unfortunately spreading among other classes too, and a large amount of money is yearly spent on it. At the present time every man of means will have at least Rs. 200 worth of ornaments and, in a rich man's house, Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000 is the usual amount. The total amount of jewellery may be estimated at Rs. 1,00,000. This is the much talked of 'hoarded wealth' of the village, though the jewels are in daily use and not hidden. Nobody has hidden anything. 301 454

It is not possible to get the exact amount of agricultural indebtedness. I have already stated that the landowners and other rich persons do not lend to the agricultural classes. But who lends to the agricultural classes? The sowcar or the professional money-lender, the middle class man who is not rich but just earns enough for maintenance and some small saving. The number of professional money-lending shops is twelve, and a large number of persons of the middle class are also engaged in the same occupation. A rough estimate of the amount of money lent by the people may be made by a reference to the account books of these money-lenders. They have together lent about Rs. 1,50,000. The money lent by others must amount to more, since they are more lenient than the sowcars, and only when the poor cannot get money from others do they apply to the sowcar. It has been probably estimated at two lakhs. 452

A little explanation of how money is lent may not be out of place here. Suppose a man wants to borrow Rs. 50. The interest that is demanded is 2½ per cent per mensem; there is deducted from the amount lent an allowance called the bank allowance, generally 10 per cent, and also six months' interest or Rs. 6-4-0. So the amount actually paid to the borrower is only Rs. 38-12-0 and he executes a promissory-note for Rs. 50. If a man actually wants Rs. 50 he must incur a debt of Rs. 65. By the third year the man must pay the whole amount and the interest. By that time the total amount would have reached nearly Rs. 90. The poor man is not able to pay the money since the very purpose for which he borrowed is to maintain himself and not for productive purposes. He rewrites the note. For what amount? Rs. 65 plus interest for 2½ years plus compound interest plus bank allowance plus six months' further interest plus a commission (which is a new innovation since last year) mounts up to nearly Rs. 125, i.e., nearly double the original amount. In three years he has paid six months' interest and yet he has to pay double the amount he borrowed. This is an ordinary case, but interest at the rate of 3 or 3½ per cent per mensem is not uncommon. 426

Very few of the poor once in debt ever release themselves. On the other hand the number who are in debt is increasing from year to year. Any amount of money that is in the possession of the

of fertilizers, 200,000 tons nitrogenous and 150,000 tons phosphatic should be allocated annually to plantation crops during the next decade. 433* 241

Investment and Output Implications

2.152 It is not possible to give any exact figure for total investment needed to carry out the programmes suggested above, as a good deal of investment will be in the nature of improvement of land, better agricultural techniques and shift in cropping pattern, all of which would have to be effected by the individual farmers. However, some rough estimates have been attempted here separately for the field crops and the plantation crops. On the basis of the rough estimates made for individual crops, the total public investment during 1961–71 in the agricultural sector comes to Rs. 142.3 crores, out of which Rs. 50.6 crores will be for plantations. The total private investment suggested is Rs. 185 crores, out of which Rs. 129 crores will be for plantations, and Rs. 56 crores for the other crops. The latter figure has been worked out on the basis of the ratio of private investment to public sector investment in agriculture, as given in the Draft Outline of the Third Five Year Plan of India. Total investment in agricultural sector during the coming decade, therefore, adds up to Rs. 287.3 crores.[1] 433* 454

2.153 It is even more hazardous to venture an estimate of additional returns from the proposed investment. It may, however, be broadly envisaged that as a result of the shift towards a more value-yielding cropping pattern as well as through increase in the physical yields and extension of area cultivable during the coming decade, the net value contributed by agricultural sector would rise by roughly 75 to 100 per cent. 433* 241

2.154 The output of foodgrains is expected to increase by 16.28 lakh tons from the present level of 9 lakh tons during the coming decade. By 1960-61, the net value of agricultural output is expected to reach Rs. 174.3 crores (at 1955-56 prices). On the basis of an assumed increase of 75 to 100 per cent during 1961–71, the output from the agricultural sector at 1955-56 prices would be roughly Rs. 300-350 crores. Since the investment required for generating this increase in income has been estimated to be of the order of Rs. 327.3 crores, the marginal capital output ratio in agricultural sector during the coming decade would be between 1.9 to 2.3, depending upon actual, increase in the output of agricultural produce.

[1] The Third Five Year Plan of Kerala, as finally approved by the Planning Commission has allotted Rs. 48.2 crores to the agricultural programmes covering agricultural production, major and minor irrigation, soil conservation, cooperation, community development, panchayats, warehousing, etc. According to NCAER calculations total public sector investment during the coming decade is envisaged to be Rs. 142.3 crores, leaving a balance of Rs. 94 crores for the Fourth Plan. If the targets laid in this Report are to be achieved, investment effort in agricultural sector during the Fourth Plan will have to be considerably stepped up.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.30
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	3.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production e ll go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its l f. Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·73 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[text continues on p 67]

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TABLE 62

EMIGRATION FROM AND IMMIGRATION TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

Year	Number of		Percentage of population		
	Immigrants	Emigrants	Immigrants	Emigrants	Balance
1901	82,023	16,346	2.18	0.43	1.75
1911	83,278	26,112	1.91	0.60	1.31
1921	88,603	29,025	1.78	0.58	1.20
1931	164,389	48,503	2.61	0.77	1.84
1951	206,823	205,816	2.25	2.22	0.01

SOURCE: *Census of India, 1951*, Travancore-Cochin, Part I A, Report.

TABLE 63

INVESTMENT DURING THE COMING DECADE (1960-61 to 1970-71)

Items	State sector (Rs. crores)	Centre and private (Rs. crores)	Total (Rs. crores)	Percentage share to total investment	Percentage share, All-India Third Plan
1. Agriculture	51.7	56.0	107.7	10.8	20.8
2. Plantations	50.6	129.0	179.6	18.1	
3. Forests	5.7	..	5.7	0.6	
4. Animal Husbandry	2.6	..	2.6	0.3	
5. Fisheries	2.5	8.3	10.8	1.1	
6. Minerals	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.1	
PRIMARY SECTOR	*113.0*	*193.7*	*307.3*	*30.9*	
7. Factory Industries	31.2	114.1	145.3	14.6	28.8
8. Small Scale Sector	14.0	28.0	42.0	4.3	
9. Non-factory Sector	..	18.6	18.6	1.9	
SECONDARY SECTOR	*45.2*	*160.7*	*205.9*	*20.8*	
10. Power	102.0	..	102.0	10.3	9.5
11. Transport	70.0	28.4	98.4	9.9	16.2
12. Social Services*	65.0	100.8	165.8	16.6	16.9
13. Inventories	15.0	60.0	75.0	7.5	7.8
14. Rural Public Works	40.0	..	40.0	4.0	
TERTIARY SECTOR	*292.0*	*189.2*	*481.2*	*48.3*	*50.4*
GRAND TOTAL	450.2	543.6	994.4	100.0	100.0
	+47.0	—47.0			
Loans from State Government to the Private Sector	497.2	496.6			

* Investment in social services has been derived from the Third Plan estimates (all-India) by assuming the same per capita investment as in all-India.

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454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[426] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings
525 by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts subscribed by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of persons agree that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by periodical instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, should take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all being returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some [301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* [i.e., on the death of a man his property is equally divided among his sons.—Ed.]

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Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

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744 Inspector the outbreak of any epidemic. He makes tours in the villages; the two vaccinators in the taluk are under him. These vaccinators have to make tours in the taluk according to a programme previously laid down by the Sanitary Inspector. Public wells, tanks, cremation grounds, markets, cart-stands, etc., are also under his supervision. All towns which have no town-councils (and our town has not) are under health-officers, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon acting as the Health Officer. He attends to lighting.

625 *Police.*—Police administration is under a Sub-Inspector who has constables under him. He is under a Divisional Inspector (of whom there are three in the State) with a Superintendent of Police above him. There is, as a rule, one Sub-Magistrate for each taluk.

674 The official figures for the detection of crime are available only for a division of which there are three (A, B and C) in the State, and not for a village. The figures for the C Division, in which my village lies, are as follows:—

Cases.						Persons.						Property.					
1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.		
Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.
												RS.	RS.		RS.	RS.	
165	143	86·6	56	77	80·2	240	192	80	149	91	61	3,762	1,146	30·46	4,372	2,208	50·50

178 *History and Prospects of the village.*—I see no signs of economic improvement in the past; nor is there much deterioration worth speaking about. There has been, however, an increase in population in recent times. There has been no diversity of occupation. The same routine of paddy cultivation goes on with the old primitive tools and implements. Much capital is not invested even for [454] agricultural improvements for the excellent reason that the small landholders who form the majority cannot afford to experiment on a grand scale, and the few big landholders are sleeping partners distributing their holdings to small men for rent. Nevertheless there are opportunities for economic improvement. The establishment of co-operative credit societies is an urgent need. An "Agricultural Society" consisting of members of the occupation could be conveniently started to diffuse modern scientific ideas in agriculture by distributing pamphlets in the vernacular and discussing questions of importance. A little more attention could be given to the rearing of agricultural stock and the use of agricultural implements. As irrigation does not depend for the most part upon wells in our parts, there is no use in multiplying them.

454 People buy land because land is the best form of investment

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in their opinion. There are no other investments so secure, and a little land will feed a man and his family even when he is indisposed to work. Again, a certain amount of prestige is attached to a landed proprietor especially when he is a big one, though there is not such adoration as can sometimes be observed in the attitude of the common people towards the Government officials big and small. 454 [556]

There has been a certain dislocation in the labour market on account of the emigration of certain classes of workers to the rubber and other estates recently established in some parts of the State and elsewhere. Their low wages, their low social position, the baits employed, somewhat nefariously, by the recruiting agents, and the grandiose hopes which the workers entertain of the unseen, have all combined to deplete the village of a certain class of workers from agriculture. The wages not only of agricultural labourers, but of all classes of workers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, coolies, etc., have gone up. Few of the emigrants have returned, and those who return are certainly not very desirous of going back. 464 167

Manual labour is still looked upon as derogatory, and a well-to-do high caste man labouring upon his own compound or his own fields or allowing either his sons or relatives to do the same would be looked upon with contempt. High caste men have always to employ low caste people for any and every work, agricultural or domestic. Skilled work such as carpentry, blacksmithy, masonry, etc., is invariably performed by the particular "castes", which are hereditary and exclusive in character. These occupy a low position in the Hindu hierarchy of caste, but not so low as that other kind of agricultural labourers whom I called "Cherumas" or Pariahs, who occupy the lowest place of all. Each is respectful to his superiors and somewhat exacting to his inferiors, but there is nothing like hatred or dissatisfaction with one's lot in any of the castes. They take it as Nature-given and the social organism works in a smooth fashion, each man having his own work and his own aspirations. Judging from the present state of affairs it is impossible, and I think undesirable, to unsettle this order of things. There is scope however for the diffusion of education and knowledge, for the opening of a diversity of occupation, for infusing better ideals of social life and joint work, for improving agriculture and removing rural indebtedness and providing means of its non-recurrence in the future. But all this requires enlightened and sympathetic workers. 461

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smiths, masons, etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 465
6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work.

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians 465
and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In 326
Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20.

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which 465
wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise.

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive [462]
as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown.

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * 435
costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five [804]
small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure.

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made 454
savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000.

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for 434
this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of

* [180 lb.—Ed.] † [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

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434 which Rs. 6,411-7-0 goes as land revenue and another Rs. 3,500 as income-tax to the Government, leaving Rs. 2,40,000 for the village. There are 385 landowners and these people get Rs. 90,000 a year for their land. The amounts earned by the great merchants may be estimated at Rs. 25,000, and this amount is shared by nearly 100 families. This amount largely comes from parts outside the village and by exportation of coconuts. The profits these people get from the village itself are not calculated under this heading since it forms no income to the village. But that may be estimated at Rs. 5,000 only. Thus all that remains to the agricultural classes after deducting the incomes of the landowners and traders, is about Rs. 1,25,000 which must be shared by 805 families of 6,000 people, an average of Rs. 20-13-9 per head per annum. The total earning of an agricultural family on an average comes to nearly Rs. 146
511 a year or Rs. 12-2-8 a month or As. 6-6 a day. Taking a rough estimate of what a family has to spend according to the present standard of living, which is in itself a low one, we may estimate the expense of a family to be at 10 annas a day. From personal experience I have found that the cost of giving artisans working in the house the one meal a day which is customary, is 2 annas per man, we made no difference between their meal and ours. Something, but not much, can be saved on this in quality, and, making all allowances for children, I infer that a family of seven members will have to spend at least 10 annas a day for food or Rs. 228 a year. Making an allowance of Rs. 20 for clothes and for religious and social functions—it is only a small amount for a year—they will have to spend Rs. 248 a year for food, in order to maintain their body and soul without suffering, leaving out of consideration luxuries, pleasure, etc. What do they get now? Only Rs. 146. So what they get is sufficient only for one meal. I was told by the carpenters and blacksmiths who worked in my house that they could not provide themselves with meals during the nights and what they do is only to drink rice water, and even that very rarely. They manage with the meal given from the house and what they get as wage is spent on their wives and children with a small saving for contingencies. This economic suffering is the main cause for the physical deterioration in India, and this is the cause of infant mortality, and this accounts for much of ignorance and filthy and insanitary habits, since with every one first food, then other matters. The case of agricultural people is much worse than artisans; they are paid lower and they are rarely given the one meal in addition as are the artisan class. Ordinary labourers if they do not get work have to starve literally.

454 It is evident from the previous statement of facts that no money can be saved at the present time by the tenants for agricultural
452 capital, or for manure. Further there is no organized industry of any kind. The oil-pressing and rope-making industries, which are the most important, are carried on with primitive tools which require no capital. It has been already stated that the landowners get
452 Rs. 90,000 a year, of which they spend for their maintenance a sum of nearly Rs. 40,000. The remaining Rs. 50,000 are spent on loans to neighbours, jewellery, house-building, education of their children, charity, religious and social festivities such as marriage. Loans to neighbours take away more than half, education nearly Rs. 10,000, and the rest for the other expenses. Money-lending forms their chief profession These landowners do not lend to the

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agricultural classes but only to the well-to-do and that in a lump sum, such as Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 5,000 or even Rs. 10,000. The chief purposes for which the well-to-do borrow are (1) to displace tenants by paying off the cost of improvement as explained in the introduction on land, (2) in the case of Brahmans for marriage of their daughters, (3) to rich debauchees, and they are not very few, on mortgage of their lands, thus in the end taking away the mortgaged land, (4) to big merchants who carry on the export trade in oil and coconuts and others who are engaged in trade. 452

The passion for jewellery which in former days was present only among Brahmans in Malabar—not so in other districts—is unfortunately spreading among other classes too, and a large amount of money is yearly spent on it. At the present time every man of means will have at least Rs. 200 worth of ornaments and, in a rich man's house, Rs. 5,000 or Rs. 10,000 is the usual amount. The total amount of jewellery may be estimated at Rs. 1,00,000. This is the much talked of 'hoarded wealth' of the village, though the jewels are in daily use and not hidden. Nobody has hidden anything. 301 454

It is not possible to get the exact amount of agricultural indebtedness. I have already stated that the landowners and other rich persons do not lend to the agricultural classes. But who lends to the agricultural classes? The sowcar or the professional money-lender, the middle class man who is not rich but just earns enough for maintenance and some small saving. The number of professional money-lending shops is twelve, and a large number of persons of the middle class are also engaged in the same occupation. A rough estimate of the amount of money lent by the people may be made by a reference to the account books of these money-lenders. They have together lent about Rs. 1,50,000. The money lent by others must amount to more, since they are more lenient than the sowcars, and only when the poor cannot get money from others do they apply to the sowcar. It has been probably estimated at two lakhs. 452

A little explanation of how money is lent may not be out of place here. Suppose a man wants to borrow Rs. 50. The interest that is demanded is 2½ per cent per mensem; there is deducted from the amount lent an allowance called the bank allowance, generally 10 per cent, and also six months' interest or Rs. 6-4-0. So the amount actually paid to the borrower is only Rs. 38-12-0 and he executes a promissory-note for Rs. 50. If a man actually wants Rs. 50 he must incur a debt of Rs. 65. By the third year the man must pay the whole amount and the interest. By that time the total amount would have reached nearly Rs. 90. The poor man is not able to pay the money since the very purpose for which he borrowed is to maintain himself and not for productive purposes. He rewrites the note. For what amount? Rs. 65 plus interest for 2½ years plus compound interest plus bank allowance plus six months' further interest plus a commission (which is a new innovation since last year) mounts up to nearly Rs. 125, i.e., nearly double the original amount. In three years he has paid six months' interest and yet he has to pay double the amount he borrowed. This is an ordinary case, but interest at the rate of 3 or 3½ per cent per mensem is not uncommon. 426

Very few of the poor once in debt ever release themselves. On the other hand the number who are in debt is increasing from year to year. Any amount of money that is in the possession of the

427 regulations in the sister states of Cochin* and Travancore, which have placed a decided check on the arbitrary dealings of the landlord over the tenant in those countries. The fear of governmental interference in the near future to regulate the relations of the landlord and the tenant (for it is well known that this problem is an old one in Malabar, and even as far back as 1885, the popular administration of Mr. Logan had made a draft regulation on the same subject which was only abandoned for want of adequate support by the country and which formed the basis on which Cochin and Travancore could afterwards proceed) has stimulated the process of converting kanom lands into verumpattam, i.e., tenure at will. By this the jenmi has a double advantage. The lands are under his direct ownership, and as they are given to cultivation by annual contracts, he can at any time refuse, withhold or do what he likes with his lands. The lands also being as it were put to auction, will produce a higher rate of income than would be the case by giving it on kanom tenure. There is also a recent tendency on the part of the jenmi to raise the kanom amounts because in Cochin and Travancore this is made the basis for the regulation of rent. Till now the policy was to give lands on a nominal kanom, the advantage being in the facility with which they might reclaim the lands at pleasure.

241 The Cherumas (the submerged class) are the agricultural labourers who neither own nor rent land. They work for their
465 masters who give them a meagre allowance of 2 edangalis, i.e., 1/5 para (the standard measure) of paddy. With this he supports his wife and family. They are attached to their masters and loath to leave them.

427 Rents are always paid in kind and are high enough particularly in the case of annual holdings. Eighty per cent of the produce will go as rent to the landowner. The sole advantage for which tenants take up lands are, they say, (1) a few days' maintenance after the harvest, (2) the possession of straw, and (3) employment. But sometimes they have to pay rent in money and this is chiefly in seasons of crop failure. This is met in these ways:—(1) Direct borrowing, (2) profit of garden cultivation and (3) the institution of chit-fund,† which is widely prevalent among them.

241 The barber and the washerman of the desam are illustrations
463 of how customary occupations are modified by practical necessity. These people, while they perform their traditional occupations to the society and receive for it the fixed remunerations, have long taken to agriculture as their chief source of income. And they are among the chief farmers. There are two manufacturers of

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* Vide p. 116.

[454] † [A chit-fund is similar to our Slate-clubs. The members meet periodically, usually every month, and each pays a defined sum into the fund. If it be an 'auction-chit,' the money so collected is given to the member who, not having received it previously, offers to give back the largest amount, e.g., if there be Rs. 100 in the chit, one member may offer to take Rs. 75 only. The remaining Rs. 25 is then divided among the other members. Security is then taken from the recipient of the Rs. 75 that he will continue to pay his monthly contributions till every member has had his turn. In the other variety of chit, the monthly sum is ballotted for. It is the same as Kuri, described on p. 124.—Ed.]

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465 Wages are paid both in money and in kind; more often in kind since they find it more to their immediate advantage. The rate of wages is two annas six pies or its equivalent in corn at the standard price, for an unskilled labourer; and four and at times five annas for skilled artisans.

435 The price of paddy varies in different seasons. In the harvest season and sometimes after it, the price ranges between 2½ and 2 paras a rupee. But towards June and July the price goes up to between 1 and 1½ paras a rupee. This is the only food which [262] can be called staple. In times of scarcity the poorer people depend on jack fruits, mango and fish, of which the latter alone need be purchased, and that is cheaper than other foods.

454 Excepting the jenmis who are large zamindars, there are but six houses which have made savings. The bulk of the families are unable to liberate themselves from the grasp of the creditors.

The capital saved by these families is employed in lending to the needy agriculturists. A microscopically small amount has gone on jewellery among these middle class families, but with the jenmi the case is different. It looks as though the capitalist knows no way to employ his capital except lending to neighbours.

426 *Debt.*—The extent of indebtedness cannot be definitely ascertained by enquiry. But from what I have been able to gather from the accounts of two capitalist families, I have been able to make an almost correct estimate of the state of things with the agriculturist. Ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 800 one family account consists of the names of thirty debtors from Kothachira. These are all standing debts and the interest on these varies from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Twelve per cent is the current rate of "polite" interest, as people call it. But there are capitalists who lend money even at 24 and 30 per cent in the neighbourhood. The capital thus employed, however, is not the result of direct saving but is ancestral property bequeathed by their fathers, who were the heads of a jenmi family.

511 Thus we find that capitalists who have money at all to lend, have got the money by other sources and not by saving. The 426 agriculturist has many difficulties to meet with. He has no land and not enough stock and implements. His family is large and the expense is ordinarily far beyond his income. From his field cultivation, after all expenses have been deducted, he gets very little for himself. The rents are very high. The capital employed in stock is vital to him and yearly his lot is to lose by death of cattle either by disease or by wild beasts. Last year there were two cases of the latter. Those who have garden cultivation have this profit to utilize. But the majority own no gardens. The population has grown but not the means of subsistence, and no family except the few named find it possible to maintain their family purely from the proceeds of their toil. Thus they incur debt, but debt once incurred hangs heavy on the debtor. Not only is he unable to find means to pay the high rate of interest on the previous year's debt, but he must borrow at all costs again if he is to avoid absolute starvation of his family. This is regularly continued. Litigation follows and an additional and unprofitable expense is thus laid on his head. Law interferes and whatever property he has is lost. But the law does not kill the people, and

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563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

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593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual 561 occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran ●461 errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighbor- [422] ing groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped [613] them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

*[433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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in their opinion. There are no other investments so secure, and a little land will feed a man and his family even when he is indisposed to work. Again, a certain amount of prestige is attached to a landed proprietor especially when he is a big one, though there is not such adoration as can sometimes be observed in the attitude of the common people towards the Government officials big and small. 454 [556]

There has been a certain dislocation in the labour market on account of the emigration of certain classes of workers to the rubber and other estates recently established in some parts of the State and elsewhere. Their low wages, their low social position, the baits employed, somewhat nefariously, by the recruiting agents, and the grandiose hopes which the workers entertain of the unseen, have all combined to deplete the village of a certain class of workers from agriculture. The wages not only of agricultural labourers, but of all classes of workers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, coolies, etc., have gone up. Few of the emigrants have returned, and those who return are certainly not very desirous of going back. 464 167

Manual labour is still looked upon as derogatory, and a well-to-do high caste man labouring upon his own compound or his own fields or allowing either his sons or relatives to do the same would be looked upon with contempt. High caste men have always to employ low caste people for any and every work, agricultural or domestic. Skilled work such as carpentry, blacksmithy, masonry, etc., is invariably performed by the particular "castes", which are hereditary and exclusive in character. These occupy a low position in the Hindu hierarchy of caste, but not so low as that other kind of agricultural labourers whom I called "Cherumas" or Pariahs, who occupy the lowest place of all. Each is respectful to his superiors and somewhat exacting to his inferiors, but there is nothing like hatred or dissatisfaction with one's lot in any of the castes. They take it as Nature-given and the social organism works in a smooth fashion, each man having his own work and his own aspirations. Judging from the present state of affairs it is impossible, and I think undesirable, to unsettle this order of things. There is scope however for the diffusion of education and knowledge, for the opening of a diversity of occupation, for infusing better ideals of social life and joint work, for improving agriculture and removing rural indebtedness and providing means of its non-recurrence in the future. But all this requires enlightened and sympathetic workers. 461

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Central Kerala Nayar

613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
241 ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts, and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
● 462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

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Central Kerala Nayar

in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus gradually come to know the children better and to influence their upbringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is however always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

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163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that
[361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths
are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and
165 the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	96	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths
[361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land.
[465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of
566 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The
462 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]

[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].

‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

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Kerala AW11

566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
,, dry lands	937·21
,, lands watered by wells	...
,, common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

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Labour cost of cultivation of one acre of paddy.

465

For this area 8½ paras * of seed will be used.

Nature of work.	Rate of wages.	Total number of days.	Total amount of wages.	In kind or money.	Remarks.
			RS. A.		
Ploughing ...	3 as. or 3 ed. of paddy per half-day.	25	4 12	Both customery.	The ploughman works only during the first half of the day. He is expected to plough three times over an area of one para of seed capacity in a half day; and the land requires nine ploughings. [466]
Plucking for replanting.	5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	8	2 8	Do.	Women chiefly employed. One person plucks one para-seed-area per day and is paid 5 ed. of paddy. [462]
Replanting.	Earns 5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	4	1 4	Do.	Half the labour of plucking.
Weeding ...	4 as. or 4 ed. of paddy per para.		2 2	Do.	Only when transplantation does not take place.
Water-inspection.	4 as. per day ...	for 3 months.	1 13	Do.	One person can supervise 12½ acres.
Safe-keeping of matured paddy.	4 paras of paddy (Rs. 2) for 15 days.	15 to 20	2 0	Do.	At the period of harvest he is paid in kind.
Harvesting (including mowing, thrashing, etc.).	For every six paras of paddy gathered one para is paid.				Women chiefly engaged.

Note.—The yield per para is 10 to 20 fold †; and in specially favoured lands even more. In this table the price of 1 *edangali* of paddy is taken to be 1 anna (which was the market rate 1916–1917). [241]

Statement showing the prices of staple food-grains in the Cochin State for the year 1915–6. 435

Articles.	Prices per maund of 82⅔ lb. 1914-5. RS.	A.	P.	1915-6. RS.	A.	P.
Rice (husked)	6	8	11	6	5	10
Wheat	5	14	1	5	15	11
Peas	5	10	6	5	12	1
Dholl	6	8	11	7	5	2
Gram	3	8	0	3	10	7
Gingelly	9	9	7	8	6	1
Green peas	3	5	11	5	7	5
Bengal gram	5	15	2	5	15	9

* [Approximately 180 lb., an excessive quantity. "Transplanted, 20 lb. in 7 cents of land will plant up one acre. But this seed-rate is usually very largely exceeded, up to 150 lb. per acre being used" Wood, Notebook of Agricultural Facts, p. 52.—Ed.]

† [I.e., 16 to 32 cwt. per acre, worth about Rs. 50 to 100. With the lower yield the net return is Rs. 31 per acre, with the higher Rs. 75, from which cost of seed must be subtracted. —Ed.]

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smiths, masons, etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work. 465

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20. 465 326

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise. 465

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown. [412]

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure. 435 [804]

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000. 454

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of 434

* [180 lb.—Ed.] † [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

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Kerala AW11

563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic lead-
[162] ers. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit lan-
[174] guage and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera
564 kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121; 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nambudiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of
463 ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a
[611] role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual
613 rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in
635 Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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[553]

Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi ...	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvittil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Rámuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Rámuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Rârappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak. 553 552

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd. 613 552

ÚRÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

141
564*

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	* 120·8	74·0	* 120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

301 * 564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans— [789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami- * 564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613 Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
* 564 Mélapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
● 463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

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*142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] [789] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*301 564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil	Krishnan	Cultivator	52
Paritbil	Achutan	Do.	27
613 Malabîtil	Sivarâman	Do.	22
Cholale	Râman	Do.	20
551 Muthira	Narrâyanan	Teacher	26
● 463 Kanakath	Kunhi Krishnan* ...	Unemployed ...	22
Mannareth	Shangaran	Trader	30
Kûmbiyal	Kannan	Peon	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan	Do.	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

*553 564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
141 *564 Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	12[illegible]·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*115 564 613 463 551 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below:—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pathushêri ...	Kanâran ...	Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
Mâvila ...	Kumâran ...	Cultivator ...	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu ...	.....	22
Puthiotil ...	Râman ...	Servant ...	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan ...	Cultivator ...	25
Ramath ...	Kunhi Râman ...	Landlord ...	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni ...	Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi ...	Paidal ...	Cultivator ...	25

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

*564 553 Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

14 561

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature ...	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting ...	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling ...	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span ...	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest ...	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders ...	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit ...	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length ...	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width ...	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger ...	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips ...	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length ...	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width ...	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length ...	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width ...	15·5	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index ...	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac ...	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic ...	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height ...	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width ...	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index ...	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus ...	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin ...	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella ...	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah. 301 564* [776] [789]

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention. [304]

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family. 163 563

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal. 564*

Names of some of those examined.

115

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

551 463● 613 564*

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary. [553]

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled [775] by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm [789] to keep this gentleman off.

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjêli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564 693 183

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breaths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [563]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note 1.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 56 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly remained serfs in spite of the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 796 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 [441] The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people; but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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174

Internal structure of the caste.

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting
[626] the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine dis-
[688] pleasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world and in the world to come.

It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the
564 division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the
174 Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional
[463] groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and
[614] Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

564 In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

[P. 97]

CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by occupation is not possible. They were at one time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkirs* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

Occupation.

564 178 [555]

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

162 [463] [182]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of
[212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is
[871] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate
[212] (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography.
105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala
564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

[463] Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or
temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With
[565] them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

of the Brahmins. There are something like sixty four subdivisions of these people, from those ranking highest, in north Malabar, to the non-military, low caste ones of the south and of the Palghat taluk. Because of their very close relation to the Nambudri Brahmins which I shall describe below in detail, it can hardly be said that the Nayars are equal in caste to Sudras elsewhere in India. This is no doubt the reason for which, not only is their true position in the Hindu caste scale generally overlooked, but also why they themselves have a proud and self-assured bearing quite unlike that of the fourth and lowest caste in other parts of the country. 105 564

With the Nayars, the end of the list of caste Hindus is reached. Below come the *outcastes* who, despite their condition, are also graded in accordance with rank. First of these are the Tiyas. These bear different names in the various parts of Kerala, but there seems to be general agreement that they are really all one and the same people. Thus the name Tiya seems reserved for them in north Malabar with the exception perhaps of former north Cochin (Thiyyas); in Palghat, they are known as Iruvans, in south Malabar as Thandans and some as Irava-Panikkars; in south Cochin and north Travancore as Chovans, while in the rest of Travancore they go by the generic name of Iravas (sometimes spelt Izhuvas).

Next are the artisans or Kammalans of which there are properly only four main subdivisions. Their associates, also artisans and craftsmen, are roughly grouped into fourteen different communities. [463]

The Kammalans are followed by another category composed of farm-hands, the Cherumas and Pulayas, and a dozen or so different kinds of aboriginals, jungle and hill folk who are rarely encountered on the coast or in the cultivated area, and have to be sought for in the foothills and jungles of the Western Ghats. [563]

Non-Hindu inhabitants of Kerala include Moslems and Christians, of whom the greater number belong to the first of these two religious communities. They are both known locally as Mappillas, the first as Jonaka Mappillas and the others as Nasrani Mappillas. It is from this name, meaning "mother's son" or "bridegroom" or again "great child", that the more familiar *Mopla* for the Kerala Mohammedans has been coined. All are of the Sunni persuasion, while the Christians belong to a great number of varied denominations; some of them are Roman Catholic (the majority), others "Romo-Syrian" (Uniat), Orthodox Syrian, Malankara Syrian, Assyro-Chaldean (Nestorian), Mar Thomas, and of the Protestant United Church of south India. 105 563 795

105 There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White,
563 Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other
[1095] Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian
564 Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more en-
783 lightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a
[1084] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy,
[264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a
[463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay-
[484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into
[1084] town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala
[841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are
[846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv-
[614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con-
[846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing
[1065] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

Respect towards a superior, towards a God, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards. 105 564 576 291

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1] 104 105 564 614 611 428 613 588 591

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by 611 613 582 105 564 588 463 582 428

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the
[423] past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and
[464] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state.
564 Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[427] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[423] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[463] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[464] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aborigipals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
454 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: ". . . and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

*595 We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very [574] hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

*595 601 He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

427 This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called 273 Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the ●1463 introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of [656] their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this regulation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

There appears to be no doubt that Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of the central area are gradually giving up polyandry. Others have reported on the speed with which it is disappearing, sometimes exaggerating the rapidity, it seems to me, but nevertheless correctly stating that not many more years will pass before the custom has become simply a memory, as it is with the Nayars. I think a distinction should be made, however, between the more wealthy, upper members of the caste and the lower, poorer ones. In fact, polyandry with the Thandans and Tiyas is being abandoned from the top, and this observation is valid not only for their community, but also for polyandry in general in Kerala. 177 564 595

It is the upper castes, who have had greater opportunity to educate themselves, adapt themselves to higher standards and lead a more modern, Europeanized type of life, who are giving it up as something primitive and unworthy of self-respecting citizens. Within the castes, however, it is not always the upper strata that has progressed in this way, as can be seen with the Nayars, where polyandry is reputed to be practised still in the conservative court circles of Cochin and Travancore. Among the Thandans and Tiyans it is the other way round, the upper class either professes not to follow the custom any longer or really abstains from doing so. The Kammalans and associated artisans nearly all continue to be polyandrous, and as they are without exception people of very slender means, a distinction such as the one made here does not apply.

Aiyappan, discussing new trends in the Irava community, has written: "Differences in occupations and income and the development of new sexual standards are two active forces that one sees in operation against polyandry." (*Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 103.) Iravas, according to him, had formerly very few avocations from which to choose. They pooled their resources and worked for the house, their common wife and their children, without making any individual reservations. Today, matters have changed and the men each want a different type of work, chosen from among the numerous new occupations which are open to them, and aspire to have their own family, wife and children. The old ways are no longer fashionable, and are even despised and considered to be primitive and barbarous. Jealousy thus reappears, and asserts itself in no uncertain way. The women, too, do not want to be shared any longer by a number of brothers, and prefer to return home or refuse polyandrous marriages rather than be joined in wedlock in the traditional manner. In North Cochin, however, it was the progress of the people in higher levels of the Thiyya caste that brought about a legal inter- 177 595 463 177 595 [152]

snake-bite, the Nāyādis wear a brass toe-ring. And, when engaged in catching rats in their holes, they wear round the wrist a snake-shaped metal ring, to render them safe against snakes which may be concealed in the hole.

The Nāyādis who live within the jurisdiction of the Kavalapāra Nāyar near Shoranūr wear the kuḍumi (front lock of hair), as there are no Māppillas (Muhammadans) to molest them. The Kavalapara Nāyar was at one time an important chief, and directed all Nambutiri jenmis (landlords) who held land within his jurisdiction to bind themselves not to let the land to Māppillas. Nāyādis of other parts are not allowed by the Māppillas to wear the kuḍumi, and, if they do so, they are taken for Parayans and professional sorcerers, and beaten.

Some Nayādis have become converts to Christianity, others to Muhammadanism, and maintain themselves by begging for alms from Muhammadans. They are called Thoppyitta (cap-wearing) Nāyādis.

The priest of the Nāyādis is called Mūppan. His appointment is hereditary, and he enquires into all matters affecting the community, and can excommunicate a guilty person.*

Average height, 155 cm.; nasal index, 86.

Nāyar.—"The Nāyars," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "are a Dravidian caste, or rather a community, for we find several distinct elements with totally different occupations among the people who call themselves by this title. The original Nāyars were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia, but the present Nāyar caste includes persons who, by hereditary

* This note is based mainly on articles by Mr. S. Appadorai Aiyar and Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyar.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[55] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

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mentioned in vernacular books, are Kiriyam, Illam, Svarupam, Itacheri or Idacheri, Pallichan, Ashtikkurichchi, Vattakātan, Otatu, Pulikkal, Vyapari, Vilakkitalavan, and Veluthetan. Of these Ashtikkurichchi and Pulikkal are divisions of Mārān, Vyapari is a division of Chettis, and Vilakkitalavan and Veluthetan are barbers and washermen respectively.

"The chief divisions of Nāyars, as now recognised, are as follows:—

1. Kiriyam, a name said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit griha, meaning house. This represents the highest class, the members of which were, in former times, not obliged to serve Brāhmans and Kshatriyas.

2. Illakkar.—The word illam indicates a Nambūtiri Brāhman's house, and tradition has it that every illam family once served an illam. But, in mediæval times, any Nāyar could get himself recognised as belonging to the Illam division, provided that a certain sum of money, called adiyara, was paid to the Government. The Illakkar are prohibited from the use of fish, flesh, and liquor, but the prohibition is not at the present day universally respected. In some parts of Malabar, they have moulded many of their habits in the truly Brāhmanical style.

3. Svarupakkar.—Adherents of the Kshatriya families of Travancore. The members of the highest group, Parūr Svarupam, have their purificatory rites performed by Mārāns. It is stated that they were once the Illakkar servants of one Karuttetathu Nambutiri, who was the feudal lord of Parūr, and afterwards became attached to the royal household which succeeded to that estate, thus becoming Parūr Svarupakkar.

4. Padamangalam and Tamil Padam were not originally Nāyars, but immigrants from the Tamil

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive [184] difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the [463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their [534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in [234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as [644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

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seems to have been reserved specially for them. It would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation." 631

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which is one of the items of the utasom programme in every important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavaḷasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman 463 [701] [241] [526] [292] [241] [357]

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy
[357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so
[178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing
872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of
[212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female
875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of
873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent
[658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the
181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of
[464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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286 yard in width and 1½ or 2 yards long. They find it difficult to maintain themselves with this work and also rent small plots of land, and some possess land. They use the unimproved handloom. There is no co-operation among them. They sell their cloth in the adjoining market of the village and do not care to send it to other villages. At times they take orders. They do not spin but buy inferior yarn from the market which gets its supply from Bombay through Cochin and Calicut and at times Ponnāni.

463 *Other crafts.*—

Sawyers	4 families.
Carpenters	11 "
Copper workers	1 family.
Iron workers	2 families.
Goldsmiths	7 "
Masons	10 "

These give their whole time to the craft.

Native umbrellas and baskets are made by all Pariahs.

[283] Rope-making—thick as well as thin—is carried on by nearly all the women of the Tiyyas and their sub-sects. Some women are wholly engaged in this work and they sell their ropes in the market themselves. The Pariahs make a peculiar kind of rope from grass, which is used for tying calves, and as reins for bulls. The rope is good and strong. They sell a rope for a measure of rice.

Leather work is done by one family which also practises agriculture.

These craftsmen have existed from times long past with no change in their condition or tools. There is no co-operation among them. Their capital is only their tools. They get sufficient work for their maintenance. There is no improvement with regard to their designs except in the case of the goldsmiths whose work is daily increasing and who are the only craftsmen who invent designs. The condition of blacksmiths is getting worse on account of the importation of foreign iron goods. His only work nowadays is to fit things, not to make them as of yore. He does not now make the nails, screws, iron bars, locks, knives, etc. These are bought from the bazaar and he fits them. But he makes all the tools necessary for other crafts and for agriculture. The same is the case with the coppersmith, but he gets sufficient work as people desire to get valuable vessels made in their presence. But his condition may be regarded as precarious. There is no change in the other craftsmen.

[283] Coir rope-making is the chief source of income for all the low caste women. They beat the soft cover of the coconut, after it is well soaked, into fibre, and twist it into strands, and the strands into ropes, in their hands. The rope is sold to the local shopkeepers daily. Some women themselves take the rope to the local fairs. Their work is increasing.

245 The other industry followed by a great many people is coconut oil-pressing. The whole Christian community with some others subsists on that work. They become tenants to big kanomdars and sometimes buy coconuts from others and extract the oil and sell it in the local market. Some big shopkeepers collect the oil and send it in large quantities to Cochin whence it is exported. One machine mill is already at work in a place

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178 426 The increase in the number of families must not be taken for a sign of prosperity. I have sought out its causes. It has both a social and an economic cause. The breaking up of the old 'Tharvads' into small homesteads, owing to want of harmony among the members, mismanagement of property due to ignorance and rank illiteracy, growing indebtedness of the once rich Tharvads to the local money-lenders or the landlord, are the causes of the downfall of the great Tharvads of old which half a century ago were gracing this desam; the stories yet current in those parts of men of high worth and talents who belonged to them, and the occasional ruined foundations of their family houses alone remain. Indeed joint families have almost all broken up and the Tharvad properties all absorbed by the local 'Jenmis.' The people are day by day being reduced to want and dependence on the landlord and the creditor.

564 The desam cannot be called a 'caste' desam strictly speaking. There are no separate quarters allotted on the basis of caste difference. In spite of the rigorous observance of the 'system of pollution' between caste and caste, peculiar to the Malabar country, all castes hold lands, work, and have families promiscuously throughout the land. For example, every landholding farmer, who is usually a Nayar, has in his family precincts (indeed far enough away to be out of reach of pollution) small homesteads of his labourers who are generally Cherumas or Pulayas * by caste.

There are—

3	Brahman	families ...	24	individuals.
3	Ambalavasi	" ...	36	"
137	Nayar	" ...	956	"
85	Tiyya	" ...	584	"
80	Cheruma	" ..	390	"
24	Muhammadan	" ...	27	"
1	Christian family	...	6	"

[463] The *Tiyya* class includes the families of the artisans—'Asari' (carpenter—two families), 'Karuvan' (blacksmith—one family), 'Kollan' (shoemaker—two families), 'Thattan' (goldsmith—one family), 'Mannan' (washerman of the lower class—one family), 'Panikkan' (stone-mason—one family).

Children living	642	
" dead	188	Born within the last ten years.
" born lifeless	67	

Children below ten are alone included in this. This has been ascertained by enquiry among the mothers.

342 Homesteads number 266. The homesteads of the villagers are miserable looking and squalid, frequently being only mud hovels of eight by five feet, more or less. Not more than 40 houses out of 333 are houses worthy of the name. The rest are simply hovels, often the very picture of poverty and famine.

* Between these two depressed castes there are only minute differences.

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427 regulations in the sister states of Cochin* and Travancore, which have placed a decided check on the arbitrary dealings of the landlord over the tenant in those countries. The fear of governmental interference in the near future to regulate the relations of the landlord and the tenant (for it is well known that this problem is an old one in Malabar, and even as far back as 1885, the popular administration of Mr. Logan had made a draft regulation on the same subject which was only abandoned for want of adequate support by the country and which formed the basis on which Cochin and Travancore could afterwards proceed) has stimulated the process of converting kanom lands into verumpattam, i.e., tenure at will. By this the jenmi has a double advantage. The lands are under his direct ownership, and as they are given to cultivation by annual contracts, he can at any time refuse, withhold or do what he likes with his lands. The lands also being as it were put to auction, will produce a higher rate of income than would be the case by giving it on kanom tenure. There is also a recent tendency on the part of the jenmi to raise the kanom amounts because in Cochin and Travancore this is made the basis for the regulation of rent. Till now the policy was to give lands on a nominal kanom, the advantage being in the facility with which they might reclaim the lands at pleasure.

241 The Cherumas (the submerged class) are the agricultural labourers who neither own nor rent land. They work for their
465 masters who give them a meagre allowance of 2 edangalis, i.e., 1/5 para (the standard measure) of paddy. With this he supports his wife and family. They are attached to their masters and loath to leave them.

427 Rents are always paid in kind and are high enough particularly in the case of annual holdings. Eighty per cent of the produce will go as rent to the landowner. The sole advantage for which tenants take up lands are, they say, (1) a few days' maintenance after the harvest, (2) the possession of straw, and (3) employment. But sometimes they have to pay rent in money and this is chiefly in seasons of crop failure. This is met in these ways:—(1) Direct borrowing, (2) profit of garden cultivation and (3) the institution of chit-fund,† which is widely prevalent among them.

241 The barber and the washerman of the desam are illustrations of how customary occupations are modified by practical necessity.
463 These people, while they perform their traditional occupations to the society and receive for it the fixed remunerations, have long taken to agriculture as their chief source of income. And they are among the chief farmers. There are two manufacturers of

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* Vide p. 116.

[454] † [A chit-fund is similar to our Slate-clubs. The members meet periodically, usually every month, and each pays a defined sum into the fund. If it be an 'auction-chit,' the money so collected is given to the member who, not having received it previously, offers to give back the largest amount, e.g., if there be Rs. 100 in the chit, one member may offer to take Rs. 75 only. The remaining Rs. 25 is then divided among the other members. Security is then taken from the recipient of the Rs. 75 that he will continue to pay his monthly contributions till every member has had his turn. In the other variety of chit, the monthly sum is ballotted for. It is the same as Kuri, described on p. 124.—Ed.]

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241
463 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agriculturists.

651 The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. The assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira was Rs. 6,519-2-4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228-7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of the chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy and arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garden. The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Every household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of an antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They are kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are planted and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plants. Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have to be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance from one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are at first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung and ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days in the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselves. When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and a shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of water. These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, small channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root of every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begun. This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are given a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of average showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for similar weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, they have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and third month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted in plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fifth and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is a second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediately after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop, the ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two months of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle of January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period of two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under single
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessments
311 on each. (The information is taken from the village accounts.) The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settlement.

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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

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3. Goldsmith.
4. Leathersmith.
5. Carpentry.
6. Masonry.
7. Oil pressing.
8. Making of bamboo mats, baskets, etc.
9. Trade in rice.
10. Butter and milk trade.

In arrack preparation two men (Tiyyas) are engaged, but they are also agriculturists and not more than two hours are spent on an average by them on their particular profession. They cut two or three trees daily and from the toddy thus got jaggery or arrack is made. The profit according to their own version is not more than three annas per day. The ironsmith, goldsmith, leathersmith, carpenter and stone mason are whole-time workmen. The ironsmith finds employment in making or repairing agricultural implements. Nothing above this is known to him. The goldsmith's work consists mainly of making ornaments for the jenmis. He is an expert as far as such ornaments are concerned. But beyond these customary works his genius does not go. The leathersmith gets hardly any orders for his work, but his wife supplies chunam* to the country whereby the family maintains a precarious existence. Carpenters and stone masons have work in some seasons. For example, in the ploughing time or the beginning of the watering season, the former has busy calls from every family for the repair of a plough, a water lift or the like. The stone mason wanders to other parts of the country in search of work. He has no work here. The average rate of wages for these is four annas a day and one meal. Goldsmiths' and ironsmiths' remuneration is based on the quality and quantity of their work. None of these have continuous employment for the whole year. Owing to this cause, out of the two families of carpenters consisting of ten members of workable age, eight migrate usually to Calicut where they get twelve annas wages per day. They pay occasional visits to their homes, stay there for a fortnight or so, and then again go.

[166]

The oil presses find ten or twelve days' work each year after a gingelly crop is cut.

285

Mat and basket making is the indoor industry of the Cheruma women. They help their husbands in the fields in minor works but sometimes are also employed on independent wages especially during harvest and sowing time. Their spare time is employed in this industry. These mats and baskets are made of split bamboo. They are rough productions.

252

There is a curious industry carried on by some Nayar men and women which illustrates the plight they are in. Each of them has a capital of two rupees. They go out with this ten or sometimes fifteen miles away and purchase paddy for this sum where it is sold cheaper by four nazhis (one-tenth para) a rupee. Next day it is boiled, dried and made into rice. On the third day it is carried to Kunnankulam or Guruvayoor, villages eight or ten miles to the

* [Slaked lime for chewing. It is spread thinly on betel leaves, which are folded when put in the mouth.—Ed.]

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other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village. 432

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer. 465

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one-and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days. [804]

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters. 566

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and 563 463

* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]

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563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings-bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

113,
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464

/For a comparison of statistical data and general information regarding employment and unemployment in the state of Kerala vs. India as a whole, see 11: India, AW11 Kerala File, category 116, pp. 206-215./

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
[496] ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in the process.

564 **Political and Economic Systems**

[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
648 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
634 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
635 centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
595 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
656 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
178 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[16] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[70] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward ne-olocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried employment has only partially undermined the position of women as
● 464 the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matri-locally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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464 564 [212] The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population belong to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning [357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 [515] [771] **Food.** The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worshipping in the temple close at hand. Their meals are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between 262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice 264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular [272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for [556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation [562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 556 [357] In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a
[292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pivu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over
[464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars
[177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this
[177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body
[369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of
[178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis-
[548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as
[71] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in
[576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Preface

THE TECHNO-ECONOMIC Survey of Kerala, conducted at the request of the State Government of Kerala, is one of the last few in the series of Techno-Economic Surveys of the various States of India undertaken by the National Council of Applied Economic Research. For some time past this small State has been attracting increasing attention of the public. Although Kerala has come into limelight on account of its political turmoils, the basic problems which the State faces are primarily economic in nature. The acute intensity of its unemployment aggravated by increased population pressure, the relatively lower per capita income of the people of the State, and highly limited scope for extension of cultivable area, pose a challenging task for the economic planners.

The main objective of the Techno-Economic Survey of Kerala, as in the case of similar surveys for other States, has been to assess technically feasible and economically viable potential for growth in the different sectors of the State economy over the coming decade. The first step towards this objective was to prepare an outline of the present structure of the economy and make an assessment of the existing physical and human resources of the State. A team of economists and technical experts was constituted for this purpose. The preliminary work on the project was started early in 1960. Relevant data were collected and the members of the survey team discussed the problems and potentialities in different fields, with a number of knowledgeable persons in the State. A number of working papers dealing with problems and potentialities in respect of various aspects of the economy were also prepared. Technical Appraisal Reports analysing growth potential in different sectors were then prepared by the technical members of the team.

The Preliminary Economic Report was ready by September 1961 and it was sent to the State Government for comments. The final report as printed here brings together the material contained in the working papers and the Appraisal Reports. The Appraisal Reports contain a detailed technical analysis of each of the major fields of development, e.g., Industry, Power, Transport, etc. The Economic Report, on the other hand, aims at presenting a broad and coordinated picture of the outline of the probable growth of the State Economy. It indicates the main lines along which future development of the State should proceed and highlights the strategy required for achieving a rapid growth of the State economy.

The economy of Kerala is marked by a number of distinctive features. It is the most thickly populated State in India with an average density per square mile being over three times the all-India average. In addition, the rate of growth of population has been noticeably higher in Kerala than in the other parts of India. A high density of population combined with a fast growth of population has been responsible

(vi)

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there
* 433 been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades.
47 In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
* 433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

rate of growth if economic and social stability is to be attained within a reasonable period. 433* 434

Growth of this magnitude can be achieved in a balanced manner over the decade through an increase of about 60 per cent in the income from primary sector, 175 per cent from the industrial sector, and 103 per cent from the tertiary sector. Sectoral growth rates of this magnitude would bring about structural changes in the economy. Over the decade the proportion of income contributed by agriculture and other primary activities would decline from 48.2 per cent to 42.8 per cent while that from secondary sector would increase from 15.7 per cent to 21.2 per cent. Income from the tertiary sector would remain more or less constant around 36 per cent. Similarly the inter-sectoral distribution of working force would undergo changes. By 1971 the proportion of employment in the primary sector would decline from 54.9 per cent in 1956 to 42.2 per cent while in the secondary and tertiary sectors it would increase from 19.3 per cent to 24.6 per cent and 25.8 per cent to 33.2 per cent, respectively. 433* 464

In planning the strategy of growth for Kerala two important factors need to be stressed: (*a*) a proper system of crop priorities in the sphere of agricultural development and (*b*) technological improvements in the industrial sector. 433*

In the sphere of agriculture, the trend of thinking up till now has been to emphasize the need for achieving self-sufficiency in foodgrains within the State. This has led to a sizable increase in the area under foodgrains at the expense of high value adding cash crops, despite the fact that Kerala offers highly favourable conditions for cash crop cultivation. The right policy for the State Government to adopt would be (*a*) to meet its foodgrains deficit by import from surplus States and (*b*) to reserve to the maximum extent all new lands coming under cultivation, for cash crops.

For raising the yield of foodgrains, a programme of widespread use of improved seeds, intensive use of fertilizers, control of soil erosion and provision of major and minor irrigation have been suggested. It is estimated that over the decade the various measures contained in the report would raise the output of foodgrains by 7.28 lakh tons. By 1970-71, the output of foodgrains would be about 16.5 lakh tons leaving a big gap to be filled by imports from other surplus States.

This report does not agree with the view sometimes propounded that the need for providing irrigation facilities is less in this State because rainfall is high. Irrigation is essential for double or triple cropping, stabilization of crops and for effective application of fertilizers. Moreover, in view of the terrain of Kerala, it is also necessary to develop irrigation facilities through minor irrigation schemes. Irrigation projects suggested in the report therefore require an investment of Rs. 39 crores in major works and Rs. 20 crores in minor works.

The need for a faster pace of industrialization than achieved hitherto is particularly urgent in Kerala in view of the high man-land ratio already attained in this State. There is a limit beyond which employment in the agricultural sector cannot be increased. A solution to the key problem of Kerala, viz., high degree of unemployment, can therefore be attempted only by further industrialization of the State. Industrial development will also be the main spearhead of overall growth of the State economy.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 In the sphere of industries, the major emphasis has been placed on the expansion of engineering industries. Out of a total investment of Rs. 145 crores in the factory industries, the engineering industries alone will absorb nearly Rs. 63 crores. The majority of light engineering industries to be established or expanded are high value adding industries and would cater to regional demand for implements, tools and other engineering goods. The capital-output ratio for these industries is also comparatively low, viz., 2.1. These are some of the factors on account of which a large scale expansion of engineering industries would be quite feasible in Kerala although the raw materials required by them would have to be imported from other parts of India over long distances. A large scale expansion of engineering industries would help to improve the technological level of other industries and agriculture in Kerala. Apart from being themselves technologically superior, the engineering industries induce technological improvements in other spheres and spread the use of better equipment, tools and machines.

For a steady growth of industries in a State like Kerala where the industrialists have been shy of investing on account of its unstable political climate, it is most essential to take all possible measures to inculcate a sense of confidence among the investor class. The State Government's recent Industrial Policy Declaration expressing their desire to give all possible help to prospective entrepreneurs, marks a step in the right direction. However, the State Government alone may not be able to go far in this matter unless they have the active cooperation of the public and political parties in the execution of their economic policies.

371 One of the chief assets of Kerala from the point of view of its future industrialization programmes is its vast resources of hydro-electric power. During the Second Plan period unfortunately, signs of power shortage were visible and the growth of industries had to suffer as a consequence. For the coming years the State should keep ahead of demand for power and should plan for surplus power generation capacity. Secondly, since the State has plenty of power resources and the costs of generation are very low, it would be in the interest of the economy of the Southern region of India to form a zonal grid. The surplus power generated in Kerala could be sold at a profit to the neighbouring States, especially Madras, which is not so fortunately placed as Kerala in respect of its hydel resources. Kerala would also stand to gain from this transfer of electrical energy since it can generate power at a much lower cost than its neighbouring States, and therefore, earn sizeable revenues from this source.

Total investment effort required for execution of the plans of development suggested in this report would be of the order of Rs. 1,000 crores over the ten-year period. The share of the State Government would be approximately Rs. 500 crores, the balance being left to the initiative of the Private Sector, and the investments through Central Government projects. Total investment would be distributed over the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in the ratio of 20.8 per cent, 28.8 per cent and 50.4 per cent respectively.

371 464 The impact of the proposed developments on the unemployment situation is not likely to be unimpressive. It is estimated that of the 17.8 lakh jobs envisaged to be created over the decade, 1.8 to 2 lakh jobs would be in the primary sector, 7.8 lakhs in the industrial sector and the balance of 7.7 lakhs in the tertiary sector. It

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

would still leave a backlog of about 4.7 lakhs unemployed persons in 1970-71. However, the proportion of unemployed persons to the total population would have been reduced from 4.2 per cent to 2.3 per cent.

It may thus be seen that in spite of certain optimistic assumption regarding creation of employment opportunities and a reduction in the intensity of unemployment, the number of unemployed persons by 1970-71 would be large for a State like Kerala. In the long run an effective solution to the over-population of Kerala can only be provided by a reduction in the rate of population growth through intensification of Family Planning Programmes and migration to other parts of India. The need for widespread use of family planning methods and measures to promote migration, is all the more urgent in a region like Kerala where population density is high, rate of growth of population is rapid, and an acute unemployment problem exists. More reliance on measures to create additional employment opportunities within the State is not enough.

This survey like other similar surveys was undertaken by a team of National Council economists and technicians headed initially by Dr. B. Natarajan and later by myself with the assistance specially of Mr. A.K. Mathur and Mr. S.R. Bose both of whom spent considerable time in the State. At the specific request of the Government of Kerala, the Director-General directed the enquiry in all its stages and visited the State on a number of occasions and guided the team. The names of persons who participated in the survey are listed in appendix 1. To all of them, specially to Mr. Mathur on whom the task of drafting the preliminary report fell, I wish to express my thanks. I would also like to acknowledge the help and cooperation received from the Government and the officers of the Kerala Government, specially the Director of Industries in the various stages of the survey. Finally, to the Minister for Industry, Mr. K.A. Damodara Menon I am specially indebted for his continuous interest in the survey and for the support and encouragement he gave to our staff.

P.S. LOKANATHAN
Director General

NEW DELHI

July 1962

1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region—are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 8]

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182 1.13 These, broadly, are the inter-relationship between physical features and economic aspects of the State, and largely determine the nature and structure of the Kerala economy discussed below.

Density of Population

161 [469] 1.14 In the ultimate analysis, the basic problem of Kerala, viz., an inordinately large section of the population being without any gainful work, is brought about by the very high density of population in the State. With an area only 1.2 per cent of the whole of India, Kerala has to support 3.8 per cent (16.8 million) of the total population of India. The density of population in Kerala (1,125 persons per sq. mile) is naturally over three times the all-India average (384 persons per sq. mile).

1.15 The population, however, is not evenly spread out over the whole of the State, but shows considerable variations from district to district (Table 2).* The highland, being mostly covered with forests, is sparsely populated. The average density here is only about 150 persons per square mile. On the other hand, the lowlands bear the severest burden of population. With only about 18 per cent of the State area, they support over 40 per cent of the population. On the other extreme is the coastal strip where the average density is over 2,500 persons per square mile. In certain pockets it even shoots up to 7,000 persons per square mile. The midland, though thickly populated, is not as congested as the area lying in the immediate vicinity of the sea coast.

Growth of Population

1.16 Not only is the density of population high in Kerala, but its rate of growth has also been fairly high. The following table gives the rate of growth of population over the last half century both for India as well as for Kerala.

DECENNIAL PERCENTAGE VARIATION IN POPULATION

Year	*India*	*Kerala*
1901-11	5.69	1.75
1911-21	—0.31	9.16
1921-31	11.00	21.85
1931-41	14.23	16.04
1941-51	13.34	22.82
1951-61	21.49	24.55

SOURCE: 1961 Census of Population Provisional Figures.

1.17 As can be seen, the population has grown much faster in Kerala than in the country as a whole during the last six decades. The basic reason for a faster [165] rate of growth of population in Kerala is a comparatively low death rate while the [163] birth rate is only slightly less than the all-India one. The comparative position of birth and death rates in India and Kerala is given in the following table.

* [see p. 270, category 116 -- Analysis]

[text continues on p. 8]

Il: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll

1.2 per cent of the total area of India, this contribution is quite significant. Yet the per capita income of Kerala in 1955-56 (Rs. 234.4) was lower than the all-India average (Rs. 261) by about Rs. 27, that is, 10.3 per cent. 434 [171]

1.22 The distribution of output and employment between primary, secondary and tertiary activities gives a broad indication of the stage of development an economy has attained. As a general rule, the more advanced the stage of economic development, the higher the proportion of income an employment originating in the secondary and tertiary activities. In Kerala the sectoral distribution of output and employment presents somewhat of a contrasting picture (Tables 3 and 4). In terms of employment, the proportion of working force engaged in agriculture and allied occupations (55%) is much smaller than the corresponding all-India proportion (71.8%). This would seem to indicate that Kerala has perhaps reached a level of development somewhat comparable to that of a country like Japan. But the picture presented is quite different when one looks at the proportion of income contributed by the various sectors. The major share (49.1%) of output still originates in the primary sector (all-India: 45.4%). The secondary and tertiary sectors taken together contribute 50.9 per cent of the output against 54.6 per cent in the case of all-India. 433* 434 464 171

1.23 Thus, while the sectoral distribution of population seems indicative of a diversified structure of the economy, the sectoral distribution of income does not. Two factors seem to provide a plausible explanation for this contrast. In view of the high density of population, the possibilities of providing gainful employment in the agricultural sector are naturally limited. Super-imposed upon this is the fact that as a result of the predominence of perennial crops, especially the coconuts, in the agricultural sector, the cropping pattern in Kerala is comparatively less labour-intensive. As a result of the operation of these forces, a large section of the population appears to have been forced to turn to some sort of non-agricultural activity or the other. But this seems to be of a "make-work" character. The technology of the secondary sector is traditional and its productivity is appallingly low. 433* 464 [434]

1.24 In fact, productivity in Kerala's secondary sector is even lower than in the primary sector. This reversed position of Kerala only points to one of the strange paradoxes that occur in an under-developed economy. Ultimately, it is not so much the sectoral distribution of working force as the sectoral levels of productivity that are the determinants of growth. Productivity, in turn, is a function of the level of technology. Table 4 shows that the net output per worker in the secondary and tertiary sectors is lower than the average for all-India. As may be observed, low productivity is especially marked in the secondary sector which mostly covers the industries (Kerala—Rs. 539 ; all-India—Rs. 1,294). 433* [171]

Agriculture and Plantations

1.25 On the other hand, the primary sector in Kerala is comparatively better developed. This is a distinct feature of the State economy. Primary sector comprises agriculture, plantations, animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries. As may be seen from Table 4, labour productivity in the primary sector of Kerala is roughly 433* 241

[see pp. 270-271, category 116 --Analyst]

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against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5[2] gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[3] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

[3] [see p. 272, category 116 -- Analysis]

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India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (i) and (ii) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

258 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require
464 much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed
288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434
171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,326
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total
491 route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

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Imports and Exports

439 1.53 Reference has already been made to the fact that Kerala is very much of an exchange economy. On the one hand it has to import a substantial part of its foodgrain requirements from the other parts of India. No exact estimates of total import of foodgrains into the State are available. The total amount of rice arriving in Kerala by train was 3.8 lakh tons during 1958 and 4.8 lakh tons during 1959.[1] This does not, however, include imports by roads or by the sea. In addition to foodgrains, almost all the industrial raw materials like coal, alumina, iron and steel, salt, etc., are obtained from the other parts of India.

1.54 On the other hand, Kerala also contributes substantially to India's export trade. As may be seen from Table 6, the total value of goods exported from the ports of Kerala to the other parts of the world is roughly Rs. 55 crores per annum, but the figure has been rising over the last few years. This is quite a substantial amount, being about 10 per cent of the overall foreign exchange earnings of India. Since this State occupies only 1.2 per cent of the total area of India, in relation to its area it may be claimed to be eight to nine times more productive in terms of its foreign exchange earnings than the whole of India.

1.55 The main export commodities of Kerala are listed in Table 6. It will be seen that the three major items which contribute about 75 per cent of total foreign exchange earnings of Kerala are tea, cashewnuts and coir and coir products. Except for fish, prawns and ilmenite, all other exportable commodities originate in the agricultural sector.

439 178 1.56 Whereas exports of most of the commodities have been rising, the trend in the case of coir, pepper and ginger has not been a promising one. Of these three commodities, pepper shows the most serious decline in foreign exchange earnings. In physical quantity the export of pepper has not declined much. It was 3,3 lakh cwts. in 1951-52 and 3.2 lakh cwts. in 1958-59. The decline in foreign exchange earnings from the export of pepper has been due to a drastic fall in the world price of pepper. The crash in prices has, in turn, been primarily due to a large increase in the production of pepper in other competing countries like Indonesia, Sarawak and Malaya. Similarly, in case of ginger and coir products no preceptible rise in exports has taken place due to competitive pressure in the foreign markets.

Unemployment

464 1.57 According to the Census of 1951, Kerala had a working force[2] of 4.54 million persons out of a total population of 15 million, giving a participation ratio (i.e., working force divided by total population) of 33.5 per cent. Since a participation rate of the order of 33.5 per cent is one of the lowest in the whole of India, it gives a fair indication of the very high degree of unemployment prevalent in Kerala. A low participation rate reflects the lack of adequate opportunities for gainful employment. These conclusions are borne out by the results of an unemployment

[113]

[1] *Economic Review of Kerala*, 1959: Government of Kerala.

[2] Working Force is equal to the sum of earning dependents and self-supporting persons. For a detailed note see Appendix 3.

3 [see p. 273, category 116 -- Analyst]

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survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 161

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head ; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

Chapter 2

Agriculture and Plantation Crops

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

161 241 A NUMBER OF distinctive features are characteristic of the agricultural sector of Kerala. In the first place, Kerala surpasses all other regions of India in respect of the high pressure of population on land. Secondly, on account of the large number of valuable cash crops, the agricultural sector is more commercialized in the State than elsewhere. Thirdly, food production has always been far short of Kerala's requirements.

311 423 171 2.2 With the fast rising density of population, the margin of cultivation has been constantly receding. The proportion of net sown area to total geographical area is consequently much higher in Kerala (47.16%) than in the rest of India (all-India: 39.1%). The average size of land-holdings, however, is much smaller (1.5 acres) in Kerala (all-India: 7.5 acres). In the Travancore-Cochin area, 66 per cent of the holdings are below one acre in size. (Table 7)[2]

464 241 [171] 2.3 The scarcity of land in relation to population has been responsible for an acute state of unemployment and under-employment among the people in the rural areas. Unemployment is about three to four times higher in Kerala than in the rest of India. The acute state of unemployment is also accounted for by Kerala's cropping pattern which is comparatively less labour absorbing than in many other parts of India. The perennial crops which take up 47 per cent of the cultivated area need labour recurrently only for maintenance and harvesting[1] although crops like tea and rubber require human labour on a large scale for picking of the green leaves and tapping of rubber. The perennial crops require very little labour for basic operations such as preparation of seed bed, sowing, etc., except once in their life time.

*433 241 434 2.4 However, the fact that the cropping pattern of Kerala is not labour-intensive is compensated to some extent by the higher value yield of the perennial crops per cultivated acre. The soil structure and climatic conditions in Kerala favour a high value yielding cropping pattern. On an average, cash crops contribute Rs. 100 crores (65%) to the income from agriculture (Rs. 151 crores). Of the cash crops, coconuts occupy 20.2 per cent of gross cropped area, standing next only to paddy which occupies 35.8 per cent of the gross cropped area. But the value yielded per acre for coconuts (Rs. 446) is more than twice that for paddy (Rs. 212). The position regarding the other crops is given in Table 9.[3]

*433 241 2.5 In respect of plantation crops the only other State which approaches closest to Kerala is Assam where the proportion of cultivable area devoted to plantation

[1] This aspect is discussed in greater detail in the Chapter on Manpower No. 11.

[2] [see p. 273, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

[3] [see p. 275, cat. 116 -- Analyst]

*433 241 its success to the persevering efforts of the State Agriculture Department. The department has made a successful drive for pulse cultivation with a view to (*i*) raise the production of pulses in which the State is grossly deficit, (*ii*) to increase crop intensity, and (*iii*) to enrich soils by including a legume in the rotation.

2.16 During the same period the area under oilseeds rose by about 131 per cent. The area under all the millets, except ragi which rose by about 9 per cent, has registered a decline ; jowar area has declined by 33 per cent, and small millets by 53 per cent. Perhaps the increase in the area under some of the higher value crops such as oilseeds and sugarcane was at the expense of inferior and low value millet crops. This is another indication of the growing preference for high value crops. (Table 10)[1]

2.17 Land productivity is generally high in Kerala and compares very favourably with that in the other States of India. Yield of rice, the principal crop, was 1,108 lbs. per acre in 1958-59, which is about 20 per cent higher than the all-India average. Only the States of Madras and Andhra have higher yields. During 1951–59 the rice yield has increased by about 25 per cent (Table 11)[2] as a result of increased application of fertilizers, improved seeds and better agricultural practices. Similarly ragi is another high yielding crop with a yield of 1,290 lbs. per acre (1958-59)—the highest in India.

2.18 On the whole the yield rates for most of the crops have improved between the years 1951–59. For cotton and ragi, as in the case of paddy, the increase has been quite significant. On the other hand, there was a decline in the yield rate of jowar, groundnut and sugarcane. (Table 11)[2]

*433 438 241 2.19 The latest districtwise disposition of area and production show that Palghat has the largest concentration of important food crops grown in the State. In 1958-59 it accounted for 29.2 per cent of the area under rice and one-third of rice production in the State. Palghat also leads in the production of millets and pulses. The district of Kottayam leads in plantation crops as well as in some of the other cash crops, for example, it had 32 per cent of area under ginger, 29 per cent of area under turmeric and 16.9 per cent of area under sugarcane.

2.20 There is a considerable degree of regional specialization in some of the minor field crops. For example, Palghat accounts for over 90 per cent of the area for the production of cotton and groundnut in Kerala. Similarly sesamum is concentrated in Alleppey (61%), tur (56%) and smaller millets (69%) in Palghat, and chillies (51%) and tobacco (95%) in Cannanore. This specialization is due to favourable conditions for the cultivation of these crops in the areas where they are being grown.

*433 241 *Future Development*

2.21 It is generally known that agriculture aids economic development in three different ways. By providing a surplus of food requirements, it sustains a growing urban population. Secondly, agriculture is an important source of industrial raw materials and, in under-developed regions, generally forms the base for a large number of industries. This is particularly so in Kerala where over 70 per cent of the factory workers are employed in agro-based industries. Lastly, higher agricultural yields [146]

[1] [see p. 276, category 11b -- Analyst]
[2] [see p. 277, category 11b -- Analyst]

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134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conser-
[464] vation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
649 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In
[656] this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.82 Against this, the total amount distributed through organized institutions in 1958-59, was only Rs. 2.49 crores. This leaves a large gap which is probably being met by money lenders who generally charge high interest rates. Since intensive agricultural development programme as suggested here would require large amounts of working capital for the various types of farm expenses, the need for expansion of rural credit facilities through organized institutions cannot be overstressed. 433* 452

PLANTATION CROPS

2.82 The predominant place occupied by commercial plantation crops in Kerala's agriculture, both in terms of area covered and net value contributed, has been stressed previously. In view of their importance to the Kerala economy, they deserve a high priority in the development plans of the State. The plantation crops of Kerala include pepper, cardamom, arecanunt, coconut, rubber, coffee and tea. Since most of these crops are perennial and have a time lag of 5-7 years between the stage of plantation and crop maturity, their future development programme should be viewed on the basis of a long term perspective of 20-30 years. The extension of area under these would not result in any immediate increase in output. However, quicker increases in production are possible from existing area under these crops through increase in yields per acre by the adoption of better techniques, etc. There is considerable scope for improvement in the methods of cultivation. It is thus necessary to devise, both short term and long term programmes for development of plantation crops in the State which are discussed below separately for each cash crop. 433* 241

Coconut

2.83 Coconut is the most important cash crop of Kerala. Natural conditions in this State are ideal for cultivation of coconut. The crop thrives well along the sea coast and in the interior up to an altitude of 1,500 feet. Kerala accounts for about 70 per cent of the area under coconut in India and for over 80 per cent of the copra and coconut oil produced in the country. Coconut is important to the Kerala economy in a number of ways. First, the outer husk goes to support the most important cottage industry of the State, viz., coir industry. The kernel is used for edible purposes and in addition it is the mainstay of a large number of coconut oil millers. Coconut oil, in turn, forms a raw material for the soap industry. Directly and indirectly this crop provides employment to over 5 lakh persons. 433* 245 288 388 464

2.84 Coconut is not a regular plantation crop since it is not grown on large tracts as in the case of rubber, tea and coffee. It is grown in scattered patches along paddy fields, river banks, backwater stretches and in the compounds of residential houses. In view of these complexities it is difficult to estimate the precise area under coconut but rough estimates show that the area under coconut in Kerala is about 1.1 million acres. The district of Kozhikode has the highest (250,884 acres) and Palghat the lowest (11,556 acres) acreage.[1]

[1] The figures refer to 1958-59 crop year.

Since this is a matter of all-India policy, the State Government should press the Central Government for an early action on this. 433* 245

2.100 Tea estate lands are leased to growers by the Government. Most estates hold lands in considerable excess of areas which actually bear tea. Government should compel the lessees to undertake planting tea in all the suitable areas ; failing this, the surplus lands may be taken back from the lessees by the Government. [427]

2.101 A programme of replantation of at least 10,000 acres per year would be necessary during the Third and Fourth Plan periods, specially to compensate for the past neglect. Fresh leases need not be granted for this purpose as there are vast uncropped areas adjacent to tea estates in the areas already leased. Pressure, inducement, incentives in the form of replantation loans and the supply of materials may be employed to achieve the desired results. Estimates of cost of bringing an acre up to the bearing stage vary from Rs. 2,150 to Rs. 3,650 per acre. Adopting the estimate of the Tea Planters Association at Rs. 2,500 per acre, the total investment necessary to raise 10,000 acres of new plantings per year for the next 10 years would be of the order of Rs. 25 crores.

2.102 *Size of the Plantations*: In 1957, there were 282 estates in Kerala. The average size of tea gardens in the State is 350 acres. However, about 50 per cent of the estates were less than 200 acres in area. For economic functioning of a tea estate, it is necessary to have a modern tea processing unit (generally known as a tea factory) attached to the garden. Different estimates show that to be an economic unit, a tea factory needs 822,000 lbs. (about 10,000 maunds) of green leaves a year and to produce this quantity anywhere from 250 to 300 acres of tea acreage would be needed. If this is accepted as a norm, it may be said that about half the tea estates in Kerala are uneconomic. This is indeed a serious problem, since the economic functioning of an estate as well as the quality of tea produced depends on the size and the type of processing machinery employed. An increase in the size of all the plantations with an area below 250 acres is necessary. Long term replantation loans and fresh leases of land, if available, are suggested as measures to correct the existing imbalance. [423]

Rubber

2.103 Kerala holds almost complete monopoly in the sphere of rubber production in the country. Kottayam has the largest concentration of rubber acreage in India. During 1958, Kerala produced 22,159 tons of rubber valued at Rs. 7.69 crores, out of a total all-India production of 25,000 tons. The rubber plantations also employ a large labour force of approximately 80,000 persons. 433* 249 [464]

2.104 Soil, climate and other natural conditions found in Kerala are quite well suited to the growth of rubber plants except that rainfall is not as well distributed over the year as in some other rubber growing areas of the world, such as Malaya and Ceylon. This factor has had a somewhat adverse effect on the yields, which might otherwise have been higher than the present level of 294 lbs. per acre. [132]

2.105 During the last decade there has been a sharp increase in the area under rubber. Between 1951 and 1958 it increased by 90 per cent, that is, from 141,760

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).* The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

*[Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*4/33 23 [464] programmes do not create any significant increase in direct employment opportunities, they do help in reducing the degree of unemployment situation within the family. Moreover, some of the animal husbandry activities such as piggery, poultry-rearing, and bee-keeping need little investment to start with and are quick to yield returns.

Although animal husbandry

3.9 Development of animal husbandry on commercial lines by individual rural families may not be possible without adequate State action. Aid should be given for implementing measures of improvement with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of the livestock. The aid could be given int he form of easy loans, development of marketing and processing facilities, sale of feed and fodder at reasonable prices, etc. These are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs separately for cattle and other livestock.

CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

*4/33 231 232 3.10 The output of milk from cattle and buffaloes as well as draught capacity can be improved through a scientific breeding programme and the prevention and control of diseases. As stated previously, cattle found in the State are of non-descript types. Unless they are imparted with high productivity genes, any amount of improvement in feeding and rearing will not be of much use beyond a particular stage. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on improving the breed of cattle and buffaloes. There are two ways of tackling this problem: (*i*) selective breeding and (*ii*) mass upgrading.

3.11 The former is not feasible, as there may not be enough cattle to start with if rigid norms are employed for selection. There will also be the problem of finding suitable means of disposal of the useless cattle. The practical solution under these circumstances would be to resort to a scheme of mass upgrading according to which the local bulls are to be replaced with bulls of some outside breed, suited to local needs and conditions. To be really effective, the upgrading programme should be made to cover the entire State and should stretch over a span of at least four decades. During this period, no bulls, other than the approved ones, should be allowed to sire.

*4/33 231 232 654 3.12 The value of the upgrading programme was realized in Kerala a few decades ago. The scheme was introduced on a large scale during the First Plan by starting five Key Village Schemes. The number was raised to 14 in the Second Plan. It is estimated that by 1965-66, it would be possible to cover about a quarter of the eligible milch cattle under the Key Village and Artificial Insemination Schemes. But even though the programme is well conceived and implemented, the NCAER team was left with the impression that the scheme had not made any significant impact in the improvement of cattle and buffalo breeds in the State. Apart from the inadequate coverage of the programme, non-elimination of the local or scrub bulls is a serious problem. For success and effectiveness of the upgrading programme, it is, therefore, necessary, first, to implement the programme intensively all over the State and secondly, competition from the local bulls should also be eliminated by compulsorily castrating all the males before they reach the fourth year of their life. These suggestions may be implemented during the Third Plan.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 part of poultry population still consists of the indigenous types despite the introduction
235 of high yielding exotic breeds such as Rhode Island Reds and White Leghorns in the early thirties. The local breeds give 50 to 60 eggs a year, while the average by the White Leghorn and Rhode Island Reds in the Government farm is 186 and 172 eggs respectively.[1] This can convey some idea of the magnitude of unexploited potential in the poultry industry.

[434] 3.18 Commercial poultry-rearing as a subsidiary occupation by the farmers has
[164] come to be recognized as the quickest and the easiest way of increasing farm incomes and providing employment to the under-employed. In view of these advantages, poultry industry has a special appeal in Kerala. It has been estimated by some experts that through replacement of indigenous birds with the exotic ones, the contribution from this sub-sector to the total State income could be more than doubled. This would be possible in less than five years, provided the pullets of desired types are made available to the farmers in adequate numbers at a low cost. The State should strive to achieve this by opening a large number of poultry extension centres. It is suggested that by the end of 1965-66 there should be at least one poultry extension centre in each Community Development Block. During the Third Plan, 143 additional centres may be opened and all these should work in close association with the block cooperatives. An investment of Rs. 35.75 lakhs would be needed to start the proposed centres.

3.19 Duck-rearing is done only on a small scale in the State in spite of the fact that conditions in most parts of Kerala are very well suited for commercial duck-keeping. Vast inland water resources and the abundant fauna in them is an ideal condition for large scale commercial duck-rearing. There is good demand for duck products particularly in Calcutta and Ceylon but this export potential could be developed only when the fowls are bred in sufficiently large number. It is, therefore, suggested that this potential should be fully exploited and the State should take adequate steps in the matter. In order to make the programme economical, some of the poultry development blocks may include multiplication of suitable duck breeds for distribution. Efforts may be made to select the best from the local birds and rear them for producing pullets for distribution.

Rearing of Goats

*433 3.20 Goat-rearing under stall-fed conditions is customary in Kerala. This is quite
231 contrary to the practice found in other parts of the country, where the goats are let out during the major part of the day for free browsing. Rearing of goats, as it is practised in Kerala, does not lead to dangers such as suppression of vegetation, crop destruction, etc.

*433 3.21 Goats are reared both for milk and meat. The average milk yield per
231 goat is low, 40 lbs. per annum, as against the all-India average of 127 lbs.
234 (Table 16). This is due to poor management and general malnutrition, but could be easily raised to the all-India level with improved feeding and better care. As a matter
[269] of fact it is not unusual to find goats yielding as high as 400 to 500 lbs. of milk in urban households and this is due to better management.

[113] [1] *Administration Report of the Animal Husbandry Department*, 1957-58, Government of Kerala, 1959.

Chapter 4

Forests

FORESTS RANK AMONG the key resources of Kerala. Estimates of the area under forests differ widely. According to the Revenue Department figures, the area under forests is 24.58 lakh acres, that is, 26.2 per cent of the total area of Kerala. According to the Forest Department, the area under its jurisdiction is 22.28 lakh acres. Private forests account for another 4.80 lakh acres thus giving a total forest area of 27.08 lakh acres (30 % of the total area). Whichever be the correct figure, it is clear that the proportion of area occupied by forests is much higher in Kerala than the average for the whole of India (17.2%). 137 311

4.2 Apart from the importance of forests as a source of raw material for the industry, and timber for other uses, forests have a moderating effect on the climate and act as a vegetal cover protecting the soil from erosion. The position in Kerala is quite satisfactory in respect of the protective function of forests. A large number of perennial tree crops like coconut, arecanut, cashewnut and rubber are also grown in the State. Their effectiveness in protection of the soil and influence on climate is as great as in the case of the forests. These perennial crops, therefore, act as a useful subsidiary to the actual forest growth. 137 [245]

4.3 The quality of forest growth of Kerala is also of a very high order. During 1955-56, forests contributed Rs. 5 crores,[1] that is, 1.4 per cent of the State income, which is almost double the all-India average (0.7%). Per acre yield of forests is also higher in Kerala. Whereas it was Rs. 5.6 per acre on an average for India, it was as high as Rs. 18 per acre in Kerala during 1955-56. Employment potential of forests, however, is quite meagre in relation to the area they occupy. Forests in Kerala employed only 19,000 workers, that is, 0.35 per cent of the total working force (all-India 0.4 %). Forests generally require only a few hands to work as the maintenance staff and as labour for extraction and logging. 313 434 313 414

Type of Forests and their Regional Distribution

4.4 The high yield and the large variety of important commercial species grown in the State are a consequence of the climatic and topographical features of the State. Kerala gets the benefit of south-west as well as north-east monsoons. As a result of these, the State is well assured of a good rainfall which, in addition, is fairly well 137 132

1. Appendix 2 explains the method of calculation.

313 be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means [654] of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

137 4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious [654] menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilizers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

*433 4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing 162 rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide 404 them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of [245] population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

*433 4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A 313 beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. 654 An amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

[Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [171] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [461] [511] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25).[22] Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26[23] that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

22, 23 [Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ans.]

Chapter 6

Minerals

FROM THE POINT of view of its industrial development, Kerala's mineral resources are a weak link in the State's economy. With a share of only 1.7 per cent in the all-India production of the minerals, Kerala lags behind most other States in the output of minerals. During 1955-56, the net value contributed by the minerals (Rs. 1.95 crores) was 0.6 per cent of the State income against one per cent of country's income. 433* 135 [434]

6.2 The important minerals of the State are beach sands comprising ilmenite, monazite, rutile, sillimanite, zircon, china-clay and tile-clay. Among these ilmenite and china-clay are the most prominent. The reserves of these minerals are adequate to last more than 20 years and may, therefore, be classified as "minerals with adequate reserves". Graphite, iron ore and mica are also found, though only in very small quantities. The deposits of limeshells occur in lakes and along the coast, but are rather modest in content. The metallic minerals and fossil fuels, however, are almost completely absent. It is the deficiency of these minerals which presents an obstacle to the growth of large scale industries.

6.3 Apart from beach sand collection and limeshell winning from the lakes and estuaries, there are eleven workings, all open cast. These do not include tile-clay working about which no data is available. The number of persons engaged in all these 11 mining enterprises (inclusive of beneficiation) is roughly 6,900. However, according to 1951 Census, the number of persons employed in mining as well as in stone-quarrying is about 18,000, i.e., 0.3 per cent of total working force (all-India 0.4%). 316 317 464

6.4 Table 28[2] gives the output of minerals from the various workings and their value. In 1955, the value of minerals production was Rs. 1.35 crores. Next year, the value of production went upto Rs. 1.95 crores, representing an increase of approximately 37 per cent. This steep rise was mainly due to the increase in ilmenite production, which went upto 314,348 tons in 1956 from 231,585 tons in 1955. Production registered a further increase of about Rs. 20 lakhs during the next year, (that is, 1957), reaching a level of Rs. 2.1 crores. This was maintained during the next two years, that is, 1958 and 1959. In 1960, however, there was a setback as one of the mineral sand companies had since closed down; and it is likely that the value of the output might not have exceeded Rs. 1.3 crores. 433* 316 317

[Text continues on p. 92]

2 [Table 28 appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

6.67 In the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin, there were 14 centres of production around Cape Comorin and one at Malipuram, Vyppeen Island, Ernakulam district. Consequent upon reorganization of the States, there is only one salt work in Kerala today. This is reflected in the sudden drop in production to a few hundred tons of salt between 1955 and 1956. 433* 317

6.68 The prime requisite for the manufacture of salt by the solar evaporation method is a dry climate with accompanying low humidity. Such a condition is rarely obtained anywhere in the State. The result is that the yield of salt is very low with the cost of production at 75 nP. to a rupee per maund (in Tuticorin—cost of production is 25 nP.). In view of the unfavourable climatic conditions, this industry does not appear to have much prospects in the State. (132) [435]

Tile-Clay

6.69 Tile-clay is the raw material for one of the major industries of Kerala viz., the tile industry. More than 150 tile factories operate in the State, providing employment to over 10,000 workers. Tiles produced are sent to other parts of India as well as to markets in some of the Far Eastern countries. The exports are mainly from the Feroke area. 339 [439]

6.70 Local earths, silts and clays are found along the alluvial flats of most of the rivers of the State. Clay collection is seasonal and is undertaken through contractors. It provides employment to about 3,500 people. Collection is done manually and the clay is transported by countrycrafts along the waterways, or by roads, where water transport facilities are not available. Depending on the distance of transportation, the price of clay varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 5 per ton at the factory. 317 [464]

6.71 In 1865, the 'Basel German Industrialists' started the first tile factory in the country at Mangalore with the object of securing the Far East Market, which was until then being supplied by the French tile industry in Marseilles. The industry then spread rapidly, first to Feroke near Kozhikode and later on to Quilon and other areas, until today, Kerala can well claim to be the home of the tile industry in the country. 339

6.72 Production of tile-clay in the State during the last few years is given in Table 31.[1] 433* 339

6.73 As can be observed, there has been a declining trend in tile production. The main part of the decrease has taken place in the major tile producing areas of Trichur and Quilon.

6.74 The decline in output of tiles is due to a shrinkage in the foreign markets. On the other hand, an optimum area for distribution within the internal market is a belt of 400 miles from the coast. In view of the near saturation point which Kerala's tile industry has reached, prospects for increased production of tile-clay are rather bleak.

Other Minerals

6.75 *Gold* : Occurrences of gold in Wynaad and Nilambur area have been known since the late nineteenth century. The discovery of old workings led to the 433* 316

[1] [Table 31, appearing on p. 291 of the text, has not been processed -- Anal, ST]

Chapter 7

Power

*433 377 [135] [133] KERALA HAS IMMENSE potentiality for the generation of hydro-electric power. The State does not possess any resource of coal or oil (within its own boundary) for generation of power but there are 44 rivers which constitute a storehouse of hydel power. This favourable factor compensates for the absence of any fossil fuels. Investigations so far have led to an estimate of this potential to be roughly of the order of 1,539 MW.[1]

*433 464 371 7.2 One of the basic problems of Kerala's economy is posed by the situation of acute unemployment prevailing in the State. A long run solution to this lies in an intensive programme of industrialization only. An accelerated pace of industrial development, in turn, requires an ensured supply of adequate power. One possible way of looking at power development activities is to consider power as a complementary factor in the programme of industrialization of the State. Targets for power generation capacity in such cases should be fixed slightly higher than what the demand is expected to be.

*433 377 7.3 The alternative approach, which is the more feasible one for Kerala, is to consider power, generation itself as an industry and to develop the State's abundant hydro-power resources to the maximum extent possible. The surplus of electricity generated over local requirements could be exported to the neighbouring State of Madras, which is not so well placed in respect of its power resources as Kerala. The electricity exported would provide a means of earning revenue, which is turn could be utilized for capital formation within the State. Moreover, a surplus in power generation capacity is desirable in itself since for a State like Kerala, where some factors deterrent to industrialization have been operating in the past, a regular supply of adequate power should be made to act as an incentive for setting up new industries. Planning for a power surplus and export of electrical energy to the neighbouring States should, therefore, form the keynote of the future power development policy in the State.

DEVELOPMENT OF POWER

7.4 The process of power development in the State is already well set. What is now required is to harness the huge energy potential of the State and convert it

[1] By the Central Water and Power Commision.

[text continues on p. 112]

embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin. 489

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc. 489 439

The Transport System 489

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores. [464] [434]

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport. [433]*

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average 496 171 496

[1] 1951 Census figures.

[Text continues on p. 127]

Chapter 11

Manpower and Employment

PART I: MANPOWER

464 128 ONE OF THE chief problems of Kerala today is the vast unemployed section of its manpower. An appraisal of the analysis of employment prospects, therefore, becomes very important. The extent of urbanization, sex distribution, the size of the labour force, its rate of participation, and occupational distribution—all these are, therefore, studied in detail in what follows.

162 161 *Urbanization*

11.2 Progress in urbanization in Kerala is less as compared to the country as a whole. Of the total population of Kerala, 13.5 per cent live in urban areas against 17.38 per cent for the whole of India according to the Census of 1951. The degree of urbanization has been progressively increasing over the past few decades. This is shown by the table below which gives the relative rates of growth of the urban and rural population during the period 1921–51. As may be seen, urban population has been growing at a faster rate than the rural population.

MEAN DECENNIAL GROWTH RATE OF POPULATION

(Per Cent)

	1921–30	*1931–40*	*1941–50*
Urban	27.18	23.26	29.58
Rural	22.85	16.53	20.12
TOTAL	23.31	17.27	21.22

N.B.: It may be noted that these figures pertain only to the old Travancore-Cochin State.

[12] SOURCE: *Census of India*, Volume XIII, Travancore-Cochin (Part I, Subsidiary Table).

11.3 During the last decade, that is, 1951–61, urbanization seems to have increased at a somewhat faster rate than in the whole of India. The proportion of population living in urban areas of Kerala grew from 13.05 per cent in 1951 to 15.03 per cent in 1961, whereas in the case of all-India the proportion registered an increase from 17.38 per cent to only 17.84 per cent.[1] In view of the plans for a faster growth of industries,

[1] As pointed out in Chapter 1, too much reliance should not be placed on a comparison of urbanization between 1951 and 1961 since the definition of urban areas during the two Census operations has not been the same.

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the trend towards a high rate of urbanization may be expected to continue during the coming decade.

Sex Distribution

11.4 One of the interesting demographic features of Kerala is its sex distribution which shows an excess of females. Out of a total population of 16.88 million[1] in 1961, females (8.53 million) outnumbered the males (8.35 million) by 0.18 million giving a sex ratio of 1,022 females to a thousand males (all-India: 940 females to 1,000 males). The proportion of females in the population had been rising successively over the past few decades till 1951, but during the past decade it has shown a slight tendency to fall as shown by the following table:

SEX RATIO (KERALA STATE)

Year	*Female per 1,000 males*
1901	1,004
1911	1,008
1921	1,011
1931	1,022
1941	1,027
1951	1,028
1961	1,022

11.5 The excess of females is especially marked in the working age groups. Whereas in the age group 0-15 years males exceeded females in the ratio 100: 97.7, in the age group 15-55 years the position was reverse, there being 100 males to 106.5 females. (1951 Census) 162 [464]

11.6 The pattern of sex distribution in the rural and urban areas is broadly similar to that in the rest of India. Females are generally found to be more predominant in the rural areas. In Kerala this contrast is quite marked as can be seen from the fact that rural sex ratio is 1,034 to a 1,000 males against the urban ratio of 990 to 1,000. The cause of this rural-urban difference is rooted in the sociological factors, the most important of which is that the males generally come over to the towns for earning their livelihood, leaving behind other members of the family in the villages. [369] [166]

Age Structure

11.7 Age structure is an important determinant of the proportion of economically active persons in the population. An economy with a high proportion of older people is necessarily less dynamic than an economy with a large element of younger blood. Table 56[2] gives a comparative picture of the age structure of the population in Kerala and in India, according to the Census of 1951. 162 464

[1] *1961 Census* (Provisional Population figures).

2 [Table 56, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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162 464 11.8 In the context of an under-developed economy like that of Kerala, it is difficult to define distinct boundary lines for the working age group, since participation in economic activity starts at an early age and at the other end of the ladder there is no fixed age of retirement. However, taking 15-55 years, as roughly representing the age group within which people actively take part in work, 53.3 per cent of Kerala's population belonged to this group against 52.4 per cent for all-India. It will also be noted from Table 56 that the working age group of the population in Kerala has a larger component of younger people than in all-India. A higher proportion of persons fall within the category of 15-25 years in Kerala while the reverse is the case with those in the age group 25-55 years.

LIVELIHOOD CLASSIFICATION

11.9 The table below gives the comparative break-up of the population of Kerala and all-India according to the sources of livelihood (1951 Census data).

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

	All-India (in million)	*Percentage to total population*	*Kerala* (in million)	*Percentage to total population*
Total Population	356.7	100.0	13.5	100.0
Self-supporting Persons	104.8	29.4	3.7	27.4
Earning Dependents	38.4	10.8	0.8	5.9
Non-earning Dependents	213.5	59.8	9.0	66.7

It will be noticed that the proportion of non-earning dependents is very high in Kerala. In fact, it is the highest in India with the exception of Madras. The burden of dependence, therefore, is very acute in Kerala.

Working Force and Participation Rates

11.10 The converse of a high rate of dependence is the low proportion of working force to the total population. Working force is defined as that section of the total population which takes part in productive activity. In terms of the classification in 1951 Census, the earners, that is, self-supporting persons and the earning dependents comprise the working force. The ratio of working force to the total population in any sector of the economy is defined as the sectoral participation rate.

11.11 According to the 1951 Census, Kerala had a total working force of 45.4 lakhs.[1] The general participation rate, that is, the rate of total working force to total population works out to only 33.5 per cent against a much higher figure of 39.9 per cent for the whole of India. Table 57 gives a break-up of general participation rate in terms of sectoral rates. This table reveals that it is the rural participation rate which is primarily responsible for this wide divergence between Kerala and India. Whereas Kerala's urban participation rate is only about 2 per cent less than the all-

[1] *Vide* Appendix 2 for the method of calculation.

2 [Table 57, appearing on p.309 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

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India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rate** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	757	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

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162 464 The fall in the participation ratio between 1931–51[1] may be attributed to three factors:

(i) Rise in the sex ratio in favour of females.
(ii) Increase in the school-going population.
(iii) Slow growth in employment opportunities.

[161] [433] 11.17 The force of the first two factors, however, is not sufficient to explain the steep decline in the participation rate. A fall of the magnitude, as shown in the above table, primarily indicates that the increase in opportunities for gainful employment has not been keeping pace with the growth of population which had increased by over 40 per cent between 1931 and 1951 without any corresponding growth of industries or development in other sectors.

REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN POPULATION DENSITY AND MANPOWER

[161] 11.18 Kerala is the most thickly populated State of India having an average density of 1,125 persons to a square mile according to the Census of 1961. The population, however, is not uniformly spread out as may be noticed from the district density figures in Table 58.[3] Malabar is less thickly populated than the Travancore-Cochin area. But the proportion of working force to total population, that is, the participation rate is also lower in the Malabar area. Generally, it is expected that participation rate would be lower in the more congested areas, because an over-crowded agricultural sector naturally offers limited scope for employment. The comparison of Travancore-Cochin and Malabar, however, seems to belie this conclusion. The [288] reason for this contrast perhaps lies in the fact that the major part of the coir industry, the most labour-intensive industry of Kerala, is concentrated mostly in the Travancore-Cochin region.[3] Absence of this industry on a large scale in Malabar seems to account for a lower participation rate in that area.

Occupational Distribution

162 464 433 11.19 Occupational pattern generally gives a broad idea as to the stage of economic development attained by a country or a region. The distribution of working force between agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, is given separately for the rural and urban sectors, in Table 59.[4] A comparison with the all-India occupational distribution brings out a marked contrast in the case of Kerala. Whereas 71.8 per cent of the working force was engaged in agricultural occupations in the whole of India, in case of Kerala the proportion was only 51.4 per cent. In fact in Kerala the proportion of its population dependent upon non-agricultural activities turns out to be the highest in the whole of India.

[1] The difference in the concepts used in 1931 and 1951 Censuses perhaps exaggerates the extent of decline in the participation rates, but it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years.

[2] Both these aspects have also been dealt with in Chapter 1.

3, 4 [see p 310, category 116 -- Analysis]

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11.20 As a general rule one associates a high proportion of working force engaged in non-agricultural activities with a high level of industrial development. However, the structure of industries and income contributed by industries[1] do not bear out this contention. Moreover, the Census of 1951 shows that 75 per cent of the non-agricultural population lives in the rural areas. This only goes to prove that the major part of non-agricultural activity is not organized on the lines of modern large scale industry but is composed of occupations more allied to agriculture which are located in the rural areas. 162 464 433

11.21 Two factors, which have already been referred to in a different context,[2] seem to be responsible for this peculiar type of occupational structure. These are:

(i) *Predominance of Perennial Crops*: Over 40 per cent of gross cropped area is covered by these crops (all-India 10%). Since these crops, once they are sown, require comparatively little labour for looking after them, tend to reduce the proportion of working force to the population engaged in agricultural activities. [241]

(ii) *Small Size of Holdings*: Super-imposed upon this is the fact that the average size of holdings in Kerala is very small. This tends to push people away from agricultural to non-agricultural avocations. Coir industry, which is mostly located in the rural areas, is an important example of such non-agricultural occupations. [423] [288]

Changes in Occupational Structure

11.22 Between the Census of 1931 and 1951 population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.84 per cent. It brings out one fact quite clearly. Although the non-agricultural sector is quite large in terms of its existing employment potential, it has not been dynamic enough to grow at a rate sufficiently large to absorb the growing population. One other consequence of a growing reliance on agriculture, in spite of the congestion already existing there, is the rising proportion of agricultural labourers to total population. Cultivation of owned land cannot be expected to provide a reasonable source of livelihood for all the rural population, when as high as 50 per cent of family holdings are less than one acre in size. The proportion of agricultural labourers to total population, therefore, increased from 12.5 per cent in 1931 to 20.16 per cent in 1951. [423]

PART II: PROSPECTS OF EMPLOYMENT

LABOUR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

11.23 Some indication has already been given of the high degree of unemployment prevailing in the economy of Kerala. Before proceeding to make a quantitative assessment of the extent of unemployment, it is desirable to clarify the definition of 464

[1] Chapter 9, Industries— Structure and Growth.
[2] Chapter 1 and Chapter 2.

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464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their 120 application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemploy- 659 ment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

962 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to 464 concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column 1 of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference betweent labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [871] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter I.

[see p. 311, category 116 -- Analyst]

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actively unemployed persons during 1956 was 6.6 lakhs.[1] The total labour force during 1956 may, therefore, be taken to be 56.9 lakh persons, i.e., 37.9 per cent of the total population. 162 464

11.29 One striking feature revealed by this survey is the very high degree of open unemployment. Open unemployment comes out to be as high as 4.2 per cent of the total population, as can be seen from Table 60 (Category 7).[2] Generally it is under-employment rather than open unemployment which is prominent in backward agricultural economies. For example, unemployment in India is only 0.29 per cent of total rural population and 1.99 per cent in urban areas giving a weighted average of 0.58 per cent[3]. The percentage of open unemployment to population in Kerala is, therefore, roughly seven times as high as in the rest of India.

11.30 Category (6) of Table 60, that is, the proportion of casual workers to the total population gives an idea of the magnitude of the problem of under-employment. The incidence of under-employment is also higher in Kerala than in India. Of the total population, 9.6 per cent belongs to this category against about 6 per cent for the whole of India.[4] Among the under-employed section of the population, on an average, a worker was unemployed for about 2.35 days per week. This, however, does not tell the whole story. There are the seasonal variations which extend the period of unemployment to several days at a stretch.

11.31 The above figures do not include disguised unemployment. In rural areas, where family enterprise is the dominant form of organization, there is generally a large surplus of hidden manpower which does take part in economic activity, but whose net contribution towards increasing the output is very little. An objective assessment of the surplus in disguised unemployment is rather difficult. It would have to rely heavily upon notional norms regarding optimum labour requirements among the self-employed sector of rural population. Within the coming decade the problem of primary importance, however, is that of providing jobs for the large backlog of unemployed, who sit completely idle, rather than for those who are in the comparatively favourable position of being employed but below their full capacity. 464 369

RURAL-URBAN UNEMPLOYMENT

11.32 The nature of unemployment in rural and urban areas varies considerably. According to NSS Report on 'Employment and Unemployment' (9th Round), open unemployment in rural areas was rather insignificant affecting only 0.29 per cent of the total rural population (urban areas 1.99%). Because of the small size of the sample, the unemployment survey referred to above did not collect separate data for rural and urban unemployment in Kerala. Under these circumstances, only rough 162 464 369

[1] Table 60.

[2] It may be noted that in Table 60 the absolute number of unemployed persons is likely to be high since a portion of Travancore-Cochin, viz., Kanyakumari was transferred to Madras. However, the percentage figures may be assumed to be fairly correct.

[3] *NSS Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[4] *Ibid.*

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162 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural
464 and urban areas.
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11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9	2.10	15 0
	(86%)	(14.0%)	(100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be
464 helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The im-
871 pression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of
[212] technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.
[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment*, Sept. 1953.

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Supply of Labour

11.36 In addition to the current back-log of unemployment, the two sources of future labour supply would be : (*i*) growth of population, (*ii*) changes in labour force population ratio. Of these, by far the most important source will be the growth of population. Long run changes in the labour force population ratio are difficult to predict. For the comparatively short period of next 10 years, this ratio may be assumed to remain constant at about 37.9 per cent or so. 464

11.37 A look at the population figures in Kerala over the last few decades shows that this State has witnessed a higher rate of growth of population than India as a whole and that during 1941–51 it was higher (22.82%) than in any other State.[1] There are indications to believe that the rate of growth of population during the coming decade may not be so fast. The following table gives the projections for growth of population[2] and the labour force arising out of it during the period 1956–71. 161 161 464

GROWTH OF POPULATION—PROJECTIONS FOR 1956—71

Year	Population (million)	Increase in Population over the previous five years (million)	Increase in the labour force (Labour force population Ratio=37.9 per cent) (million)
1956	15.01	..	..
1961	16.68	1.67	.633
1966	18.34	1.66	.629
1971	20.12	1.78	.674
			1.936
	Backlog of unemployment in 1956		.660
			2.596
Less jobs created during the Second Plan			.200*
Additional labour supply during 1961–71			2.396

* *Employment Trends and Prospects*—Planning Commission. Approximate estimates of employment created during the Second Plan may also be derived from investment figures. On this basis we get a smaller figure for employment generated during the Second Plan period. Public sector investment during the Second Plan was about Rs. 75 crores. Adding 50 per cent for private investment the total comes to Rs. 112.5 crores. Assuming that an investment of roughly Rs. 8,000 is required to create an additional job, the number of jobs created during the Second Plan comes to about 1.4 lakhs. [183] [433]

11.38 The above figures may be taken to be only rough approximations, since the projections of population and labour force ratios are based on certain assumptions. However, the magnitude of the problem is well illustrated by the fact that during the coming decade an additional 23.96 lakh jobs will have to be created if something approaching the standards of full employment has to be achieved. This figure is almost 50 per cent of the existing working force. 161 464 433

[1] *1961 Census*—Provisional Population figures.

[2] Based on NCAER population projections. It may be noted that the NCAER projections would have to be slightly modified in the light of the 1961 Census data. However, the extent of difference would not be so large as to make any substantial difference to our calculations.

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TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-58)

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	Working force			*Net value added per worker (Rs.)*	
	Kerala		*India*	*Kerala*	*India*
	Lakhs[a]	*Per cent*	*Per cent*		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	..	413	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	*50.3*	*100.00*	*100.00*	*700.00*	*651.00*

[a] Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Integrated Sample Survey. According to this, estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Integrated Sample Survey are given below:

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	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	*24.5*
2. Secondary Sector	*9.4*
(a) Mining	0.5
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	*12.4*
TOTAL	*46.3*

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TABLE 58

DENSITY OF POPULATION (KERALA STATE)
(Figures based on 1951 Census)

District		*Participation rate* (Per cent)	*Density of population*	
Trivandrum	Travancore-Cochin	36.2	1,569	
Quilon			749	
Alleppey			2,148	
Kottayam			664	
Ernakulam			982	
Trichur			1,188	
Palghat		28.5	795	785
Kozhikode			809	
Cannanore			618	
STATE TOTAL			904	

Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore formed the previous districts of Malabar.

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TABLE 59

OCCUPATIONAL BREAK-UP OF WORKING FORCE (1951)

	KERALA						*INDIA*					
	Rural		*Urban*		*Combined*		*Rural*		*Urban*		*Combined*	
	Lakhs	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*
Agricultural Sector	22.3	60.3	1.1	18.9	23.4	51.4	990	81.8	30	18.9	1,020	71.8
Non-agricultural Sector	17.3	39.8	4.7	81.1	22.0	48.6	218	18.2	184	81.1	402	28.2
TOTAL	*39.6*	*100.0*	*5.8*	*100.0*	*45.4*	*100.0*	*1,208*	*100.0*	*214*	*100.0*	*1,422*	*100.0*

[Pp. 286–309 not Processed]

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TABLE 60

UNEMPLOYMENT POSITION IN KERALA

Activity status	*Travancore-Cochin*		*Malabar*		*Kerala*	
I	II		III		IV=II+III	
	Absolute number (In lakhs)	*Percentage to total population*	*Absolute number* (In lakhs)	*Percentage to total population*	*Absolute number* (In lakhs)	*Percentage to total population*
(a) Below 15 years age	41.3	40.7	20.7	36.9	62.0	39.4
(b) Above 15 years	60.2	60.1	35.3	63.0	95.5	60.6
1. Students	4.0	4.0	1.2	2.1	5.2	3.3
2. Disabled or too old	4.6	4.5	3.2	5.7	7.8	4.9
3. Pensioners or Rentiers	1.1	1.4	0.5	0.4	1.2	0.8
4. Having Regular Employment	19.7	19.6	9.8	17.5	29.5	18.7
5. Household Workers	19.2	19.0	10.9	19.4	30.1	19.1
6. Casual Workers	9.1	8.0	7.2	12.1	15.2	9.6
7. People in search of employment	3.7	3.6	2.9	5.9	6.6	4.2
TOTAL POPULATION	*101.5*	*100*	*56.0*	*100*	*157.5*	*100*
LABOUR FORCE (4+6+7)	*31.4*	*30.9*	*19.87*	*35.5*	*51.2*	*32.5*
Category (7) as percentage of labour force	*3.7*	*11.62*	*2.9*	*14.64*	*6.66*	*12.79*

SOURCE: The Statistics Department, Government of Kerala.

TABLE 61

COMPARATIVE SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF WORKING FORCE

Sector	*Proportion of working force*	
	1956	*1971*
1. Primary Sector	54.9	42.2
2. Secondary Sector	19.3	24.6
(a) Factory Sector	3.4	9.2
(b) Non-factory Sector and Mining	15.9	15.4
3. Tertiary Sector	25.8	33.2
TOTAL	*100.0*	*100.0*

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the *kanni* in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February. 105 241

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in existence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves. 105 427 [423] [104]

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them. [104] [243] [466] [464]

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants [104]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles and interests among the various castes and communities in the state. Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

Kanamdars are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

The aborigipals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are addicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes, and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
T:495

The informant, Velu, with whom we spoke, kept us outside the house on some chairs in the drive leading up to the property. He did not seem inclined to let us come in. 595* [23]

I made the accompanying genealogy with Velu. It is rather an extensive one since the family was large, and therefore I have laid it out in two Tables (4 & 5), separating the two lots of polyandrous families in which the older generation was divided. As regards the name, the informant told me that the *tarawad* contained five households, of which this was one; they had appellations principally of the four cardinal points, the name of his household meaning "eastern". 595* 601

Velu and his two younger brothers were married polyandrously to Kalyany, who had become their wife after her elder sister, Amalu, had died. This appeared to be somewhat reminiscent of sororate, but I understand that it was not so, the brothers simply having taken their sister-in-law in marriage because they liked her and thought it a good idea. The two elder brothers who were now dead, Pangan and Karapan, had also been married polyandrously to Mogami, who was still alive; she was sixty five at the time of my research work. They had had her all to themselves, because the three younger men had not wanted her. although for what reason it was impossible to make Velu say. All that he would impart to us was that they did not want her, and brought in Amalu as their wife, and kept her in the same house with the others. Even today, he said, they all lived together, without the property having been divided up between them.

Mogami had had eighteen children of whom thirteen were still alive. 595* I had an opportunity to meet this remarkable woman some weeks later, and I found her a lively and intelligent person, who did not appear to be the slightest bit worn out by her two husbands and many children. She was thin and rather small with flashing eyes and a very sharp brain. She told me many anecdotes of her former married life, with great relish and obvious pleasure, as if she had been extremely happy in it. She was quite unashamedly proud of her achievements and her present widowed life was kept interesting by the memories for which she lived.

Two of her eldest daughters, Lakshmi and Kuniyukuti, had been married polyandrously, and still lived under that arrangement, although Chankuni, the elder husband of Kuniyukuti, was rarely at home; he was employed as a peon in Ceylon, and only paid brief visits to Kerala. This brought the total number of polyandrous families in the Kereghetil household to four. [464] [167]

It should be noted, however, that only the men and their families as [591]

[Text continues on p. 183]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595* 601

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed. [464] [167] [464] [166]

Kalyany told me that she was related to the brothers of the Katukulangara *tarawad* whom I had interviewed at Kadavelur on the 27th of October. She was a half sister of Velu by another mother. I found this family particularly interesting, because it illustrated, more than any other Tiya one encountered so far, the ancient and persistant connection which the caste has with Ceylon. Their genealogy is given in Table 8.

Before going on to an account of my visits to Kammalans and other artisan families practising polyandry in Kerala, I would like to give here, together with the material that I collected about Tiyas, the description of a Thandan family that I went to see on the 25th of November 1949. 595*

They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on p. 191]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodierthamana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

has supplied many of the leading members of the learned professions."

Nāyi (dog).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

Nāyinar.—Nāyinar, Nāyanar, or Nainar, has been recorded as a section of Vellālas, who are thought to be descended from Jains who were converted to Hinduism, and as a title of Jains, Kaikōlans, Pallis, and Udaiyāns. Nāyanikulam occurs as a synonym of Bōya. The word Nāyinar is the same as Nāyaka, meaning lord or master, and the Saivite saints, being religious teachers, are so called, *e.g.*, Sundara Mūrti Nāyanar.

Nāyinda.—Recorded, in the Mysōre Census Report, 1901, as the name of a caste, which follows the hereditary occupation of barber, and also of agriculture. "They are," it is there said, "members of the village hierarchy. They are paid, like the Agasa (washerman), in kind for their services. They are also fiddlers, and have the exclusive right of wind instruments. They are known as Kēlasiga or Hajām. They are both Saivites and Vaishnavites. A section of them wear the lingam, and follow Lingayetism. They are known as Silavanta. These people are largely in requisition at feasts, marriages, etc., when they form the music band." Kelasi is the name of a Canarese barber caste, and Hajām is a Hindustani word for barber.

Nedungādi.—This name, denoting a settlement in Nedunganād in the Walluvanād taluk of Malabar, has been returned as a sub-caste of Nāyars and Sāmantas.

Nekkāra.—A small class of washermen in South Canara. The women only are said to do the washing, while the men are employed as devil-dancers.

Nellika (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).—An illam of Tiyan.

Nellu (paddy, unhusked rice).—A gōtra of Kurni.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

311 high and five feet round, on which the paddy is sown just before the rains.
312 When the monsoon bursts the surrounding water is freshened and transplanting takes place. This is a rather precarious method, illustrating the devices enforced by severe population pressure.

(iv) In the wet lowlands above the backwaters more normal methods prevail, but the early onset of the rains enables planting to take place in April–May and harvest in September; the continuance of the rains then often permits a poor second crop (not necessarily paddy) harvested in January; very occasionally a third is possible.

241 After rice, coconut is the chief crop, accounting for nearly 1 m. ac., typically, of course, in the sandy coastal strip but also on alluvial loams and (with more careful preparation) on laterites. In Travancore the coconut acreage is nearly equal to that of rice; in Quilon taluk, indeed, it covers 85% of cropped area. After rice as the essential food, the coconut palm is the basis of life in Kerala: "Apart from the several uses of the chief products, viz., coir, copra, coconut oil, oil-cake, the hollowed trunk serves as a canoe, the nut forms a staple article of diet, the leaves may be used for many of the purposes of paper, are frequently employed as thatch and for the manufacture of brooms, baskets, umbrellas, tattis [screens kept soaked to cool rooms], and fans, and utilised as crude torches in a dried form, or burnt as fuel, as it is [*sic*] or in the form of charcoal. In addition, the fresh or fermented
273 juice of the stem is consumed as a beverage, by evaporation it is made into jaggery and by subsequent treatment even sugar is obtainable. When distilled, the toddy becomes arrack and finally vinegar."[45] Of the "industrial" workers of Kerala—most of them, of course, cottage workers—about a third
[464] are in various processes connected with coconut products, and of these
[286] two-thirds are women. The coir 'yarn' is almost entirely cottage-produced, its working-up into mats and so on largely a small factory industry.

The most important other crops (apart from plantation rubber and tea
311 in the hills), are cassava (tapioca) and pepper, mainly in the foothills. The
241 former is grown as a food crop on poorer lateritic soils; pepper is perhaps the chief peasant-produced cash crop after coconut. Cereals other than paddy are negligible, as are oilseeds except for a little sesamum (gingelly), often as a third crop on the higher wet-rice lands. Nearly every homestead has its plantains and other fruit trees, and ginger and the betel vine, with its associated areca palm, are also grown widely but in tiny patches.

Tapioca deserves special mention. Introduced about 1920, it is grown on the lateritic soils ("about as attractive for agriculture as railway ballast") in tiny holdings by the poorest of the poor. As Gourou points out, there is a sort of social inversion: the better-off rice farmers in the valley-bottoms, and a hundred feet or so above them a very wretched (largely Christian) peasantry.

[45] Quoted in Kuriyan, 1937 (Vol. XI), 286. Cf. P. K. Paniker, "The Coconut—its Cultivation on the Malabar Coast", *IGJ* XVIII (1943), 78–88.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

in their opinion. There are no other investments so secure, and a little land will feed a man and his family even when he is indisposed to work. Again, a certain amount of prestige is attached to a landed proprietor especially when he is a big one, though there is not such adoration as can sometimes be observed in the attitude of the common people towards the Government officials big and small. 454 [556]

There has been a certain dislocation in the labour market on account of the emigration of certain classes of workers to the rubber and other estates recently established in some parts of the State and elsewhere. Their low wages, their low social position, the baits employed, somewhat nefariously, by the recruiting agents, and the grandiose hopes which the workers entertain of the unseen, have all combined to deplete the village of a certain class of workers from agriculture. The wages not only of agricultural labourers, but of all classes of workers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, coolies, etc., have gone up. Few of the emigrants have returned, and those who return are certainly not very desirous of going back. 464 167

Manual labour is still looked upon as derogatory, and a well-to-do high caste man labouring upon his own compound or his own fields or allowing either his sons or relatives to do the same would be looked upon with contempt. High caste men have always to employ low caste people for any and every work, agricultural or domestic. Skilled work such as carpentry, blacksmithy, masonry, etc., is invariably performed by the particular "castes", which are hereditary and exclusive in character. These occupy a low position in the Hindu hierarchy of caste, but not so low as that other kind of agricultural labourers whom I called "Cherumas" or Pariahs, who occupy the lowest place of all. Each is respectful to his superiors and somewhat exacting to his inferiors, but there is nothing like hatred or dissatisfaction with one's lot in any of the castes. They take it as Nature-given and the social organism works in a smooth fashion, each man having his own work and his own aspirations. Judging from the present state of affairs it is impossible, and I think undesirable, to unsettle this order of things. There is scope however for the diffusion of education and knowledge, for the opening of a diversity of occupation, for infusing better ideals of social life and joint work, for improving agriculture and removing rural indebtedness and providing means of its non-recurrence in the future. But all this requires enlightened and sympathetic workers. 461

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.
241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to
[439] their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5-a boundaries

796
411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

[273]
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and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and [357]
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a [354]
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword 796
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera. The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velichchappâd about three days afterwards going to perform elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Târavâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

* The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Bráhmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Asán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *tâli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pân supâri*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *pâyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremony the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *tâli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkâkkarappan* temple and tie the *tâli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahâdévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpâd is the *tâli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *tâli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tâlikettu kalyânam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tâlikettu*

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kolla-Kurups

614 564 The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in [428] the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

*595 601 I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing [126] at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

*595 420 465 The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595*
Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601
to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [115] [551]
helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614
obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564
be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582]
matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428]
was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564
Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 417
but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his employees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers. 465

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564
upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 791
went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293]
umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595*
thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342]
dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595*
androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601
to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast-
feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [534] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral-commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

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794
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man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayâlis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

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163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that
[361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths
are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and
165 the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	96	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths
[361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land.
[465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of
566 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The
462 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]

[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].

‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

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427 Munsifs and District Judges with summary jurisdiction in the matter." The provisions in the regulation apply only to "Kanam
423 tenants who, by themselves or through their predecessors in interest, have uninterruptedly held the holding for a period of not less than thirty years prior to the coming into force of this Regulation," and provide some restrictions on the part of the landlord in matters of renewal of kanam holdings, and ejection of kanam tenants; and dispense altogether with the right of *Melkanam*. The Puravaka janmis in Watakancheri number 54, of whom a few are Nambudri Brahmans, the others being of various castes. The Nambudris are the big landlords.

423 These janmis also are in some cases the custodians of "devaswoms" (literally "wealth of the gods"), lands belonging to the local temples; these are treated by them just like their janmam lands, but they keep separate accounts for the same. The Sirkar also manages devaswom lands and there is a department in the State which manages the affairs of the temples and the property belonging to them.

Of the total number of landowners (about 150), only 34 with an area of 194·44 acres cultivate their own lands. The rest sublet.

Of the non-cultivating landowners a few are big janmis like the Nambudri Brahmans and the Paliath Atchan. The Nambudri Brahmans pursue no occupation but that of living in strict conformity with the duties of a Brahman. They study the Vedas and live a pious and cleanly life. Western civilization and ideas have not
[428] penetrated to them. They maintain the joint-property system in which the whole property descends to the eldest male member.
[837] Only the eldest male is allowed to enter into legal marriage, but he can marry two or three women; the rest keep Nayar females as their mistresses.*

The "Paliath Atchan" possesses much land in the State. The head of the family lives in a place near Cranganore. He manages his estates through departments and officials like the Sirkar. He is the biggest landlord in the State, and a powerful hereditary chief.

The small landowners who do not cultivate their lands pursue occupations like retail trade, Government service, law, etc. These generally sublet their lands to tenants who own no lands and try to exact from these latter as much rent as possible. There are also agricultural workers who neither own nor rent land; the caste of "Cherumas" belongs to this class. Also a few of the low
• [465] castes, the Mappilas and in some cases the Christians,—male and female—engage themselves in such work. They are low paid. Formerly these wages were in kind, but money wages have begun to prevail; but for harvesting work wages are invariably paid in kind, the worker receiving one para of paddy for every six gathered in.

The rents of paddy lands are paid in kind.

243 *Agriculture.*—Paddy is grown on all the wet lands. Out of the seasons, the cultivators also grow to a small extent such grains as gram and peas in the paddy lands. Area under paddy—653·24 acres.

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* [This phrase must not be understood to mean that such Nayar women are maintained in any way by their Nambudri paramours. They depend on their own family property, which descends in the female line. The children of Nambudri Brahmans and Nayar women are reckoned Nayars, and are members of the joint family of the mother, and entitled to maintenance from that family property.—Ed.]

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326 father is usually the teacher of his children in the hereditary [465] caste. A good workman can earn from about 8 annas to 10 annas per day.

438 *Village trade.*—Iron ware used for domestic utensils and for agricultural purposes is got from Trichur, the nearest town. There are however a few retail shops in the 'town.' All articles of consumption are bought from retail shops, the retail keepers themselves getting their wares from either Trichur or Palghat.

Rice is the principal commodity. Arecanut and to some extent pepper and bamboos form important items of sale. There is a fair half a mile to the north of the 'town' which meets once a week (every Wednesday), for the sale of arecanut and pepper. Merchants from various parts of Malabar and even from the east of the Ghats come here to buy arecanuts. Vegetables and sundries also are exposed for sale for the use of the villagers only.

361 The main metalled road which passes from Shoranur to Trichur
491 passes through the middle of the 'town.' Another road from the west touches the main road to the north of the 'town.' The Shoranur-Cochin Railway touches this place. The commercial town of Trichur is only ten miles to the south.

474 Co-operation in trading as well as in most other affairs is conspicuous by its absence. A Registrar of Co-operative Societies has recently been appointed in the State, and, I am told, gave one or two lectures in the place, but nothing came of it. I have hopes that a co-operative credit society will be started within a few years. I may mention that such credit societies have been opened in three places in the taluk and are receiving much help from the State. The co-operative principle as yet is not extended to trading, but with the development of knowledge and culture this may come.

Economic condition—

465 Statement showing wages (in *money*) for the whole State.

Workers.	Minimum.		Maximum.		Maximum in villages.	
	RS.	A.	RS.	A.	RS.	A.
Carpenters	0	6	1	0	0	8
Blacksmiths	0	6	0	12	0	8
Masons	0	6	0	14	0	8
Bricklayers	0	7	0	12	0	8
Sawyers	0	10	1	0	Piece-worker.	
Coolies—						
Male	0	4	0	10	0	6
Female	0	3	0	6	0	3
Boys	0	2	0	4	0	2

To Cherumans payment is made in kind (see above). Also wages are paid in kind to agricultural workers in the village area especially during the harvest season.

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Labour cost of cultivation of one acre of paddy.

465

For this area 8½ paras * of seed will be used.

Nature of work.	Rate of wages.	Total number of days.	Total amount of wages.	In kind or money.	Remarks.
			RS. A.		
Ploughing ...	3 as. or 3 ed. of paddy per half-day.	25	4 12	Both customery.	The ploughman works only during the first half of the day. He is expected to plough three times over an area of one para of seed capacity in a half day; and the land requires nine ploughings. [466]
Plucking for replanting.	5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	8	2 8	Do.	Women chiefly employed. One person plucks one para-seed-area per day and is paid 5 ed. of paddy. [462]
Replanting.	Earns 5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	4	1 4	Do.	Half the labour of plucking.
Weeding ...	4 as. or 4 ed. of paddy per para.		2 2	Do.	Only when transplantation does not take place.
Water-inspection.	4 as. per day ...	for 3 months.	1 13	Do.	One person can supervise 12½ acres.
Safe-keeping of matured paddy.	4 paras of paddy (Rs. 2) for 15 days.	15 to 20.	2 0	Do.	At the period of harvest he is paid in kind.
Harvesting (including mowing, thrashing, etc.).	For every six paras of paddy gathered one para is paid.				Women chiefly engaged.

Note.—The yield per para is 10 to 20 fold †; and in specially favoured lands even more. In this table the price of 1 *edangali* of paddy is taken to be 1 anna (which was the market rate 1916-1917). [241]

Statement showing the prices of staple food-grains in the Cochin State for the year 1915-6.

435

Articles.	Prices per maund of 82⅔ lb. 1914-5. RS. A. P.	1915-6. RS. A. P.
Rice (husked)	6 8 11	6 5 10
Wheat	5 14 1	5 15 11
Peas	5 10 6	5 12 1
Dholl	6 8 11	7 5 2
Gram	3 8 0	3 10 7
Gingelly	9 9 7	8 6 1
Green peas	3 5 11	5 7 5
Bengal gram	5 15 2	5 15 9

* [Approximately 180 lb., an excessive quantity. "Transplanted, 20 lb. in 7 cents of land will plant up one acre. But this seed-rate is usually very largely exceeded, up to 150 lb. per acre being used" Wood, Notebook of Agricultural Facts, p. 52.—Ed.]

† [I.e., 16 to 32 cwt. per acre, worth about Rs. 50 to 100. With the lower yield the net return is Rs. 31 per acre, with the higher Rs. 75, from which cost of seed must be subtracted. —Ed.]

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245 eight miles from the village, but the primitive oil mill is chiefly used, worked by two oxen. It is very cheap. Perhaps two rupees would be enough excepting for the oxen.

438 *The village trade.*—The chief articles consumed are rice, fish, vegetables, cereals and spices. The price of the total quantity consumed in the village may be estimated at Rs. 2,50,000, the total sales of the shop being Rs. 3,50,000, of which one lakh is to outsiders.

The quantity of produce taken to the market is not very great. The rice and cereals and spices necessary for consumption come from Palghat and consequently must be bought from the bazaar All other articles that are necessary, e.g., vegetables, fish, salt, chillies, oil, straw, fodder, fuel, etc., are brought to the house by petty traders or by the actual producers. In addition to this there is a weekly fair where local produce to the value of about Rs. 1,000 is sold weekly. A smaller quantity, which may be estimated at Rs. 36,000 per annum, is sold to shopkeepers and they sell to other villages. The people sell to shopkeepers only when they cannot sell in any other way, for the shopkeepers offer only a low price.

491 The main road comes from the Cochin State and passes through the northern and the western side of the village and bends and passes through the southern side. One branch road runs from the west and passes through the centre and ends at the eastern extremity of the village. The road system is not satisfactory. Other branch roads are wanted and those that are made have not been repaired at all for many years, though tolls are collected. People once complained of this to the Taluk Board but to no effect, although thousands of pilgrims visit this place every year on account of the sanctity of the temple. There are numerous by-ways.

498 The nearest railway stations are Pattambi, Trichur, and Watak-
505 kancheri, each twenty miles away. People go to Trichur by boat through the backwaters, and the steam boat that runs from Ponnāni to Tirur is availed of by many and it is cheap. There is backwater communication to Ponnāni and Cochin.

438 Copra, coir, etc., are taken or sent to Cochin and the people get in return rice, cloth, and cereals and other luxuries. Fish can be got from the sea, which is very near the village. The fishermen go every day in the morning and return in the evening.

465 *Economic condition of the village.*—Wages for artisans are always paid in money; for agricultural work both in kind and in money.

Money wages.—The ordinary labourers are always paid in money. In short all those kinds of labour which do not immediately bring fruit to the owner are paid in money. A labourer, for a full day's work, is now paid four annas; five or six years ago three annas. For short work such as carrying weights, etc., the wage is fixed for the moment and will vary according to the distance they have to go, etc. Generally two annas must be paid for one mile as an average. For carrying a bag of rice a high wage is demanded because of high weight.* Woman's labour costs three annas per day now, formerly 2½ annas, a boy's labour 2½ annas now, formerly 2 annas.

Carpenters get six annas a day, boy carpenters three annas, formerly four annas and two annas. Other artisans such as black-

[160 lb.—Ed.]

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smiths, masons, etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work. 465•

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20. 465 326

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise. 465

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown. [412]

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure. 435 [804]

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000. 454

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of 434

* [180 lb.—Ed.] † [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

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427 regulations in the sister states of Cochin* and Travancore, which have placed a decided check on the arbitrary dealings of the landlord over the tenant in those countries. The fear of governmental interference in the near future to regulate the relations of the landlord and the tenant (for it is well known that this problem is an old one in Malabar, and even as far back as 1885, the popular administration of Mr. Logan had made a draft regulation on the same subject which was only abandoned for want of adequate support by the country and which formed the basis on which Cochin and Travancore could afterwards proceed) has stimulated the process of converting kanom lands into verumpattam, i.e., tenure at will. By this the jenmi has a double advantage. The lands are under his direct ownership, and as they are given to cultivation by annual contracts, he can at any time refuse, withhold or do what he likes with his lands. The lands also being as it were put to auction, will produce a higher rate of income than would be the case by giving it on kanom tenure. There is also a recent tendency on the part of the jenmi to raise the kanom amounts because in Cochin and Travancore this is made the basis for the regulation of rent. Till now the policy was to give lands on a nominal kanom, the advantage being in the facility with which they might reclaim the lands at pleasure.

241 The Cherumas (the submerged class) are the agricultural labourers who neither own nor rent land. They work for their
465 masters who give them a meagre allowance of 2 edangalis, i.e., 1/5 para (the standard measure) of paddy. With this he supports his wife and family. They are attached to their masters and loath to leave them.

427 Rents are always paid in kind and are high enough particularly in the case of annual holdings. Eighty per cent of the produce will go as rent to the landowner. The sole advantage for which tenants take up lands are, they say, (1) a few days' maintenance after the harvest, (2) the possession of straw, and (3) employment. But sometimes they have to pay rent in money and this is chiefly in seasons of crop failure. This is met in these ways:—(1) Direct borrowing, (2) profit of garden cultivation and (3) the institution of chit-fund,† which is widely prevalent among them.

241 The barber and the washerman of the desam are illustrations
463 of how customary occupations are modified by practical necessity. These people, while they perform their traditional occupations to the society and receive for it the fixed remunerations, have long taken to agriculture as their chief source of income. And they are among the chief farmers. There are two manufacturers of

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* Vide p. 116.

[454] † [A chit-fund is similar to our Slate-clubs. The members meet periodically, usually every month, and each pays a defined sum into the fund. If it be an 'auction-chit,' the money so collected is given to the member who, not having received it previously, offers to give back the largest amount, e.g., if there be Rs. 100 in the chit, one member may offer to take Rs. 75 only. The remaining Rs. 25 is then divided among the other members. Security is then taken from the recipient of the Rs. 75 that he will continue to pay his monthly contributions till every member has had his turn. In the other variety of chit, the monthly sum is ballotted for. It is the same as Kuri, described on p. 124.—Ed.]

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465 Wages are paid both in money and in kind; more often in kind since they find it more to their immediate advantage. The rate of wages is two annas six pies or its equivalent in corn at the standard price, for an unskilled labourer; and four and at times five annas for skilled artisans.

435 The price of paddy varies in different seasons. In the harvest season and sometimes after it, the price ranges between 2½ and 2 paras a rupee. But towards June and July the price goes up to between 1 and 1½ paras a rupee. This is the only food which [262] can be called staple. In times of scarcity the poorer people depend on jack fruits, mango and fish, of which the latter alone need be purchased, and that is cheaper than other foods.

454 Excepting the jenmis who are large zamindars, there are but six houses which have made savings. The bulk of the families are unable to liberate themselves from the grasp of the creditors.

The capital saved by these families is employed in lending to the needy agriculturists. A microscopically small amount has gone on jewellery among these middle class families, but with the jenmi the case is different. It looks as though the capitalist knows no way to employ his capital except lending to neighbours.

426 *Debt.*—The extent of indebtedness cannot be definitely ascertained by enquiry. But from what I have been able to gather from the accounts of two capitalist families, I have been able to make an almost correct estimate of the state of things with the agriculturist. Ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 800 one family account consists of the names of thirty debtors from Kothachira. These are all standing debts and the interest on these varies from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Twelve per cent is the current rate of "polite" interest, as people call it. But there are capitalists who lend money even at 24 and 30 per cent in the neighbourhood. The capital thus employed, however, is not the result of direct saving but is ancestral property bequeathed by their fathers, who were the heads of a jenmi family.

511 Thus we find that capitalists who have money at all to lend, have got the money by other sources and not by saving. The 426 agriculturist has many difficulties to meet with. He has no land and not enough stock and implements. His family is large and the expense is ordinarily far beyond his income. From his field cultivation, after all expenses have been deducted, he gets very little for himself. The rents are very high. The capital employed in stock is vital to him and yearly his lot is to lose by death of cattle either by disease or by wild beasts. Last year there were two cases of the latter. Those who have garden cultivation have this profit to utilize. But the majority own no gardens. The population has grown but not the means of subsistence, and no family except the few named find it possible to maintain their family purely from the proceeds of their toil. Thus they incur debt, but debt once incurred hangs heavy on the debtor. Not only is he unable to find means to pay the high rate of interest on the previous year's debt, but he must borrow at all costs again if he is to avoid absolute starvation of his family. This is regularly continued. Litigation follows and an additional and unprofitable expense is thus laid on his head. Law interferes and whatever property he has is lost. But the law does not kill the people, and

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443 Of these paddy is mostly bought by outsiders and non-agricul-
438 tural labourers, such as carpenters or blacksmiths. Most labourers
[465] indeed get their wages in paddy. Metallic articles are mostly bought by blacksmiths, both in this village (to a very small extent) and by outsiders. So, too, in regard to coconut oil, gingelly oil, tobacco, sugar and all other articles, large quantities are purchased by persons coming from other villages, where there are no shops. Probably about 50 per cent of the total sales are to outsiders.

As regards the quantities of these articles consumed, the shop-keeper says that there is no difference between what is sold now and what was sold 25 years ago when the shop was started. Only the prices have risen. One or two new articles of consumption have however been introduced, e.g., coffee, the sale of which is increasing. Iron and other metallic articles began to be sold some 15 years ago and the sales are increasing, though very little is consumed in the village. Besides the articles mentioned the shop deals in sundry small articles of consumption in the village, such as medicinal products, garlic and onions (consumed by the
438 Cherumas and the lower castes), chillis, spices and the like. An important commercial product is pepper. The village produces about Rs. 2,000 worth of it and the shop buys about Rs. 1,000 worth from other villages. Very little of this is sold in the village. It is sent to the towns and commercial centres. The trade is very profitable and may be extended.

The commodities sold in the village are brought from the nearest towns or trading centres, like Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Ponnāni. The usual means of transportation are bullock carts. It does not pay to bring small quantities by railway and there is also the risk of delay and damage. The villagers also sometimes buy their clothing and other articles in towns or at the Vaniamkulam fair. About a thousand rupees worth of vegetable and garden produce is also taken to the fair in a year for sale, with the proceeds of which the villagers buy cattle and implements or commodities for consumption. The local prices of commodities are 10 per cent higher than prices in towns, about 4 per cent representing cost of carriage and the remainder interest and profit. After deducting interest on capital invested at 9 per cent, the owner of the shop makes a fair sum as wages of superintendence and profits—about Rs. 400 per annum, excluding the profits from the pepper trade which are at least as much again as this. The shop also sells paper and other articles of stationery for the use of villagers at fair prices.

435 As regards the rise in retail prices in recent years, the village accounts show a general rise in prices of nearly 100 per cent—salt alone having fallen in price. The rise is most marked in foodstuffs and other articles of immediate consumption, and in metallic articles. Betel leaves have not risen much in price. Paddy, which used to sell at 2½ to 3 paras per rupee 25 years ago, now sells at 1·2 to 1·8 or 2 paras. Oils have generally risen at least 100 per cent in 25 years. So also sugar, tobacco and the like.

432 If one compares the total value of purchases by different classes, one will find that the many purchases of the few well-to-do persons and the few small purchases from day to day of the great majority of poor persons roughly equal one another. The Cherumas and

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other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, 432
chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village.

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas 465
per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer.

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one- [804]
and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days.

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five 566
edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters.

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and 563
strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their 463
labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and

* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]

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Nayar

"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

776 821 [184] during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

241 Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, [243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one [132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there [776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; 241 rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 252 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar 241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. 342 As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every [351] garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four- 342 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the 556 houses of the rich:

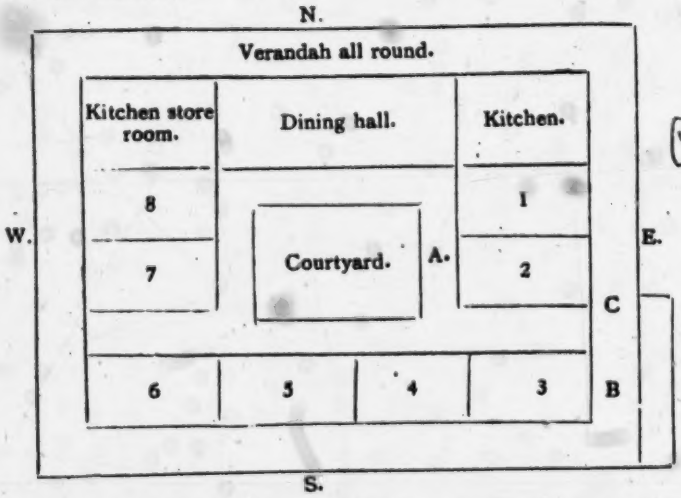

[778]

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon. [115]

as ginger and chillies, palm sugar, mangoes and bananas, betel leaf, tea 105
and coffee. There are two main paddy (unhusked rice) harvests, the 241
kanni in September and until November, depending on the type of rice planted and where, and the *magaram* in January and February.

A system of land-tenure and tenancy very special to Kerala is in ex- 105
istence in the state and its principal characteristics may be summed up 427
as follows. Freehold land owners are called *janmis* and they are entitled [423]
to the absolute proprietorship of the land; they may mortgage or lease [104]
it to anyone as they wish. They are themselves nearly always non-cultivating. The first kind of tenure to which they may resort is called *kanam* and he who holds the lease is known as the *kanamdar*. This is a curious type of arrangement between landlord and tenant, by which the latter deposits a certain sum with the *janmi*, who in return pays interest on the amount as if it were a loan. The *kanamdar* then has the right to work the land or to lease it out to someone else. Every year he pays rent, an adjusted sum as the interest received from the landlord is deducted. Once every twelve years, a so-called renewal fee is paid by the tenant equal to three times the annual rent, and this gives him the right of possession for a further twelve years. Should he wish to give up the lease, the original deposit will be returned to him by the *janmi*. Most *kanamdars* sub-let and do not cultivate the land themselves.

The *kanamdars* often lease out the land as a *kanam* tenure too; but [104]
if they do not, it is as a *verumpattam* lease that they do so. This is a simple affair held for one year at a time, by which the tenant pays a fixed rent, or for several years, in which case it is called a customary *verumpattam*, and a renewal fee then becomes necessary, payable between five and twelve years. This lease is used only for paddy fields. [243]
Tenants of this category often sub-lease in the same way to others, who cultivate the land either themselves, or, more usually, employ labourers [466]
to do so. These labourers are of two kinds, free and tied. The former [464]
are coolies hiring themselves out for wages, while the others are agrarian farmhands who receive only board, lodging and clothing from the master responsible for them.

Customary *verumpattam* tenure of palm gardens for the production [104]
of coconuts or arecanuts is called *kuzhikanam*. The twelve year renewal fee is equal to the amount made on the garden in the last year and a half of the lease. Virgin and waste land, which nevertheless always has a *janmi* somewhere, is also let out on this type of tenure. The land owner has the right to evict the tenant if he has made no improvement of the land during his period of lease. House-sites occupied by tenants

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

296 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil [791] and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

•466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

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Labour cost of cultivation of one acre of paddy.

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For this area 8½ paras * of seed will be used.

Nature of work.	Rate of wages.	Total number of days.	Total amount of wages.	In kind or money.	Remarks.
			RS. A.		
Ploughing ...	3 as. or 3 ed. of paddy per half-day.	25	4 12	Both customery.	The ploughman works only during the first half of the day. He is expected to plough three times over an area of one para of seed capacity in a half day; and the land requires nine ploughings. [466]
Plucking for replanting.	5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	8	2 8	Do.	Women chiefly employed. One person plucks one para-seed-area per day and is paid 5 ed. of paddy. [462]
Replanting.	Earns 5 as. or 5 ed. of paddy per day (piece-wages).	4	1 4	Do.	Half the labour of plucking.
Weeding ...	4 as. or 4 ed. of paddy per para.		2 2	Do.	Only when transplantation does not take place.
Water-inspection.	4 as. per day ...	for 3 months.	1 13	Do.	One person can supervise 12½ acres.
Safe-keeping of matured paddy.	4 paras of paddy (Rs. 2) for 15 days.	15 to 20	2 0	Do.	At the period of harvest he is paid in kind.
Harvesting (including mowing, thrashing, etc.).	For every six paras of paddy gathered one para is paid.				Women chiefly engaged.

Note.—The yield per para is 10 to 20 fold †; and in specially favoured lands even more. In this table the price of 1 *edangali* of paddy is taken to be 1 anna (which was the market rate 1916-1917). [241]

Statement showing the prices of staple food-grains in the Cochin State for the year 1915-6. 435

Articles.	Prices per maund of 82⅔ lb. 1914-5. RS. A. P.	1915-6. RS. A. P.
Rice (husked)	6 8 11	6 5 10
Wheat	5 14 1	5 15 11
Peas	5 10 6	5 12 1
Dholl	6 8 11	7 5 2
Gram	3 8 0	3 10 7
Gingelly	9 9 7	8 6 1
Green peas	3 5 11	5 7 5
Bengal gram	5 15 2	5 15 9

* [Approximately 180 lb., an excessive quantity. "Transplanted, 20 lb. in 7 cents of land will plant up one acre. But this seed-rate is usually very largely exceeded, up to 150 lb. per acre being used" Wood, Notebook of Agricultural Facts, p. 52.—Ed.]

† [I.e., 16 to 32 cwt. per acre, worth about Rs. 50 to 100. With the lower yield the net return is Rs. 31 per acre, with the higher Rs. 75, from which cost of seed must be subtracted. —Ed.]

161 for the most acute problem of Kerala, viz., abnormally high rate of unemployment.
464 According to a survey carried out by the State Statistics Department open unemployment in the State was as high as 4.2 per cent (all-India 0.6%) and under-employment 9.6 per cent of the total population (all-India 6.0%).

464 The unemployment problem of Kerala might not have been so severe had there
* 433 been a correspondingly rapid development of industries over the past few decades.
● 47 In this sphere the State suffers from certain handicaps. Although the industrial sector in Kerala absorbs a high proportion of the working force (Kerala 19.1%; India 9.4%), the majority of them are engaged in very low productivity industries. The two major industries of Kerala, viz., coir and cashewnut are technologically very backward. Coir industry, which is organized as a cottage industry, absorbs 4-5 lakh persons. Cashewnut-processing, although organized on the lines of factory industry, is almost entirely unmechanized. As a result, labour productivity in the secondary sector is extremely low. Because of this, industrial sector in Kerala does not create any sizeable reinvestible surplus and the process of capital formation is hampered. The types of industries in which Kerala predominates, have not also aided the development of entrepreneurial talents. Kerala lacks in a long tradition of industrial enterprise. Most of the large scale industries which now exist in Kerala, for example, Fertilizers & Chemicals Travancore Ltd., Travancore-Cochin Chemicals Ltd., Indian Aluminium Company and Aluminium Industries Ltd., were started under the direct initiative of the governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin or industrialists from other neighbouring States of India. No distinct body of local entrepreneurship has, therefore, developed in the State.

135 In addition, lack of sizable mineral deposits (except Ilmenite) adds to the
438 difficulties which have been retarding industrial development of the State. Coal
* 433 as well as all metallic raw materials for the industries of Kerala have to be transported over long distances from other parts of the country. But there are favourable factors compensating some of these deficiencies in the economic endowments of the
241 State. The agricultural sector of Kerala abounds in a rich variety of high value
434 yielding cash crops like coconut, pepper, rubber, arecanut, tea, cashewnut, cardamom
439 and coffee. These crops not only provide considerable incomes for the farmers, but are a good source of foreign exchange earnings and provide valuable raw materials
*433 for the industries. A vast potential for generation of low-cost hydro-electric power makes up for the absence of fossil fuels. Rich forest and fishery resources, a highly intelligent and literate labour force, easy accessibility to most parts of the State through a wide network of roadways, and the scenic beauty of its landscape capable of attracting tourists, are some of the other assets of Kerala.

* 433 As a result of the present survey, several lines of technically and economically
434 feasible developments have been suggested in this report in the industrial and other fields. The total impact of these developments would be to raise the per capita income of the State from the present level of Rs. 240 (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 404 (at the same price level) by 1970-71. State income would rise from Rs. 400 crores (at 1955-56 prices) to Rs. 812.8 crores, i.e., at an average annual rate of 10.3 per cent. The targets are undoubtedly on the high side, but the needs of Kerala in the context of its huge unemployment and very low per capita income demand a rather high

[For additional information on the growth of business and industrial organization see category 433, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaṅ:s*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
● 471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative
[178] power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
[622] in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
[613] from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages isolated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes 564
two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants."

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied 564
in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, 554
and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or dif- [628]
ferent sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, [726]
soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain.

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages 621
of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property 613
groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the 564
king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet 566
paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure 471
was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran*. In most villages the men of 427
retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar*, a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs.

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristo- 564
cratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, 794
nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

563 [162] The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received [65] land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth [564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the [463] produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and [592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

● 471 The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western 592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell 566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one 771
becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" 177
or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyin* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which [114]
lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. 241
The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of 242
excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific 245
skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme [177]
fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut 245
cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by 471
the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the [361]
Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. 241
Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. [438]
It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the [432]
market.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

In this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 [591] [593] [429]

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 [564] [471]

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1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. [114] [122]

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. [113]

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 acres to 270,625 acres. This is a proof of the growing popularity of rubber cultivation 249 in Kerala. Increase has also been registered in the tapped area. During 1951–56, the tapped area increased by about 50 per cent (99,120 to 150,000 acres), though the acreage under rubber increased only by 25 per cent. A higher rate of increase in case of tapped area has been caused by maturing of trees planted before 1951.

433 2.106 *Distribution of Holdings*: The increase in the number of holdings since 249 1951 has been much more than the increase in acreage under rubber. There were 423 50,000 estates in 1958 as against 9,026 in 1951. The increase was roughly 500 per cent as against an increase in the area by about 100 per cent only. The consequence is that today rubber industry in Kerala is marked by the existence of a large number of small-size family estates. The increase in area under small estates is not a healthy trend, as these are uneconomic and have low productivity.

433 2.107 *Production and Yields*: During 1958, the total production of rubber in 249 Kerala was 22,200 tons. The production has been steadily rising at a rate of 8.2 per cent per annum which is indeed a very high rate when compared with growth in the gross agricultural production. (Table 13)

[171] 2.108 In 1958 the yield per acre of rubber in Kerala was 294 lbs. which is very low when compared to the yields in Malaya, Ceylon, Indonesia and other rubber growing countries. Compared to 1958, the yield in 1951 was slightly higher standing at 312 lbs. per acre. The decline in yield was partly due to the transfer of Kanyakumari district, which was a high yielding region, to Madras after the reorganization of the States. Partly it was also due to large scale new planting in all the districts except Trichur.

2.109 A significant fact about land productivity is the wide difference in yield rates between big and small estates. In 1958, the average yield of holdings of below 100 acres was only 162 lbs. per acre while in larger holdings it was 486 lbs.

433 2.110 Low productivity in smaller gardens is due to the inefficient and unscientific 249 manner in which the estates are managed and lack of resources at the disposal of these estate owners. Scientific and efficient management of rubber gardens requires 242 manuring of gardens, periodic renewal of fences, clearance of under-growth, control of soil erosion, etc. For carrying out these operations, it is necessary to have a large [471] fund of working capital which the small growers do not possess. Small growers, particularly those with 10 acres and less, have very little sustaining power and cannot wait for the trees to attain maturity. Consequently, premature tappings and slaughter tappings are too common among the small estates. The small holders are also tempted [249] to grow an understorey when the plants are young and for that they generally prefer tapioca as it is a food crop with high yields. Under cropping even when properly manured, is not good for the soil but when it is considered along with inadequate manuring, the harm can well be imagined. This type of mismanagement generally does not occur in large plantations. It is high time that something is done to improve the situation. Measures such as amalgamating small units into an economic size and working them on a cooperative basis would perhaps meet the needs. The matter should be further investigated and followed up by suitable action.

2.111 The low yield per acre is also due to the cultivation of low yielding varieties and over-ageing of trees. The Rubber Board reported that at the end of 1955, 80

[see p. 278, category 116 -- Analysis]

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

*[433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Other Occupations

Fishing, both sea and freshwater, plays a big part in the life of Kerala 226
but, as usual in India, is primitive in technique and organisation. It has, however, some interesting features: Portuguese influence is obvious in the so-called 'China nets' and the crossbow used for shooting fish from river-banks,[46] and there are many varieties of basket-work fish-traps. The catch of 'sardines' is largely used for manuring coconut; prawns are taken in flooded paddy-fields, the skins used as manure and the pulped flesh exported. Normally Burma was a good customer for prawns; the time of transport raised no difficulty as a high degree of putrescence was regarded with favour.

Travancore has a hydro-electric plant at Pallivasal on the Mudrapuzha 377
River, with a capacity of 21,000 kW which can be increased to 36,000. The 471
power is used for the industries of Cochin town and Ernakulam, of which the production of soap and cosmetics from copra is the most important. It also powers the sole Indian aluminium works, at Alwaye, formerly dependent on imported alumina but now increasingly supplied from Muri in Bihar (591 above); and a recent development is the use of electric pumps for 'de-watering' the *cole* lands. The great reservoir impounding the [312]
Periyar headwaters was built to supply irrigation water, by tunnel, to the Madras side, but may possibly be developed for power in the future.

Except for local clays and laterite, the only mineral deposits are the 135
ilmenite, monazite, and zircon sands of the Travancore beaches from 433
Quilon to Cape Comorin. These contain 8–10% thorium oxide and were exploited for the manufacture of gas mantles; the spread of electric lighting ruined this demand, but there has been a remarkable recovery. Titania from the ilmenite and cerium from the monazite are essential to some highly specialised electrical and chemical manufactures (electrodes, tracer bullets, and as a catalyst in benzine synthesis, amongst others) and recent developments in atomic research have made these deposits of great strategic significance. Production, which in 1925 fell to one hundred-weight of monazite, amounted in 1944 to 200,000 tons ilmenite, 2000 monazite, and 1600 zircon.

Population and Settlement

Population problems are very serious in Kerala; the density of Cochin 161
in 1941 was the highest for any political unit in India—953 on a total area of 1493 sq mls—locally reaching 2000–4000 in a purely rural environment. Elankunnapuzha village had in 1941 no fewer than 18,173 people on its 3·8 sq mls—a density of 4782. The rate of increase has been very high—for

[46] A. K. Menon, "Fisheries of Cochin" (*IGJ* XIV (1939)), 229–36; C. D. Forde, *op. cit.*, 269.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Laccadives A24
Maldives A25

Day 1500 Cabral arrived, and from then until the Dutch supplanted them in 1663 the Portuguese were in alliance with the rulers of Cochin against the Muslim Zamorin of Calicut. The port has considerable locational advantages: it is central on the backwaters, the Palghat Gap lies about 125 miles (by rail) to the NE, and it is about 300 miles nearer Aden and Durban than is Bombay. It may even rival Colombo as a transit port, as a call at Cochin adds only 40 miles to the Aden-Fremantle run.[52] The development of the modern port was for long impeded by its curious political situation; it lies on a breach in the long spit separating the great backwater from the sea, but while the major installations and the approaches lie in what was British territory, the inner harbour—in which much of the trade is carried on—is in Cochin state, and much of the backwater was Travancorean. Real development—including the cutting of a channel through the bar across the natural breach, and much reclamation—began only in 1920–23; later a 3-mile approach channel was dredged to a width of 450 and a depth of 37 ft, so that the inner harbour is now accessible to any ship which can pass Suez. Rail and road bridges cross the backwater, and a large airport has been built on reclaimed land; the old metre line to the SIR through the Palghat has been changed to BG. The volume of trade increased from 450,000 tons in 1920 to about 1,250,000 in 1950, while the number of ships using the port has more than trebled. Normally rice from Burma and Indo-China formed two-fifths in bulk of the total trade; mineral oil is also a major import. The exports are the usual Kerala ones: coconut products, especially coir and copra, tea, rubber, cashew nuts. Across the backwater is Ernakulam (46,790), capital of Cochin, with important soap factories, the largest owned (naturally) by Tatas: rice milling, as at Mattancherri, is also important. Trichur (57,524), the largest town of Cochin, has cotton spinning and weaving mills and tile factories; it shares with Palghat (55,160) command of the gap.

Travancore is less urbanised than Cochin, but Trivandrum (**186,931**) is the capital of Travancore–Cochin state. Alleppey (**116,278**) and Quilon are ports of ancient fame now decayed; mere roadsteads, they still carry on a considerable backwater traffic. Alleppey, protected by a mudbank, is slightly the better port, but Quilon has the advantage of its situation on the metre line from Trivandrum through the Shencottah Gap.

The Maldive and Laccadive Islands

These groups of coral atolls extend from the Equator to about 15° N, 180–300 miles from the Malabar coast. The Laccadives and Minicoy are attached to Madras, the Maldives (which have their own Sultan and constitutional government) to Ceylon: these affiliations represent historical accident merely.

[52] *Handbook of Commercial Information for India* (Delhi, 1937), 79; personal information from Sir Robert Bristow.

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

of these schemes is being expanded to handle 250 maunds per day during the Third Plan. Under these schemes, milk from the surrounding villages would be collected and pasteurized before bottling them for sale. The schemes will serve a two-fold purpose: (*i*) they will give incentive for a higher production of milk in the rural areas by offering fair prices and (*ii*) they will provide hygienic milk to the urban population at a reasonable price. The unscrupulous middleman will be eliminated by this process. 433* 234

3.29 The dairy development programme of this type needs to be taken up on a much larger scale than at present. This is necessary to provide an outlet for the likely increase in milk production and for making hygienic fluid milk available to the urban people. Owing to acute shortage of clean and pure milk in the urban areas, milk supply schemes of the type discussed above might prove a great success. It would be good if all the urban areas with a population of over 30,000 are served with such schemes. According to 1951 Census there were 13 towns in Kerala with a population exceeding 30,000. At the end of the Second Plan, 11 among these were still without any milk scheme. It is, therefore, suggested that these milk schemes should be organized in all these towns. The capacity, investment required, etc., for these schemes is given in Table 22.[2] [162]

3.30 Many of the dairy units proposed here may find it difficult to get sufficient quantities of milk from the surrounding areas owing to the poor yield of animals and low marketable surplus with the farmers. In order to justify collection, marketing and sales organization of even the smallest size, it is considered necessary to have a handling capacity of 150 maunds per day. In case sufficient milk is not available, which is likely to be the case at least in some centres, a part of the capacity may be utilized for bottling reconstituted milk. Reconstituted milk can be of various types depending upon the fomulae. Milk powder is a common ingredient in all the types. A survey of consumer preference and tastes may be conducted before choosing the type, and part of the demand for fluid milk may be met in this way. Such a survey is essential before embarking upon the actual production of reconstituted milk because the new product may meet considerable consumer resistance in its initial stages. Propaganda and other measures to popularize the use of reconstituted milk will also have to be taken up side by side.

3.31 In smaller towns, that is, those with less than 30,000 population, cooperatives for supply of milk, may be organized with consumers or producers. There were 12 such societies in 1958. These societies should be encouraged. [474]

3.32 Munnar is a region which possesses the potential for growth into a large scale commercial dairy farming centre. Many exotic cattle breeds[1] are thriving in the region. The performance of some of the herds maintained by a few sterling tea companies is said to be of a high order and compares favourably with that of similar herds maintained in the countries from which these cattle are imported. It is suggested that the Department of Animal Husbandry should further investigate the economic feasibility of commercial dairying in the Munnar region. If the investigation reveals prospects, the State may organize a few such dairy farms in the public 433* 231 234

[1] Jersey and Holstein.

[2] [Table 22 appearing on p. 286 of the text, has not been processed – Ankapur]

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*433 231 234 sector. The dairy farms may also take up the manufacture of high value items such as creamery products and *cheddar* cheese.

Processing and Marketing of Poultry Products

*433 235 474 3.33 Proper disposal of poultry products is also a pressing need. At present there are a number of private as well as cooperative organizations in the Travancore-Cochin area for collecting and marketing poultry products. Some of them have even inter-State connections. These organizations have rendered satisfactory service to the poultry industry in Kerala. Credit goes to them for having developed export demand for poultry products of the State. All these organizations, however, are faced with serious limitations to further expansion and more efficient working. Their main problem is inadequate working capital. The other difficulties are: (*i*) lack of cold storage facilities, (*ii*) inadequate availability of transport aids and containers for safe transit, and (*iii*) lack of technical guidance. The State should take steps to remove these difficulties. It is suggested that the State should encourage municipalities to construct cold storage godowns. This would benefit not only the poultry industry, but also other activities such as horticulture, meat packing and fisheries. The other needs could be largely looked after by the Development Blocks. It is also suggested that the poultry cooperatives should be asked to grade eggs before marketing them.

*433 235 439 3.34 It may not be possible to find market either inside or outside the State for all the marketable surplus in poultry products in the future. This fear is justified in view of the fact that significant development in poultry industry has taken place in some of the egg-importing States such as West Bengal, Madras, Punjab and Bombay under the Second Plan. It may, therefore, be expected that the production of eggs and other items in these States would increase considerably by the end of the Third Plan. Such a development would hit Kerala's exports adversely. In order to guard against such consequences, it is desirable that alternative means of disposal of eggs and poultry meat are planned now. The best method would be to set up a combined egg powder-cum-meat packing plant in a convenient location somewhere in the Travancore-Cochin area. The in take of the plant may be of the order of 30,000 eggs and 500 to 1,000 birds per day. The birds may be processed for preservation and packed in polyethelene bags in convenient numbers. A product like this is bound to be popular all over the country. The plant would need an investment of Rs. 3 lakhs.

*433 23 452 3.35 Animal husbandry needs State support and help in other ways too. Loans from the State Government to both processers and cooperatives would be of a great help. The average farmer is at present unable to take to livestock-keeping as a subsidiary occupation on account of lack of funds for investment as well as for working capital. Normal farming agencies like banks and cooperatives do not serve them because of their non-credit worthiness and the uncertain nature of livestock business. Seeking the help of local money-lenders would be too expensive for these ventures. Only the State can solve the problem of rural credit in a situation of this type by making available larger *takavi* funds, arranging for loans through banks and cooperatives, by agreeing to share the risks, etc.

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 197 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [894] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

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*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme
647 suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
655 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be especially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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326 father is usually the teacher of his children in the hereditary
[465] caste. A good workman can earn from about 8 annas to 10 annas per day.

438 *Village trade.*—Iron ware used for domestic utensils and for agricultural purposes is got from Trichur, the nearest town. There are however a few retail shops in the 'town.' All articles of consumption are bought from retail shops, the retail keepers themselves getting their wares from either Trichur or Palghat.

Rice is the principal commodity. Arecanut and to some extent pepper and bamboos form important items of sale. There is a fair half a mile to the north of the 'town' which meets once a week (every Wednesday), for the sale of arecanut and pepper. Merchants from various parts of Malabar and even from the east of the Ghats come here to buy arecanuts. Vegetables and sundries also are exposed for sale for the use of the villagers only.

361 The main metalled road which passes from Shoranur to Trichur
491 passes through the middle of the 'town.' Another road from the west touches the main road to the north of the 'town.' The Shoranur-Cochin Railway touches this place. The commercial town of Trichur is only ten miles to the south.

474 Co-operation in trading as well as in most other affairs is conspicuous by its absence. A Registrar of Co-operative Societies has recently been appointed in the State, and, I am told, gave one or two lectures in the place, but nothing came of it. I have hopes that a co-operative credit society will be started within a few years. I may mention that such credit societies have been opened in three places in the taluk and are receiving much help from the State. The co-operative principle as yet is not extended to trading, but with the development of knowledge and culture this may come.

Economic condition—

465 Statement showing wages (in *money*) for the whole State.

Workers.	Minimum.		Maximum.		Maximum in villages.	
	RS.	A.	RS.	A.	RS.	A.
Carpenters	0	6	1	0	0	8
Blacksmiths	0	6	0	12	0	8
Masons	0	6	0	14	0	8
Bricklayers	0	7	0	12	0	8
Sawyers	0	10	1	0	Piece-worker.	
Coolies –						
Male	0	4	0	10	0	6
Female	0	3	0	6	0	3
Boys	0	2	0	4	0	2

To Cherumans payment is made in kind (see above). Also wages are paid in kind to agricultural workers in the village area especially during the harvest season.

[For additional material dealing with government regulation or the development of industry see category 656 in 6: Spate AW1 India.]

/Information on the "enangar" as several cooperative linked lineages, will be found in category 613./

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead members of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members [628]
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this [694]
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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426 money-lenders is absorbed in no time. In the last five years the number of money-lending shops has doubled and their funds invested by this means have trebled. There is yet a demand for money which is unsatisfied.

Another method of supporting, as it were, the poor, is to lend the seed for sowing on the promise that for every 100 measures lent they will return after the first crop, i.e., after four months from the time of lending, 120 or 130 measures. This means an interest of 60 per cent per annum. The cultivators do not as a rule save their own seed, because when they have no means of living they natually use their seed for food. I am told this is the case with every paddy cultivator excepting the three rich agriculturists who are landowners. It must be confessed here that without such borrowing the cultivation itself could not at present be carried on.

The village is free from padials. The debtors only pay interest, but in the Palghat taluk the system of padials survives.

The causes of indebtedness are not far to seek. Economic backwardness is the primary cause. Waste of money on drink and evil habits is not uncommon. In some cases debt is due to ambi-
[585] tious schemes which fail. Excessive display in marriage is not common in Malabar as in eastern districts. Non-Brahmans, especially the castes below the Nayars, pay only Rs. 20 or Rs. 30, according to their means, to the bridegroom, and sometimes not even that. Another Rs. 25 will raise a marriage above the ordinary level. Taking into account that a marriage will be performed in a family only once in five or six years this expenditure of Rs. 50 or so cannot be deemed great.

The ordinary labourers, who number about 500, maintain themselves by their daily work and they are never in debt. It is the agricultural classes and those who are engaged in petty trade that
[427] are in debt. The only asset of the tenants is that they have to pay as advance one year's rent to the landowners and they receive for the advance 6 per cent interest. Even this is paid in some cases by borrowing.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

476 *Communal life.*—The Brahmans of this village have formed
794 themselves into a society for mutual aid and convenience. This organization of the society is on the model of the old village republics. It exists for social purposes only. Two persons are elected biennially to look after the affairs and the income of the society. Every house is represented by its head in the village assembly and that assembly elects the persons. The sources of income to the society are--

(1) the interest on the already existing property which is about Rs. 3,000;

(2) for all social functions such as marriage, etc., the society as a whole has a claim for a fixed sum. The total income from these two sources may be estimated at Rs. 350.

The duty of the society is to appoint the village priest, village barber, village trumpeter and other persons essential for the performance of social or religious functions.

The whole income is spent on the worship of God. The particular ways in which it should be spent have been fixed long ago, and comprise a special feast for the Brahmans once a year, provision of a burial-ground and other public and necessary places

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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for Brahmans as a whole, and the performance of *puja* during one month in a year. 476

The two elected administrators spend the money as explained above, keep the accounts, and are responsible for the whole income. This organization is seen throughout the Brahman community in Malabar. It may be regarded as a survival of the village communal organization, the political functions of which disappeared with the advent of British rule. 794

The lower classes have appointed a family to settle caste questions and questions of excommunication, adultery, etc., and this family has been exercising this power from time immemorial. The family still holds the power and the verdict which the headman of the family pronounces about such questions is tacitly accepted by all. 692

Religious festivals are performed by the temple, and the temple *in practice* belongs to the Zamorin. It is managed by the Court of Wards at the present time, along with the Zamorin's estate. The income of the temple is the offerings of the devotees who chiefly come from distant places. The festivals which the temple performs will in a year cost more than Rs. 2,000. In addition offerings to the temple from the village itself will amount to more than Rs. 3,000. 794

The above statements of indebtedness, communal income, etc., are based on careful inquiry with well-known persons and the village munsif, and are given in round numbers as accurately as possible.

Sanitary condition.—Malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox and consumption are absent from the village. 164

The ordinary diseases of the village are fever, dysentery, elephantiasis and such like diseases. Infantile mortality is high. Out of 156 deaths 87 are infant deaths. The deaths are high among the poor, particularly the Hindu poor. It may be people cannot afford to bring up their children decently. The mothers must work for the maintenance of the family before many days have passed after child-birth. I know of a Tiyya family in which seven out of eleven children born died before they were three years old. Moreover they cannot afford medical help and they implore God to help them and resort to quack doctors. The prevalence of early marriage may be cited as one of the causes for physical deterioration. But the most potent cause especially in the case of the higher classes is the ignorance of the mothers. Domestic hygiene is a sealed book for them. Their habits are not quite sanitary. [515]

There are no venomous snakes.

There is a hospital very near the village. But the chief medical help is from the native doctors who practise privately. There are two great medical experts in the native system but there are also a large number of quacks. The experts have a tremendous business but the quacks do some injury too. 759

Wearing unclean * cloths, not keeping the house neat, using the same plate for food for the whole family, are some of the insanitary habits of the poor and the lower classes. But the higher classes are very neat and Malabar is famous for its neatness. People bathe every day. 515

* [I.e., unclean according to the Malabar standard of cleanliness, which is very high. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around [291] the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to [435] five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476] along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

776
796 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
778 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
[793] daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[782] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
important part in the religious history of Malabar. It
comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the
pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the
perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people
resort thither annually by thousands from almost all
parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the
stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitia-
tory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of
cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of under-
taking this sacred mission. People arrange to start
on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in
small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the
journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves
and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and,
above all, a number of cocks form an almost com-
plete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all
gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this
bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their
[481] girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one
hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each
from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at
the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous
recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads,
which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The fore-
man it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[701] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or carried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[505] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the
[726] heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The difficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized ir-
651 rigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new 796
cloths to women after menstruation, but my information 564
on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the gold- [294]
smith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work [326]
as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only.

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple; Vannân bring- [293]
ing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day.

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans 796
(fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 326
'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith 226
comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, 564
but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword.

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called 796
the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of 564
his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate [782]
offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profes- [482]
sion is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. [326]
Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum-sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-[293] makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [422] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neigh-
[435] bouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[628] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup
582 clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhú-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

484 There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
717 journey :
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Muppēram
Trkelta iva ēzhu Naal
Vitakkil vilāyā Bhūmi
Pōkunnakil aran varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

771 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar

553
554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Anán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Anán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Manndtiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564 582 833 783 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous. This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.[1]

Marriage prohibitions.

564 582 783 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilómam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Kanapatha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme south of South Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolathiri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overruled by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilómam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and luxuries, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

[784] [562] [484]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

P 159
[PP 1-158 not Processed]

CHAPTER 2

THE POLYANDRY OF THE THANDANS (TIYAS), KAMMALANS, AND OTHER ARTISAN CASTES OF KERALA

Anthropological research in Kerala is not, and never has been, easy. Human society there, as we shall see from what follows, is extremely complex, being made up of innumerable Hindu castes, sub-castes and outcastes, to which must be added other non-Hindu communities, such as the Moslems, Christians, and Jews. To gain an insight into these, or even, as in our case, into only a section of them – namely those practising polyandry – is a painstaking affair, especially when one realizes, as one very soon does, that the customs of a single ethnic group are by no means uniform in the whole state and often vary radically from north to south. 114 184

The climate, too, is a problem. Most of Kerala is damp and tropical all the year round, with a very wet period during the summer monsoon from June to October. The record density of the population makes for poor and inadequate quarters in which to live. Communications are bad, the rainy season disrupting traffic quite seriously with floods and high winds because of the physical nature of the land, which can be described as follows. 114 [132] [161] [484]

A. KERALA, A DESCRIPTION

1. ENVIRONMENT

The State of Kerala stretches, today, from the boundary of South Canara in Mysore State in the north, to Cape Comorin in the south, the latter being the most southerly point of the Indian continent. It is an extremely narrow belt of coastland, only five miles wide at some points and never exceeding seventy at its widest, which is at the Palghat gap. It is bordered on the west by the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean, in which are to be found the Laccadive islands, administratively part of the State, and on the east, by the imposing range of mountains called the Western 131 [133]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nayadis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every individual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be considered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu 484
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
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564

564
484 NĀYAR 304

841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction
[613] has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does
784 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are 613
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live
there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the
Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are
eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's
corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and
other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name
may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There
will be more to say on the point when we come to
"Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this
exception is now having some slight effect, since of late
years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli
who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine
and law in the Presidency town or even in far off
England. It is that women of the relatively inferior
Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the
other clans; so in these days of free communications
when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from
their own country, they often prefer to select wives from
this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on
the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than
orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible
exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

486 564 784 562 178 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstruation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. 783 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is 841 effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* 564 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, 613 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear 486 (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna 178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more 562 liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

177 nese (from at least the sixth century) and after 1498 the Portuguese, followed by the English, Dutch, and French (Logan, 1951, I: 251–254, 258, 294–399).

133 The coast falls roughly into three natural divisions: the coastal strip, the midlands, and the highlands rising into the Ghats (cf. Buchanan, [245] 1807: 565–566). The coastal strip is flat and sandy. Its chief product is coconuts, with some rice and bananas. In the southern half it is [243] broken by salt-water lagoons which for over a hundred miles form a continuous navigable chain parallel to the sea. Most of the chief 361 towns are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing vil- [487] lages. Many of the coast towns are ancient, and most of them lie at the mouths of navigable rivers which flow westward from the Ghats. [439] From time immemorial raw materials, chiefly pepper, were brought by boat from the inland hillsides for shipment from these ports.

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises 245 into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, bananas, pepper, ginger, and many fruit trees such as [439] jack and mango. It was probably wild pepper which was exported in Roman times, but pepper and other spices have been deliberately [177] cultivated at least since 1290 (Ricci, 1931: 326). Cashew nuts, introduced by the Portuguese, formed an additional export crop. Small 361 merchant settlements, market-centers, and the military fortifications of 443 petty chiefs existed at strategic points on river banks. Some of these centers grew into bazaar towns in the nineteenth century. But the mass of the population traditionally lived, as today, in scattered village communities on garden land surrounding or surrounded by fields 243 of wet rice, the main subsistence crop. Wet-rice cultivation depended 231 on plough agriculture with teams of oxen or water buffalo. Goats and chickens were the other significant domestic animals.

361 The highlands rising into the Ghats were covered mainly by de- [133] ciduous forests. The foothills, interspersed with occasional rice flats, were sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as those in the plains. They eked out their wet-rice cultivation with gar- [241] den crops of fruits, spices, and vegetables, with shifting hoe cultiva- [224] tion of dry grains on hillsides, and with forest hunting of elephant, deer, and pig. Higher in the mountains lived primitive tribes of hunters and shifting cultivators, having only occasional contacts with the kingdoms of the plains.

132 Throughout most of the area Kerala's rainfall varies between 75 and 170 inches, being heaviest in the north where the mountains are

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

133 377 1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

133 1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region —are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

133 208 182 [469] 133 187 [509]

3 1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

[234]

133 1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[312] [339]

[text continues on p. 6]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

499 8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and
491 bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and
652 Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammglans
Kolla-kurups

and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could inherit if there were no male heirs.

The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lakkidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[Text continues on p. 206]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

Chapter 8

Transport

IN THE CONTEXT of a developing economy, the transport system has a special role to fulfil. Apart from opening up the country and linking all areas with each other, it has to meet the growing movement of raw materials on account of more rapid development of industry and rising levels of consumption and distribution. The particular relations of production, consumption and distribution obtaining in the State and changing, according to the emphasis of the Plans, entail certain characteristic tasks for the transport system of the State. In Kerala, for example the persistent food deficit of the State, necessitates movements of rice and other cereals by road and rail from adjacent States,[1] and foreign or coastal imports[2] through ports such as Cochin, Calicut or Trivandrum. Fish and fish-products are distributed from the ports by road, rail and waterways in local and inter-State interchange. From her fields and plantations orginate exports of coconuts, copra, pepper, ginger, cardamom, cashew kernels, tapioca, tea, coffee and rubber. The State's forests covering about a fourth of its area, furnish varieties of timber for clearance from one of the biggest timber markets in the world ; countryside distribution and foreign exports take place from Kallayi and Calicut. Exports of mineral ores, such as ilmenite, have to be handled from ports like Quilon or Chavra. The transport media serve continually, except for the interruption of the monsoon, in the carriage of raw materials, fuels, and essential construction and other goods such as cement, iron and steel, sugar and textiles. In particular, the transport network has to cater daily to the needs of industrial establishments, e.g., rubber and titanium factories at Trivandrum ; cashew industry at Quilon, the aluminium and ceramic industries at Kundara, paper and plywood factories at Trichur ; the coir and coir products of Alleppey ; the cement and sugar factories at Kottayam, the rayon factory at Perumbavoor ; the industrial complex at Alwaye comprising fertilizer, chemical, textile, glass and aluminium industries ; the saw mills and timber-based industries, soap, etc., in the Calicut area ; the big plywood factory at Baliapatam; the tile industry at Quilon, Trichur, Feroke, Calicut and other centres.

8.2 As regards passenger traffic, the Southern Railway carried 16.2 million passengers in 1959, the pressure of traffic being notable at Calicut, Quilon, Ernakulam, Alwaye and Trivandrum Central. The nationalized road transport services carried 65.3 million passengers in 1959. The passenger motor-boat services operating on the inland waterways carry 27,700 passengers daily. About 1,100 passengers

[1] Over 600,000 tons.

[2] About 80,000 tons in a recent year.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin. 489

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc. 489 439

489

The Transport System

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores. [464] [434]

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport. [433]*

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average 496 171 496

[Text continues on p. 127]

[1] 1961 Census figures.

504 transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons
505 of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

*433 8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara
504 which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

489 8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expendi-
652 ture between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport–railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

509 8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a
[508] clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[113] [1] For particulars of a detailed assesment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

for Indian Airlines Corporation.[1]

8.38 The absence of an air-link between Calicut and Trivandrum is being keenly felt, as other forms of travel including railways to and from Kerala's capital involve a long and time-consuming journey with the difficulties attendant on the break-of-gauge at Ernakulam.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS IN KERALA DURING 1961-71

8.39 An assessment of traffic that the implementation of the programmes proposed elsewhere in this survey will generally indicate that an additional overall traffic of 5 million tons can be anticipated during 1970-71. The nature, magnitude and composition of the anticipated traffic are set out in Table 41.[k]

8.40 The estimate does not take into account traffic in certain items, for example, coconuts and certain types of consumer goods. An allowance of 10 per cent may be made for these omissions. Further, the transport system of the State, besides meeting the additional demands of its own traffic, will have to bear the burden of traffic of other States, such as Madras or Mysore, which is handled for them at Kerala's ports[2] and on roads and railway sections[3] within the territory of the State; the additional traffic on this account may amount to 1 or 1.5 million tons by 1970-71. The overall growth in traffic may thus be between 60 and 65 per cent over the present level.[4] The transport arrangements in the State have thus to be planned and developed to meet an additional traffic of 6.5 to 7 million tons by 1971.

8.41 There may be some changes in the character of the traffic. For instance, there may be a decline in the traffic in firewood by about 100,000 tons as oil and other fuels are coming in as substitutes. Changes in technology in the Fourth Plan period presage the disappearance of the traffic in gypsum (145,000 tons) to Alwaye and substitution by imports of sulphur (100,000 tons) *via* Cochin. Decline in foreign imports of foodgrains is anticipated, while increased imports from more distant sources inside the country are envisaged.

8.42 The distribution of the State's additional traffic between different media (including the demand for ports' services) as anticipated, is presented in the table below. The heavy dependence of Kerala on the import of materials for industry from outside is reflected in the preponderant inter-State rail traffic. By 1971 the increase in the rail traffic in the State over its traffic in 1958-59 may be about 60 per cent.[5]

[1] An Air Traffic Survey has since been completed by NCAER for the Indian Airlines Corporation. Besides estimating the traffic potential of the circular route in the Southern Region, the Survey has recommended air linking of Calicut, inclusion of Trivandurm in the Madras—Tiruchirapalli, Madurai—Colombo air route, location at Thirukakara of an airport for Cochin and Alwaye, terminal facilities at the Cochin Airport, etc.
—Vide *Air Traffic Survey—Southern Region*, NCAER, 1962

[2] Predominantly at Cochin.

[3] Mostly on the highway and railway section between Ernakulam and Shoranur.

[4] The current traffic by road, rail and waterways is estimated at 10.8 million tons.

[5] The cross traffic to or from Cochin and from or to other States is taken into account.

k [Table 41, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed--Ahalya]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433
489

ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC ANTICIPATED BY DIFFERENT TRANSPORT MEDIA IN 1970-71

(In thousand tons)

Railways	2,337
Road transport[a]	1,859
Waterways[b]	1,126
Ports[b]	1,367

[a] Includes feeder traffic.
[b] Coastal and foreign traffic included.

8.43 The intra-State road traffic may be expected to register significant gains whereas the inter-State is likely to be steady: the decline in inter-State foodgrain movements by road may be somewhat counter-balanced by anticipated industrial traffic. The waterways are likely to compete for traffic going by road especially in low-rated commodities (sand, limeshell, ores), as well as in those which are conveniently handled at the ports either alongside berths or in midstream (e.g. petroleum, foodgrains imports, etc.).

[504] 8.44 The State's demand for port services in coastal and foreign trade is expected to go up by about 1.37 million tons by 1970-71. The services are likely to be required particularly at Cochin, Calicut and Neendakara-Quilon. At Cochin and Calicut the demand for port services will be further reinforced by the growing needs of the hinterland in Coimbatore and Nilgiri districts of Madras. The railway link with Cochin may require further additions to line capacity on the route to Alwaye, Shoranur and Coimbatore.[1]

8.45 The distribution of additional traffic among the ports of Kerala, as anticipated for 1970-71, is set out in table under para 8.42. The figures given in the table are approximate estimates based on requirements of port services of various industries suggested by the National Council. Only detailed traffic surveys can establish close and reliable estimates, allowing for such factors as traffic-potential in the hinterland, beyond the State boundaries, if any, and traffic gains or losses resulting from diversion from or to other ports. In the case of Cochin, imports are likely to be very predominant, foodgrains, petroleum products, and chemicals figuring prominently. Such gains as are likely to be achieved in exports may be in chemicals, plantation products, etc. As regards Calicut, the requirements of the newly coming up rayon-pulp factory is likely to be an important factor responsible for the import of machinery, fuel oil, coal and coke, and the coastal export of rayon pulp. Neendakara-Quilon ports are likely to receive impetus from developments in Kundara, Quilon, etc.

8.46 The effect of regional industrial developments within the State on the traffic by inland waterways is indicated in Table 42.[2] Intensification of traffic between Alwaye and Cochin, Cochin and Quilon, Tiruvalla, Kottayam and Alleppey may be expected. The growth of traffic upto the potential indicated will depend

[1] The extent to which imbalances of traffic on these and other lines of the State are likely to be affected by anticipated growth of traffic to and from the State between 1961 and 1971 is to be separately surveyed and assessed.

[2] [Table 42, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

upon the maintenance of navigability in the waterways, and removal of a number of handicaps listed in para 8.28.

CONCLUSIONS

8.47 The conclusions that follow from the general traffic pattern outlined above are (*a*) accessions to traffic may be expected just in those areas and routes where it is strikingly high already (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur), (*b*) spare transport capacity on many railway sections will be absorbed, (*c*) the road, rail and waterway links to the ports may need improvement, and (*d*) further, the road transport capacity and terminal facilities should be increased to meet mounting demands.[1]

8.48 The railways have an important role to play, mainly in inter-State traffic and in helping the work of the ports. In the Third Plan, an investment of Rs. 1.2 crores i.e., of the same order as proposed and accepted but unfulfilled in the Second Plan may be necessary, mainly in connection with increase in the line capacity on vital routes (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur). If traffic and engineering surveys establish the economic feasibility of Trivandrum-Nagercoil-Tirunelveli line, it may be considered for the Fourth Plan.

8.49 As the eastern regions of the State are untouched by the Railways and are likely to remain so, these have to rely mainly on road transport. It is necessary to extend, bridge, and improve the road network in these areas till at least 50 per cent of the targets set for 1981 are achieved by 1971[2]. The expenditure will be about Rs. 17 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 26.3 crores in the Fourth Plan.

8.50 The Third Plan programme for roads and bridges in the State will cover the development of arterial routes and cross-roads in the north of the State (Rs. 4.32 crores), improvement of arterial routes in the south including the opening of Thenmala-Thekkadi road (Rs. 1 crore), the Vypeen Island Scheme (Rs. 1 crore), construction and improvement of about 3,600 miles of district and village roads (Rs. 5.996 crores) and the construction and improvement of 122 major and 584 minor bridges and culverts. Schemes spilling over from the Second Plan and costing Rs. 1.62 crores will also have to be completed. It is desirable to institute a road fund in the State to finance road development. The particular areas and routes where extension and improvements are possible in the next five years are set out in Table 43. The physical targets are indicated in Table 44.

8.51 The number of trucks will need to be considerably augmented to cope up with the anticipated demands of traffic. The investment on trucks may amount to about Rs. 11 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 10.29 crores in the Fourth Plan. The number of passenger buses may require to be increased by 2,400 in 10 years. About 4,600 buses may have to be replaced by the end of 1971. This would entail an expenditure of Rs. 20.5 crores. The State's Third Plan envisages the continuance of the

[1] Passenger traffic is certain to go up with rising population and concentrations of industry and trade at such centres as Trivandrum, Quilon, Kundara, Cochin, Ernakulam, Trichur, Palghat, Calicut and Cannanore but no estimate of the passenger service demands has been made here.

[2] Targets for 1981 as per formula of the Chief Engineers' Plan, Bombay (1960).

[Table 44, appearing on p. 298 of the text, has not been observed -- Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

3L: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

VATANAMKURUSSI VILLAGE (WALLUVANAD TALUK).

[*By N. Sundara Aiyar, Presidency College, Madras.*]

361 *Preliminary.*—The village lies in the interior of the district, thirty miles west of the municipal town of Palghat on the high road 489 that passes from Palghat to Ponnani. It is to the north of the railway line passing from Calicut to Palghat, and about equidistant from the two railway stations of Shoranur and Pattambi on that line (South Indian Railway). It is fifty-four miles south-east (by railway) of the port of Calicut, the capital of the district.

The village is more or less surrounded by low hills on all sides, 361 and there is a small forest to the east of it. A portion of the village 131 has for its southern boundary the Bharata Puzha (called the Ponnani river, because it joins the sea at Ponnani). The river is of little use for navigation, since it is in flood during the rains and almost dry in summer. The railway passes through the village, for about a mile, though the nearest railway station is 4¼ miles distant. The trunk road from Palghat also passes through the middle of the village. The village is roughly in the shape of a triangle with its apex to the north and the base on the south. Being in the midst of hilly country, dry soil abounds in the village, though the few wet acres are comparatively good.

162 *Population.*—The total population of the village in Census years was as follows:—

Year.	Occupied houses.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.
1891 ...	322	1,055	1,134	2,189	2,116	73
1901 ...	369	1,130	1,187	2,317	2,226	91
1911 ...	398	1,210	1,270	2,480	2,373	107

The figures include those of an adjacent small village, of which the total population in 1911 was 124, all Hindus.

564 There are Brahmans and Sudras, the latter split up into a large number of sub-castes and sects like the Nayars, Nambiyars, Menons, Chettis, etc., and the lower classes like the Thiyyas, or Ezhuvans, and the depressed classes of Cherumas, Pariahs and Nayadis. Nayars predominate in the village. There are a few Muhammadans, but no Christians at all.

Of Brahmans there are ten families comprising 60 individuals resident in the village. There are two families of Nambudiri Brahmans with some 30 members.

162 The great majority are Nayars, of whom there are about 150 families with nearly 1,500 individuals. Cherumas may number between 300 and 400, the Thiyyas or Ezhuvans about 500. The chief minor sub-castes in the village are Chettis (34), Kunparars (Potters, about 50), Asaris (Carpenters, 28), Karuvans (blacksmiths, 21), Thattars (goldsmiths, 19), Panans (makers of bamboo and palm leaf umbrellas, 29), Masons (13), Pariahs (42), and five families of Mannans, washermen of the lower classes, who also make mud walls, engage themselves as herdsmen and act as Pujaris, i.e.,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or carried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[505] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the
[726] heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The difficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized ir-
651 rigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[437] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius. 635 527 175 [821]

"The *Tirunâvâyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank. [491]

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction. [312]

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand. [133]

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp. [701]

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

Overhead Facilities

185 1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

[P. 66]

MAP 8

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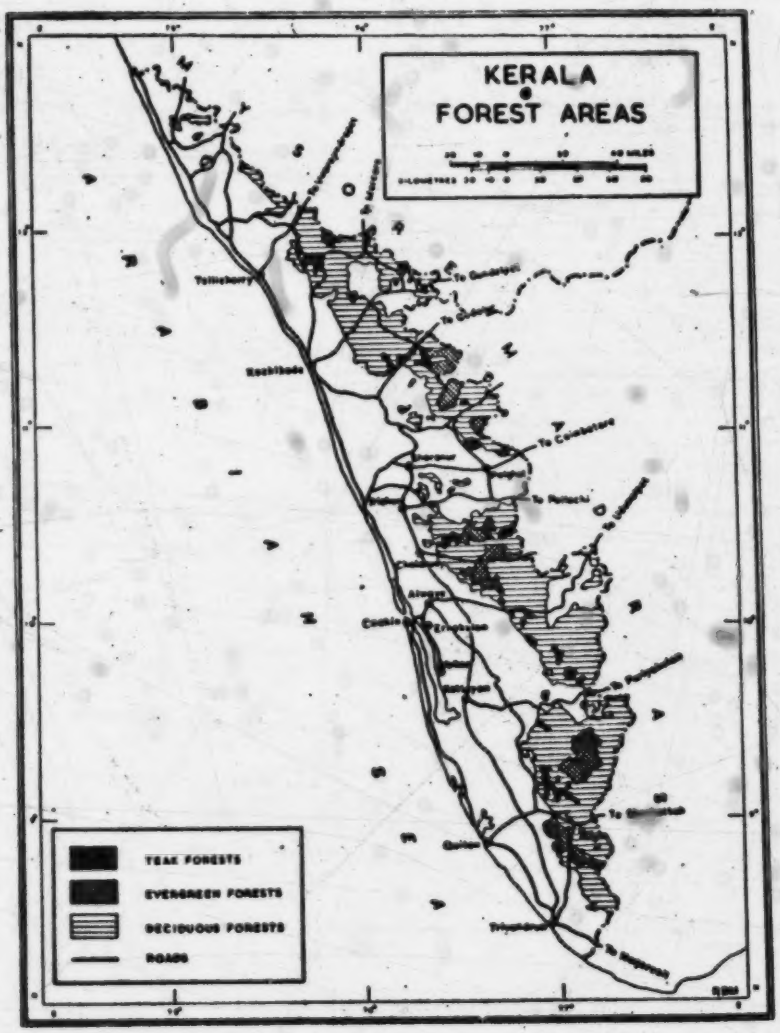

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 499 8.13 The programme of investment in the rail facilities in the State was estimated to cost Rs. 1.015 crores during the Second Plan. Till early 1960 it seems only about one-third (34.3 %) of this amount had been spent. Major items of expenditure were on re-railing of track in the Shoranur-Calicut section, provision of metre gauge facilities at Cochin harbour and conversion of a number of stations into crossing stations and improvements therein. But progress was not substantial on account of non-arrival of materials, etc. Line capacity works were undertaken on the Punalur-Quilon section, increasing the number of trains from 11 to 12 and the net ton miles by 1.24 million. Additional loops were provided at Calicut, which helped to reduce detention of trains at adjacent stations. Additional platforms, goods sheds and marshalling yards were provided at Quilon to receive and assist the traffic on the new metre gauge link with Ernakulam. Engineering and traffic surveys for a new line from Tellicherry to Mangalore *via* Coorg were completed. Proposals relating to alignments between Trivandrum and Tirunelveli *via* Nagercoil and Cape Comorin are stated to be under consideration of the Railway Board.

ROAD NETWORK

491 8.14 The total road mileage in the State at 10,739 miles (Table 38) exceeds the figure of the mileage calculated in accordance with the Nagpur Plan Formula. The State has 71.6 miles for 100 square miles, as against 26 miles, derived from the Nagpur Plan Formula. However, the road system is not without certain shortcomings, such as those resulting from the uneven distribution of the total mileage among different districts and regions of the State (Table 39). Calicut district and, in a lesser degree, Trichur district have fared rather poorly whether judged in relation to the extent of area served or mileage per 100,000 of population. There are considerable regional disparities between Malabar and Travancore-Cochin.[1] While the former has 61.9 miles of road per 100 square miles of area and 73.5 miles of road per 100,000 of population, the corresponding figures for the latter are 79.6 and 65.2 miles respectively. The area north of Alwaye-Munnar road presents an unsatisfactory situation in respect of road mileage. As Malabar is also relatively not so well-endowed in respect of inland water transport communications the comparative deficiency of road mileage is all the more significant in this area.

8.15 A number of factors reduce at present the maximum economic usefulness of the State's comparatively high road mileage. Among these may be mentioned (*a*) the absence of bridges on many roads (*b*) the weakness of existing culverts and bridges (*c*) poor surfacing (*d*) narrow width even on high traffic density routes (e.g. Trichur-Vadakkancheri, Malapuram-Hitchcock memorial in Calicut) (*e*) tortuous alignments, e.g., along Aroor-Ernakulam route (*f*) delays to traffic owing to reliance on road-cum-rail bridge (Ankamali-Trichur section of the Highway) and (*g*) saturation

[Text continues on p. 130]

[1] Particulars are set out in Table 6 of the NCAER appraisal report on Transport in Kerala.

[Tables 38 + 39, appearing on p. 295 of the text, have not been procured -- Analyst]

[P. 129]

MAP 12

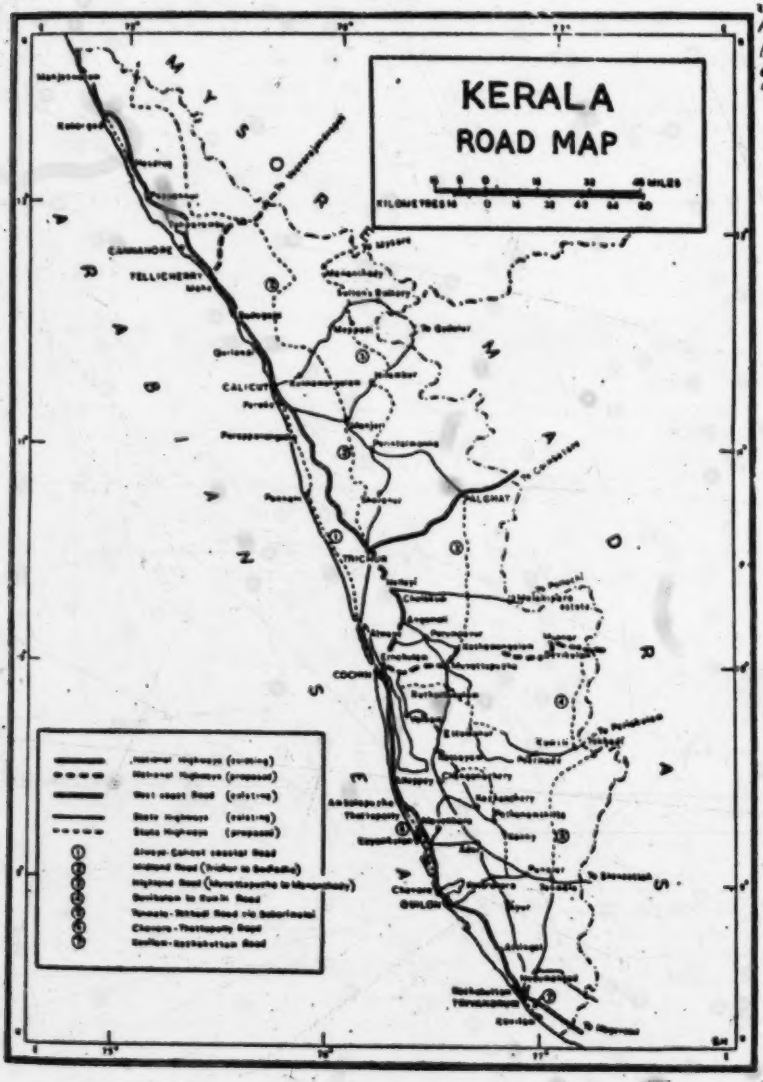

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11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

491 of traffic on arterial routes (e.g., Coimbatore-Cochin). The opening of Aroor Bridge has failed to attract the high potential of traffic expected between Quilon and Ernakulam, as there are weak bridges at least at three points on the route. As a result of lack of bridges, inter-State traffic between Kasargod and Mangalore has to seek a diversion *via* South Coorg. Apart from this, the need for bypasses, which is felt today in and near Calicut, is likely to become an urgent necessity around every focal point of increased industrial growth, such as Ernakulam, Quilon, Alwaye, Palghat, Trichur, etc.

433 491 8.16 Special mention may be made of two vital routes:

(*i*) *Cochin-Coimbatore Road* (*N.H. No. 47*). This road has already become fully saturated with traffic passing between the port of Cochin and the Coimbatore area. The opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge over the Alwaye river has contributed to this saturation to a great extent. Future industrial development and increased traffic at the Cochin port would require the reservation of this road (N.H. No. 47) for fast moving traffic with an additional lane. Infact, even to cater to the present needs, such an arrangement is necessary. Slow moving traffic will have to be diverted to an alternative route from Trichur to Coimbatore *via* Kollengode and Palghat.

(*ii*) *Aroor Bridge—Ernakulam Road*. This length of 9¼ miles of the National Highway is tortuous and incapable of being widened. If it is to cope up with the expanding activities of Cochin area, it will have to be realigned, even before the ship-building yard is located in Cochin. The best plan would be to reclaim land along the coast from Aroor bridge to the site where a bridge is proposed to be constructed near the Thevara College at Ernakulam approximately a distance of four miles, and divert the road on to this reclaimed land; the reclamation will have not only to provide for a road of about 70 ft. width, but could also be used to build a chain of warehouses which are very much in demand. A water frontage to handle the water-borne traffic on this entire four-mile route will also have to be constructed.

ROAD TRANSPORT

493 8.17 The number of mechanized road vehicles in the State—trucks, buses, taxies, private cars, auto-rickshaws, etc.,—has increased sharply from 9,395 in 1956-57 to 23,087 in 1959-60. The number of goods vehicles rose from 2,714 to 5,218, i.e., by 92.2 per cent. But their proportionate share declined, 28.9 per cent of the total number of vehicles, to 22.6 per cent. During the same period, the number of buses increased from 452 to 3,236, that is by over 600 per cent. The percentage to the total number of road vehicles in their case increased from 4.8 per cent to 14 per cent. Passenger transport has thus recorded a striking increase.

8.18 The State has a vehicle density of 2.14 per mile of road, 1.54 per sq. mile of area, and 146.6 per 100,000 of population. The comparative figures for all-India and an industrially advanced State like West Bengal are as follows.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and
499 bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on
491 roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and
652 Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 35 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 400 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

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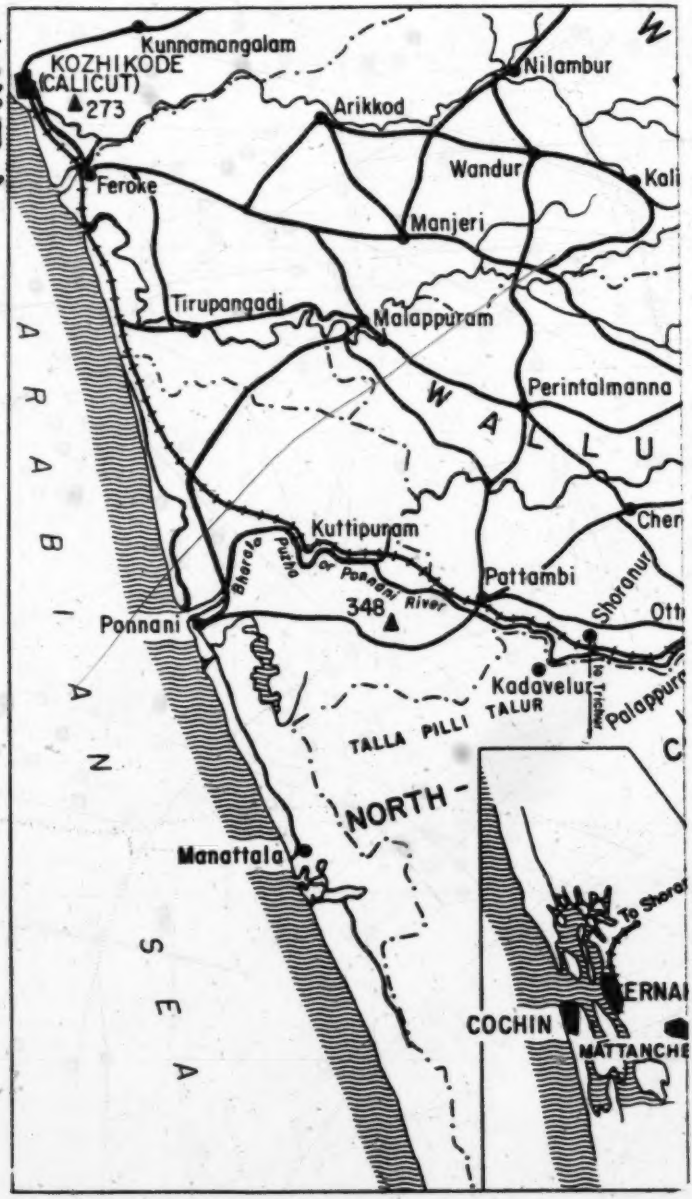

Map II. Map of South Malabar and North Cochin in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

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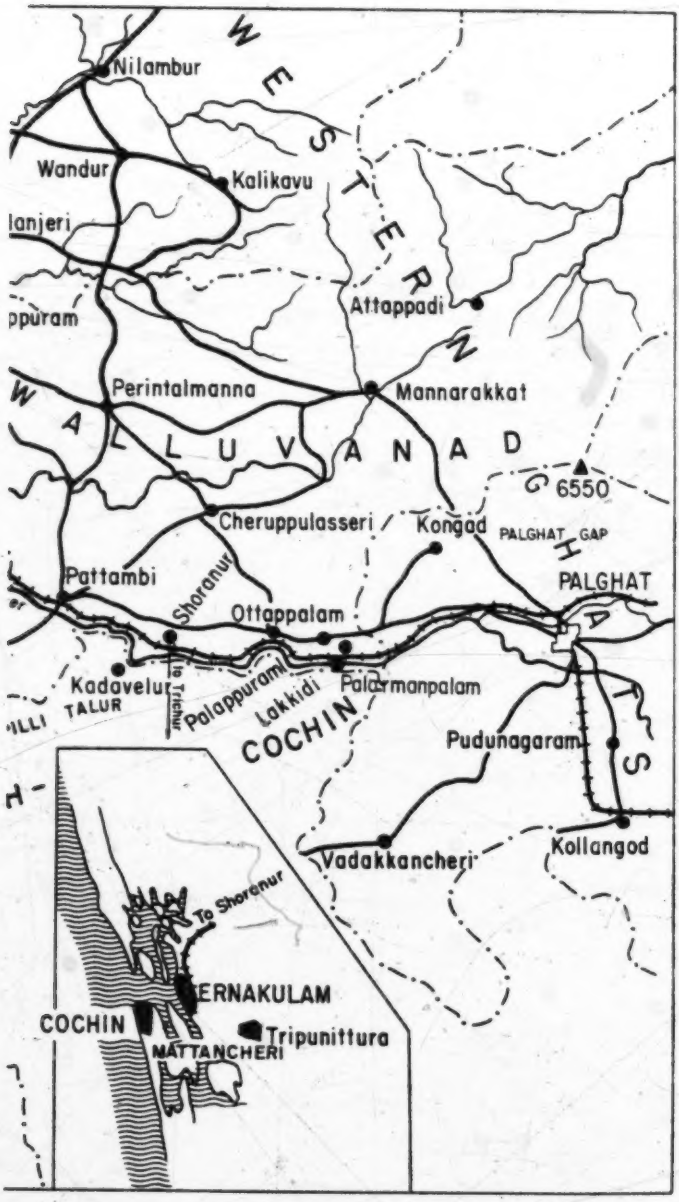

in in Kerala.

0 15 30 miles

[facing P. 176-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

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[491]

Fig. 5. A typical Kerala landscape: the red laterite dust road passes between green paddy fields; the blue sky is reflected in the water of the irrigation channel by the side of the road.

[1008]

Fig. 6. A Christian shrine at a crossroads in Cochin.

[P.238 – A]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

326 father is usually the teacher of his children in the hereditary
[465] caste. A good workman can earn from about 8 annas to 10 annas per day.

438 *Village trade.*—Iron ware used for domestic utensils and for agricultural purposes is got from Trichur, the nearest town. There are however a few retail shops in the 'town.' All articles of consumption are bought from retail shops, the retail keepers themselves getting their wares from either Trichur or Palghat.

Rice is the principal commodity. Arecanut and to some extent pepper and bamboos form important items of sale. There is a fair half a mile to the north of the 'town' which meets once a week (every Wednesday), for the sale of arecanut and pepper. Merchants from various parts of Malabar and even from the east of the Ghats come here to buy arecanuts. Vegetables and sundries also are exposed for sale for the use of the villagers only.

361 The main metalled road which passes from Shoranur to Trichur
491 passes through the middle of the 'town.' Another road from the west touches the main road to the north of the 'town.' The Shoranur-Cochin Railway touches this place. The commercial town of Trichur is only ten miles to the south.

474 Co-operation in trading as well as in most other affairs is conspicuous by its absence. A Registrar of Co-operative Societies has recently been appointed in the State, and, I am told, gave one or two lectures in the place, but nothing came of it. I have hopes that a co-operative credit society will be started within a few years. I may mention that such credit societies have been opened in three places in the taluk and are receiving much help from the State. The co-operative principle as yet is not extended to trading, but with the development of knowledge and culture this may come.

Economic condition—

465 Statement showing wages (in *money*) for the whole State.

Workers.	Minimum.		Maximum.		Maximum in villages.	
	RS.	A.	RS.	A.	RS.	A.
Carpenters	0	6	1	0	0	8
Blacksmiths	0	6	0	12	0	8
Masons	0	6	0	14	0	8
Bricklayers	0	7	0	12	0	8
Sawyers	0	10	1	0	Piece-worker.	
Coolies—						
Male	0	4	0	10	0	6
Female	0	3	0	6	0	3
Boys	0	2	0	4	0	2

To Cherumans payment is made in kind (see above). Also wages are paid in kind to agricultural workers in the village area especially during the harvest season.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

245 eight miles from the village, but the primitive oil mill is chiefly used, worked by two oxen. It is very cheap. Perhaps two rupees would be enough excepting for the oxen.

438 *The village trade.*—The chief articles consumed are rice, fish, vegetables, cereals and spices. The price of the total quantity consumed in the village may be estimated at Rs. 2,50,000, the total sales of the shop being Rs. 3,50,000, of which one lakh is to outsiders.

The quantity of produce taken to the market is not very great. The rice and cereals and spices necessary for consumption come from Palghat and consequently must be bought from the bazaar All other articles that are necessary, e.g., vegetables, fish, salt, chillies, oil, straw, fodder, fuel, etc., are brought to the house by petty traders or by the actual producers. In addition to this there is a weekly fair where local produce to the value of about Rs. 1,000 is sold weekly. A smaller quantity, which may be estimated at Rs. 36,000 per annum, is sold to shopkeepers and they sell to other villages. The people sell to shopkeepers only when they cannot sell in any other way, for the shopkeepers offer only a low price.

491 The main road comes from the Cochin State and passes through the northern and the western side of the village and bends and passes through the southern side. One branch road runs from the west and passes through the centre and ends at the eastern extremity of the village. The road system is not satisfactory. Other branch roads are wanted and those that are made have not been repaired at all for many years, though tolls are collected. People once complained of this to the Taluk Board but to no effect, although thousands of pilgrims visit this place every year on account of the sanctity of the temple. There are numerous by-ways.

498 The nearest railway stations are Pattambi, Trichur, and Watak-
505 kancheri, each twenty miles away. People go to Trichur by boat through the backwaters, and the steam boat that runs from Ponnāni to Tirur is availed of by many and it is cheap. There is backwater communication to Ponnāni and Cochin.

438 Copra, coir, etc., are taken or sent to Cochin and the people get in return rice, cloth, and cereals and other luxuries. Fish can be got from the sea, which is very near the village. The fishermen go every day in the morning and return in the evening.

465 *Economic condition of the village.*—Wages for artisans are always paid in money; for agricultural work both in kind and in money.

Money wages.—The ordinary labourers are always paid in money. In short all those kinds of labour which do not immediately bring fruit to the owner are paid in money. A labourer, for a full day's work, is now paid four annas; five or six years ago three annas. For short work such as carrying weights, etc., the wage is fixed for the moment and will vary according to the distance they have to go, etc. Generally two annas must be paid for one mile as an average. For carrying a bag of rice a high wage is demanded because of high weight.* Woman's labour costs three annas per day now, formerly 2½ annas, a boy's labour 2½ annas now, formerly 2 annas.

Carpenters get six annas a day, boy carpenters three annas, formerly four annas and two annas. Other artisans such as black-

[160 lb.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of 443
Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around [291]
the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to [435]
five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476]
along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Sale of village produce.—Paddy, coconuts, bananas, plantains, arecanuts, pepper, vegetables, medicinal plants and roots are sent to market in larger or smaller quantities. 438

Paddy is not taken to the market, but traders come to the houses or the village shop to buy. Pepper is bought by Muhammadan traders early in the season, while not yet ripe, and afterwards sold at a great profit, often 100 or 200 per cent. All the other articles are taken by the producers to the market, chiefly to the Vaniamkulam weekly fair and sold at greater or smaller profit. A part of the produce is consumed in the village.

The trunk road from Palghat to Ponnani passes through the middle of the village. It leads to the two railway stations of Shoranur (the junction for the South Indian Railway and the Cochin Railway) and Pattambi, which are almost equidistant. The road also passes through Vaniamkulam, 6 miles east of the village, where there is the most important fair in Malabar. The town of Ottappālam (where there is a High School and a Munsif's Court) which is a small commercial centre, also lies on the road, some nine miles east of the village. Palghat is thirty miles east. Ponnāni, 22 miles distant, is a small coast town and a commercial centre and it is the western terminus of the road, which is also connected with Angadipuram, the taluk headquarters. The stream which passes through the village is full during the rains and is accessible to boats from the Ponnāni river. Some trade is thus carried on. Carts are the usual vehicles of transport. There are four in the village itself. 491 498

Village trade and consumption.—There is only one important shop in the village and it is therefore possible to get some idea of the amount of commodities bought by villagers from the accounts of the shop. The shop was started in 1892 and was at that time the only one in those parts. Since then a few petty shops have been started, but the business done by them is not very considerable. They deal mostly in those common articles of every-day consumption which are purchased in small quantities from day to day by the poorer classes. On the other hand the one important shop mentioned supplies the needs not only of the inhabitants of this village but of other villages as well. Some allowance must be made on this score when considering the consumption of commodities by this village, so that the total sales of the village shop may not be taken as representing the purchases of the inhabitants of this place. 443 438

The total sales of the shop amount in value to about Rs. 12,000 a year. The chief items are—

	RS.
Paddy	2,500
Salt	2,000
Coconut-oil	1,500
Iron bolts, bars, screws and other metallic articles	1,000
Kerosene oil	750
Tobacco	750
Gingelly oil	500
Dhall, grains, pulses, etc.	1,500
Betel leaves and nuts	500
Castor oil	250
Sugar	200

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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796 184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or 796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora- 184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali, widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati, 773 in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what 776 was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after 173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra- 796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the 184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, corian- [439] der, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu [492] Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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173
laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam,
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and [492]
goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

Chapter 3

Animal Husbandry

23 ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IN Kerala is poorly developed. It stands in sharp contrast to the well-developed agricultural sector. With the exception of poultry, low livestock productivity marks all aspects of animal husbandry. The milk yield in the State [234] is among the lowest in the country. The total production of milk in Kerala in 1956 has been estimated at 1.82 lakh tons,[1] which works out to a per capita production of 1.3 ozs. as against the minimum of 10 ozs. per capita recommended by the Nutritional Advisory Committee of the Indian Council of Medical Research. This is also true of yield of meat from sheep and goat. Consequently, the contribution of animal [439] husbandry to the State income is comparatively low. During 1957-58 the net contribution of livestock to State income was Rs. 12.2 crores, that is, only 3.3 per cent of the State income while for all-India it was about 8 per cent.

Livestock Population

231 3.2 According to the 1956 Census of livestock, Kerala had a total livestock population of 4,168,000. This consisted of 2,510,000 cattle; 4,88,000 buffaloes; 97,820 sheep; 113,711 pigs; 956,000 goats, fowls and ducks. The number of cows and she- [171] buffaloes in milk per thousand of human population was very low at 30, while the same was as high as 148 in Madhya Pradesh, 123 in Punjab, 150 in Rajasthan (all-India 80). Other major heads of livestock in the same year were sheep (97,820) and pigs (113,711).

3.3 In 1956 there were 838,000 working cattle in the State (Table 20). The significant fact about this is the high proportion of buffaloes to the total working cattle. The buffaloes constituted about one-third of the draught animals. The correspond- [492] ing all-India proportion in the same year was only 9 per cent. Buffaloes are popular in Kerala as draught animals, because of their superior draught capacity and greater suitability for the puddled type of cultivation. This has an important bearing on the formulation of the future breeding policy.

3.4 Between the Census of 1951 and 1956 the livestock population rose by over 17 per cent in the State as against only 4.8 per cent for the entire country. There has been an all round increase under all the major heads except pigs (—3.6%) and sheep [114] (—77%). A large increase in the livestock and poultry population may be partly due to a higher level of reporting in the Census of 1956 over the previous Census.

[113] [1] *Indian Livestock Statistics*, 1953-54 to 1955-56, Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Government of India.

564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with [851] others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [613] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493] * A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

789 magician was called in to prepare one of these. Placing
791 an ordinary style and a small sheet of copper in a box, he closed it. Presently a noise was heard inside the box; and in a few moments a sound as of the style falling. The box was opened and magic figures were found to be inscribed on the copper sheet. The lady wears the talisman now! The magician must have been in a favourable mood on the occasion, as he is said to have given an additional performance on his own account. When he had placed the style and the tiny sheet of copper in the box, taking two young cocoanuts in his hands, he kept on throwing them in the air and catching them. "What will you have in each?" he asked. "Honey in one and boiled milk in the other" was the answer. Of course these were found in the cocoanuts when they were opened by the magician, but it was somewhat gross of the Nâyar gentleman to test the quality of the milk by turning it into curds the next
[493] day. Wonderful stories are told of this man who used to be seen at night carried in a mancheel by invisible bearers, whose weary chant could be heard, but whose bodily presence was beyond the reach of human eye.

791 The last and the chief of this trio is the once famous Kandeth Nayar who departed this life about a hundred
[782] years ago. Every one knows about the Kandeth Nayar, and any one now-a-days who wants to injure another invokes his aid, and resorts to his tomb to fulfil his vow. I understand that sacrifices at his tomb are common, and that his power reaches from the land of shades in almost the same strength as when he lived.

791 The rather incoherent way in which the terms
754 warlock, magician, have been used seems to demand some explanation. Strictly speaking, the Parayan Ôḍiyan is the only warlock. Magician is scarcely the correct term for the ordinary worker in magic. Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible to avoid a somewhat indiscriminate use of these terms on account of the way in which the functions of the warlock, the magician, the astrologer, and even the priest are really interwoven one with the other. The professed magician is often also the warlock and *vice versâ*. The vernacular word, which is as catholic as that which stands for "Religion," is "mantravâḍi"—mantram man; he who is sought every day of the year by hundreds of the people of Kêrala, to relieve them of their physical troubles and infirmities, to cure their cattle, to injure their enemies, aye, even to destroy them.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles [1]

1. Vide pages 18-22.

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491 of traffic on arterial routes (e.g., Coimbatore-Cochin). The opening of Aroor Bridge has failed to attract the high potential of traffic expected between Quilon and Ernakulam, as there are weak bridges at least at three points on the route. As a result of lack of bridges, inter-State traffic between Kasargod and Mangalore has to seek a diversion *via* South Coorg. Apart from this, the need for bypasses, which is felt today in and near Calicut, is likely to become an urgent necessity around every focal point of increased industrial growth, such as Ernakulam, Quilon, Alwaye, Palghat, Trichur, etc.

*433 491 8.16 Special mention may be made of two vital routes:

(i) *Cochin-Coimbatore Road* (*N.H. No. 47*). This road has already become fully saturated with traffic passing between the port of Cochin and the Coimbatore area. The opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge over the Alwaye river has contributed to this saturation to a great extent. Future industrial development and increased traffic at the Cochin port would require the reservation of this road (N.H. No. 47) for fast moving traffic with an additional lane. Infact, even to cater to the present needs, such an arrangement is necessary. Slow moving traffic will have to be diverted to an alternative route from Trichur to Coimbatore *via* Kollengode and Palghat.

(ii) *Aroor Bridge—Ernakulam Road.* This length of 9¼ miles of the National Highway is tortuous and incapable of being widened. If it is to cope up with the expanding activities of Cochin area, it will have to be realigned, even before the ship-building yard is located in Cochin. The best plan would be to reclaim land along the coast from Aroor bridge to the site where a bridge is proposed to be constructed near the Thevara College at Ernakulam approximately a distance of four miles, and divert the road on to this reclaimed land; the reclamation will have not only to provide for a road of about 70 ft. width, but could also be used to build a chain of warehouses which are very much in demand. A water frontage to handle the water-borne traffic on this entire four-mile route will also have to be constructed.

ROAD TRANSPORT

493 8.17 The number of mechanized road vehicles in the State—trucks, buses, taxies, private cars, auto-rickshaws, etc.,—has increased sharply from 9,395 in 1956-57 to 23,087 in 1959-60. The number of goods vehicles rose from 2,714 to 5,218, i.e., by 92.2 per cent. But their proportionate share declined, 28.9 per cent of the total number of vehicles, to 22.6 per cent. During the same period, the number of buses increased from 452 to 3,236, that is by over 600 per cent. The percentage to the total number of road vehicles in their case increased from 4.8 per cent to 14 per cent. Passenger transport has thus recorded a striking increase.

8.18 The State has a vehicle density of 2.14 per mile of road, 1.54 per sq. mile of area, and 146.6 per 100,000 of population. The comparative figures for all-India and an industrially advanced State like West Bengal are as follows.

VEHICLE DENSITY

	Per mile of road	Per sq. mile	Per 100,000 Population
Kerala	2.14	1.54	146.6
West Bengal	1.20	0.92	111.1
India	1.20	0.32	104.0

Kerala comes up with the highest indices, but this is not surprising as the railway serves only certain limited areas and road transport has to serve the other areas.

8.19 Trivandrum and Calicut districts have the largest concentration of goods vehicles on the road ; Alleppey, Ernakulam, and Quilon figure next. As regards the stage carriages, Trivandrum district has the largest fleet ; Trichur, Ernakulam, and Calicut districts also account for large numbers of stage carriages but these are much smaller. The Coimbatore-Cochin route is saturated with goods traffic in cotton bales, fertilizers, planks, tea, tapioca, machinery, hardware, etc., particularly since the opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge replacing the Desom ferry. The traffic was expected to go up by about 50 per cent during 1961. Similarly the traffic between Calicut and Coimbatore, across the Palghat gap and between Calicut and Wynad (timber traffic) bound for destinations in Salem, Madras, Mysore, Tuticorin, etc., has been on the increase. As industrial developments presage considerable increase of traffic on these routes, problems of alignment, bridging, extra lanes, expressway sections, etc., may call for more investment and additional construction.

8.20 About 250 trucks are operating between Mysore and Kerala on inter-State routes. They are subject to the restriction that they may not operate on more than three important straight routes, not exceeding 300 miles in each State. Inter-State routing arrangements between Madras and Kerala are yet to be completed.

8.21 The business in goods transport in the State suffers from the preponderance of owner-operators of single trucks (1,717 operators). There are only five operators in the State who own more than 10 trucks. The predominance o. the owner-operator of single trucks is likely to prevent the industry from obtaining the economies and advantages of enhanced efficiency resulting from better organization of road transport in the State.

8.22 Among other features of the transport system special mention may be made of chronic over-loading of vehicles and the beginning of movement in truck-trailer combinations in order to circumvent difficulties arising from restrictions of weight over weak bridges and culverts. Study and analysis of road transport problems are rendered more difficult by the paucity of data regarding traffic, the absence of regular departmental road census of vehicles and traffic, etc. A limited degree of nationalization of goods transport by road has been introduced on the Cochin-Mannar route where 10 to 18 trucks carry tea from the estates to Cochin, and rice, manures and machinery from Cochin to the estates.

8.23 Despite an early start, the nationalized road passenger services have not made much headway. About 458 vehicles are on the road, covering 24.9 million miles annually, and carrying about 65.3 million passengers. The larger revenues resulting from increased traffic and higher fares,[1] have not improved the net profits of

[1] The revenues rose by Rs. 31 lakhs.

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494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and
499 bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on
491 roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and
652 Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

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upon the maintenance of navigability in the waterways, and removal of a number of handicaps listed in para 8.28. 433* 489

CONCLUSIONS

8.47 The conclusions that follow from the general traffic pattern outlined above are (*a*) accessions to traffic may be expected just in those areas and routes where it is strikingly high already (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur), (*b*) spare transport capacity on many railway sections will be absorbed, (*c*) the road, rail and waterway links to the ports may need improvement, and (*d*) further, the road transport capacity and terminal facilities should be increased to meet mounting demands.[1]

8.48 The railways have an important role to play, mainly in inter-State traffic and in helping the work of the ports. In the Third Plan, an investment of Rs. 1.2 crores i.e., of the same order as proposed and accepted but unfulfilled in the Second Plan may be necessary, mainly in connection with increase in the line capacity on vital routes (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur). If traffic and engineering surveys establish the economic feasibility of Trivandrum-Nagercoil-Tirunelveli line, it may be considered for the Fourth Plan. 433* 499

8.49 As the eastern regions of the State are untouched by the Railways and are likely to remain so, these have to rely mainly on road transport. It is necessary to extend, bridge, and improve the road network in these areas till at least 50 per cent of the targets set for 1981 are achieved by 1971[2]. The expenditure will be about Rs. 17 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 26.3 crores in the Fourth Plan.

8.50 The Third Plan programme for roads and bridges in the State will cover the development of arterial routes and cross-roads in the north of the State (Rs. 4.32 crores), improvement of arterial routes in the south including the opening of Thenmala-Thekkadi road (Rs. 1 crore), the Vypeen Island Scheme (Rs. 1 crore), construction and improvement of about 3,600 miles of district and village roads (Rs. 5.996 crores) and the construction and improvement of 122 major and 584 minor bridges and culverts. Schemes spilling over from the Second Plan and costing Rs. 1.62 crores will also have to be completed. It is desirable to institute a road fund in the State to finance road development. The particular areas and routes where extension and improvements are possible in the next five years are set out in Table 43. The physical targets are indicated in Table 44.[3]

8.51 The number of trucks will need to be considerably augmented to cope up with the anticipated demands of traffic. The investment on trucks may amount to about Rs. 11 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 10.29 crores in the Fourth Plan. The number of passenger buses may require to be increased by 2,400 in 10 years. About 4,600 buses may have to be replaced by the end of 1971. This would entail an expenditure of Rs. 20.5 crores. The State's Third Plan envisages the continuance of the 433* 493 494

[1] Passenger traffic is certain to go up with rising population and concentrations of industry and trade at such centres as Trivandrum, Quilon, Kundara, Cochin, Ernakulam, Trichur, Palghat, Calicut and Cannanore but no estimate of the passenger service demands has been made here.

[2] Targets for 1981 as per formula of the Chief Engineers' Plan, Bombay (1960).

[3] [Table 44, appearing on p. 298 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 493 494 policy of gradual nationalization. In the nationalized sector, about 560 additional vehicles are proposed to be put on the road at a cost of Rs. 2.16 crores. Investment on land, buildings and equipment is to be Rs. 87.7 lakhs. A Road Transport Corporation should be formed to run the bus service. The private sector will have to meet the residual road passenger needs.

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8.54 Port of Cochin can be expected to play an even more dominant role in the transport of the State as the economy takes off. An investment of Rs. 1.75 crores proposed to be incurred to improve facilities at Cochin Port during the Third Plan will benefit not merely Kerala but Madras and other States. It will add conspicuously to the State's transport capacity, created by the investments in roads, waterways and railways within the State.

[PP. 139-205 not processed]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

133
[493]
[491]

Fig. 5. A typical Kerala landscape: the red laterite dust road passes between green paddy fields; the blue sky is reflected in the water of the irrigation channel by the side of the road.

[1018]

Fig. 6. A Christian shrine at a crossroads in Cochin.

[P.238-A]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

bearers.* The Sūdra clan supplies female servants in the 564
houses of Nambūdiris. The Vattakkād (or Chakkingal : [258]
chakku, oil press) clan, whose proper *métier* is producing
gingelly or cocoanut oil with tne oil-mill, is the lowest
of all, excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in [553]
North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nāyars of
the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkād
to be Nāyars, and say that they have adopted the
honorary affix Nāyar to their names quite recently."
There is some obscurity as regards the sub-divisions
of the Vattakkād clan. To the north of Calicut, in
Kurumbranād, they are divided into the Undiātuna, or
those who pull (to work the oil-machine by hand), and
the Murivechchu-ātune, or those who tie or fasten
bullocks, to work the oil-machine. Yet further north,
at Tellicherry and thereabouts, there are no known
sub-divisions, while in Ernād, to the eastward, the clan
is divided into the Veluttātu (white) and Karuttātu
(black). The white have nothing to do with the [258]
expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary [264]
occupation of the black. The white may eat with
Nāyars of any clan ; the black can eat with no others
outside their own clan. The black sub-clan is strictly
endogamous ; the other, the superior sub-clan, is not.
Their women may marry men of any other clan, the
Pallichchan excepted. Union by marriage, or whatever
the function may be named, is permissible between most
of the other clans, the rule by which a woman may
never unite herself with her inferior being always
observed. She may unite herself with a man of her
own clan, or with a man of any superior clan, or with
a Nambūtiri, an Embrāntiri, or any other Brāhman,

* A manchil is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, and more like a [493]
hammock slung on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palanquin.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

VEHICLE DENSITY

	Per mile of road	Per sq. mile	Per 100,000 Population
Kerala	2.14	1.54	146.6
West Bengal	1.20	0.92	111.1
India	1.20	0.32	104.0

493
171

Kerala comes up with the highest indices, but this is not surprising as the railway serves only certain limited areas and road transport has to serve the other areas.

8.19 Trivandrum and Calicut districts have the largest concentration of goods vehicles on the road ; Alleppey, Ernakulam, and Quilon figure next. As regards the stage carriages, Trivandrum district has the largest fleet ; Trichur, Ernakulam, and Calicut districts also account for large numbers of stage carriages but these are much smaller. The Coimbatore-Cochin route is saturated with goods traffic in cotton bales, fertilizers, planks, tea, tapioca, machinery, hardware, etc., particularly since the opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge replacing the Desom ferry. The traffic was expected to go up by about 50 per cent during 1961. Similarly the traffic between Calicut and Coimbatore, across the Palghat gap and between Calicut and Wynad (timber traffic) bound for destinations in Salem, Madras, Mysore, Tuticorin, etc., has been on the increase. As industrial developments presage considerable increase of traffic on these routes, problems of alignment, bridging, extra lanes, expressway sections, etc., may call for more investment and additional construction. 494

8.20 About 250 trucks are operating between Mysore and Kerala on inter-State routes. They are subject to the restriction that they may not operate on more than three important straight routes, not exceeding 300 miles in each State. Inter-State routing arrangements between Madras and Kerala are yet to be completed.

8.21 The business in goods transport in the State suffers from the preponderance of owner-operators of single trucks (1,717 operators). There are only five operators in the State who own more than 10 trucks. The predominance o. the owner-operator of single trucks is likely to prevent the industry from obtaining the economies and advantages of enhanced efficiency resulting from better organization of road transport in the State. [422]

8.22 Among other features of the transport system special mention may be made of chronic over-loading of vehicles and the beginning of movement in truck-trailer combinations in order to circumvent difficulties arising from restrictions of weight over weak bridges and culverts. Study and analysis of road transport problems are rendered more difficult by the paucity of data regarding traffic, the absence of regular departmental road census of vehicles and traffic, etc. A limited degree of nationalization of goods transport by road has been introduced on the Cochin-Mannar route where 10 to 18 trucks carry tea from the estates to Cochin, and rice, manures and machinery from Cochin to the estates.

8.23 Despite an early start, the nationalized road passenger services have not made much headway. About 458 vehicles are on the road, covering 24.9 million miles annually, and carrying about 65.3 million passengers. The larger revenues resulting from increased traffic and higher fares,[1] have not improved the net profits of [652]

[1] The revenues rose by Rs. 31 lakhs.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

494 652 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs in 1959-60.

499 491 652 8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 35 lakhs

493 494 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

487 503 505 [688]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

upon the maintenance of navigability in the waterways, and removal of a number of handicaps listed in para 8.28. 433* 489

CONCLUSIONS

8.47 The conclusions that follow from the general traffic pattern outlined above are (*a*) accessions to traffic may be expected just in those areas and routes where it is strikingly high already (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur), (*b*) spare transport capacity on many railway sections will be absorbed, (*c*) the road, rail and waterway links to the ports may need improvement, and (*d*) further, the road transport capacity and terminal facilities should be increased to meet mounting demands.[1]

8.48 The railways have an important role to play, mainly in inter-State traffic and in helping the work of the ports. In the Third Plan, an investment of Rs. 1.2 crores i.e., of the same order as proposed and accepted but unfulfilled in the Second Plan may be necessary, mainly in connection with increase in the line capacity on vital routes (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur). If traffic and engineering surveys establish the economic feasibility of Trivandrum-Nagercoil-Tirunelveli line, it may be considered for the Fourth Plan. 433* 499

8.49 As the eastern regions of the State are untouched by the Railways and are likely to remain so, these have to rely mainly on road transport. It is necessary to extend, bridge, and improve the road network in these areas till at least 50 per cent of the targets set for 1981 are achieved by 1971[2]. The expenditure will be about Rs. 17 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 26.3 crores in the Fourth Plan.

8.50 The Third Plan programme for roads and bridges in the State will cover the development of arterial routes and cross-roads in the north of the State (Rs. 4.32 crores), improvement of arterial routes in the south including the opening of Thenmala-Thekkadi road (Rs. 1 crore), the Vypeen Island Scheme (Rs. 1 crore), construction and improvement of about 3,600 miles of district and village roads (Rs. 5.996 crores) and the construction and improvement of 122 major and 584 minor bridges and culverts. Schemes spilling over from the Second Plan and costing Rs. 1.62 crores will also have to be completed. It is desirable to institute a road fund in the State to finance road development. The particular areas and routes where extension and improvements are possible in the next five years are set out in Table 43. The physical targets are indicated in Table 44.[3]

8.51 The number of trucks will need to be considerably augmented to cope up with the anticipated demands of traffic. The investment on trucks may amount to about Rs. 11 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 10.29 crores in the Fourth Plan. The number of passenger buses may require to be increased by 2,400 in 10 years. About 4,600 buses may have to be replaced by the end of 1971. This would entail an expenditure of Rs. 20.5 crores. The State's Third Plan envisages the continuance of the 433* 493 494

[1] Passenger traffic is certain to go up with rising population and concentrations of industry and trade at such centres as Trivandrum, Quilon, Kundara, Cochin, Ernakulam, Trichur, Palghat, Calicut and Cannanore but no estimate of the passenger service demands has been made here.

[2] Targets for 1981 as per formula of the Chief Engineers' Plan, Bombay (1960).

[3] [Table 44, appearing on p. 298 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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[PP. 139-205 not processed]

133 Calicut, Cochin, Alleppey, Quilon and Trivan-
361 drum), are situated on the coast, divided by chains of little fishing villages. In the northern
133 half a railway runs along its edge from Manga-
361 lore in South Canara, southeast to Shoranur,
496 where it divides and turns off northeast to Madras and south to Ernakulam, the capital of Cochin State. In the extreme south another railway comes in from Tinnevelly District in the east, and follows the coast from Quilon to Trivandrum. (See Map 1.)

133 The midlands comprise low hills and fertile
24 valleys. Broad strips of alluvial rice-lands lie in the valleys, thinning out as the land rises into the foothills of the Ghats. On the hill slopes are gardens of coconut palms, tapioca, plantains, pepper, ginger, rubber, cashew-nut trees, and many fruit trees such as jack and mango. Cashews (introduced by the Portuguese) and pepper have become for the past 100 years particularly important cash crops on the hill-slopes of North Malabar District, while bamboo is more prevalent in South Malabar District and Cochin. The coconut is ubiquitous and very important in the total economy. There are a few small bazaar
[361] towns, [3] but most of the people live in villages, on garden land surrounding or surrounded by wet paddy-flats.

133 The highlands rising into the Ghats are covered
[136] mainly by thick virgin forests harbouring wild elephant and small tigers. The foothills are
[162] sparsely populated by people of the same cultural groups as are found in the plains, while higher in the mountains live primitive tribes.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564
[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
648 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
634 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
635 centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

258 464 Cashewnut industry, by the very nature of the process involved, does not require much of capital equipment. Although the average size of cashewnut factories is about 400 workers per unit, capital requirements in the industry hardly exceed 288 Rs. 200 per worker. Even the coir and cotton textile factories in Kerala use only the handlooms. Existence of handlooms within the precincts of textile factories is, in fact, a unique phenomenon in Kerala (especially the Malabar region). Only a dozen out of over 300 textile factories use modern equipment. Nowhere else in India can this be seen.

434 1.46 The contrast between a well-developed primary sector and a backward industrial sector is also brought out by comparative wage statistics for the two sectors. It has already been pointed out that in spite of a high degree of unemployment in the agricultural sector, the wage rates and average household earnings, though low, do not compare very unfavourably with the average for all-India. On the other hand, the average annual earnings of workers in factories covered by the Payment of Wages Act are only Rs. 736 per worker. As may be seen from the table below, this figure is one of the lowest in the whole of India.

434 171

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS OF FACTORY EMPLOYEES, 1956

	Rs.
Andhra	595
Assam	1,526
Bihar	1,236
Bombay	1,415
Madhya Pradesh	982
Madras	950
Orissa	947
Punjab	991
Uttar Pradesh	1,014
West Bengal	1,142
KERALA	736

SOURCE: *Statistical Abstract of India* (1957-58).

185 *Overhead Facilities*

1.47 In respect of overhead facilities, Kerala is fortunately better placed than many other parts of India. This has been the result of a progressive policy followed by the Governments of the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, whose rulers took an active interest in the development of various public amenities and tried to attract industrialists from other parts of India to invest in Kerala.

496 1.48 In the sphere of transport, the coverage of Railways is rather limited, total route mileaghe being only 543 miles. This is, however, more than compensated by the 491 wide network of roadways, which in spite of its many drawbacks, is superior to that in most other parts of India. The extent of road mileage per 100 square miles as well as the vehicle density in Kerala are the highest in the country. Road transport is, in general, more suited to conditions prevailing in Kerala than Railways because of the uneven nature of the terrain.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Transport

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11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

embark and disembark every month at the two airports of the State in Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.3 The State's transport system has to meet not only the requirements of the internal movement of traffic and the needs of inter-State and overseas trade and commerce of the State, but also the traffic connected with the import and export trade of adjoining areas in the neighbouring States. Calicut and Cochin provide suitable inlets and outlets for the intake of oil fuels, cotton, hardware and machinery, fertilizers and foodgrains, and for exports of tea, coffee, etc.

The Transport System

8.4 The transport system of the State consists of:

A. Sections of the Southern Railway, 543 miles long; (broad gauge 331 miles; metre gauge 204 miles; mixed gauge 8 miles), serving port-towns such as Cochin, Quilon and Calicut, and other important industrial centres.

B. A road network made up of national and provincial highways (1,432 miles) and district and village roads (9,307 miles).

C. A unique inland waterway system of navigable rivers and coastal and cross canals, 1,178 miles long.

D. Thirteen ports, including a major port at Cochin, and two active minor ports at Calicut and Alleppey.

E. One hundred and eleven statute miles of airways, with airports at Trivandrum and Cochin.

8.5 Nearly 145,000 persons,[1] constituting 2.93 per cent of the working force of the State are engaged in transportation and account for an annual income of Rs. 8.697 crores.

8.6 The features of this system, particularly in relation to the physical and financial (investment) demands that the growth of the State's economy may make on it in the coming decade (1961–71) are highlighted here for each medium of transport.

THE RAILWAYS

8.7 In relation to the extent of area served (14,992 sq. miles), the railway mileage per 100 square miles of State territory (3.6 miles) compares favourably with all-India (2.7 miles) and Mysore (2.2 miles); Madras State is better served with 4.4 miles per 100 square miles. The railway mileage per 100,000 of population in the State is however, only 3.4 miles, slightly less than a third of what it is for all-India, viz., 9.5 miles. The corresponding figures for the adjoining States of Mysore and Madras are higher being 6.2 and 5.6 miles respectively. The comparatively lower average

[Text continues on p. 127]

[1] 1951 Census figures.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 11

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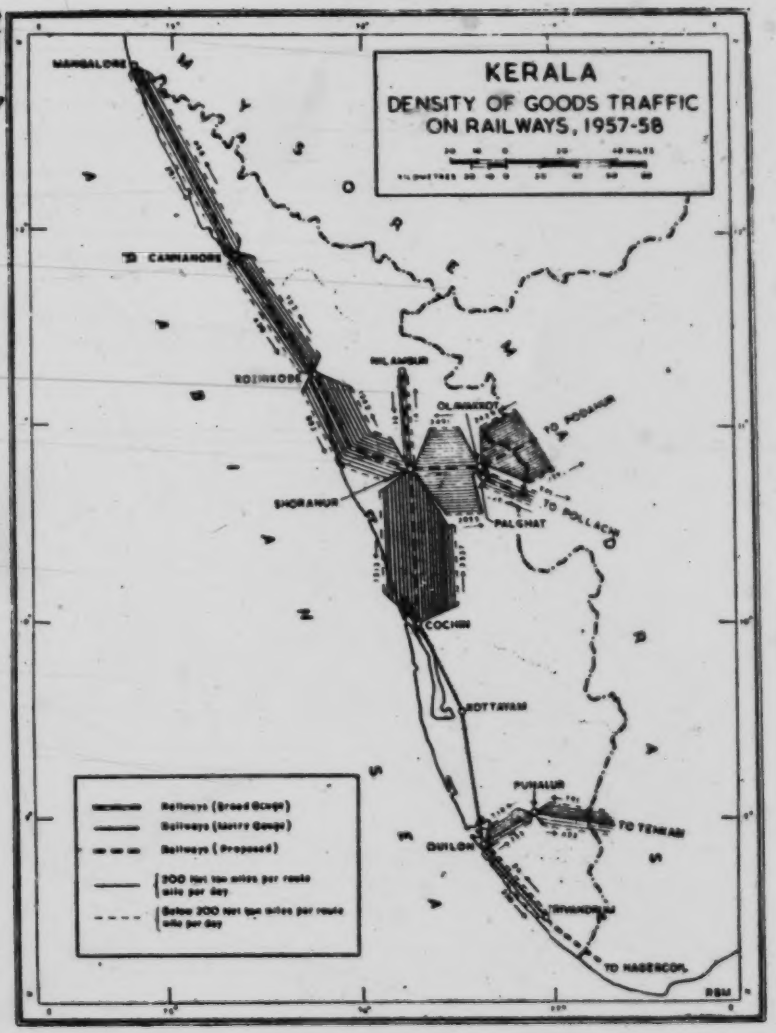

for Kerala is to be ascribed to the State's high density of population.[1] Within the State, the districts of Quilon, Palghat, Calicut, Trichur and Cannanore are more favourably placed with regard to railways than others. Alleppey, which is least provided with railway mileage and facilities, and the districts of Kottayam and Ernakulam make up for their low railway mileage through roads and extensive waterways.[2] 496

8.8 The region south of Ernakulam and Cochin is served by the metre gauge line, and the region north of these by broad gauge. There is break of gauge in Ernakulam, involving transhipment of through traffic moving north or south as the case may be. Cochin harbour, however, is served by both gauges, the metre gauge giving access to the south, and the broad gauge to the north, and north-east of the State as well as the adjoining areas of the Madras State.

8.9 As the main railway line from Trivandrum to Kasargod lies almost all along the coast, except for the section between Ernakulam and Karthikapalli on the Ernakulam-Quilon section, railway facilities are not within easy reach of the eastern border areas of the State. Also a potential traffic route from Trivandrum to Tirunelveli *via* Nagercoil and Cape Comorin remains untouched by the railways.

8.10 On many sections of the railway within the State there is spare line capacity (Table 37).[3] Though at present Cochin-Shoranur section has some spare line capacity, it may be called on to handle considerable increases in traffic, requiring additional line capacity. In the hinterland of Calicut Port, however, there appears to be enough capacity to cope up with additional demands that industrial and port developments there may generate. 497

8.11 In the railway sections within the State, the traffic is not balanced. The inward (or import) movements generally trend to exceed the outward (or export) movements as measured by net ton miles per route miles, per day. The imbalance has been maximum on the Cochin-Shoranur line and had tended to increase. However, since 1955–57, the imbalance has tended to reverse its direction. Shoranur-Calicut, Shoranur-Punalur, Quilon-Trivandrum Central, Punalur-Quilon are other sections where imbalances may be observed. The twin problems of additional demands on line capacity and uneliminated imbalance of traffic are both likely to show up together on the Cochin-Shoranur line, as the traffic to and from Cochin harbour registers an increase.

8.12 The pressure of passenger-traffic bookings, already heavy at Calicut, Quilon, Ernakulam, Alwaye and Trivandrum Central, is likely to get very much accentuated since these are precisely the locations where growth of urban concentrations is likely to come about with the development of the new industries proposed by the National Council for the decade 1961–71.

[1] The backwardness is compensated by waterways, coastal movement and a working road and road transport system.

[2] The regional provision of railways is as follows:

	Mileage per 100 sq. miles	*Mileage per 100,000 population*
Travancore-Cochin area	3.13	2.56
Malabar area	4.22	5.02

[3] [Table 37, appearing on p. 294 of the text, has not been processed] - Analyst

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

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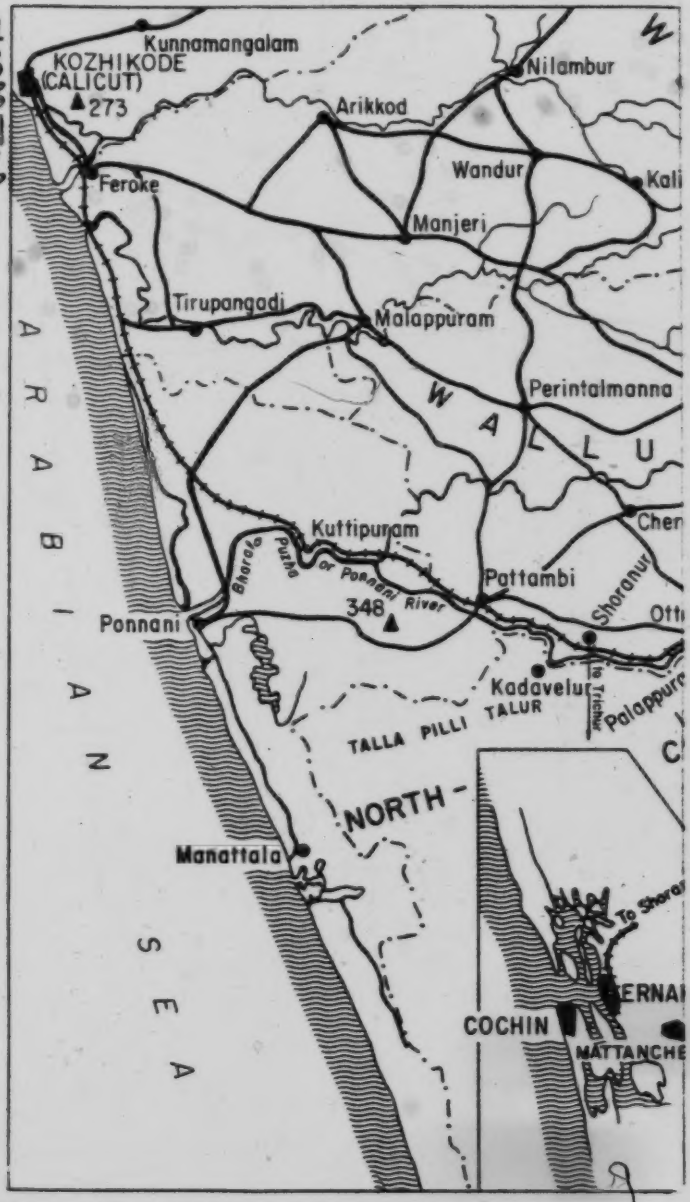

Map II. Map of South Malabar and North Cochin in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

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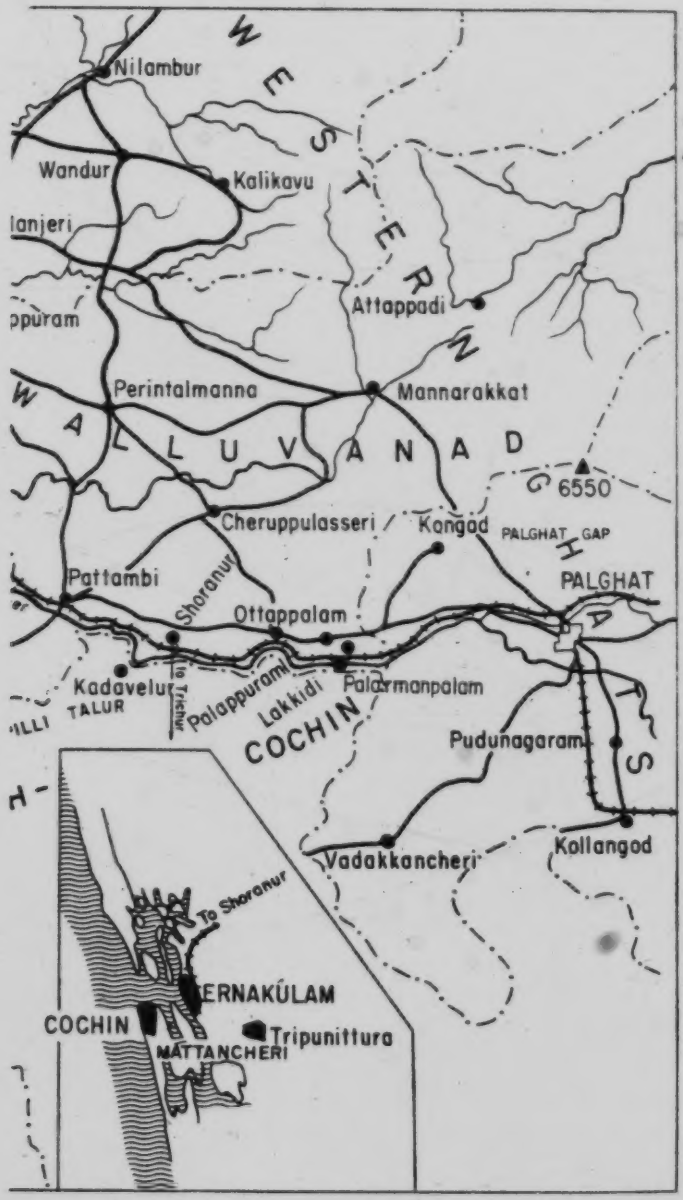

in in Kerala.

[facing P. 176-B]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 11

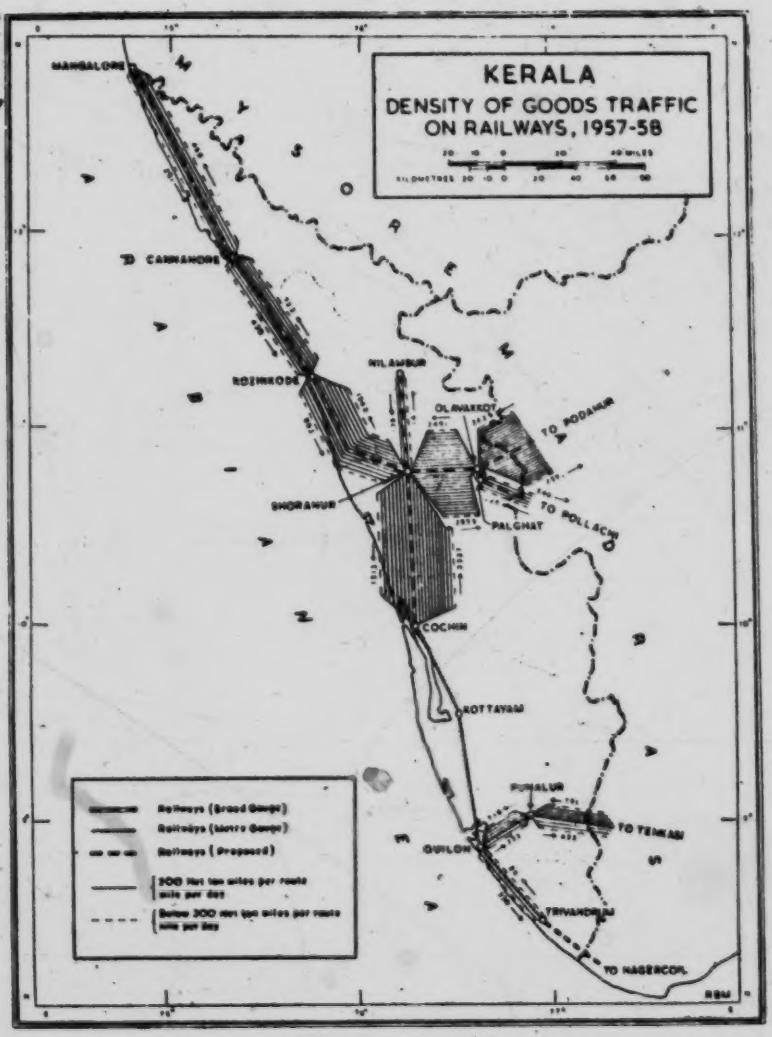

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[3] [Table 37, appearing on p. 294 of the text, has not been processed] - Analyst

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

245 eight miles from the village, but the primitive oil mill is chiefly used, worked by two oxen. It is very cheap. Perhaps two rupees would be enough excepting for the oxen.

438 *The village trade.*—The chief articles consumed are rice, fish, vegetables, cereals and spices. The price of the total quantity consumed in the village may be estimated at Rs. 2,50,000, the total sales of the shop being Rs. 3,50,000, of which one lakh is to outsiders.

The quantity of produce taken to the market is not very great. The rice and cereals and spices necessary for consumption come from Palghat and consequently must be bought from the bazaar All other articles that are necessary, e.g., vegetables, fish, salt, chillies, oil, straw, fodder, fuel, etc., are brought to the house by petty traders or by the actual producers. In addition to this there is a weekly fair where local produce to the value of about Rs. 1,000 is sold weekly. A smaller quantity, which may be estimated at Rs. 36,000 per annum, is sold to shopkeepers and they sell to other villages. The people sell to shopkeepers only when they cannot sell in any other way, for the shopkeepers offer only a low price.

491 The main road comes from the Cochin State and passes through the northern and the western side of the village and bends and passes through the southern side. One branch road runs from the west and passes through the centre and ends at the eastern extremity of the village. The road system is not satisfactory. Other branch roads are wanted and those that are made have not been repaired at all for many years, though tolls are collected. People once complained of this to the Taluk Board but to no effect, although thousands of pilgrims visit this place every year on account of the sanctity of the temple. There are numerous by-ways.

498 The nearest railway stations are Pattambi, Trichur, and Watak-
505 kancheri, each twenty miles away. People go to Trichur by boat through the backwaters, and the steam boat that runs from Ponnāni to Tirur is availed of by many and it is cheap. There is backwater communication to Ponnāni and Cochin.

438 Copra, coir, etc., are taken or sent to Cochin and the people get in return rice, cloth, and cereals and other luxuries. Fish can be got from the sea, which is very near the village. The fishermen go every day in the morning and return in the evening.

465 *Economic condition of the village.*—Wages for artisans are always paid in money; for agricultural work both in kind and in money.

Money wages.—The ordinary labourers are always paid in money. In short all those kinds of labour which do not immediately bring fruit to the owner are paid in money. A labourer, for a full day's work, is now paid four annas; five or six years ago three annas. For short work such as carrying weights, etc., the wage is fixed for the moment and will vary according to the distance they have to go, etc. Generally two annas must be paid for one mile as an average. For carrying a bag of rice a high wage is demanded because of high weight.* Woman's labour costs three annas per day now, formerly 2½ annas, a boy's labour 2½ annas now, formerly 2 annas.

Carpenters get six annas a day, boy carpenters three annas, formerly four annas and two annas. Other artisans such as black-

[160 lb.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Sale of village produce.—Paddy, coconuts, bananas, plantains, arecanuts, pepper, vegetables, medicinal plants and roots are sent to market in larger or smaller quantities. 438

Paddy is not taken to the market, but traders come to the houses or the village shop to buy. Pepper is bought by Muhammadan traders early in the season, while not yet ripe, and afterwards sold at a great profit, often 100 or 200 per cent. All the other articles are taken by the producers to the market, chiefly to the Vaniamkulam weekly fair and sold at greater or smaller profit. A part of the produce is consumed in the village.

The trunk road from Palghat to Ponnani passes through the middle of the village. It leads to the two railway stations of Shoranur (the junction for the South Indian Railway and the Cochin Railway) and Pattambi, which are almost equidistant. The road also passes through Vaniamkulam, 6 miles east of the village, where there is the most important fair in Malabar. The town of Ottappālam (where there is a High School and a Munsif's Court) which is a small commercial centre, also lies on the road, some nine miles east of the village. Palghat is thirty miles east. Ponnāni, 22 miles distant, is a small coast town and a commercial centre and it is the western terminus of the road, which is also connected with Angadipuram, the taluk headquarters. The stream which passes through the village is full during the rains and is accessible to boats from the Ponnāni river. Some trade is thus carried on. Carts are the usual vehicles of transport. There are four in the village itself. 491 498

Village trade and consumption.—There is only one important shop in the village and it is therefore possible to get some idea of the amount of commodities bought by villagers from the accounts of the shop. The shop was started in 1892 and was at that time the only one in those parts. Since then a few petty shops have been started, but the business done by them is not very considerable. They deal mostly in those common articles of every-day consumption which are purchased in small quantities from day to day by the poorer classes. On the other hand the one important shop mentioned supplies the needs not only of the inhabitants of this village but of other villages as well. Some allowance must be made on this score when considering the consumption of commodities by this village, so that the total sales of the village shop may not be taken as representing the purchases of the inhabitants of this place. 443 438

The total sales of the shop amount in value to about Rs. 12,000 a year. The chief items are—

	RS.
Paddy	2,500
Salt	2,000
Coconut-oil	1,500
Iron bolts, bars, screws and other metallic articles	1,000
Kerosene oil	750
Tobacco	750
Gingelly oil	500
Dhall, grains, pulses, etc.	1,500
Betel leaves and nuts	500
Castor oil	250
Sugar	200

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Forest Roads

4.57 Although in respect of overall position regarding forest roads, Kerala is comparatively better off and accessibility is quite good, there are some remote areas for which new roads are required. Opening up of these areas through forest roads would permit tapping of certain pockets of forest resources uptil now lying untapped. Some of these important roads which have been suggested for being taken up during the Third Plan are :

(a) *Roads from Dhon to Palamalai*—to tap the Chenat Nair reserved forests and to make Palamalai a summer resort.

(b) *Extension of the Silent Valley roads to the borders of the Nilgiris district*—to tap the rich resources of the Silent Valley reserved forest and the improvement of its existing natural regeneration.

(c) *Construction of a road from Nelliampathy Parambikulam Tellikkal.* This will make Sungam and Parambikulam Ranges accessible through the Kerala territory only. At present, the State has to depend on the goodwill of the Madras Forest Department for the extraction of forest produces.

The cost of constructing these roads is estimated to be Rs. 50 lakhs.

Training Facilities

4.58 The programme for raising forest plantations can be implemented smoothly only if there is adequately trained personnel to deal with the several technical problems. At present the staff is generally deputed to Forest Colleges at Dehra Dun and Coimbatore for training. These colleges cannot, however, meet the requirements of training lower grade staff. It is, therefore, suggested that in view of the importance of forestry to Kerala, this State should have a separate training institute of its own. This institute, may be located at Peechi.

Resource Survey

4.59 For proper planning of forest-based industries, the exact extent of availability and location of different types of forest resources should be known. In the past, development has been impeded by industries being allotted more areas than was warranted by their capacity. This has thwarted development of other industries which could have utilized the surplus raw material from the forest coupes. These defects can be remedied only if a full inventory of forest resources is available. Uptil now only a survey of bamboo areas has been carried out. During the Third Plan a full resource survey should be carried out.

ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED FOR THE DEVELOPMENTS PROPOSED

4.60 If the development programmes proposed in this report are to be carried out, strengthening of the Forest Department will be necessary. Appointment of

*433 499 8.13 The programme of investment in the rail facilities in the State was estimated to cost Rs. 1.015 crores during the Second Plan. Till early 1960 it seems only about one-third (34.3 %) of this amount had been spent. Major items of expenditure were on re-railing of track in the Shoranur-Calicut section, provision of metre gauge facilities at Cochin harbour and conversion of a number of stations into crossing stations and improvements therein. But progress was not substantial on account of non-arrival of materials, etc. Line capacity works were undertaken on the Punalur-Quilon section, increasing the number of trains from 11 to 12 and the net ton miles by 1.24 million. Additional loops were provided at Calicut, which helped to reduce detention of trains at adjacent stations. Additional platforms, goods sheds and marshalling yards were provided at Quilon to receive and assist the traffic on the new metre gauge link with Ernakulam. Engineering and traffic surveys for a new line from Tellicherry to Mangalore *via* Coorg were completed. Proposals relating to alignments between Trivandrum and Tirunelveli *via* Nagercoil and Cape Comorin are stated to be under consideration of the Railway Board.

ROAD NETWORK

491 8.14 The total road mileage in the State at 10,739 miles (Table 38) 2 exceeds the figure of the mileage calculated in accordance with the Nagpur Plan Formula. The State has 71.6 miles for 100 square miles, as against 26 miles, derived from the Nagpur Plan Formula. However, the road system is not without certain shortcomings, such as those resulting from the uneven distribution of the total mileage among different districts and regions of the State (Table 39) 3 Calicut district and, in a lesser degree, Trichur district have fared rather poorly whether judged in relation to the extent of area served or mileage per 100,000 of population. There are considerable regional disparities between Malabar and Travancore-Cochin.[1] While the former has 61.9 miles of road per 100 square miles of area and 73.5 miles of road per 100,000 of population, the corresponding figures for the latter are 79.6 and 65.2 miles respectively. The area north of Alwaye-Munnar road presents an unsatisfactory situation in respect of road mileage. As Malabar is also relatively not so well-endowed in respect of inland water transport communications the comparative deficiency of road mileage is all the more significant in this area.

8.15 A number of factors reduce at present the maximum economic usefulness of the State's comparatively high road mileage. Among these may be mentioned (*a*) the absence of bridges on many roads (*b*) the weakness of existing culverts and bridges (*c*) poor surfacing (*d*) narrow width even on high traffic density routes (e.g. Trichur-Vadakkancheri, Malapuram-Hitchcock memorial in Calicut) (*e*) tortuous alignments, e.g., along Aroor-Ernakulam route (*f*) delays to traffic owing to reliance on road-cum-rail bridge (Ankamali-Trichur section of the Highway) and (*g*) saturation

[Text continues on p. 130]

[1] Particulars are set out in Table 6 of the NCAER appraisal report on Transport in Kerala.

2, 3, 4 [Tables 38 + 39, appearing on p. 295 of the text, have not been procured -- Analyst]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

494 652 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs in 1959-60.

499 491 652 8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 494 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

487 503 505 [688]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

upon the maintenance of navigability in the waterways, and removal of a number of handicaps listed in para 8.28.

CONCLUSIONS

8.47 The conclusions that follow from the general traffic pattern outlined above are (*a*) accessions to traffic may be expected just in those areas and routes where it is strikingly high already (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur), (*b*) spare transport capacity on many railway sections will be absorbed, (*c*) the road, rail and waterway links to the ports may need improvement, and (*d*) further, the road transport capacity and terminal facilities should be increased to meet mounting demands.[1]

8.48 The railways have an important role to play, mainly in inter-State traffic and in helping the work of the ports. In the Third Plan, an investment of Rs. 1.2 crores i.e., of the same order as proposed and accepted but unfulfilled in the Second Plan may be necessary, mainly in connection with increase in the line capacity on vital routes (e.g., Cochin-Shoranur). If traffic and engineering surveys establish the economic feasibility of Trivandrum-Nagercoil-Tirunelveli line, it may be considered for the Fourth Plan.

8.49 As the eastern regions of the State are untouched by the Railways and are likely to remain so, these have to rely mainly on road transport. It is necessary to extend, bridge, and improve the road network in these areas till at least 50 per cent of the targets set for 1981 are achieved by 1971[2]. The expenditure will be about Rs. 17 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 26.3 crores in the Fourth Plan.

8.50 The Third Plan programme for roads and bridges in the State will cover the development of arterial routes and cross-roads in the north of the State (Rs. 4.32 crores), improvement of arterial routes in the south including the opening of Thenmala-Thekkadi road (Rs. 1 crore), the Vypeen Island Scheme (Rs. 1 crore), construction and improvement of about 3,600 miles of district and village roads (Rs. 5.996 crores) and the construction and improvement of 122 major and 584 minor bridges and culverts. Schemes spilling over from the Second Plan and costing Rs. 1.62 crores will also have to be completed. It is desirable to institute a road fund in the State to finance road development. The particular areas and routes where extension and improvements are possible in the next five years are set out in Table 43. The physical targets are indicated in Table 44.[3]

8.51 The number of trucks will need to be considerably augmented to cope up with the anticipated demands of traffic. The investment on trucks may amount to about Rs. 11 crores in the Third Plan and Rs. 10.29 crores in the Fourth Plan. The number of passenger buses may require to be increased by 2,400 in 10 years. About 4,600 buses may have to be replaced by the end of 1971. This would entail an expenditure of Rs. 20.5 crores. The State's Third Plan envisages the continuance of the

[1] Passenger traffic is certain to go up with rising population and concentrations of industry and trade at such centres as Trivandrum, Quilon, Kundara, Cochin, Ernakulam, Trichur, Palghat, Calicut and Cannanore but no estimate of the passenger service demands has been made here.

[2] Targets for 1981 as per formula of the Chief Engineers' Plan, Bombay (1960).

[3] [Table 44, appearing on p. 298 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala.. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 177 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [894] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 30 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

establishment of booking agencies and the introduction of insurance against loss or theft are crying needs of the water transport system of the State. Licensing rules have to be made uniform throughout the State; the levy of tolls at locks and toll stations in Malabar has to be abolished, the loss in revenue being made good by licence fees. The bulk transport of petroleum products, which is of the order of 72,000 tons annually, suffers from restrictions on licensing of tank-boats with wooden hulls. Since the traffic is likely to be doubled in 10 years the rules must be reviewed to see if they can be amended to suit local conditions, especially in the case of non-hazardous petroleum products. A considerable volume of traffic-potential is likely to be generated for the waterways by the proposed programme of industrialization. A proper organization answering to the anticipated demands for transportation by waterways is called for.

8.29 At present 25,030 country craft (registered tonnage 180,735), 466 motor-boats (registered tonnage 2,988) and 1,298 crafts are operating on Kerala's waterways. In spite of the shortcomings referred to above, about 2.3 million tons of goods are moved annually over the waterways. The approximate figures of tonnage between specific points are 1.35 million tons between Cochin and Quilon, 60,000 tons on the Trivandrum-Quilon route and about 990,000 tons in the area north of Cochin. Particulars of the growth of traffic in recent years are not available.[1]

8.30 Motor-boats carry about 27,700 passengers a day on 65 different routes, the length of journeys ranging from 6 to 77 miles. Of this traffic, about 15,000 passengers were carried daily by 146 powered boats operated by the Kerala Water Transport Corporation in the Cochin-Quilon area. The Corporation's fares were slightly higher than on the Valloms. The organization ran into difficulties and is being reorganized. The State ferry services, operated with 13 powered boats between Ernakulam and Cochin, have been incurring losses. But in view of the revised fares introduced recently, they are expected to work profitably in the future.

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THE PORTS

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs in 1959-60.

8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

establishment of booking agencies and the introduction of insurance against loss or theft are crying needs of the water transport system of the State. Licensing rules have to be made uniform throughout the State; the levy of tolls at locks and toll stations in Malabar has to be abolished, the loss in revenue being made good by licence fees. The bulk transport of petroleum products, which is of the order of 72,000 tons annually, suffers from restrictions on licensing of tank-boats with wooden hulls. Since the traffic is likely to be doubled in 10 years the rules must be reviewed to see if they can be amended to suit local conditions, especially in the case of non-hazardous petroleum products. A considerable volume of traffic-potential is likely to be generated for the waterways by the proposed programme of industrialization. A proper organization answering to the anticipated demands for transportation by waterways is called for.

8.29 At present 25,030 country craft (registered tonnage 180,735), 466 motor-boats (registered tonnage 2,988) and 1,298 crafts are operating on Kerala's waterways. In spite of the shortcomings referred to above, about 2.3 million tons of goods are moved annually over the waterways. The approximate figures of tonnage between specific points are 1.35 million tons between Cochin and Quilon, 60,000 tons on the Trivandrum-Quilon route and about 990,000 tons in the area north of Cochin. Particulars of the growth of traffic in recent years are not available.[1]

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11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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8.54 Port of Cochin can be expected to play an ever more dominant role in the transport of the State as the economy takes off. An investment of Rs. 1.75 crores proposed to be incurred to improve facilities at Cochin Port during the Third Plan will benefit not merely Kerala but Madras and other States. It will add conspicuously to the State's transport capacity, created by the investments in roads, waterways and railways within the State.

[PP. 139-205 not processed]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
647 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be espe-
655 cially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

establishment of booking agencies and the introduction of insurance against loss or theft are crying needs of the water transport system of the State. Licensing rules have to be made uniform throughout the State; the levy of tolls at locks and toll stations in Malabar has to be abolished, the loss in revenue being made good by licence fees. The bulk transport of petroleum products, which is of the order of 72,000 tons annually, suffers from restrictions on licensing of tank-boats with wooden hulls. Since the traffic is likely to be doubled in 10 years the rules must be reviewed to see if they can be amended to suit local conditions, especially in the case of non-hazardous petroleum products. A considerable volume of traffic-potential is likely to be generated for the waterways by the proposed programme of industrialization. A proper organization answering to the anticipated demands for transportation by waterways is called for.

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8.30 Moter-boats carry about 27,700 passengers a day on 65 different routes, the length of journeys ranging from 6 to 77 miles. Of this traffic, about 15,000 passengers were carried daily by 146 powered boats operated by the Kerala Water Transport Corporation in the Cochin-Quilon area. The Corporation's fares were slightly higher than on the Valloms. The organization ran into difficulties and is being reorganized. The State ferry services, operated with 13 powered boats between Ernakulam and Cochin, have been incurring losses. But in view of the revised fares introduced recently, they are expected to work profitably in the future.

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11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expenditure between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport–railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[1] For particulars of a detailed assessment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC ANTICIPATED BY DIFFERENT TRANSPORT MEDIA IN 1970-71

(In thousand tons)

Railways	2,337
Road transport[a]	1,859
Waterways[b]	1,126
Ports[b]	1,367

[a] Includes feeder traffic.
[b] Coastal and foreign traffic included.

8.43 The intra-State road traffic may be expected to register significant gains whereas the inter-State is likely to be steady: the decline in inter-State foodgrain movements by road may be somewhat counter-balanced by anticipated industrial traffic. The waterways are likely to compete for traffic going by road especially in low-rated commodities (sand, limeshell, ores), as well as in those which are conveniently handled at the ports either alongside berths or in midstream (e.g. petroleum, foodgrains imports, etc.).

[504] 8.44 The State's demand for port services in coastal and foreign trade is expected to go up by about 1.37 million tons by 1970-71. The services are likely to be required particularly at Cochin, Calicut and Neendakara-Quilon. At Cochin and Calicut the demand for port services will be further reinforced by the growing needs of the hinterland in Coimbatore and Nilgiri districts of Madras. The railway link with Cochin may require further additions to line capacity on the route to Alwaye, Shoranur and Coimbatore.[1]

8.45 The distribution of additional traffic among the ports of Kerala, as anticipated for 1970-71, is set out in table under para 8.42. The figures given in the table are approximate estimates based on requirements of port services of various industries suggested by the National Council. Only detailed traffic surveys can establish close and reliable estimates, allowing for such factors as traffic-potential in the hinterland, beyond the State boundaries, if any, and traffic gains or losses resulting from diversion from or to other ports. In the case of Cochin, imports are likely to be very predominant, foodgrains, petroleum products, and chemicals figuring prominently. Such gains as are likely to be achieved in exports may be in chemicals, plantation products, etc. As regards Calicut, the requirements of the newly coming up rayon-pulp factory is likely to be an important factor responsible for the import of machinery, fuel oil, coal and coke, and the coastal export of rayon pulp. Neendakara-Quilon ports are likely to receive impetus from developments in Kundara, Quilon, etc.

8.46 The effect of regional industrial developments within the State on the traffic by inland waterways is indicated in Table 42.[2] Intensification of traffic between Alwaye and Cochin, Cochin and Quilon, Tiruvalla, Kottayam and Alleppey may be expected. The growth of traffic upto the potential indicated will depend

[1] The extent to which imbalances of traffic on these and other lines of the State are likely to be affected by anticipated growth of traffic to and from the State between 1961 and 1971 is to be separately surveyed and assessed.

[2] [Table 42, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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[PP. 139-205 not processed]

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kerala AW11
Laccadives A24
Maldives A25

Day 1500 Cabral arrived, and from then until the Dutch supplanted them in 1663 the Portuguese were in alliance with the rulers of Cochin against the Muslim Zamorin of Calicut. The port has considerable locational advantages: it is central on the backwaters, the Palghat Gap lies about 125 miles (by rail) to the NE, and it is about 300 miles nearer Aden and Durban than is Bombay. It may even rival Colombo as a transit port, as a call at Cochin adds only 40 miles to the Aden-Fremantle run.[52] The development of the modern port was for long impeded by its curious political situation; it lies on a breach in the long spit separating the great backwater from the sea, but while the major installations and the approaches lie in what was British territory, the inner harbour—in which much of the trade is carried on—is in Cochin state, and much of the backwater was Travancorean. Real development—including the cutting of a channel through the bar across the natural breach, and much reclamation—began only in 1920–23; later a 3-mile approach channel was dredged to a width of 450 and a depth of 37 ft, so that the inner harbour is now accessible to any ship which can pass Suez. Rail and road bridges cross the backwater, and a large airport has been built on reclaimed land; the old metre line to the SIR through the Palghat has been changed to BG. The volume of trade increased from 450,000 tons in 1920 to about 1,250,000 in 1950, while the number of ships using the port has more than trebled. Normally rice from Burma and Indo-China formed two-fifths in bulk of the total trade; mineral oil is also a major import. The exports are the usual Kerala ones: coconut products, especially coir and copra, tea, rubber, cashew nuts. Across the backwater is Ernakulam (46,790), capital of Cochin, with important soap factories, the largest owned (naturally) by Tatas: rice milling, as at Mattancherri, is also important. Trichur (57,524), the largest town of Cochin, has cotton spinning and weaving mills and tile factories; it shares with Palghat (55,160) command of the gap.

Travancore is less urbanised than Cochin, but Trivandrum (**186,931**) is the capital of Travancore–Cochin state. Alleppey (**116,278**) and Quilon are ports of ancient fame now decayed; mere roadsteads, they still carry on a considerable backwater traffic. Alleppey, protected by a mudbank, is slightly the better port, but Quilon has the advantage of its situation on the metre line from Trivandrum through the Shencottah Gap.

The Maldive and Laccadive Islands

These groups of coral atolls extend from the Equator to about 15° N, 180–300 miles from the Malabar coast. The Laccadives and Minicoy are attached to Madras, the Maldives (which have their own Sultan and constitutional government) to Ceylon: these affiliations represent historical

[52] *Handbook of Commercial Information for India* (Delhi, 1937), 79; personal information from Sir Robert Bristow.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[701] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or carried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[505] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the
[726] heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The difficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized ir-
651 rigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

1.9 The distance within which these rivers descend to the sea level being very short, there are generally a large number of steep falls or a series of cascades in their courses. These provide a rich potential for generation of hydro-electric power, which can be generated at a low cost (1.7 nP per kWh on an average). This low cost power potential is an important asset of Kerala from the point of view of the future programmes of industrialization.

1.10 Some other implications of topographical features are not so obvious. For example, the lakes, the lagoons and the backwaters fringed with coconut palms, no doubt, impart to Kerala its characteristic scenic beauty and provide one of the chief tourist attractions. Their importance, however, goes much beyond the purely aesthetic aspect. In fact, the backwaters—especially in the Travancore-Cochin region—are indirectly responsible for providing the means of livelihood to a vast section of the population. Coir spinning, the chief industry of Kerala, is located in this State primarily because of the natural retting facilities provided by the backwaters. The availability of these facilities is unique in the case of Kerala. In almost all other coconut-growing areas of India, the coconut husks go waste because of the absence of natural retting facilities. Since coir industry provides an occupation to 4 to 5 lakh persons (about 10% of the total working force and 40% of industrial working force), one can well imagine what the unemployment situation in Kerala would have been in the absence of the backwater facilities. The backwaters have also facilitated the development of a wide network of inland waterways all along the coastline. Apart from employing a large number of persons in towing or rowing the boats, the inland waterways provide inexpensive modes of transporting the agricultural produce and light industrial goods manufactured in the coastal area.

1.11 Up till now only some of the favourable consequences of physical features have been pointed out. The sloping terrain and preponderance of backwaters in the coastal area also possess a negative aspect. The heavy downpour is gradually leaching off the mineral content of the soils, thus rendering them generally poor in their fertility status. One of its ultimate consequences is the fact that livestock feed available in Kerala is deficient in mineral content and this in turn reduces the yield of milk of the livestock. The heavy precipitation of rain also creates a serious flood control problem in Kerala.

1.12 The backwaters raise other problems as well. During the dry summer months saline water from these flows into the lower reaches of the rivers, many of which fall into the backwaters. This has an adverse effect on cultivation and the supply of drinking water in the coastal areas. Coastal areas are, therefore, beset with the problem of salinity control. The chain of consequences does not stop here. Recently implementation of one of the important salinity control measures in Kerala, viz., the Thanneermukkom bund across the Vembanad lake has created a new problem in its wake. The accretion of limeshell deposits, an important raw material found in the lake, depends on the high salinity of the lake water. Since, after putting up of the barrage salinity of water will get reduced, it will have adverse repercussions on the long run supply position of the limeshells. This, in turn, jeopardizes the long run prospects of the cement industry in the State which is based on the limeshells.

[text continues on p. 6]

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the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

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in the early years has been due to the fact that either the sanctions from the Government were received late or the staff was not appointed in time. The shortfall in performance during the Second Plan period emphasises the need for devoting greater attention to forest development programmes during the Third Plan period.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY

4.29 Forests are an important source of raw material for industry in Kerala. Their importance is brought out by the fact that forest-based industries are more predominant in the economy of Kerala compared to the position they occupy in the industrial structure of India as a whole.[1]

4.30 In view of the important position occupied by the forest-based industries in Kerala, the policy towards forest resources should aim at long-run enhancement of the forest potential so that an increasing surplus of raw materials could be made available to industry. Forest development policy in the State should, therefore, be guided by the following objectives :

(*i*) Utilization of resources as yet untapped.
(*ii*) Raising the long-run forest potential through:
  (*a*) acceleration of the process of conversion of poor deciduous forests into valuable teak and softwood plantations.
  (*b*) extensive reclamation of grasslands on the basis of experimental Eucalyptus plantings carried out during the Second Plan.
(*iii*) Incorporation of technical improvements in the methods of logging, etc., so that wastage could be reduced. These aspects are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Existing Potential

4.31 In Kerala, the existing potential of forest resources is being exploited comparatively much better than in many other States of India. Due to easy accessibility provided by the numerous rivers and roads, many of which serve the forests, extraction has been very much facilitated. The importance of the role of river transport in exploitation of forest wealth is shown by the fact that two big centres of forest produce, viz., Kallai and Chalakudy are both located by the side of rivers. Although the general picture as regards exploitation of existing resources is quite bright, some pockets still remain untapped. These are discussed below :

4.32 (*i*) *Bamboo Resources* : In spite of a large bamboo potential in the State, this source remains completely unutilized for industrial purposes. Out of the total available supply, about two-thirds is utilized for local requirements of construction, etc. The position regarding the quantum of surplus available is as follows.

[1] See Chapter on Industries.

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

II: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and
499 bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on
491 roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and
652 Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

establishment of booking agencies and the introduction of insurance against loss or theft are crying needs of the water transport system of the State. Licensing rules have to be made uniform throughout the State; the levy of tolls at locks and toll stations in Malabar has to be abolished, the loss in revenue being made good by licence fees. The bulk transport of petroleum products, which is of the order of 72,000 tons annually, suffers from restrictions on licensing of tank-boats with wooden hulls. Since the traffic is likely to be doubled in 10 years the rules must be reviewed to see if they can be amended to suit local conditions, especially in the case of non-hazardous petroleum products. A considerable volume of traffic-potential is likely to be generated for the waterways by the proposed programme of industrialization. A proper organization answering to the anticipated demands for transportation by waterways is called for.

8.29 At present 25,030 country craft (registered tonnage 180,735), 466 motor-boats (registered tonnage 2,988) and 1,298 crafts are operating on Kerala's waterways. In spite of the shortcomings referred to above, about 2.3 million tons of goods are moved annually over the waterways. The approximate figures of tonnage between specific points are 1.35 million tons between Cochin and Quilon, 60,000 tons on the Trivandrum-Quilon route and about 990,000 tons in the area north of Cochin. Particulars of the growth of traffic in recent years are not available.[1]

8.30 Motor-boats carry about 27,700 passengers a day on 65 different routes, the length of journeys ranging from 6 to 77 miles. Of this traffic, about 15,000 passengers were carried daily by 146 powered boats operated by the Kerala Water Transport Corporation in the Cochin-Quilon area. The Corporation's fares were slightly higher than on the Valloms. The organization ran into difficulties and is being reorganized. The State ferry services, operated with 13 powered boats between Ernakulam and Cochin, have been incurring losses. But in view of the revised fares introduced recently, they are expected to work profitably in the future.

8.31 The inland waterways were allocated Rs. 43 lakhs in the Second Plan in order to (*a*) construct the Alleppey-Shertallai Canal (*b*) improve the West Coast Canal from Trivandrum to Shoranur (*c*) construct the Badagara-Azhikkal Canal (*d*) improve canals in the Malabar area, and (*e*) carry out some minor works. In the first three years Rs. 23 lakhs were spent. As most of the funds were taken up in the execution of the Alleppey-Shertallai Canal Scheme, much was not done for the other schemes. Top priority is being given for improvements to the Cochin-Quilon section. The estimated cost for the Azhikkal-Badagara canal is Rs. 1.05 crores. As the proposed alignment involved deep cutting at several places, a new alignment is being worked out for execution in the Third Plan.

THE PORTS

8.32 The coastal and foreign traffic of the State is handled at Cochin, Alleppey, Calicut and 10 other ports of the State. The major port of Cochin dominates all

[1] However, in section 8.42 the rate of growth of traffic anticipated during 1961—71 is indicated.

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504 transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons
505 of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

*433 8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara
504 which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

489 8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expendi-
652 ture between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport–railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

509 8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a
[508] clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[113] [1] For particulars of a detailed assesment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

245 eight miles from the village, but the primitive oil mill is chiefly used, worked by two oxen. It is very cheap. Perhaps two rupees would be enough excepting for the oxen.

438 *The village trade.*—The chief articles consumed are rice, fish, vegetables, cereals and spices. The price of the total quantity consumed in the village may be estimated at Rs. 2,50,000, the total sales of the shop being Rs. 3,50,000, of which one lakh is to outsiders.

The quantity of produce taken to the market is not very great. The rice and cereals and spices necessary for consumption come from Palghat and consequently must be bought from the bazaar All other articles that are necessary, e.g., vegetables, fish, salt, chillies, oil, straw, fodder, fuel, etc., are brought to the house by petty traders or by the actual producers. In addition to this there is a weekly fair where local produce to the value of about Rs. 1,000 is sold weekly. A smaller quantity, which may be estimated at Rs. 36,000 per annum, is sold to shopkeepers and they sell to other villages. The people sell to shopkeepers only when they cannot sell in any other way, for the shopkeepers offer only a low price.

491 The main road comes from the Cochin State and passes through the northern and the western side of the village and bends and passes through the southern side. One branch road runs from the west and passes through the centre and ends at the eastern extremity of the village. The road system is not satisfactory. Other branch roads are wanted and those that are made have not been repaired at all for many years, though tolls are collected. People once complained of this to the Taluk Board but to no effect, although thousands of pilgrims visit this place every year on account of the sanctity of the temple. There are numerous by-ways.

498 The nearest railway stations are Pattambi, Trichur, and Watakkancheri, each twenty miles away. People go to Trichur by
● 505 boat through the backwaters, and the steam boat that runs from Ponnāni to Tirur is availed of by many and it is cheap. There is backwater communication to Ponnāni and Cochin.

438 Copra, coir, etc., are taken or sent to Cochin and the people get in return rice, cloth, and cereals and other luxuries. Fish can be got from the sea, which is very near the village. The fishermen go every day in the morning and return in the evening.

465 *Economic condition of the village.*—Wages for artisans are always paid in money; for agricultural work both in kind and in money.

Money wages.—The ordinary labourers are always paid in money. In short all those kinds of labour which do not immediately bring fruit to the owner are paid in money. A labourer, for a full day's work, is now paid four annas; five or six years ago three annas. For short work such as carrying weights, etc., the wage is fixed for the moment and will vary according to the distance they have to go, etc. Generally two annas must be paid for one mile as an average. For carrying a bag of rice a high wage is demanded because of high weight.* Woman's labour costs three annas per day now, formerly 2½ annas, a boy's labour 2½ annas now, formerly 2 annas.

Carpenters get six annas a day, boy carpenters three annas, formerly four annas and two annas. Other artisans such as black-

* [160 lb.—Ed.]

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transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expenditure between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport–railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[1] For particulars of a detailed assesment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

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11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

for Indian Airlines Corporation.[1]

8.38 The absence of an air-link between Calicut and Trivandrum is being keenly felt, as other forms of travel including railways to and from Kerala's capital involve a long and time-consuming journey with the difficulties attendant on the break-of-gauge at Ernakulam.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS IN KERALA DURING 1961-71

8.39 An assessment of traffic that the implementation of the programmes proposed elsewhere in this survey will generally indicate that an additional overall traffic of 5 million tons can be anticipated during 1970-71. The nature, magnitude and composition of the anticipated traffic are set out in Table 41.[5]

8.40 The estimate does not take into account traffic in certain items, for example, coconuts and certain types of consumer goods. An allowance of 10 per cent may be made for these omissions. Further, the transport system of the State, besides meeting the additional demands of its own traffic, will have to bear the burden of traffic of other States, such as Madras or Mysore, which is handled for them at Kerala's ports[2] and on roads and railway sections[3] within the territory of the State; the additional traffic on this account may amount to 1 or 1.5 million tons by 1970-71. The overall growth in traffic may thus be between 60 and 65 per cent over the present level.[4] The transport arrangements in the State have thus to be planned and developed to meet an additional traffic of 6.5 to 7 million tons by 1971.

8.41 There may be some changes in the character of the traffic. For instance, there may be a decline in the traffic in firewood by about 100,000 tons as oil and other fuels are coming in as substitutes. Changes in technology in the Fourth Plan period presage the disappearance of the traffic in gypsum (145,000 tons) to Alwaye and substitution by imports of sulphur (100,000 tons) *via* Cochin. Decline in foreign imports of foodgrains is anticipated, while increased imports from more distant sources inside the country are envisaged.

8.42 The distribution of the State's additional traffic between different media (including the demand for ports' services) as anticipated, is presented in the table below. The heavy dependence of Kerala on the import of materials for industry from outside is reflected in the preponderant inter-State rail traffic. By 1971 the increase in the rail traffic in the State over its traffic in 1958-59 may be about 60 per cent.[6]

[1] An Air Traffic Survey has since been completed by NCAER for the Indian Airlines Corporation. Besides estimating the traffic potential of the circular route in the Southern Region, the Survey has recommended air linking of Calicut, inclusion of Trivandrum in the Madras—Tiruchirapalli, Madurai—Colombo air route, location at Thirukakara of an airport for Cochin and Alwaye, terminal facilities at the Cochin Airport, etc.

—Vide *Air Traffic Survey—Southern Region*, NCAER, 1962

[2] Predominantly at Cochin.

[3] Mostly on the highway and railway section between Ernakulam and Shoranur.

[4] The current traffic by road, rail and waterways is estimated at 10.8 million tons.

[5] The cross traffic to or from Cochin and from or to other States is taken into account.

[Table 41, appearing on p. 296 of the text, has not been processed--Analyst]

175 individual ends. Their struggles were eclipsed by the Muslim invasions from Mysore which began in 1766, and ended when the East Indian Company took over the area in 1792. But the idea of a United Kerala has not died, and has been repeatedly suggested since India attained [6] Independence in 1947.

161 (3) Population

The Malabar Coast is the most densely populated part of India. The figures for 1931 show a population of 3,533,944 for Malabar; 1,205,016 for Cochin; and 5,095,073 for Travancore. In Malabar the mean density was 610 per square mile; in Cochin, 814; and in Travancore, 668. This includes forest and lagoon areas. The mean density of habitable land in Cochin was 1,400.

[511] Relative to the present exploitation of resources the whole coast is overpopulated. Most of the people lead a hand-to-mouth existence on an income barely sufficient to support life. Want and indebtedness are chronic and there is much unemployment.

Reliable figures are not available for before 1891, but at least since that date and probably for 50 to 100 years previsouly, a great increase has taken place. The figures for 1891 were, for Malabar, 2,557,736; fo Cochin, 722,906; and for Travancore, 2,557,736. This increase in population is part of the baseline from which we must start in analysing kinship systems.

174 631 II The Traditional Political Background

European and Arabic reports on the Nayars

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

This is mostly due to two reasons: 434
First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [187]
without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245]
on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511
fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613]
the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182]
their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262
beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vāzhakkā Kari yuntaru vaku*
> *Bhaia Bhojana matu Kootāttillā.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nayars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264
people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262
as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291
2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184
Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439]
richer classes go in for Benares silk.

against the all-India average of 7.5 acres; and over 60 per cent of the landholdings in Travancore-Cochin area are less than one acre in size. 241 423

1.31 The high pressure of population also reveals itself in an urge to push along the margin of cultivable area as far as possible. This is shown by the fact that the proportion of net sown area (45.25 lakh acres) to total area of the State was as high as 47.16 per cent against 39 per cent for the whole of India in 1956. The higher proportion assumes even a greater significance in view of the fact that forests cover over 25 per cent of the total area of Kerala (all-India—18%). 311

1.32 The agricultural labourers form a very high proportion of the agricultural population (Kerala 39%: India 17.5%), and the extent of under-employment among them is also one of the highest in India. The number of days of employment per agricultural labourer in Kerala was only 170 days per year[1], the lowest in the whole of India. 162 464

1.33 A deterioration in the position of the agricultural labourers is shown by the decline in the average annual income of agricultural labour households between 1951 and 1957. As can be seen from the table below, the average annual income of an agricultural labourer's household in Kerala declined from Rs. 486 in 1951 to Rs. 437 in 1956. This is a much steeper decline than observed in the case of the whole of India, presumably due to a higher rate of growth of population in Kerala than in India. 434 178

[171]

AVERAGE ANNUAL INCOME OF AGRICULTURAL LABOUR HOUSEHOLDS

	Kerala (Rs.)	*India* (Rs.)
1950-51	486	447
1956-57	437	437

SOURCE: *Second Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.* [113]

Consumption Pattern

1.34 The level of consumption expenditure per head is a good indicator of the standard of living prevailing in any region. Table 5 gives a comparative picture of the pattern of consumption expenditure for the rural areas of Travancore-Cochin[2] and India. As may be seen, the average monthly consumption expenditure in Kerala (Rs. 18.64) is lower than that in all-India (Rs. 21.44), indicating a somewhat lower standard of living in the State. 511 171

1.35 The break-up of total expenditure into different items of consumption reveals some interesting points. The expenditure on foodgrains, milk and milk products is not only absolutely lower in Kerala but even as a proportion of total expenditure, it is considerably below the all-India average. On the other hand, meat, egg, fish and 'other food' absorb quite a high proportion of consumption expenditure in Kerala. These differences reflect the relative scarcity of foodgrains 511 262 [171] [113]

[1] *Report of the Agricultural Labour Enquiry Committee.*

[2] The data is compared for Travancore-Cochin and India (1952) because figures for Kerala State are not available. However, the conclusions are likely to be broadly true of Kerala also.

3 [see p 272, category 11b -- Analysis]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

and milk products in the State as a result of which people have to lean more heavily on fish and tapioca.

1.36 Among the items of non-food expenditure the significant point is the higher percentage of expenditure devoted to clothing. The neatness and cleanliness of dress worn by the people of Kerala is evident even to a casual visitor to the State.

The Food Gap

1.37 The superior cropping pattern has also brought with it a huge food deficit. In this, Kerala leads all the other States. The current production of foodgrains is estimated at 9.6 lakh tons, whereas requirements on the basis of a norm of 17 ozs. per day would come to about 24 lakh tons, leaving a gap of nearly 14.6 lakh tons. The width of this gap is only partially closed by the consumption of tapioca as part of the diet by poorer sections of the people, although it does form an important second line of defence in the lean years as in 1940's when there was a severe food shortage.

1.38 Wide as the food gap in Kerala is, it has often led to the formulation of solutions which, if given effect to, would be retarding the operation of inherent growth factors in the Kerala economy. Every economy may present some "growth leaders", and development consists in stimulating and invigorating them. The climate and physical formation of Kerala favour the growth of a large number of valuable cash crops. It is this sector to which maximum attention should be devoted. Kerala is better suited to serve the role of an exchange economy which relies for its food requirements on the other parts of India and in return contributes to the economic development of the country by earning valuable foreign exchange through the export of raw and semi-processed commodities.

Other Primary Activities

1.39 Of the other three primary activities, viz., animal husbandry, forestry and fisheries, the former, that is, livestock is rather poorly developed. Due to the poor breed, and the natural deficiency in the livestock feed, the cattle is of poor quality with milk yields much lower than the all-India level. The only exception to this is poultry. Kerala can claim to have the best developed commercial poultry in India, the eggs produced in Kerala going even as far north as Punjab. However, in view of under-feeding and the poor conditions under which the birds are reared, there is still a lot of unexploited potential in poultry development.

1.40 Forestry and fishery are the two other sectors which hold an important place in the economy of Kerala. The forests in the State are rich in some of the valuable species like teak and rosewood. As a result of forest management on scientific lines and the high quality of forest growth, their yield per acre in Kerala during 1955-56 was as high as Rs. 18 against the all-India average of Rs. 5.6. This sector is crucial as a source of supply of industrial raw materials.

1.41 Kerala ranks foremost among the fish-producing States of India. In 1957 total fish landings in Kerala were 3.41 lakh tons. With only 10 per cent of the all-

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

India coastline, 30 per cent of the country's fish production came from the coast of Kerala. There is, however, still ample scope for increasing the output of fish. Only the fringe of the potential for off-shore fishing has been tapped up till now. Similarly, it is believed that the output of fish can also be increased considerably from the coastal fisheries without subjecting the fishing grounds to undue pressure. Introduction of mechanized fishing and better fishing gear can add considerably to fish production. However, as it is, the fishermen are the most depressed class of persons in the economy, and unemployment is at its maximum among them.

1.42 Development of fisheries is of particular importance in case of Kerala in view of the large food deficit of the State. The requirements of rice for a balanced diet could be considerably reduced if it is adequately supplemented by tapioca and fish. Tapioca by itself is not an adequate substitute for rice requirements since it lacks in proteins. However, its food value can be considerably enhanced if it is combined with a sufficient quantity of fish.

Secondary Sector

1.43 The secondary sector covers mining and industry. Mining activity is comparatively limited in Kerala in view of the meagre occurrence of minerals. During 1955-56 mining contributed only 0.6 per cent of the State Income (all-India 1%). The chief mineral asset of Kerala is the beach sand. Ilmenite is the most important variety of the beach sands. Besides some fine quality china-clay, of which there are good reserves, other items of mineral wealth of Kerala are not of any particular importance.

1.44 The industries of Kerala, both the factory[1] and the non-factory type, are marked by a low level of productivity as shown by Table 4. The main reason for this is the backwardness of technology employed as would be true of other parts of India as well. While this may not apply to the modern industries run on a large scale basis, in some of which indeed the State has been a pioneer, the overall picture of industry presented as a whole is, nevertheless, one of poor technological level. Further, during 1955-56, the organized factory industries employed 17.5 per cent of the working force in the secondary sector (9.7 lakhs) as against 21.8 per cent in India. Moreover, in both the factory and the non-factory categories, the major share of employment opportunities is monopolized by a few industries which can by no means claim to be in the forefront of modern industries.

1.45 In the non-factory sector, out of a total working force of 7.8 lakh persons, almost 50 per cent of the workers are employed in the coir industry, the foremost industry of Kerala. As in most cottage industries, the maximum degree of mechanization in coir industry never goes beyond a spinning wheel. In Malabar, even that is missing, since spinning operations are mostly carried on with hand. Similarly in the factory sector, the three major industries, viz., cashewnut, textile and coir factories which account for 64 per cent of factory employment, are entirely unmechanized.

1 Factory type of units are defined as those falling within the coverage of Section 2 in (*i*) and (*ii*) of the Factories Act, 1948. These include all those factories employing more than 20 workers as well as those employing between 10 to 20 workers, if using power.

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [171] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [461] [581] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25). Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ana]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

511
369
191

TABLE 5

CONSUMER EXPENDITURE IN RUPEES PER PERSON BY ITEMS OF CONSUMPTION FOR PERIOD OF 30 DAYS IN RURAL AREAS

Items	*Travancore-Cochin*		*All-India*	
	Expenditure level (Rs.)	*Percentage*	*Expenditure level* (Rs.)	*Percentage*
Foodgrains	6.10	32.7	8.70	4.06
Milk and milk products	0.43	2.3	1.35	6.3
Edible oil	0.57	3.1	0.45	2.1
Meat, egg and fish	0.78	4.2	0.42	2.0
Sugar	0.40	2.2	0.45	2.1
Salt	0.06	0.3	0.06	0.3
Other food	2.83	15.2	2.11	9.8
FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*11.17*	*66.0*	*13.54*	*63.2*
Clothing	1.13	9.8	1.66	7.7
Fuel and light	1.13	5.9	1.16	5.4
Rent	0.08	2.8	0.30	1.4
Taxes	0.06	0.2	0.07	0.3
Miscellaneous	5.07	15.4	4.71	22.0
NON-FOOD (SUB-TOTAL)	*7.47*	*34.0*	*7.90*	*36.8*
TOTAL	**18.64**	**100.0**	**21.44**	**100.0**

SOURCE: *The National Sample Survey*, Fourth Round, April-September 1952, Number 13.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

434 which Rs. 6,411-7-0 goes as land revenue and another Rs. 3,500 as income-tax to the Government, leaving Rs. 2,40,000 for the village. There are 385 landowners and these people get Rs. 90,000 a year for their land. The amounts earned by the great merchants may be estimated at Rs. 25,000, and this amount is shared by nearly 100 families. This amount largely comes from parts outside the village and by exportation of coconuts. The profits these people get from the village itself are not calculated under this heading since it forms no income to the village. But that may be estimated at Rs. 5,000 only. Thus all that remains to the agricultural classes after deducting the incomes of the landowners and traders, is about Rs. 1,25,000 which must be shared by 805 families of 6,000 people, an average of Rs. 20-13-9 per head per annum. The total earning of an agricultural family on an average comes to nearly Rs. 146
511 a year or Rs. 12-2-8 a month or As. 6-6 a day. Taking a rough estimate of what a family has to spend according to the present standard of living, which is in itself a low one, we may estimate the expense of a family to be at 10 annas a day. From personal experience I have found that the cost of giving artisans working in the house the one meal a day which is customary, is 2 annas per man; we made no difference between their meal and ours. Something, but not much, can be saved on this in quality, and, making all allowances for children, I infer that a family of seven members will have to spend at least 10 annas a day for food or Rs. 228 a year. Making an allowance of Rs. 20 for clothes and for religious and social functions—it is only a small amount for a year—they will have to spend Rs. 248 a year for food, in order to maintain their body and soul without suffering, leaving out of consideration luxuries, pleasure, etc. What do they get now? Only Rs. 146. So what they get is sufficient only for one meal. I was told by the carpenters and blacksmiths who worked in my house that they could not provide themselves with meals during the nights and what they do is only to drink rice water, and even that very rarely. They manage with the meal given from the house and what they get as wage is spent on their wives and children with a small saving for contingencies. This economic suffering is the main cause for the physical deterioration in India, and this is the cause of infant mortality, and this accounts for much of ignorance and filthy and insanitary habits, since with every one first food, then other matters. The case of agricultural people is much worse than artisans; they are paid lower and they are rarely given the one meal in addition as are the artisan class. Ordinary labourers if they do not get work have to starve literally.

454 It is evident from the previous statement of facts that no money can be saved at the present time by the tenants for agricultural
452 capital, or for manure. Further there is no organized industry of any kind. The oil-pressing and rope-making industries, which are the most important, are carried on with primitive tools which require no capital. It has been already stated that the landowners get
452 Rs. 90,000 a year, of which they spend for their maintenance a sum of nearly Rs. 40,000. The remaining Rs. 50,000 are spent on loans to neighbours, jewellery, house-building, education of their children, charity, religious and social festivities such as marriage. Loans to neighbours take away more than half, education nearly Rs. 10,000, and the rest for the other expenses. Money-lending forms their chief profession These landowners do not lend to the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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west, and sold there. The profit of the bargain is four annas. 252
Twelve families subsist on this trade.

Buttermilk, ghee and butter are made and sold by some families. 234
But this is not a steady trade. It is dependent on cows giving birth.

Village trade.—The volume and the extent of village trade is 438
limited; the wants are few and easily satisfied. Paddy seed for 426
cultivation is not purchased but borrowed from the landlord at an interest of sixty per cent. The amount borrowed with the interest thereon is annually given back to the landlord and again borrowed at the sowing season. The borrower is bound to return paddy fit for seeding.

Other commodities useful for agriculture, such as ropes, vessels 438
used for lifting water, etc., are purchased from the little town of 443
Kunnankulam, eight miles off and belonging to the Native State of Cochin. There is a big bazaar at Kunnankulam where almost all necessaries and luxuries are sold. But the usual market for the village trade is that held on every Thursday at Chalisseri, a large village three miles to the west of Kothachira. People take areca, paddy and other vegetables to this market, get these sold there and with the money thus obtained purchase necessaries; sometimes articles are directly exchanged for paddy. The chief necessaries usually purchased are salt, fish, oil, kerosene, chillis, onions, and cloth to wear. Men and women wear simply one *mundu* around [291] the waist. Hence little clothing is required.

Chalisseri is in a way an important place. Much trade in areca is carried on here. The agents of the areca traders of Chalisseri come to each family and purchase directly the quantities each has to sell. The quantity conveyed to market by the ryot himself is not very great. The selling price of areca varies from three to [435] five rupees per tulam (= 25 lb.) according to time and circumstances. The arecanut traders of Chalisseri are absolute masters of this business and often impose their own terms upon the cultivator. After being cut and dried areca is exported by the former into the districts of the east. The best areca grower has sold nuts worth Rs. 400 a year.

The road that runs from the Pattambai railway station to 491
Chowghat passes through Chalisseri. This is the nearest road to Kothachira people. It winds near Kutnad and thus runs parallel to the northern and western boundaries of Kothachira at a distance of two miles from each. A by-road cut from the western arm of the main road to the house of one of the jenmis at his own expense, has long been out of use and is not adapted for public purposes.

The idea of co-operation is unknown. A public road opened [476] along the private footpath that runs between Karuvathur, a village six miles to the east of Kothachira, and Chalisseri, would be of immense use to the public of these parts. Much traffic is carried on along this footpath between these places specially on market days. It would run across Peringode and along the boundary between Mathur and Kothachira and thus benefit all these desams.

Economic condition of village.—The economic condition of this 511 ●
desam is rather discouraging. The people are deep in debt, are overworked and underfed and ground down by a double tyranny, the tyranny of the landlord who is also the money-lender, and the tyranny of deep-rooted custom in all their lives and walks.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

465 Wages are paid both in money and in kind; more often in kind since they find it more to their immediate advantage. The rate of wages is two annas six pies or its equivalent in corn at the standard price, for an unskilled labourer; and four and at times five annas for skilled artisans.

435 The price of paddy varies in different seasons. In the harvest season and sometimes after it, the price ranges between 2½ and 2 paras a rupee. But towards June and July the price goes up to between 1 and 1½ paras a rupee. This is the only food which [262] can be called staple. In times of scarcity the poorer people depend on jack fruits, mango and fish, of which the latter alone need be purchased, and that is cheaper than other foods.

454 Excepting the jenmis who are large zamindars, there are but six houses which have made savings. The bulk of the families are unable to liberate themselves from the grasp of the creditors.

The capital saved by these families is employed in lending to the needy agriculturists. A microscopically small amount has gone on jewellery among these middle class families, but with the jenmi the case is different. It looks as though the capitalist knows no way to employ his capital except lending to neighbours.

426 *Debt.*—The extent of indebtedness cannot be definitely ascertained by enquiry. But from what I have been able to gather from the accounts of two capitalist families, I have been able to make an almost correct estimate of the state of things with the agriculturist. Ranging from Rs. 10 to Rs. 800 one family account consists of the names of thirty debtors from Kothachira. These are all standing debts and the interest on these varies from 9 per cent to 12 per cent. Twelve per cent is the current rate of "polite" interest, as people call it. But there are capitalists who lend money even at 24 and 30 per cent in the neighbourhood. The capital thus employed, however, is not the result of direct saving but is ancestral property bequeathed by their fathers, who were the heads of a jenmi family.

511 Thus we find that capitalists who have money at all to lend, have got the money by other sources and not by saving. The 426 agriculturist has many difficulties to meet with. He has no land and not enough stock and implements. His family is large and the expense is ordinarily far beyond his income. From his field cultivation, after all expenses have been deducted, he gets very little for himself. The rents are very high. The capital employed in stock is vital to him and yearly his lot is to lose by death of cattle either by disease or by wild beasts. Last year there were two cases of the latter. Those who have garden cultivation have this profit to utilize. But the majority own no gardens. The population has grown but not the means of subsistence, and no family except the few named find it possible to maintain their family purely from the proceeds of their toil. Thus they incur debt, but debt once incurred hangs heavy on the debtor. Not only is he unable to find means to pay the high rate of interest on the previous year's debt, but he must borrow at all costs again if he is to avoid absolute starvation of his family. This is regularly continued. Litigation follows and an additional and unprofitable expense is thus laid on his head. Law interferes and whatever property he has is lost. But the law does not kill the people, and

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [517] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	.	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

32: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

624 *Village administration.*—There is no panchayat. There seems to be scope for one, and educated men are not wanting. The general administration of the village is in the hands of the village munsif or adhikari, who is assisted by the karnam. The adhikari represents the Government in all matters. The village 625 officers can send for the police from the nearest police station— 674 4 miles away. There is no regular police quartered in the village. But there is no need for any. The villagers are not prone to criminal acts and nuisances are not committed. The villagers are terribly afraid of the police too. Above the village officers is the Tahsildar of the taluk, who checks all their acts. Occasionally the Tahsildar or his deputy pays a visit to the village and is warmly welcomed by the prominent landlords. Revenue Inspectors and Land Records Tahsildars also visit the village to verify and check the village accounts. There has been no serious crime of any sort within recent years. Petty thefts are occasionally heard of particularly when corn is very dear and many of the poor actually starve.

691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

land is the chief source of a livelihood and industries do not exist. 178
What is the conclusion? The increasing emigration to other 511
places points in the same direction. The fact that the emigrants [167]
return as soon as they earn something shows that they are not likely to leave home unless hard-pressed. The increasing indebtedness of the villagers and the growth in the number of assignments and mortgages are other evidence. But population has increased only 7 per cent between 1901 and 1911. Wages are very low and have not risen in proportion to prices. Prices of food-stuffs have in many cases doubled within my own personal knowledge. Articles like milk, ghee, etc., have doubled in price within the last ten years. The price of grain has risen enormously in a generation. I have been told on good authority that some fifty years ago grain was four times as cheap as to-day. Only the land-owning classes and those who have surplus grain to sell have profited from this high rise. Many independent owners of land have been forced to sell their land to keep themselves free from debt and to pay the Government taxes. Taxation is much heavier: when the settlement was introduced into the village some twelve years ago the assessment was doubled and many villagers suffered. Against all this evidence of deterioration one must place the improvement in the standard of living of some classes and the growth of education, though unsatisfactory in many respects.

As for possibilities of economic improvement and the opportunities therefor, it may be said that the former are many, the latter few (as things now are) unless the villagers get help from outside—from the Government. In the sphere of agriculture improvement is badly needed, though the means of bringing it seem to be lacking, methods of cultivation could be improved and the use of scientific manure introduced. But all this requires capital and that is conspicuous by its absence. The advantage must be practically demonstrated to the cultivator and to the landlord, who alone can take the initiative herein. It seems to be impossible to introduce scientific farming so long as the system of scattered and strip holdings continues. The landlord must get his [423]
lands continuous; as it is as many as half a dozen landlords may have strips of land in one survey division of half a dozen acres. A man holding 10 acres may have it in 20 parcels, a distance of a mile from one plot to another is not uncommon.

About the possibility of extending the area of irrigated land 312
only an expert could speak with confidence. As it is, out of a total area of 2,380 acres only 680·78 acres are wet land and 110 acres garden land—the rest coming under 'unoccupied or occupied dry.' It would be a very good thing if more of this could be brought under cultivation than at present. It does not appear that many more wells could be sunk with advantage. At present the wet and garden lands abound in wells, the 'dry' land being without any. It would not pay to sink wells in it and take out water according to the existing methods. If cheaper and more efficient methods are possible, then it would be worth attempting.

Something might be done—must be done, if the village is to 600
improve—to ameliorate the general condition of the villagers and

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

241
435

Product—150 paras—

	PARAS.	RS.	A.	P.
Kanomdar's share	90			
Tenant's share	60			
,, grain surplus, 17 paras, worth ..		11	6	0
,, money expenses		9	6	0
,, money profit		2	0	0

Good one-crop land—

	PARAS.			
Posts—				
Seed	8			
Wages for sowing	8			
Reaping and threshing wages	6			
Allowances	2			
Money expenses		6	0	0
Total ...	24 and	6	0	0

Product 88 paras, tenant's share being 44 paras.

Grain surplus 20 paras, worth Rs. 14, leaving a money profit of Rs. 8.

Inferior one-crop land.—Here the produce falls to about 72 paras, of which the sub-tenant may get 36 paras. The money profit is Rs. 2.

A small share of the straw is paid to the kanomdar, but the working tenant keeps about nine-tenths. This is not much more than sufficient to feed his oxen.

A small extra rent, in the large Malabar variety of banana, is paid to the kanomdar in the *Onam* festival by each sub-tenant, of an estimated value of eight or nine annas, irrespective of the size of holding.

511 *The annual budget of a typical well-to-do Nayar, a leading kanomdar.*

Income—

	PARAS.
The probable income from lands wet and dry together having an extent of 27 and 40 acres, respectively.	4,600 to 5,000

Expenses—

Food for the family of eight members, two male servants and one female servant	700
Cherumas' wages for the year	950
Seeds	400
Bran, oil-cake and other food for cattle purchased in addition to what is found in the house	75
Janmi's michavaram (rent)	600
Government assessment at two paras for a rupee ...	400
Extra expenses such as salts, oil, etc.	90
Feasts in the temple	60
Charity, such as giving alms and pujari's wages ...	50
The village festivals	10
Sradhas (six in all) (dead relations)	30
Seven kuris	710
Interest on loans (calculated as above) on Rs. 1,500 ...	270

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

5110

	PARAS.
Wages for the two servants and the servant maid ...	72
Payments to the carpenters and blacksmiths, Panars and Pariahs	25
Allowances to Cherumas on festive occasions	25
Washerman's and barber's wages	15
Clothing for a few members of the family	50
(The karnavan and the servants only are clothed by the family, the rest having their private money for the purpose.)	
	4,532

Fuel is got from their jungly lands for bringing which they manage with their daily labourers, Cherumas. They do not keep any strict accounts about their income from gardens which is usually spent in the family. If the harvest proves a success it may be possible to save something.

Budget of a middle class Brahman schoolmaster (for 1917).

	RS.	A.	P.
Income—			
Interest on Rs. 2,000 at 9 per cent	180	0	0
Income as interest on 700 paras of paddy at 15 per cent, calculated at 2 paras for a rupee	52	8	0
Salary	144	0	0
	376	8	0
Expenses—			
For food, etc., for man, wife and two children ...	144	0	0
Various kuris	112	8	0
Interest on loan of Rs. 225 at 6 per cent	13	8	0
Miscellaneous expenses such as sradhas, festivals, washerwoman's wages, thatching cow-shed, fencing, Government assessment, etc.	50	0	0
Brother's educational expenses, Rs. 250 (probable).	250	0	0
Expenses of mother in Madras	60	0	0
	630	0	0

So there is a deficit of Rs. 253-8-0 this year.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things 592 has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured 178 customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. 592 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large num- 613 ber of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *kâranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *tâvashi* (*ta*=mother, *vashi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed;
[564] generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his pro-
cession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again serv-
ed with food, after which they are conducted to a room
where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass
or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over,
sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal
chamber, where the women of the house and others are
assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
hides herself behind the others. Here again the bride-
groom and his party go through more chewing while
they chat with the women. After a while the men with-
draw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the
women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one
of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occa-
sions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas
each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom,
sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited
receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the
men and women are separate; at different ends of the
[574] house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far
away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's
house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the
bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving
under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means
but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the
expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The
Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her
own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior
woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
613 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and
on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathira she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco.
The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32,
or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher
numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house
express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to
their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

777 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

● 513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
484 journey :
777
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāhi Muppēram
Trkelta iva ēzhu Naal
Vitakkil vilāyā Bhūmi
Pōkunnakil aran varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

711 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.) 291 864

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them. 853

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog. 863 [854] [861]

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there. 865 [513]

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani [856]

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

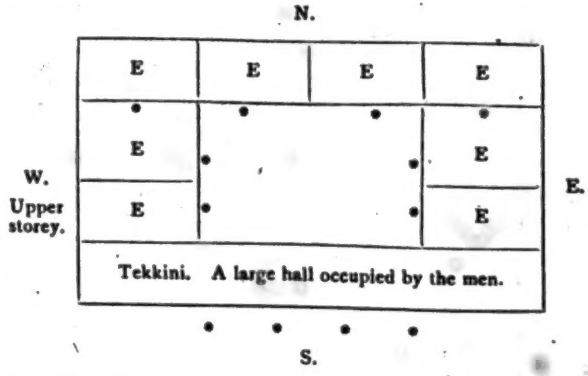

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

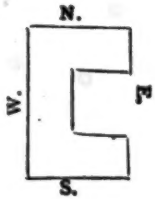

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [514] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	..	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
•515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
[778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its
241 subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never. 502 564* [412] [177] [305]

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome. 142 564*

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some of the members of this clan who call themselves "Paḍi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly. 301 564* [304]

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to [789] [515]

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564 301 wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" [515] ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left [789] hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

[782] One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

[304] One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.* It is altogether unlike [171] any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

[304] The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, 301 which probably first found its way hither in the days of 177 Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins 364 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

1/1 [see plate I, facing p. 220 -- An.]

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142 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest
*564 was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

301 *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings
*564 (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—
[304]

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face
[789] with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29
*564 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

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the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the in- [561] variable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the [532] deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and [782] gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done [515] the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

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* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

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RELIGION.

It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and women can scarcely wear less than they do in compatibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

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PL. XIV.

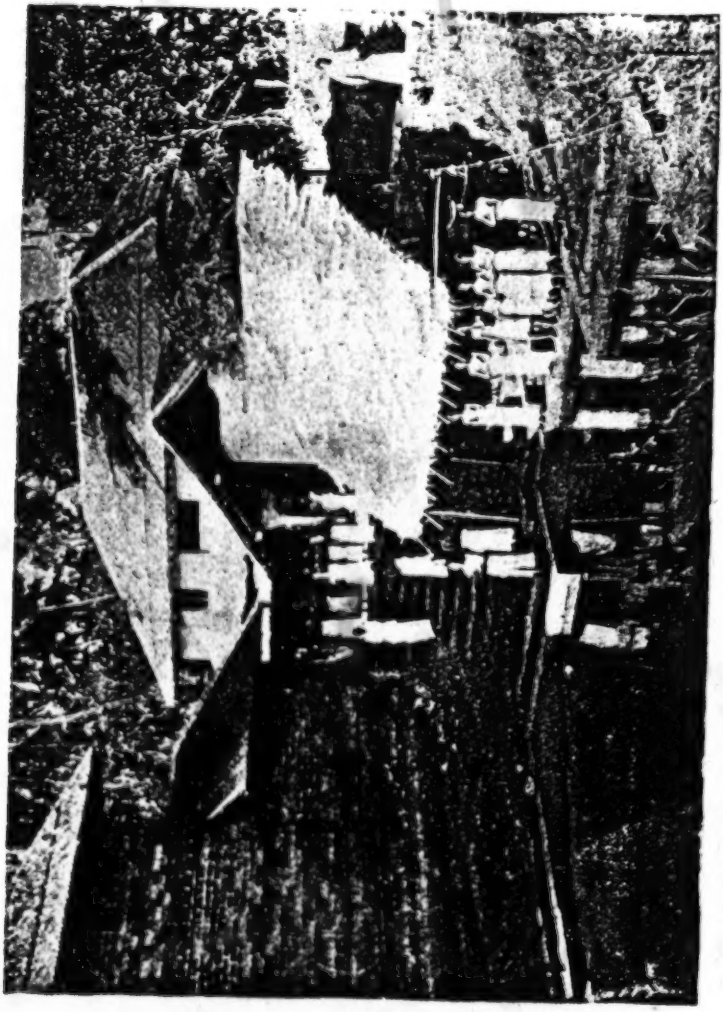

A NAYAR HOME, PANUR, N. MALABAR. THE BATHING TANK AND BATHING SHED IN THE FOREGROUND.

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[Facing p. 262]

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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

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796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
262 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight 776 [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things 592 has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured 178 customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kdranavan*. 592 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large num- 613 ber of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kára-navan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

464 The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as
564 regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population be-
[212] long to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning
[357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worship-
[515] ping in the temple close at hand. Their meals
[771] are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between
262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice
264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of
[272] the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for
[556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Food.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation
[562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged
556 to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by
[357] the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Thandans
Tiyas

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Fig. 9. Thandan women bathing in the Ponani river of south Malabar, near Lakkidi, in the Walluvanad taluk.

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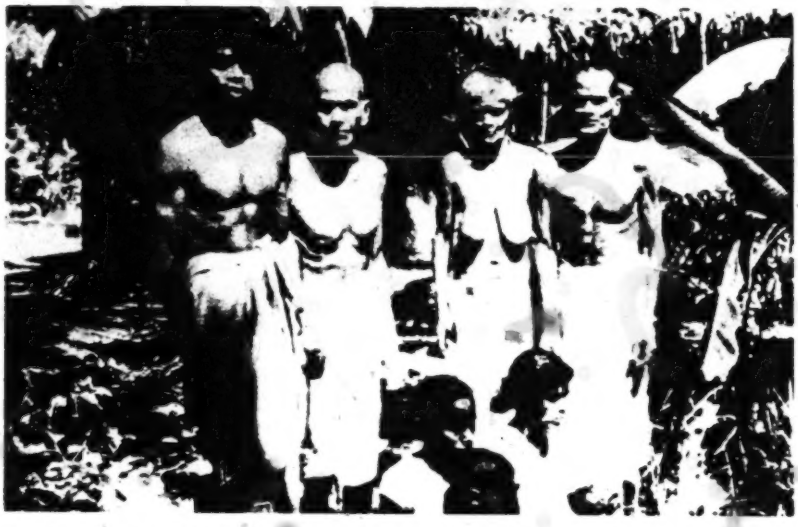

Fig. 10. Kaladiwalapil household of Perumpillav village in north Cochin. From left to right, standing: Kandapan, Mundon, Chaki and Raman; seated in front: Lakshmi, her son and Kunyu.

[P. 238-C]

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes * that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous disorders are never observed except among slaves and
[302] the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

796 In some families, after
526 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
535 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
[524] the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed;
[564] generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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there will be a specialist for diseases of children, an eye specialist, 759
an ordinary vaidyan who cures all common diseases, and a *mantravati* (hymn-chanter) who pretends to cure diseases by chanting certain hymns within himself, and who is believed in by the masses. There is also a *visha-vaidyan*, or expert in curing snake-bite, in some villages.

The Sub-Assistant Surgeons in charge of Government hospitals are, I am afraid, affected by red tape and carelessness born of security of employment and income.

In rural parts especially I am pained to note that their treatment is getting discredited, for the apothecaries take little pains to know the exact nature of the diseases of the poor persons who resort to the hospital and to prescribe proper medicines for the same. There are of course noble exceptions to this, but it is deplorable that there should be any irregularities at all in this most humane of all charities. The native vaidyans, on the other hand, have a local interest, their families living in the village for generations together and they are very keen to keep up their reputations; while the Government Surgeon is a bird of passage, who comes and goes, none of the villagers knowing whence or whither.

Malayalis, as a rule, are very clean, most of them bathe twice a 515
day; their clothes are kept neat and clean. But there is much scope for the spread of modern ideas on sanitation in very many fields. At child-birth the mother is usually kept in the worst possible room in the house. Children too might be brought up in a more sanitary environment; the education of females on these matters is a very crying necessity. It is also deplorable that Brahmans are gradually neglecting the morning-bath and exercise on which their ancestors insisted. The local Muhammadans are extremely insanitary. They are filthy, their children are filthy, their habits too are filthy.

The habit of keeping the stock very near the house should be avoided. Again except in well-to-do Nayar families kitchens are in the houses; they should be in a different building.

Among the Brahmans, a girl has to be married before the age 582
of puberty, generally 12. Among no other caste is this compulsory, [797]
though a few people, including the Indian Christians, marry their girls before puberty. These Christians are generally converts from low caste* Hindus, and change of religion has not changed their custom in this respect.

The local Muhammadans do not, as in the east of the peninsula, 562
observe purdah; their women freely talk to any person, work for others as coolies and stir abroad. Most of them are converts from low caste Hindus, and so there is no fanaticism, nor such strict observance of the rules of Islam as elsewhere. Nayar ladies are quite free, and among them descent in the female line (Marumakkattayam) prevails. Brahman ladies (not Nambudris) can go out, and be seen by others, but they are subject to their husbands and are not allowed to speak to Brahman men, and Brahman men are not allowed to speak with the women. A newly married Brahman bride is neither allowed to see nor to speak to her husband until she actually joins her husband after the nuptials. But these

* [M. L. K. Anandakrishna Ayyar, Cochin State Anthropologist, informs me that the Syrian Christians of Cochin are mainly the descendants of converts from *high* caste Hindus.—Ed.]

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Kerala AW11

for Brahmans as a whole, and the performance of *puja* during one month in a year. 476

The two elected administrators spend the money as explained above, keep the accounts, and are responsible for the whole income. This organization is seen throughout the Brahman community in Malabar. It may be regarded as a survival of the village communal organization, the political functions of which disappeared with the advent of British rule. 794

The lower classes have appointed a family to settle caste questions and questions of excommunication, adultery, etc., and this family has been exercising this power from time immemorial. The family still holds the power and the verdict which the headman of the family pronounces about such questions is tacitly accepted by all. 692

Religious festivals are performed by the temple, and the temple *in practice* belongs to the Zamorin. It is managed by the Court of Wards at the present time, along with the Zamorin's estate. The income of the temple is the offerings of the devotees who chiefly come from distant places. The festivals which the temple performs will in a year cost more than Rs. 2,000. In addition offerings to the temple from the village itself will amount to more than Rs. 3,000. 794

The above statements of indebtedness, communal income, etc., are based on careful inquiry with well-known persons and the village munsif, and are given in round numbers as accurately as possible.

Sanitary condition.—Malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox and consumption are absent from the village. 164

The ordinary diseases of the village are fever, dysentery, elephantiasis and such like diseases. Infantile mortality is high. Out of 156 deaths 87 are infant deaths. The deaths are high among the poor, particularly the Hindu poor. It may be people cannot afford to bring up their children decently. The mothers must work for the maintenance of the family before many days have passed after child-birth. I know of a Tiyya family in which seven out of eleven children born died before they were three years old. Moreover they cannot afford medical help and they implore God to help them and resort to quack doctors. The prevalence of early marriage may be cited as one of the causes for physical deterioration. But the most potent cause especially in the case of the higher classes is the ignorance of the mothers. Domestic hygiene is a sealed book for them. Their habits are not quite sanitary. [515]

There are no venomous snakes.

There is a hospital very near the village. But the chief medical help is from the native doctors who practise privately. There are two great medical experts in the native system but there are also a large number of quacks. The experts have a tremendous business but the quacks do some injury too. 759

Wearing unclean * cloths, not keeping the house neat, using the same plate for food for the whole family, are some of the insanitary habits of the poor and the lower classes. But the higher classes are very neat and Malabar is famous for its neatness. People bathe every day. 515

* [I.e., unclean according to the Malabar standard of cleanliness, which is very high. —Ed.]

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Kerala AW11

so long as they live, they have to keep their body and soul together. Thus year by year, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. The process is continuing at a fast rate and the people do not realize it. They are too ignorant and attribute everything to their fate and God's will. To add to these evils, in some years crops fail and there will be utter starvation. Thus the causes of indebtedness are— 511 426

(1) High rent.
(2) Population beyond means of subsistence.
(3) Lands limited in area.
(4) Absolute dependence on land of the population.

There is no instance of debtors who have entirely liberated themselves from debt in this desam. There is no co-operative society.

Sanitation.—In regard to sanitation, thanks to the peculiar customs of Malabar, the evils arising from the rigour of social rules are absent. Infant marriage and purdah are both absent. There is no problem of the disposal of night-soil here, for there are large unoccupied areas whither the people resort, while the women have latrines far out in their back compounds. As for insanitary habits, they are not addicted to any similar to what are found elsewhere. All bathe once a day in tanks or streams. There is neither much smoking or snuffing, but there is chewing (betel and tobacco and lime and arecanut all together) among all people, but not to such an extent as among people in Madras, etc. Drinking is a real evil among the Cherumas, but this is chiefly due to lack of proper food of other sorts. Several of them when asked why they drink have given the same unanimous answer, that "while stomach calls, one must respond, else not hear at all." The latter is of course the cheaper course. 364 [514] [515] 276 273

Good and clear water for drinking is easily got from private wells.

But with all these, the figure for the year of deaths from diseases and infant mortality is not encouraging. 165

The list contains the account of only one year that of 1915-16. But it still speaks for itself.

Kothachira.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Dysentery.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Karappani (skin blotched).	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	3	...	...	...	4	2	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	13	4	3	1	...	...	4	1	...
" 10 " 20 ...	1	1	...	..	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	7	3	...	1	1	...	...	...	2
" 30 " 40 ...	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 40 " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	3	.	1	1	1	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	2
Total ...	48	11	8	4	3	...	8	3	4

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

556 own most of the cultivable land in the village. This family draws an income of rather more than 10,000 paras of paddy from the village, husking it in the village and using it to feed a vast household of Nambudri priests and students, and maintain a choultry. It employs a Sanskrit pandit, whose time, as the demand for Sanskrit teaching diminishes, is partly taken up with the recital to the young students of Puranic stories to which the unseen ladies of the household listen eagerly.

312 *Water-supply.*—The water-supply is abundant and is obtained from deep wells and tanks. Water from deep wells alone is used for drinking purposes. Owing to the rocky nature of the subsoil some wells are dry in summer. Each house has one or more wells; it costs about Rs. 20 to bore an ordinary deep well. The quality of well water is excellent and is an asset to the village. All people [515] bathe every day in tanks, sometimes both in the morning and evening, especially Brahmans. The villagers are personally very clean and tidy.

871 *Education.*—One elementary school, started (very recently) and managed by the philanthropic Nambudri landlord of the place, gives free instruction to boys and girls of all castes up to the fifth standard. The school has two tiled buildings, one having an area of 72 by 20 feet, inside, and a verandah of the same length which is 9 feet broad, and the other having an area of 15 by 18 feet. Both are well ventilated and well situated and have a good appearance. There is a small flower garden in front. The school is provided with the necessary furniture, maps, and pictures, and is as far as it goes one of the best equipped of such schools. It teaches reading, writing and arithmetic, music, drawing and gardening. About the practical, as distinct from the cultural value of this education, one must say (like the Scotchman) "I have my doots." There are now no less than 5 "qualified" teachers; how one wishes that "qualified" meant much more than it does mean in educational language! They are so ill-paid (Rs. 7 to 15 per month) that it is hopeless to expect more capable men to be forthcoming or to take real interest in the work of the school. As it is, I know that at least one master is interested in the work. One hundred and twenty-six boys and 42 girls, I am informed, attend the school more or less regularly. These are drawn from all classes, except the very lowest like Cherumas and Paraiyas. The vast majority however are caste Hindus—all the girls are—and come from the Nayar and Brahman families. One could wish for greater regularity in their attendance. But they complain of having work to do at home, in assisting their parents, or they are sometimes too hungry to attend school. They are as a rule too poor to buy their own books or slates and these have to be provided by the school. Numerous prizes of books, slates, etc., are given by liberal villagers and the manager every year, to encourage the pupils to persist and to attract others. The school is steadily growing.

The average duration of school life is about four years. Many students leave before that period owing to the necessity of working 871 for their livelihood.

212 About 18 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular. This

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

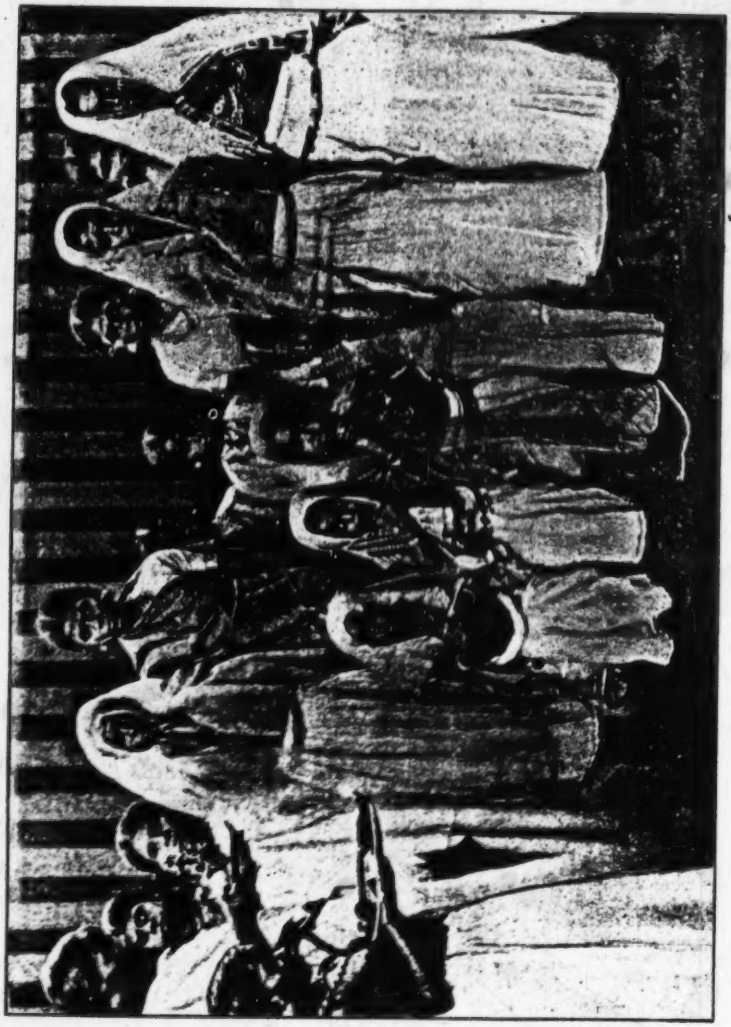

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A TALL-TYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

[facing p. 24]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

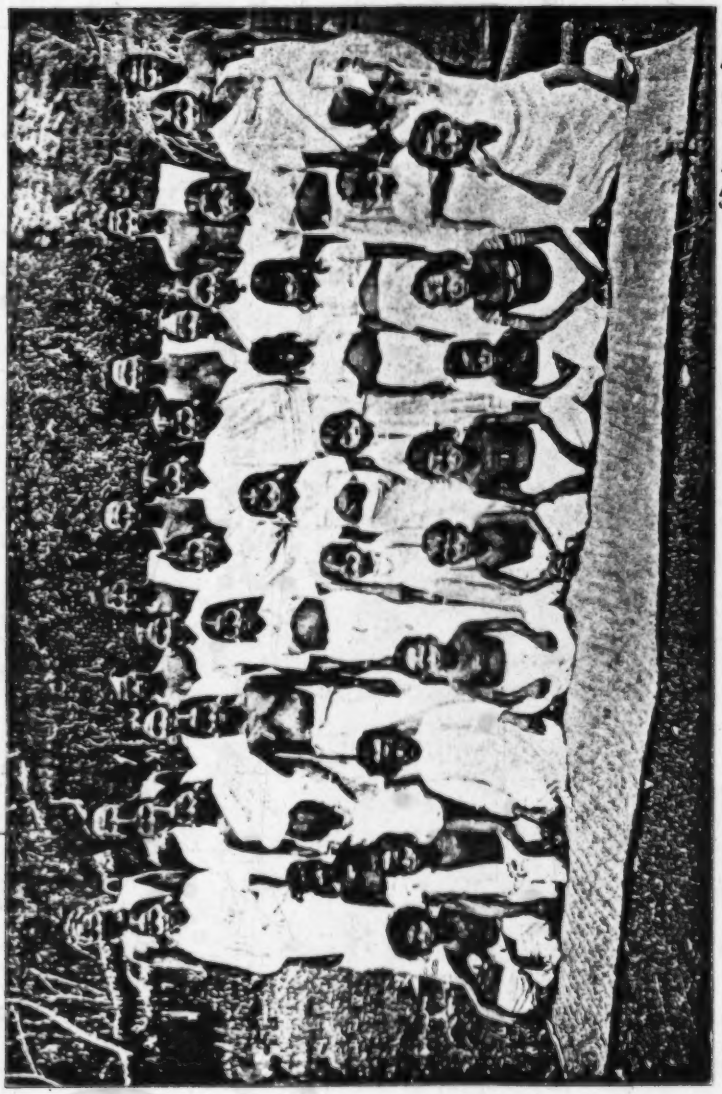

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY

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[facing p. 47]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

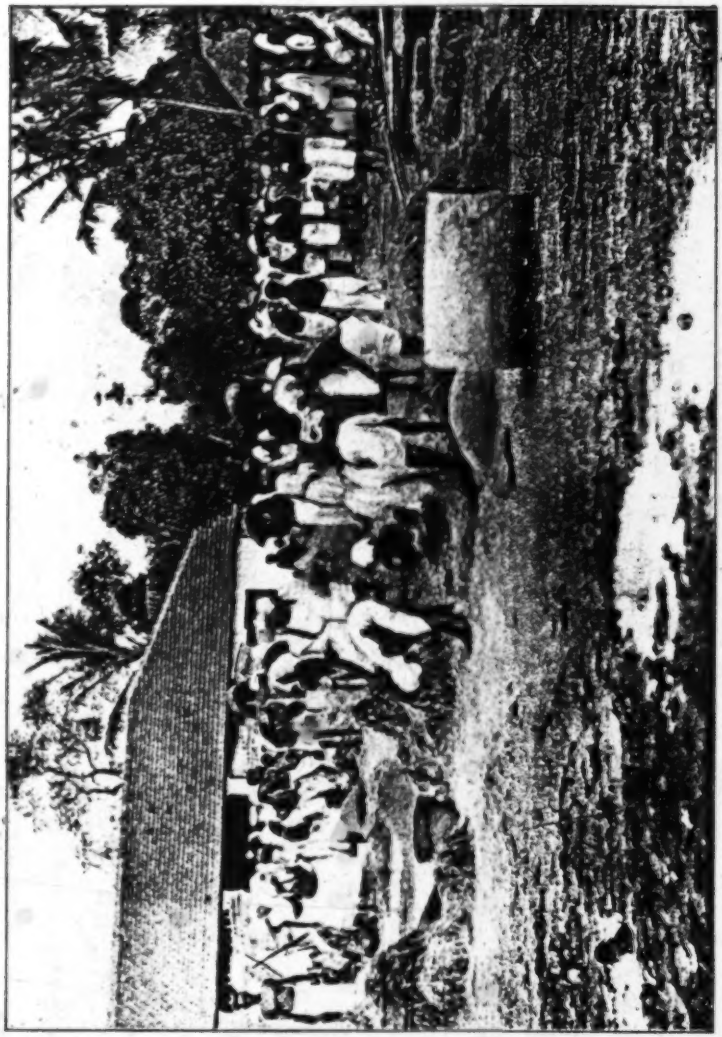

NAYAR WOMEN THRESHING CORN.

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[Facing p. 98]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayars

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Fig. 7. Parbhatiama, the Nayar woman and her sister Kunyimaluama.

Fig. 8. Kunyimaluama and her brother Krishnanayar.

[P. 238-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kolla-kurups
Toi-Kollans

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[516]

Fig. 13. While Kunji, aged twelve, of the *Kolla-kurup* Palappuram *Kalarikel* sings, the rest of the family sits around her

[304]

Fig. 14. Old Kurumba, seventy six, of the *Tolkottan* household of Palakarampil village, near Ottappalam. Note the enlarged holes in her ear lobes.

[P. 238-E]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Panans

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Fig. 15. Sita of the *Panan* Villarkaden household, Kundilpadam *tarawad*. At her breast, Kumaran, then Chami and Narayana.

[P. 238-F]

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

NÂYAR HOUSE.

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351
3:2

[facing P. 361]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and *residence avunculocal.*

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them. 227 [651]

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26. 433* 228 [312] [221]

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon. [439]

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries.

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species. 433* 226 [133]

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries. [523]

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture. 433* 228

"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHIRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening. 796 [264] [526] [535] [524]

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before. 796 526

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a 796 534

796 In some families, after
526 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
535 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
[524] the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627
This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627
this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634
when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627
another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634
chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578
being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525]
two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652]
wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423
to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427
in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178]
the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821]
a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

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* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782]
people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut). . . . [762]
after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—
"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

454 The families which have made savings are very few in proportion to the population both in the 'town' and in the village area. There is a big Nambudiri janmi in the village. He owns very much land which he has sublet and holds the custody of much [428] devaswom land. As the partition of family property does not exist in a Nambudiri family, their property only increases. The joint property system also obtains among the Nayars, but the Nayar families which are well-to-do and have made savings could be numbered on the fingers. The majority of them are poor and many of them occupy themselves in work for wages. The Brahmans other than Nambudiri Brahmans follow the divided property system.* I can only count four or five families which possess wealth to the value of Rs. 10,000 and above and only one or two which have Rs. 20,000. Most of the Brahmans are comparatively poor. Some are engaged in Government service for a paltry pay of Rs. 20 per month or less, and few are able to save much out of this pay.

No more capital is invested in agriculture than is absolutely necessary from year to year, as for replenishing the stock, implements, etc., and clearing the fields of rubbish and making it [312] ready to receive the rains. Bunds are also constructed, to store water in the water course which runs on the north of the village area, by persons whose lands lie near it, but these dams last only during the summer. A few indeed improve their land by digging it, and one or two have made new fields on land previously waste. About one-tenth of the savings could be said to be utilized in these ways. No one invests his earnings in savings banks.

[426] Lending to neighbours is *the* form of investing one's savings, until they come up to a round sum which can be invested in landed property. A few people in the town take advantage of others' difficulties to lend money at exorbitant interest. Many are in debt.

454 All castes and conditions of men try to accumulate their savings by subscribing to a *kuri*. A *kuri* serves the purpose of a savings 525 bank. There are three chief kinds—*bhangati-kuri*, auction-*kuri* and lottery-*kuri*. The first prevails among the lower castes and consists of small subscriptions. The *kuri* is started by a *kuri-muppan* (stake-holder) with a certain specified amount as principal, each member subscribing an equal amount. The stake-holder is entrusted with the task of giving a dinner to all the members, each member contributing two or four annas for the purpose. On the day appointed for the *kuri*, the members bid down the amount and the bidden amount is collected from each of the several members and paid to the bidder. Auction-*kuri* is similar to this, but the dinner is dispensed with and the *kuri* deals with large amounts sub[illegible] by well-to-do men. In a lottery-*kuri*, a number of person[illegible] that each should subscribe a certain sum of money by p[illegible] instalments and that each in his turn, as determined by lot, [illegible] take the whole of the subscription for each instalment, all [illegible] returned the amount of their subscriptions and the common fund being lent to each subscriber in turn.

454 Every decent householder among the Brahmans spends some [301] money (at least Rs. 60) on gold ornaments for his wife or other female relatives. The other castes rarely use gold ornaments or jewellery of any cost.

* i.e., on the death of a man his property is [illegible]

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation ground, while at another corner is a dense shrub-
[778] bery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

875 526 [827] [564] [553] 875 526 564 [844]

The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say "the body is cool," is the time when, according to custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises. At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when they are believed to be properly accomplished they are given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small county): and his women folk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

526

Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sarîravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sarîravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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military element in Malabar. The opponents who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter staff, stood 30 feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, a la cancan, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with outstretched arms, came down *slowly* on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and after some preliminary pirouetting went for each other tooth and nail. 526

The sword play which one sees during festive ceremonies, a marriage or the like, done by the hereditary retainers who fight imaginary foes and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly. above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs—in ever so many impossible ways.

Nâyar swords and shields are figured in the illustration. The shields are made of wood covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle and half way up the blade; but the one which is figured will suffice to show what the Nâyar fighting sword was like. The smaller shields are now used in play. 714 411 [531]

796 festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy is [132] harvested. As a rule the Ônam season is one of bright sunshine following the almost continuous rain of June, July and August.

● 526 I once witnessed a very interesting game called êitû 796 (êiththu), played by the Nâyars in the Southern portion [184] of Kurumbranâd during the ten days preceding Ônam. Curiously, the locality and the period are, so to speak, fixed. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to "sides." Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo about 18 inches in length, and arrows or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the leaf at one end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the "cheppu" as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight and stick in readily) carries of all the arrows lying on the ground. Each "side" strives to secure all the arrows and to deprive the other side of theirs. A sort of "beggar my neighbour." He who hits the mark *last* takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit it first was running the 25 yards to touch the "cheppu." Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it; and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much shouting, gesticulation, and laughter. Those returning after securing a large number of arrows turned somersaults, and in saltatory motions expressed their joy.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round. 796 431

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit. 556 466 431 796

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to." 796 [535] [526] [524]

"THE THIRUVATHIRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in [776] [773] [515] [533]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
262 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 782 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening. 796 [264] [526] [535] [524]

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before. 796 526

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a 796 534

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for [534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God [533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pâttu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they [526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree). [264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner [262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and [431] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam [777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

early in the morning to gather flowers, of which the kadali is the most important. On their return, they sit in front of the tulasi (sacred basil) mandapam, make a carpet-like bed of the blossoms which they have collected, and place a clay image of Ganapati in the centre. A writer in the Calcutta Review * describes how having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M., and then the daily decoration begins. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers, and one or two varieties of foliage of different tints, are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art, accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal (booth), hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork."

"Various field sports, of which foot-ball is the chief, are indulged in during the Ônam festival. To quote Paulinus once more, the men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into parties, and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted, but exceedingly strong, and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans."

* January, 1899.

•526 In connection with bows and arrows, Mr. Fawcett writes that "I once witnessed a very interesting game called ĕitū (ĕiththu), played by the Nāyars in the southern portion of Kurumbranād during the ten days preceding Ōnam. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to sides. Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo, about 18 inches in length, and arrows, or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the cheppu, as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight, and stick in readily) carries off all the arrows lying on the ground. Each side strives to secure all the arrows, and to deprive the other side of theirs—a sort of 'beggar my neighbour.' He who hits the mark last takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit first was running the 25 yards to touch the cheppu. Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it, and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much

shouting, gesticulation and laughter. Those returning, 526 after securing a large number of arrows, turned somersaults, and expressed their joy in saltatory motions." In a note on this game with bows and arrows in Kurumbranad, Mr. E. F. Thomas writes that "the players form themselves into two sides, which shoot alternately at the mark. Beside the mark stand representatives of the two sides. When the mark is hit by a member of either side, on his representative shouting 'Run, man,' he runs up the lists. His object is to seize the mark before it is hit by any one belonging to the other side. If he can do this, his side takes all the arrows which have been shot, and are sticking in the stop-butt. If, on the other hand, the mark is hit by the other side before he reaches it, he may not seize the mark. A member of the other side runs up in his turn to seize the mark if possible before it is hit again by the first side. If he can do this, he takes out, not all the arrows, but only the two which are sticking in the mark. If, while number two is running, the mark is hit a third time, a member of the first side runs up, to seize the mark if possible. The rule is that one or three hits take all the arrows in the stop-butt, two or four only the arrows sticking in the mark. Great excitement is shown by all who take part in the game, which attracts a number of spectators. The game is played every fortnight by Nâyars, Tiyans, Mâppillas, and others. I am told that it is a very old one, and is dying [178] out. I saw it at Naduvanûr."

The Ônam games in the south-east of Malabar, in 796 the neighbourhood of Palghat, are said by Mr. Fawcett 526 to be of a rough character, "the tenants of certain jenmis 184 (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights, in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing, which

796
●526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman
[184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the
[175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them
[431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a
[174] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic
[178] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."
796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu-
[176] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The
[173] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogde of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

796 In some families, after
526 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
535 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
[524] the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed;
[364] generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

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they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. 788 796 In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror [776] in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and [783] sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respec- [431] tive homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, 526 "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time 875 when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice 564 physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in 526 a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

526 a short stick; and a stick like a quarter-staff called a sariravadi, or stick the length of one's body. The watta is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way, turn over an opponent. The total length of the watta is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends, and is but a short staff. It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sariravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands. The distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one, now by another end by either hand, as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the watta and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship, when the Nâyars were the military element in Malabar. The opponents, who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter-staff, stood thirty feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with out-stretched arms, came down slowly on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over, and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and, after some preliminary pirouetting, went for each other tooth and nail. The sword play, which one sees during festive ceremonies, such as a marriage or the like, is done by the hereditary retainers, who fight imaginary foes, and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, and always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by

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way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by 526 squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nāyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nāyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, 631 "have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the dēsam, presided over by a Dāsavazhi. A number of dēsams adjoining one another constituted a nādu, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the Nāduvazhi. Above the Nāduvazhis was the Rājah, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each nādu split itself up into a certain number of taras, over the affairs of which a Karanavan, or elder, presided. An assembly of these Karanavans [613] constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military [623] organisation of the Nāyars in mediæval times. These 631 six hundred are referred to in two places in the second 175 Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 623 A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371 M.E., the same organisation is referred to as Venattarunuru, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavaḷasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original
sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

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CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635 published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a trouble- [762] some ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [574] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, 178 that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end 527 of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief [114] administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

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635 occasionally adopted this mode of escape from the cha-
527 grin of not being re-elected by their adherents." He goes on to say what Mr. Jonathan Duncan wrote about this festival, of which his account appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

635 The festival was held last in 1743.

527 "Those who acknowledged the Zamorin's suzerainty sent
175 flags in token of fealty; and the places where these flags used to be hoisted at festival times are still pointed out. The Valluvanād Raja, who is still represented in the management of the Tirunāvāyi temple by one of the four Brahman *Kārālars*, instead of sending a flag used to send men called *Chāvers* (men who have elected to die) whose office it was to endeavour to cut their way through the Zamorin's guards to his throne in a manner presently to be described. If they had succeeded in killing him—as on the occasion cited by Hamilton, whose statement except as to date, is moreover corroborated by tradition—it is uncertain what would have happened; but probably if a capable Raja had been ruling in Valluvanād at such a time, popular opinion would have endowed him with suzerainty, for the Nâyar militia were very fickle, and flocked to the standard of the man who was fittest to command and who treated them the most considerately.

[127] "With the kind assistance of the present Zamorin, Maharaja Bahadur, the records of his family have been examined and a complete account obtained of the events attending the festival held in 1683 A.D., the festival next preceding that alluded to by Hamilton.

[82] "The festival used to continue for twenty-eight days every twelfth year when the planet Jupiter was in retrograde motion in the sign of *Karkadagam* or Cancer or the Crab, and at the time of the eighth lunar asterism in the month of Makaram the festival used to culminate.

"On the occasion in question the Zamorin some months beforehand sent orders for the preparation of the necessary timber and bamboos for the temporary buildings required at *Tirunāvāyi* and the materials were floated down stream from the Aliparamba Chirakkal lands.

"Then exactly two months before the opening day he sent out a circular to his followers worded as follows:—

'Royal writing to the *Akampati Janam* (body-guards).

'On the 5th Makaram 858 is *Mahāmakha Talpuyam* (time of the eighth lunar asterism in the festival season), and the *Lōkars* (chief people of each locality) are required to attend at Tirunāvāyi as in olden times.

'Mangātt Raman and Tinayancheri are sent to collect and bring you in regular order for the Mahāmakham.'

"The Zamorin timed himself to arrive at Tirunāvāyi on the day after that appointed for the arrival of his followers, and the

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lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius. 635 527 175 [821]

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank. [491]

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction. [312]

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand. [138]

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp. [701]

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

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with 'one hundred and fourteen small links and one clasp, making in all one hundred and fifteen'—as the record specifically testifies—and with golden bosses and other ornaments too numerous to be detailed. But this part of the ceremonies is not to be permitted to pass unchallenged, for it signifies in a formal manner the Zamorin's intention to assume the *rôle* of *Rakshapurashan* or protector of the festivities and of the people there assembled. On the instant, therefore, there is a stir among the crowd assembled near the western gate of the temple directly facing at half a mile distance the Zamorin's standing-place on the upper terrace.

"From this post, running due east in a perfectly straight line to the western gate of the temple, is the straight piece of road already described, but the road itself is clear and the armed crowd on the plain, it is seen, are hemmed in by barrel palisadings running the full length of the road on both sides. Two spears' length apart the palisades are placed, and the armed crowd on either hand, consisting on this occasion of the thirty thousand Ernād Nāyars, it is seen, are all carrying spears. The spearmen may not enter that narrow lane, and by the mere weight of their bodies present an impossible obstacle to the free passage of the foemen now bent on cutting down the Zamorin in his pride of place.

"Amid much din and firing of guns the *morituri*, the *Chaver* Nāyars, the elect of four Nāyar houses in Valluvanād, step forth from the crowd and receive the last blessings and farewells of their friends and relatives. They have just taken of the last meal they are to eat on earth at the house of the temple representative of their chieftain; they are decked with garlands and smeared with ashes. On this particular occasion it is one of the houses of Putumanna Panikkar who heads the fray. He is joined by seventeen of his friends—Nāyar or Māppilla or other arms-bearing caste men—for all who so wish may fall in with sword and target in support of the men whe have elected to die.

"Armed with swords and targets alone they rush at the spearmen thronging the palisades; they 'winde and turn their Bodies, as if they had no Bones, casting them forward and backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders,' as worthy Master Johnson describes them in a passage already quoted (page 137). But notwithstanding the suppleness of their limbs, notwithstanding their delight and skill and dexterity in their weapons, the result is inevitable and is prosaically recorded in the chronicle thus: 'The number of *Chavers* who came and died early morning the next day after the elephant began to be adorned with gold trappings—being *Putumanna Kantur Menon* and followers—were 18.

"At various times during the ten last days of the festival the same thing is repeated. Whenever the Zamorin takes his

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stand on the terrace, assumes the sword and shakes it, men rush forth from the crowd at the west temple gate only to be impaled on the spears of the guardsmen who relieve each other from day to day. The turns for this duty are specifically mentioned in the chronicle thus: 'on the day the golden ornaments are begun to be used the body-guard consists of the thirty thousand; of Ellaya Vakkayil Vellōdi (and his men) the second day, of Netiyiruppu,* Mūttarāti Tirumulpād (and his men) the third day of Ittatūrnād,† Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fourth day, of Ērnād Mūnāmkūr,‡ Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fifth day, of Ērnād,§ Elankur Nambiyāttiri Tirumalpād (and his men) the sixth day, and of the ten thousand,|| the Calicut Talachanna Nāyar and Ērnād Mēnon the seventh day.'

[701]

"The chronicle is silent as to the turns for this duty on the eighth, ninth and tenth days. On the eleventh day, before the assembly broke up and after the final assault of the *Chāvers* had been delivered, the *Ernad Elankur Nambiyātiri Tirumalpad* (the Zamorin next in succession) and the *Tirumanisseri Nambūtiri* were conveyed in palanquins to the eastern end of the narrow palisaded lane, and thence they advanced on foot, prostrating themselves four times towards the Zamorin, once at the eastern end of the lane, twice in the middle, and once at the foot of the terraces. And after due permission was obtained they took their places on the Zamorin's right hand.

"After this, so the chronicle runs, it was the duty of the men who have formed the body guard to march up with music and pomp to make obeisance. On this occasion, however, a large portion of the body-guard seems to have been displeased, for they left without fulfilling this duty, and this story corroborates in a marked way the facts already set forth (page 132) regarding the independence and important political influence possessed by the Nāyars as a body.

"The *Ernād Menon* and the *Calicut Talachanna Nāyar* with their followers were the only chiefs who made obeisance in due form to the Zamorin on this occasion, and possibly by the time of the next festival (1695 A.D.), of which Hamilton wrote, the dissatisfaction might have increased among his followers and the Zamorin's life even may have been endangered

* The fifth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
† The fourth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
‡ The third Prince of the Zamorin's family.
§ The second Prince and heir apparent of the Zamorin's family.
|| The ten thousand of Pōlanād, the district round about Calicut, formed the Zamorin's own immediate body-guard—Conf. the account contained in the *Kēralolpatti* of how these men were originally selected—Chapter III, section (*a*).

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175 635 527 as Hamilton alleges, probably through lack of men to guard him. Tradition asserts that the *Chāver* who managed on one occasion to get through the guards and up to the Zamorin's seat belonged to the family of the Chāndrattil Panikkar.

"The chronicle winds up with a list of the *Chāvers* slain on this occasion, viz. :—

When the Zamorin was taking his stand on the terrace apparently at the commencement of festivities	5
On the day the elephant was adorned as already stated	18
"The next day of *Chandrattil Panikkar* and followers, the number who came and died	11
'Of *Verkōt Panikkar* and followers the number that came and died the third day.	12
'The number who came to Vakkayūr and died in the four days	4
'The number of *Chāvers* who were arrested at the place where Kalattal Itti Karunākara Menon was, and brought tied to Vakkayūr and put to death	1
'The number of *Chāvers* arrested on the day of the sacrifice, when all the men together made the obeisance below Vakkayūr at the time when the Zamorin was taking his stand, and left tied to the bars, and who were afterwards brought to Vakkayūr and after the ceremony was over and the Zamorin had returned to the palace were put to the sword	4
Total ...	55

"The chronicle does not mention the fact, but a current tradition states that the corpses of the slain were customarily kicked by elephants as far as the brink of the fine well, of which mention has been made, and into which they were tumbled promiscuously. The well itself is nearly filled up with débris of sorts, and a search made at the spot would probably elicit conclusive evidence of the truth of this tradition.

627 "The martial spirit of the Nāyars was in former days kept alive by such desperate enterprises as the above, but in every-day-life the Nāyar used to be prepared and ready to take vengeance on any who affronted him, for he invariably carried weapons, and when a man was slain it was incumbent on his

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 787 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration*.

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.
† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.
‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

military element in Malabar. The opponents who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter staff, stood 30 feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, a la cancan, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with outstretched arms, came down *slowly* on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and after some preliminary pirouetting went for each other tooth and nail. 526

The sword play which one sees during festive ceremonies, a marriage or the like, done by the hereditary retainers who fight imaginary foes and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs—in ever so many impossible ways.

Nâyar swords and shields are figured in the illustration. The shields are made of wood covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle and half way up the blade; but the one which is figured will suffice to show what the Nâyar fighting sword was like. The smaller shields are now used in play. 714 411 [531]

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

[561] [532] [782] [515]

* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

796 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate im-
114 portance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 An important local festival is that held near Palghat,
184 in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti
782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the
[346] southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others
[126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of
[532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver
[326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is
[564] regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [987]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri 588 613 [176] [182] 588

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII
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ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion 755
and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has [532]
a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed
of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the
village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, [373]
sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come [535]
before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying
music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric
effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like
blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible
looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into
a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who
prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and
the devil is supposed to have been cast out.

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," that they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into [775]
girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no
avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endear- 776
ment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god.
He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a
dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He
never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place

[1] Note, the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations. 536 [873]

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja. [532] [534] [176]

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night. [534] [262] [203]

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are [345] [354] [534]

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkákarappan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *káranavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nentranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

564 771 776 Religion. The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-cháttan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kávus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, and require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, [782] and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock 769
caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors [532] are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789]
and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754]
Brahmans also share.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattán kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and 825
other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 771 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 778 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a 825 woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [841] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [782] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to [532] re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kálamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
[791] to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
796 man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[534] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a
[532] scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chithayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brahman sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified.

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned carefully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared

342 west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east.
[823] Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing
351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this;
[184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the
342 Nāyars. The following is a plan of a nālapura or four-
556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

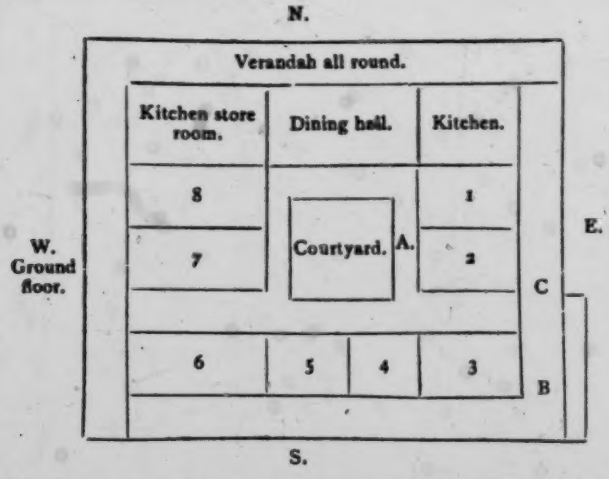

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for
[532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of
[613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver,
[735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

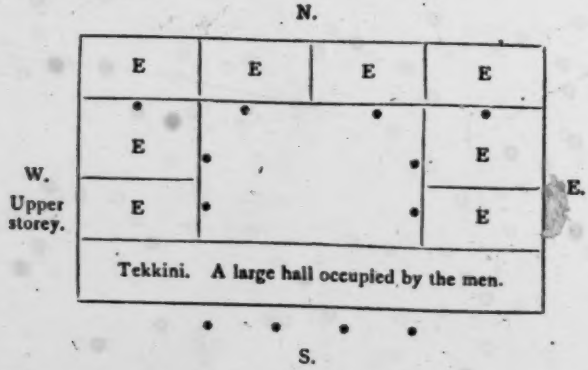

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar 301 wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who 789 died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be 304 favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore [177] by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women [564] of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. 776 Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of [532] these have granite representations, or at least such [778] emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met [775] with accidental death, and girls who have died before [766] their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic [791] amulets are attached to the waist by members of both [789] sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits [782] are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

early in the morning to gather flowers, of which the kadali is the most important. On their return, they sit in front of the tulasi (sacred basil) mandapam, make a carpet-like bed of the blossoms which they have collected, and place a clay image of Ganapati in the centre. A writer in the Calcutta Review * describes how having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M., and then the daily decoration begins. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers, and one or two varieties of foliage of different tints, are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art, accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal (booth), hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork."

"Various field sports, of which foot-ball is the chief, are indulged in during the Ōnam festival. To quote Paulinus once more, the men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into parties, and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted, but exceedingly strong, and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans."

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* January, 1899.

796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 572 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

564 servants, nowadays [20] collectively called Amba-
744 lavasis. The highest of these were the Chakk-
yars or reciters of Puranic stories, and the
Pushpagans or flower-gatherers for temples.
[611] These two castes had a patrilineal descent-sys-
tem of the same type as Nambudiris, and are
said to have once been Nambudiris who were
degraded for ritual offences. They ranked be-
low Nambudiris and above Nayars and the matri-
lineal temple servant castes. These latter in-
[533] cluded Nambyars, a small caste whose work was
to accompany Chakkyar recitations on a metal
drum; Psharodis and Variyars, both of whom
traditionally sweep the temple, clean temple
vessels and make garlands for the idols; Pudu-
vals or drummers on a drum called maddalam;
and Marars or regular drummers on another
drum called chenda.

The temple-servant castes were small and
were chiefly congregated in villages owned by
Nambudiri landlords or by large temples. Four
main types of temple were owned by the higher
castes of Malabar. First came large and weal-
thy temples owned and managed entirely by
groups of Nambudiri landlords and dedicated to
one of the orthodox Brahmanical male deities of
India, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second came the
private temple of each individual Nambudiri fam-
ily in villages owned by Nambudiris; these were
small replicas of the first type, dedicated to the
same types of deities. Third came the large
temples, one of which was associated with each
[776] royal and chiefly matrilineage. These were
usually dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali,
the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the soil.

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give 564
sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, 613
and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they 588
proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing [586]
of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the [533]
Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtain- [171]
ing in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be [735]
said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is repre- [184]
sented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, [824]
and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They [415]
are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891). [113]

796
364 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[346] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See Plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

796
564 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his
782 hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a
793 a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple
[534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As
[533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

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776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is
[564] regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHIRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

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796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
262 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished
585 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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588 182 184 sambandham lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambūdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after [533] the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [782] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

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pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face. 000

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion. 881 588 564 533 182

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'. 588 783 182 831 588 783 182

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual 588 182 564

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of ostracism by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tāli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his elder kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

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vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-therritham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol. 773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son. 588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet. 841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

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2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others. 533 554 [644]

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar. [1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play. [874]

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *avan*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British [451]

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnóttu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Bráhmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purínic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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588 171 *kalyánam* of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials [533] [789] in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pattu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig védic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathâyam* Hindus, the *táli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathâyam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on the occasion of *táli* tying. The reason for this departure may have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the [182] early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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881 she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. [184] In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

585 The second or real marriage is the ***Sambandham*** (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only [184] two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs con- nected with each of the latter differ in different places: [582] nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other [584] classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bride- [787] groom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kâranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bride- groom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly wel- comed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Râmâyanam* or other sacred book, referring to marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read [533] by the Asân or village school master. Some music is also [574] provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the [782] drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniyáttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.—There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them :— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Pattu :—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta pattu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati pattu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs :—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam* :—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for [534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvátira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvátira* day in Dhanu (December-[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Káma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God [533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvátira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they [526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree). [264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner [262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, [431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam [777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

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consider a coral necklace an essential. In her right hand she holds a vālkannādi (brass hand mirror), and in her left a charakkal (a highly ornate arrow). In front of the girl are placed, in addition to the five-wicked lamp and nirachaveppu, a metal dish or talam of parched rice, and the eight lucky things known as ashtamangalyam. A woman, termed Brahmini or Pushpini, usually of the Nambissan caste, sits facing her on a three-legged stool (pidam), and renders appropriate and lengthy songs, at the close of which she scatters rice over her. About midday there is a feast, and in the evening songs in the macchu are repeated. Next morning the ceremonial in the macchu is repeated for the third time, after which the paraphernalia are removed to the nearest tank or to the east of the household well, where the Pushpini sings once more, goes through the form of making the girl's toilet, and ties a cocoanut frond round each of her wrists (kappōla). The girl has then to rise and jump over a kindi (vessel) of water with an unhusked cocoanut placed on the top, overturning it the third time. The party then proceed to the pandal, two men holding a scarlet cloth over the girl as a canopy, and a Chāliyan (weaver) brings two cloths (kōdi vastiram), which the girl puts on. In the evening, the previous day's ceremonial is repeated in the macchu. The third day is the most important, and it is then that the central act of the ceremony is performed. For this the girl sits in the inner pandal richly adorned. In some cases she is carried from the house to the pandal by her karnavan or brother, who makes a number of pradakshinams round the pandal (usually 3 or 7) before he places her in her seat. Before the girl are the various objects already specified, and the hymeneal ditties of the Pushpini open the proceedings. At the auspicious moment the

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184 Manavâlan arrives in rich attire. He is often preceded by a sort of body guard with sword and shield who utter a curious kind of cry, and is met at the gate of the girl's house by a bevy of matrons with lamps and salvers decorated with flowers and lights, called talams. A man of the girl's family washes his feet, and he takes his seat in the pandal on the girl's right. Sometimes the girl's father at this stage presents new cloths (mantravâdi or mantrokôdi) to the pair, who at once don them. The girl's father takes the tâli, a small round plate of gold about the size of a two-anna bit, with a hole at the top, from the goldsmith who is in waiting, pays him for it, [787] and gives it to the Manavâlan. The karnavan or father of the girl asks the astrologer thrice if the moment has arrived, and, as he signifies his assent the third time, the Manavâlan ties the tâli round the girl's neck amidst the shouts of those present. The Manavâlan carries the girl indoors to the macchu, and feasting brings the day to [533] a close. Tom-toming and other music are of course incessant accompaniments throughout as on other festal occasions, and the women in attendance keep up a curious kind of whistling, called kurava, beating their lips with their fingers. On the fourth day, girl and Manavâlan go in procession to the temple richly dressed. The boy, carrying some sort of sword and shield, heads [782] the party. If the family be one of position, he and the girl must be mounted on an elephant. Offerings are made to the deity, and presents to the Brâhmans. They then return home, and, as they enter the house, the Manavâlan who brings up the rear is pelted by the boys of the party with plantains, which he wards off with his shield. In other cases, he is expected to make a pretence of forcing the door open. These two usages are no doubt to be classed with those marriage ceremonies which take the

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[787]

astrologer, and those youths in the tarwads who have passed the age of eighteen, and whose horoscopes agree with those of the girls, are declared to be eligible. The ola (palm-leaf) on which the Kaniyan (astrologer) writes his decision is called the muhurta charutu, and the individual who receives it from him is obliged to see that the ceremony is performed on an auspicious day in the near future. The next important item is the fixing of a wooden post in the south-west corner or kannimula of the courtyard. At the construction of the pandal (booth) the Pidakakkar or villagers render substantial aid. The mandapa is decorated with ears of corn, and hence called katirmandapa. It is also called mullapandal. On the [533] night of the previous day the kalati or Brâhman's song is sung. A sumptuous banquet, called ayaniunnu, is given at the girl's house to the party of the young man. The ceremony commences with the bridegroom washing his feet, and taking his seat within the pandal. The girl meanwhile bathes, worships the household deity, and is dressed in new cloths and adorned with costly ornaments. A Brâhman woman ties a thread round the girl's left wrist, and sings a song called Subhadraveli, which deals with the marriage by capture of Subhadra by Arjuna. Then, on the invitation of the girl's mother, who throws a garland round his neck, the bridegroom goes in procession, riding on an elephant, or on foot. The girl's brother is waiting to receive him at the pandal. A leading villager is presented with some money, as if to recompense him for the permission granted by him to commence the ceremony. The girl sits within the mandapa, facing the east, with her eyes closed. The bridegroom, on his arrival, sits on her right. He then receives the minnu (ornament) from the Ilayatu priest, and ties it round the girl's neck. A song is sung called

A song is sung called
ammachampattu, or the song of the maternal uncle. If 588
there are several brides, they sit in a row, each holding 184
in her hand an arrow and a looking-glass, and the [533]
ornaments are tied on their necks in the order of their ages. Unless enangans are employed, there is usually only one tāli-tier, whatever may be the number of girls. In cases where, owing to poverty, the expenses of the ceremony cannot be borne, it is simply performed in front of a Brāhman temple, or in the pandaramatam, or house of the village chieftain. In many North Travancore taluks the girl removes her tali as soon as she hears of the tali-tier's death." It is noted by the Rev. S. Mateer * that " a Nair girl of Travancore must get married with the tāli before the age of eleven to avoid reproach from friends and neighbours. In case of need a sword may even be made to represent a bridegroom." Sometimes, when a family is poor, the girl's mother makes an idol of clay, adorns it with flowers, and invests her daughter with the tāli in the presence of the idol.

In an account of the tali-kettu ceremony, in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, it is stated that " the celebration of the ceremony is costly, and advantage is therefore taken of a single occasion in the course of ten or twelve years, at which all girls in a family, irrespective of their ages, and, when parties agree, all girls belonging to families that observe death pollution between one another go through the ceremony. The ceremony opens with the fixing of a post for the construction of a pandal or shed, which is beautifully decorated with cloth, pictures and festoons. The male members of the village are [574]
invited, and treated to a feast followed by the distribution

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., XII, 1883.

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 88
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 585
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
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534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra. Early on, the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked down, and salt put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

796 794 564 [293] [482] [685] [572] [786]

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the

lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

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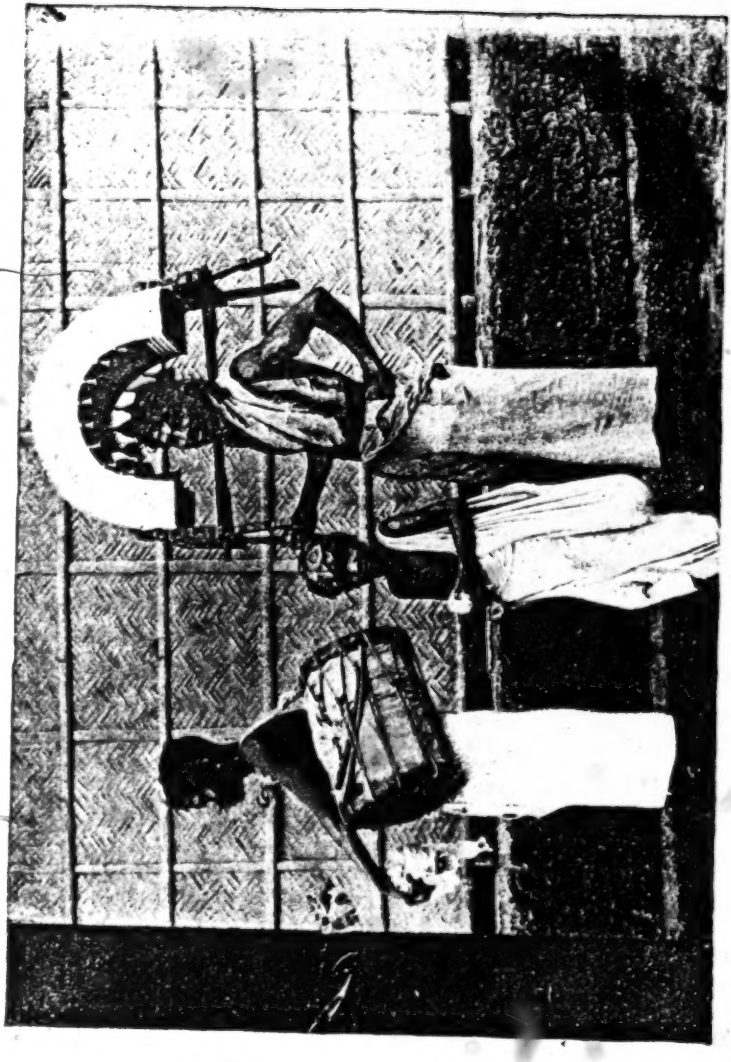

A PALNI PILGRIM, WITH HIS KAVADI.

[Facing p. 230]

796
564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[346] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

796 564 [778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

796
564 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a
782 a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain
793 room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple
[534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As
[533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

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The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State. 564

6. *Márár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies. [534]

7. *Pidamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision. [788]

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Vániyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :— 564 326

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1] [778]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses. 564

12. *Edachéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called 536
Attakkathas (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a [873] high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily [532] drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the [534] bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr [176] or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, [534] which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for [262] an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock [203] they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of [345] mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two [354] bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled [534] cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

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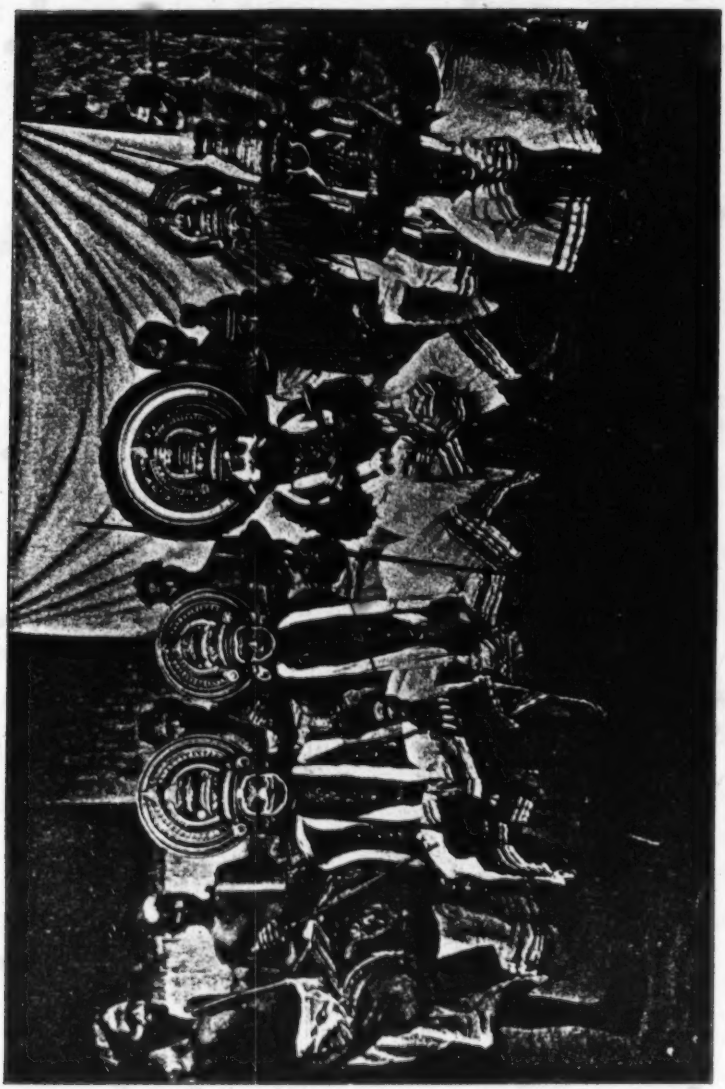

CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p. 65]

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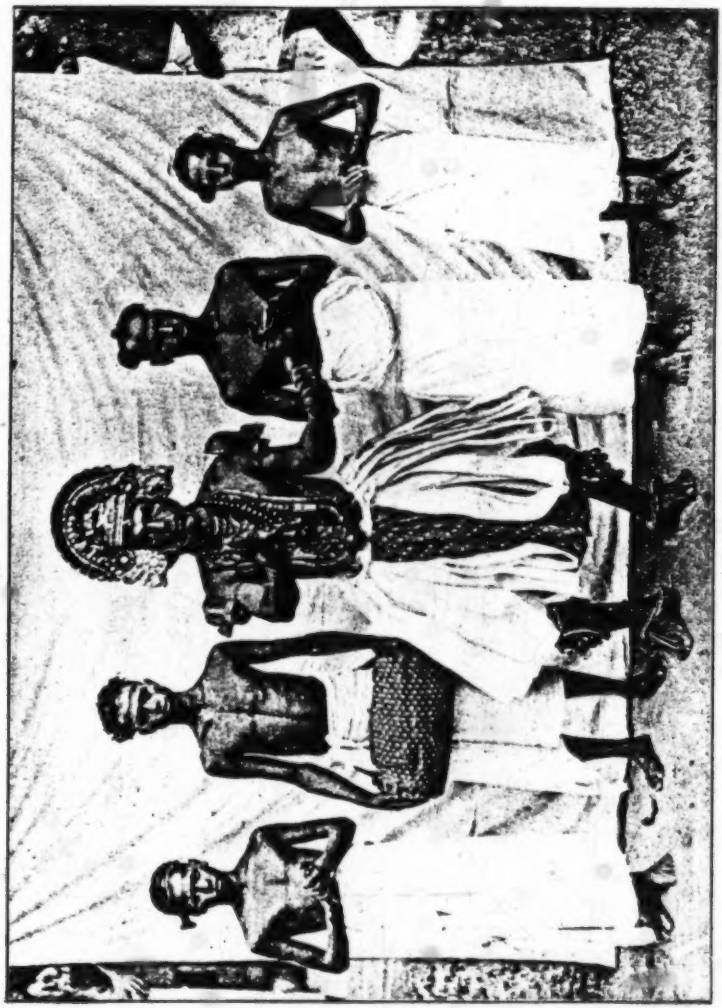

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[facing p.66]

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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening.

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before.

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for [534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvátira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvátira* day in Dhanu (December-[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Káma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God [533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvátira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they [526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Ushinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree). [264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner [262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, [431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and [263] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet preparation of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national [777] festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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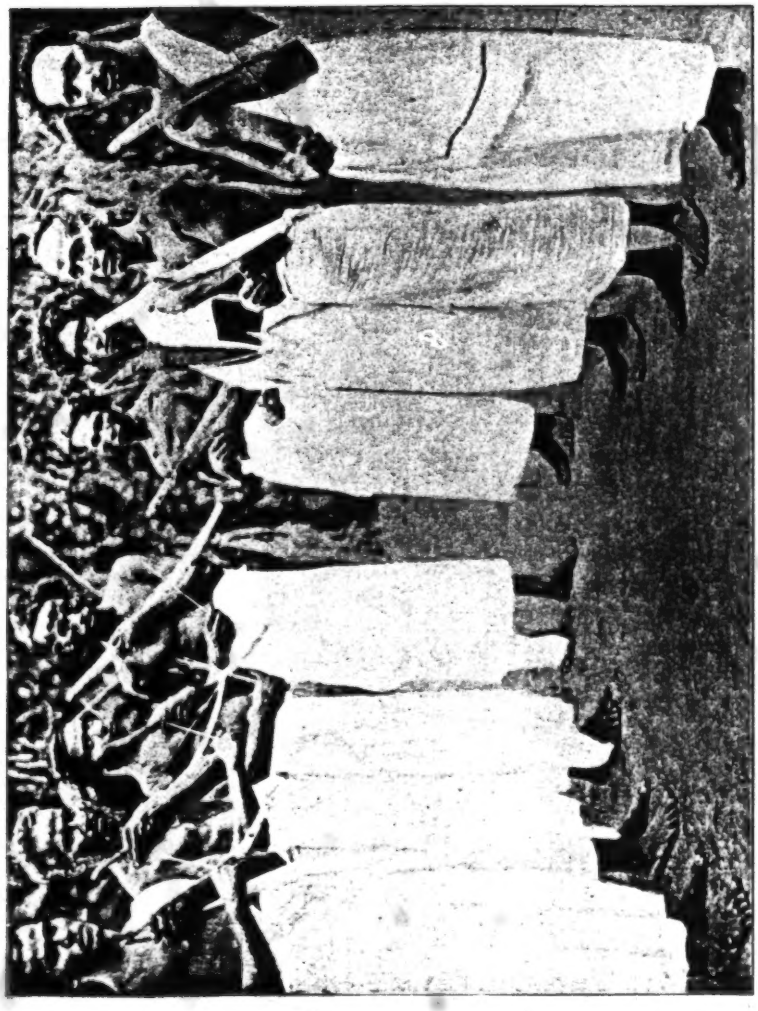

A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[Facing p. 71]

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kálamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
[791] to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
796 man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[534] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a
[532] scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by
[791] elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the
[463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, b (no date) 1909
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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed [843] during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778] pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793] exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789] called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534] which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782] concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787] auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824] of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415] woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* [354] carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-[293] makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [482] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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PALNI PILGRIM AND KAVADI.

[facing p. 397]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round. 796 431

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit. 556 466 431 796

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to." 796 [535] [526] [524]

"THE THIRUVATHIRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in [776] [773] [515] [533]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
262 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening. 796 [264] [526] [535] [524]

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before. 796 526

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a 796 534

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this propitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

Agricultural ceremonies.

Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quantity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and the devil is supposed to have been cast out. 755 [532] [373] [535]

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," that they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endearment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god. He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place [775] 776

[1] Note, the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *mak-kathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AW11 Kerala
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114 *dbang Nor-pu*), who had already brought us to Kyelang from Kulu. Towards the middle of July, with some added personnel recruited from him and placed under the authority of his daughter, Dölma (*sGrol-ma*), we left for Rupchu and Ladak. (For an account of this journey, see *Chevauchée tibétaine*, by the same author, Fernand Nathan editeur, Paris, 1958.)

My first stage was the Shar Shu monastery, near Kolong, where the [192] Wazir of Lahul and his family resided. Here we attended the annual [196] masked dance of the lamas, and spent the night at Thakur Partap [535] Chand's fort-like castle. It was here, too, that I met the *goba* of the nomads of Rupchu; he was introduced to me by Mangal Chand, alias *amchi* Tashi Dawa, and I received an invitation to go to Korzok.

The next day, we continued to Patseo or Dozam (*rDo-Zam*) as it is called in Tibetan, and camped with Tsewang Norbu, chief of the Gyakar Kham-pa, and his people for a few days until we received the pack ponies and men which I had ordered from him.

This gave us the opportunity to attend the local fair and annual market here and to see for ourselves in what manner goods from the nomads further north were bought or exchanged for other products by the sedentary Lahulis. We also attended a local show given by travelling enter- [536] tainers from Spiti, in which they performed the ancient ceremony of breaking a large stone on the chest of a man.

The climb up over the Baralatcha pass (16,147 ft.) was strenuous, but we were soon over it, and travelling on the flat Lingti plain, along the banks of the Yunan river. We reached the Ser chu and then the Tsarab chu, which we forded to reach Spiti. A short distance further on, we crossed the south-eastern boundary of Kashmir, and continued our progress now through that State.

A few days later, we turned in a south-easterly direction so as to reach the shores of the lake called Tso (*mTs'ho*) Morari (this is the name on the map, but I heard locally that it should be more correctly *Moriri*), where the *goba* resided.

We arrived at our destination towards the beginning of August, not without difficulty because we had had to cross some very high passes, one of them the Lagnyal-la (20,600 ft.). Our caravan, both men and horses, suffered from the unusual altitude and, for some days, were quite unable to go on. But finally, we descended to relatively more reasonable heights and were received, some distance away from where we were going to stay, by the *goba* and his nephew. They were both relatives of the Karpa house in Lahul.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala
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We were taken to a camp two miles further on where we found some black, yak-hair, Tibetan tents, standing, as they do, like spiders because of their strange construction. There were flocks of sheep about, as well as a few yaks (*gYag*), animals from which our present hosts, the nomads, made their living. A tent, larger than the others, proved to be that of the *goba*, and we were taken close to it and invited to put up our own tents nearby.

Very soon after our arrival, we attended a masked dance at the monastery, and the abbot himself acted the Black Hat dancer which is the principal role. There were many spectators present, all the nomads of Rupchu taking a particular and obvious pleasure in what they saw. Another day, we witnessed a ceremony called *zor* (*Zor*) in which a *torma*, made of the head, backbone and entrails of a goat, standing on the animal's skin, was destroyed by lamas armed with great knives, as a way of exorcising devils and evil spirits.

Then came a reception in the *goba's* tent, a festive function at which there were many guests. We were entertained with *chang*, dried meat, *tsampa*, turnips and buttered tea, and the party was a very gay one in which most of the guests, the *goba* and the abbot included, got roaring drunk.

At another reception to which we were invited at the monastery before leaving and in which all our caravaneers received coloured bits of rag as talismans from the hands of the *tulku*, I was able to inform myself about the marital customs of the nomads.

The day after the reception at the *gompa*, we left for Leh, capital of Ladak (7th August, 1938). It was a cold journey as there was frost already on the high passes, and we had three to cross before we reached lower ground near Tso Kar (*mTs'ho dKar*), "the White Lake". From here, we continued down the Gya valley, where we encountered the first houses and fields again and received our first letter in many weeks, addressed to us by the Superintendent of the Moravian Mission in Ley, the Reverend Walter Asboe. A few stages further on, we crossed the Indus near Upshi, and followed its right bank past Himis and Tikse *gompas* to Sheh, one stage before our destination.

On the 22nd August, 1938, we came to Leh in the early afternoon and were received at the entrance of the town by the Moravian Missionary, the local authorities and a crowd of Ladakis, men, women and children. We were taken past the mile long *mani* walls to the Residency in the south-westerly quarter, where we had been authorized to stay during the period of our visit to Ladak. Very soon, we met those who

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed;
[564] generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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pit, then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the goddess ere going away. 796 564

And now the procession starts out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate, and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayalis the two most intimate are "Kuttichchâttan" and "Gulikan," who are supposed to have assisted Kâli (who is scarcely the Kâli of Brâhmanism by the by) in overcoming the Asura, and on the occasion of this festival these two demons dance before her. "Gulikan" is represented by the Vannân and "Kuttichchâttan" by the Manûtan who have been mentioned already, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tîyans. I saw poor "Gulikan" being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was and was told he was "a devil." He looked mild enough; but then his "make up" had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the northern entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, his hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; his head and neck was swathed and decorated; a wooden platform arrangement from which hung a red ornamented skirt was fastened to his hips; there was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales's feathers arrangement (made of plank) the top of which reached five feet above his head; and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchâttan was treated in much the same manner. 796 776 536

As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his three minutes' dance, preparation for which occupied all the afternoon, was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he moved at all, let alone dance.

The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchâttan gives his dance,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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536 538 the early ages, and *Krishnáttam* and *Rámanáttam* are among the earliest productions in the Malayalam literature. The origin of the former is interesting. A pious devotee, Vilvamangalattu Swámiyar, by name, resided in the temple of Guruváyúr in the Chaughat Taluk, which belonged to the Zamorin of Calicut. One of the Zamorins, while on a pilgrimage to the temple, asked the pious Swamiyar to show him the person of the God Krishna. On his wish being gratified, he was so much attracted by the handsome countenance of the divine 'Child God' that the Raja attempted to detain him by catching him by the head. But, alas, he vanished, leaving in the hands of the Raja a single peacock's feather which had adorned the crown on his head. The Raja who was a great scholar determined to write a drama which would contain the life of Krishna—from his incarnation to his departure to heaven—and *Krishnáttam* was the outcome of that resolve. This play, which is seldom 536 acted outside Calicut, takes eight days for its performance beginning as a rule, each night, at 10 p. m. and lasting until 3 a. m.

The cost of a night's performance is 64 fanams (eighteen rupees, four annas, and seven pies). Once it is said that when the actors went to Tripunathura, the residence of His Highness the Raja of Cochin, who had a night's performance in his palace, *Kamavadham* (death of Kamsa, an *Asura* king, who was the maternal uncle of Krishna) was the play selected for the night; and to try the strength of the actor Krishna, a tusker who was brought to the stage was caught hold of by the tusks and killed. The play was never thereafter sent either to Cochin or Travancore.

The other play which is equal in importance to the one just described is the *Ramanáttam*, and was composed by the *Kottarakhara Tampuran*, a distant relative of the then ruling sovereign of Travancore. Once this prince asked the Zamorin of Calicut to send his actors for a few nights' performance in his own palace; but his request was refused on the plea that the prince as well as the southerners generally, were not able to appreciate so important and erudite a drama. This led to the composition of a play by the prince himself.

Plays, as a general rule, are not very popular at present, perhaps with the exception of the one kind which is now being

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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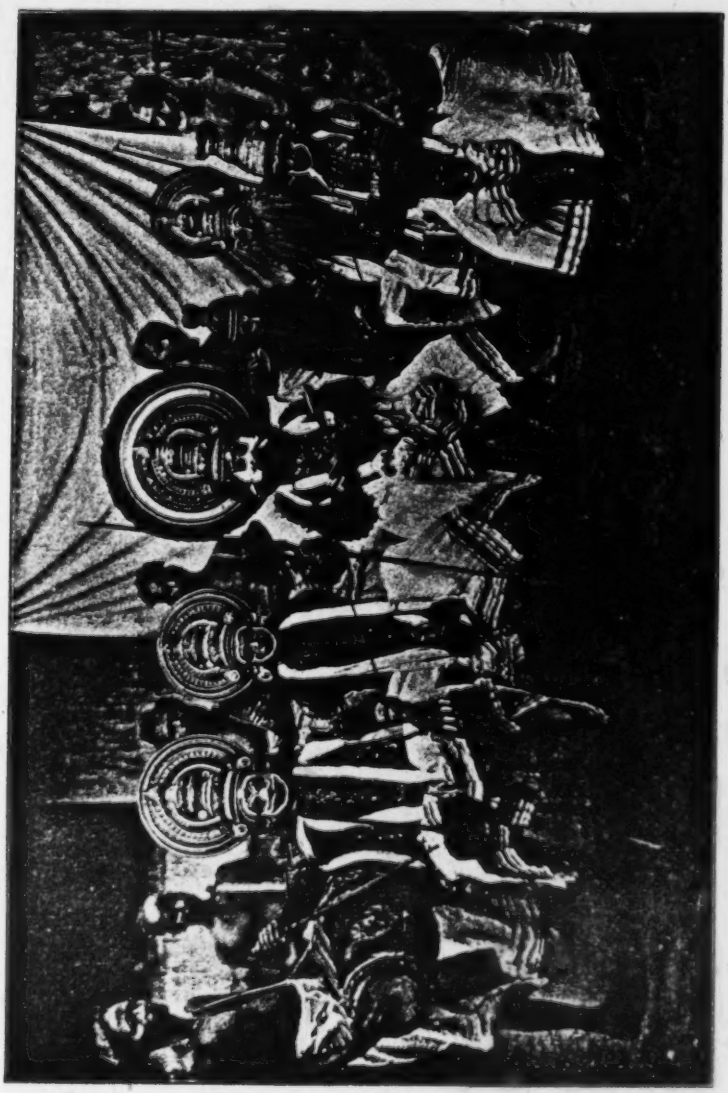

CHARACTERS OF MALABAR DRAMA (KATHA KALI).

[facing p. 65]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into [782] the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniyáttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.—There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them:— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Pattu:—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta pattu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati pattu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs:—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam*:—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AW11 Kerala
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114 *dbang Nor-pu*), who had already brought us to Kyelang from Kulu. Towards the middle of July, with some added personnel recruited from him and placed under the authority of his daughter, Dölma (*sGrol-ma*), we left for Rupchu and Ladak. (For an account of this journey, see *Chevauchée tibétaine*, by the same author, Fernand Nathan editeur, Paris, 1958.)

My first stage was the Shar Shu monastery, near Kolong, where the [1192] Wazir of Lahul and his family resided. Here we attended the annual [1196] masked dance of the lamas, and spent the night at Thakur Partap [535] Chand's fort-like castle. It was here, too, that I met the *goba* of the nomads of Rupchu; he was introduced to me by Mangal Chand, alias *amchi* Tashi Dawa, and I received an invitation to go to Korzok.

The next day, we continued to Patseo or Dozam (*rDo-Zam*) as it is called in Tibetan, and camped with Tsewang Norbu, chief of the Gyakar Kham-pa, and his people for a few days until we received the pack ponies and men which I had ordered from him.

This gave us the opportunity to attend the local fair and annual market here and to see for ourselves in what manner goods from the nomads further north were bought or exchanged for other products by the sedentary Lahulis. We also attended a local show given by travelling enter- [536] tainers from Spiti, in which they performed the ancient ceremony of breaking a large stone on the chest of a man.

The climb up over the Baralatcha pass (16,147 ft.) was strenuous, but we were soon over it, and travelling on the flat Lingti plain, along the banks of the Yunan river. We reached the Ser chu and then the Tsarab chu, which we forded to reach Spiti. A short distance further on, we crossed the south-eastern boundary of Kashmir, and continued our progress now through that State.

A few days later, we turned in a south-easterly direction so as to reach the shores of the lake called Tso (*mTs'ho*) Morari (this is the name on the map, but I heard locally that it should be more correctly *Moriri*), where the *goba* resided.

We arrived at our destination towards the beginning of August, not without difficulty because we had had to cross some very high passes, one of them the Lagnyal-la (20,600 ft.). Our caravan, both men and horses, suffered from the unusual altitude and, for some days, were quite unable to go on. But finally, we descended to relatively more reasonable heights and were received, some distance away from where we were going to stay, by the *goba* and his nephew. They were both relatives of the Karpa house in Lahul.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
[574] day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During
[536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

788
demons dance before her. Gulikan is represented by 796
the Vannān and Kuttichchāttan by the Manūtan who 776
have been already mentioned, and who are under like
restrictions with the nine Tiyans. I saw poor Gulikan 796
being made up, the operation occupying five or six 776
hours or more before his appearance. I asked who 536
he was, and was told he was a devil. He looked mild 788
enough, but then his make-up had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the north-east entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, the hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; and his head and neck were swathed and decorated. A wooden platform arrangement, from which hung a red ornamented skirt, was fastened to his hips. There was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales' feathers arrangement, the top of which reached five feet above his head, and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchāttan was treated in much the same manner. As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple, where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his dance was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he could move at all, let alone dance. The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchāttan gives his

796 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving
788 the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under
776 which is a high raised platform built up with earth
536 and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of
796 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste men-
564 tioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a
788 crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampadiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer. 129 124 [538]

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization. 621 [421]

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist. 621 563 564 [361]

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim 631 634

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

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595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

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the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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536 the early ages, and *Krishnáttam* and *Rámanáttam* are among
538 the earliest productions in the Malayalam literature. The origin of the former is interesting. A pious devotee, Vilvamangalattu Swámiyar, by name, resided in the temple of Guruváyúr in the Chaughat Taluk, which belonged to the Zamorin of Calicut. One of the Zamorins, while on a pilgrimage to the temple, asked the pious Swamiyar to show him the person of the God Krishna. On his wish being gratified, he was so much attracted by the handsome countenance of the divine 'Child God' that the Raja attempted to detain him by catching him by the head. But, alas, he vanished, leaving in the hands of the Raja a single peacock's feather which had adorned the crown on his head. The Raja who was a great scholar determined to write a drama which would contain the life of Krishna—from his incarnation to his departure to heaven—and *Krishnáttam* was the outcome of that resolve. This play, which is seldom
536 acted outside Calicut, takes eight days for its performance beginning as a rule, each night, at 10 p. m. and lasting until 3 a. m.

The cost of a night's performance is 64 fanams (eighteen rupees, four annas, and seven pies). Once it is said that when the actors went to Tripunathura, the residence of His Highness the Raja of Cochin, who had a night's performance in his palace, *Kamsavadham* (death of Kamsa, an *Asura* king, who was the maternal uncle of Krishna) was the play selected for the night; and to try the strength of the actor Krishna, a tusker who was brought to the stage was caught hold of by the tusks and killed. The play was never thereafter sent either to Cochin or Travancore.

The other play which is equal in importance to the one just described is the *Ramanáttam*, and was composed by the *Kottarakkara Tampuran*, a distant relative of the then ruling sovereign of Travancore. Once this prince asked the Zamorin of Calicut to send his actors for a few nights' performance in his own palace; but his request was refused on the plea that the prince as well as the southerners generally, were not able to appreciate so important and erudite a drama. This led to the composition of a play by the prince himself.

Plays, as a general rule, are not very popular at present, perhaps with the exception of the one kind which is now being

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771 From 824 the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 ● 538 **Folk-tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [821] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayāna, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

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873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for
217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

538 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth*, *ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

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morning and evening and also in the leisure hours of the noon. I have often noted with interest the way in which even apparently illiterate people discuss among themselves the philosophy of life as preached in the Hindu sastras.

Village administration.—Panchayats were only introduced into the State in 1913. His Highness granted it as one of his boons during the celebration of his sixtieth birthday. "It is also my wish to revive, in commemoration of this occasion, the old village panchayat system which, I trust, will give facilities to the people to settle several matters of each village easily and quickly amongst themselves and give them some training in the art of self-government. It may also afford them better opportunities of representing their wants and grievances to the Darbar." With this Proclamation of His Highness the Raja begins the definition of the constitution and powers of the Village Panchayat Regulation. 623

Constitution.—Five members of whom the chief village officer of a revenue village (called locally "Parvathiakaran") is an ex-officio member. The rest are now nominated. It meets at least once a month.

POWERS.

I. *Administrative.*—(1) Maintenance and repairs of all minor irrigation works (i.e., works which do not require professional skill) below the cost of Rs. 500.

(2) Maintenance of road avenues.
(3) Maintenance of water-sheds.
(4) Prevention of epidemic diseases.
(5) Clearing and repairing of public wells and tanks.
(6) Formation of Co-operative Credit Societies.
(7) Improvement of public lanes and canals.

II. *Judicial.*—Civil disputes up to Rs. 50 with or without the consent of the parties, and up to Rs. 200 with the consent of the parties. 692

The judicial portion of the Regulation is still in abeyance and has not been brought into force in any panchayat in the State.

Even the administrative portion is applied only in three places in the taluk, since the rest have not sufficiently responded to the scheme. Watakancheri is still without a panchayat, though it is the headquarters of the taluk. 623

For executive work every taluk is under the direct administrative supervision of a Tahsildar (Revenue officer) who is also the Chief Treasury Officer. Until recently he was also a Magistrate, but this function is definitely taken away from him. Below him are Revenue Inspectors and village officers. The taluk in question, which has 74 villages, has 4 Revenue officers and more than 30 village officers. Watakancheri with an adjoining village is under a "Parvathiakaran" who collects the revenue and who has a clerk under him. This "Parvathiakaran" is paid Rs. 12 per month and his clerk Rs. 9. The revenue inspector supervises the survey work and collection work, and checks the village accounts. There are also a Munsif's Court and a Magistrate's Court in the village for the settlement of civil and criminal disputes. 631 [692]

Each taluk in the State has, as a rule, one Sanitary Inspector. The village officers should bring to the notice of the Sanitary 744

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

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THE ÔNAM FESTIVAL.

796 The popular festival of Malabar is the Ônam, occurring in the last days of August or early in September. [43] It is the great occasion for general rejoicing, when every one gives and receives presents, when the children are to be seen roaming everywhere gathering flowers, to make the flower carpets which are a distinctive feature of this happy season. For the Ônam is not merely a one-day festival. It lasts three days at least, and the ten days preceding it are occupied in preparations and in games—Ônam games. A writer (a Malayali evidently), in the "Calcutta Review" for January 1899, thus describes the Ônam season:—

796 "There are a great many of these Ônam ballads; but most of them are of a piece with the specimen given. It is a delight 539 to hear them chanted in the early morning hours by bands of light-hearted children with clear bell-like voices;—

Chembil house maiden, little maiden,
What did he give you who yesterday came?
A new dress he gave me, a small dress he gave me,
A lounge likewise on which to recline,
A tank to disport in, a well to draw water from, a compound
To gambol in, a big field to sing in.
Freshen up flowers, oh freshen for me.
On the south and the north shore, in the compound of Kannan, there grew up and flourished a thumba flower plant.
Out of this plant were fifty boats gotten; at the head of each boat a banyan tree grew.
From the banyan there grew a tiny little babe, and a drum and a stick for the baby to play with.
The drum and the drum-stick, the household domestic, all together they flew away and they vanished.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.
A measure and a half measure, and elephant's chains and earrings, who goes under the flower tree beneath which the elephant passes?
It is no one at all, it is no one at all; it is the Kuttikat baby god; when we went forth to pluck of ripe fruit, a mischievous urchin sprang up and bit us.
With bitten foot when we went to the Brahmin's, the Brahmin lady, we found, had been injured.
With bitten foot then we went to the house of Edathil, whose lady with fever lay stricken.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

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At noon of Attam day a bamboo fresh sprouted, and therewith we made us a good fish trap. 796 539

And when to the tank a fishing we went, we baited a minnow.

By its tail did we hold it, on the *bund* did we dash it, and of cocoanuts, with milk full, eighteen we ground.

With elephant pepper we dressed it; with asafœtida we filled it, right up to the elephant's head.

Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

Having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the little children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M.; and then the daily decorations begin. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers and one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. Among the flowers that contribute to the exquisite design may be named the common red, as well as the rarer variegated, lantana, the large red shoe flower *(Hibiscus rosa sinensis)* an indispensable feature of the cultivated vegetation in a Malayali's homestead, the yellow marigold, the yellow aster, the scarlet button flower, the sacred *tulsi (Ocimum sanctum)*, the wee, modest *thumber* (a vermifugal member of the Nepetæ tribe), the common *tagara* (yellow wild Cassia), the beautiful bluebell, and another common species of Cassia which the natives call the "Ônam flower." In addition, various little violet and purple wildlings that adorn the margins of rice fields, and beautiful specimens of the lily and allied orders of tropical plants are requisitioned by the weavers of these remarkably handsome, but, alas, quickly perishable, carpets. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork. This object is peculiar to the naturally well favoured province of Kéralam; and it serves to remind us that the people who possess the refined taste to produce such a pretty work of art must have long enjoyed a very high order of civilisation." 796 824

It has been noticed already under description of Nambûtiri Brahmans (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1), that the cloths given as "Ônam presents" are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sunworship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest 796 431 796

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Sriparamêsvaranûm Sri Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâî Ezhunellumpôl Sri

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâî Srî Paramêsvaran Srî Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi en guruvînâna." 755 539

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755 on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754 the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789 near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777] bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [753] has business everywhere relieving people from their oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every [761] Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week: [262] [828]

> "*Ezuzcha Kulichalum*
> *Vyazcha Kulikkaruthu.*"

784 [5]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this: "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

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717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

484 There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
777 journey :
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Muppōram
Trkelta iva ēzku Naal
Viiakkil vilayā Bhāmi
Pōkunnakil aran varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, "a vast oral tradition of leading cases" connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same "rationale": that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified: for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

771 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

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This is mostly due to two reasons: 434
First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [187] without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245] on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511 fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer clases, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613] the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182] their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262 beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Kaiel vizhakkā Kari yunjoru vaku*
> *Bhaim Bhojana matu Kootiltilla.*" [539]

> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nāyars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264 people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262 as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291 2½ yards long, 1½ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184 Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439] richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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771 824 From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 **Folk-tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of [825] serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have [823] acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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During the exile of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, they lived chiefly by hunting. One day, when Sita was drying some pieces of flesh, a crow accidentally pecked at one of Sita's ruddy toes, taking it for one of the blood red pieces of meat. She thereupon told her husband about it, who shot an arrow at the crow and blinded it in one eye, and thenceforth its descendants have been blind in one eye. 825 539

When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asura*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

Ari-pravu or the common house-dove has a story told of it. These birds, male and female, are always found in pairs together. Once, it is said, they were quarrelling about a game, and the quarrel ended in the desertion by the male bird of his mate, who recognizing the mistake called for him, and her cries are said to be ever calling out for her mate.

Rain, Thunder and Lightning:—In the aërial regions are huge monsters of extraordinary strength (*Kalameghattanmár*) who are supposed to possess two horns with the aid of which all the water from the earth is drawn up during the summer, to be spat out in the rainy season at Indra's (Rain God's) bidding. Lightning is caused by the friction of the horns, while engaged in the task of spitting out water. Another version of the story as to the origin of lightning is, that it is caused by the brandishing of Indra's sword, while engaged in ordering the monsters to supply the earth with water. 539 [821] [776]

It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined. [825] [826]

Evil spirits are believed to have the power at times of changing men into tigers, such being distinguished by having no tails. [776] [825]

The claws and even the teeth of the tiger are used as charms against witchcraft and the evil-eye. They may frequently be seen set in silver, and worn round the necks of [789] [825]

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is [763] generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykutta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning. 824 539

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those of children under two or three years of age as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. 764 [766]. When a Nayar is at the point of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. 763 [778] [823]

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon) 764 [824] [804]

702 military leader (Asan) appointed by the chief.
[857] Each desam had its gymnasium (kalari) into which
all retainer-Nayar boys were inducted at the age
of seven. Their training in gymnastics and
swordsmanship lasted nine years, after which
they received their arms at the hand of the king
701 and were accorded the title of Nayar. After this
age every able-bodied Nayar man was perpetually
in military training until he reached the age of
retirement or until he was obliged to succeed to
the headship of his matrilineal property-group
[541] and retire to manage its lands. In peacetime,
mock fights were organized between Nayars of
adjacent villages or of adjacent nads, and joust-
ing was conducted at the court for the entertain-
726 ment of the royal family. In war, the Nayars
[714] fought naked: their arms were the sword, bow,
lance and the bow and arrow, though gunpowder
was also used, at least by the more important
Rajas. Battles between enemy kingdoms appear
to have been stylized. Not more than 10,000
men were commonly brought into the field at one
time, and severe loss of life was prevented by
the employment of Nambudiri emissaries who, if
fighting became intense, entered the battle field
and arbitrated between its leaders. [32] If how-
ever the king or a chief were slain, his subjects
must fight to the death until their honour was
avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding
leader on the enemy side. The aim of such
721 battles appears to have been solely to gain con-
trol over the military power of nads of adjacent
kingdoms, together with certain payments of
tribute by conquered chieftains, and also to gain

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [554] D83 [541]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564 There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 [874] bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 701 874 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 874 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*, [346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 541 701 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained, even now hold a review in martial array (*vila*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 794 [346] The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community. The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these [631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 [121] In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. 796 789
The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple 782
by the northern door to the north side of the temple, 793
and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know [534]
what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) [533]
powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the 796
weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious 564
effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, [541]
mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for
217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

538 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth*, *ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a
[292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pávu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over
[464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars
[177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats; others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this
[177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body
[369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of
[178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis-
[548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as
[171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in
[576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548 ●
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 849
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 560

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters. 604

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister. [601] [551]

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling. [601] [602] [613] [614] [578]

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and 603

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
Central Kerala Nayar

As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

601 corrupted to *chēdatti amma* (Cochin) or *eratti amma* (S. Malabar).

(9) *Chētan.* M. and F. speaking, reference; M. speaking only, address. A particular shortened form of *jyēshtan* (ElBr), reserved for the husband of A6.

(10) *Makan.* M. speaking. Son of ego's wife. Reference only.

(11) *Makal.* M. speaking. Daughter of ego's wife. Reference only.

(12) *Pērakutti.* M. speaking. Child of ego's wife's daughter. Reference only. Not always used.

(13) *Appan.* M. and F. speaking. Ritual husband (*tāli* tier) of ego's mother.

(14) *Manavalan.* F. speaking. Ritual husband. Reference only.

All other affines and cognates were referred to by descriptive compound terms (e.g., *ende acchande marumakan*, "my father's nephew"; *ende anujande bhārya*, "my younger brother's wife"). Persons of 8 and 9 were also often referred to by descriptive compound terms.

601 A man might *address* his wife's matrilineal kin older than himself
602 by the same terms as she did but he was not obliged to do so. He
[551] might also address them by their names and caste titles. They ad-
[564] dressed him by his personal name, adding the caste title if he were of higher caste.

A man addressed his wife's younger matrilineal kinsmen by name. Because of the avoidance relationship he and his wife's younger sisters used no terms or names to address each other.

If she knew them and was of the same caste as they were, a woman addressed her husband's older matrilineal relatives by the same terms as he did. She addressed by name those younger than herself. She called her husband's younger sister who was older than herself *jyēshtatti*, (elder sister). Because of the avoidance relationship no terms or names were used between a woman and her husband's brothers who were older than she.

In hypergamous marriages a woman and her husband's natal kin used no terms to address each other.

An individual used no terms, but only names, to address his father's matrilineal kin.

601 *Comment:* In general, the restricted use of reference terms for
[581] affines and the lack of terms for patrilateral kin other than the father reflect the slenderness of the marriage tie and the lack of obligations to these kin.

Affinal terms were mainly restricted to the spouses of ego's older matrilineal kin, persons with whom he had fairly regular contact. Even these, however, might be *referred* to by descriptive compound

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvittil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Râmuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Râmuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Rârappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak.

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd.

URÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	120·8	74·0	120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—

[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami-

*564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
*564 Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
● 551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

142 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest
*564 was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings
564 (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one
[304] case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

(4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper
[515] rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face
[789] with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the
163 waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

*564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
● 551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil	Krishnan	Cultivator	52
Paritbil	Achutan	Do.	27
613 Malabîtil	Sivarâman	Do.	22
Cholale	Râman	Do.	20
●551 Muthira	Narrâyanan	Teacher	26
Kanakath	Kunhi Krishnan * ...	Unemployed ...	22
463 Mannareth	Shangaran	Trader	30
Kûmbiyal	Kannan	Peon	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan	Do.	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*115 564 613 463 551 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below:—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pathushêri ...	Kanâran ...	Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
Mâvila ...	Kumâran ...	Cultivator ...	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu ...	.....	22
Puthiotil ...	Râman ...	Servant ...	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan ...	Cultivator ...	25
Ramath ...	Kunhi Râman	Landlord ...	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni ...	Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi ...	Paidal ...	Cultivator ...	25

*564 553

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

14 564

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature ...	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting ...	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling ...	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest ...	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders ...	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit ...	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length ...	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width ...	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger ...	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length ...	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width ...	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length ...	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width ...	15·5	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index ...	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac ...	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic ...	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index ...	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height ...	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width ...	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index ...	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus ...	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin ...	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella ...	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given— 115

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil ...	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

KURUP NÂYARS.

*141 *564 [114] The number examined, 8, is not, of course, enough on which to base dependable averages. The men of this clan are—judging by the average such as it is—the tallest of all those examined. Tall, straight, well-bred looking men they are, carrying with them an air of independence and self-respect as one of the old fighting clans. It will be observed that the cephalic length is greater than the average for all the Nâyars, while the cephalic index is less, showing that they are longer headed, and more dolichocephalic than the average Nâyar. Again, the measure of vertex to chin is much greater than in any other clan; and their faces are narrower. The index $\frac{\text{Bizygomatic} \times 100}{\text{Vertex to chin}}$ gives the Nambûtiri one of 69.5, all the Nâyars excluding the Kurups 66.2, and the Kurups 64.5.

[551] The men are called by their clan name, Râma Kurup, Krishna Kurup, Gôvinda Kurup. The name Rama seems to be a favourite one, as four out of eight were so called.

Ages ranging between 20 and 72*.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 8.	To stature =100.
Stature	174·9	163·4	167·1	...
Height, sitting	88·8	82·9	85·7	51 3
Do. kneeling	130·3	120·2	124·1	74·3
Span	184·8	173·0	178·6	106·8
Chest	89·4	78·3	82·4	49·3
Shoulders	42·2	38·8	40·4	24·2
Left cubit	51·0	45·1	47·5	28·4
Left hand length	20·8	18·2	19·3	11·5
Do. width	8·8	7·7	8·2	..
Left middle finger	12·3	10·9	11·5	6·9
Hips	28·4	24·5	26·4	15·2
Left foot length	28·0	24·9	26·4	15·2
Do. width	9·5	8·0	8·8	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·9	19·5	11·7
Do. width	14·6	13·4	14·0	...
Do. index	74·6	68·9	72·0	..
Bigoniac	10·9	9·6	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	83·5	76·7	79·6	...
Nasal length	5·3	4·4	4·8	2·87
Do. width	3·9	3·4	3·7	...
Do. index	84·1	64·2	76·2	...
Vertex to tragus	14·3	12·3	13·2	7·9
Do. to chin	21·8	19·0	23·3	12·1
Middle finger to patella	13·0	3·6	9·2	5·51

[787] * The man who said he was by his horoscope 72 was put down by me as looking 58.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A Wli Kerala A Wli
Nayar

564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

14. *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and [264] Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage [582] between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks.

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, 554 Titles. the origin and significance of which are given below:—

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur [551] Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

551. The names of Nayars present great varieties and those most commonly met with are the following :—

(a) Andi Menon
Kandar Menon
Kannan Menon
Ittirayarachan
Korappan
Koman Menon
Kumara Menon
Thenchu Menon
Konthu Nayar
Eacharan Nayar

(b) Raman
Krishnan
Govindan
Gopalan
Achyuthan
Sankaran
Narayanan
Madhavan
Sreedharan
Raghavan
Neelacandhan
Velayudhan

(c) Names of females:
Kunjikavu
Chirutha
Ichon
Kotha
Nangeli
Ooli
Cheeru
Cheeronna
Ichi
Ittiri
Mukami
Oonni Maya

(d) Kalyani
Lakshmi
Madhavi
Rugmani
Seetha
Subhadra
Narayani
Dakshayani
Karthyayani
Meenakshi
Gowri
Bhargavi
Janaki
Parvathi
Sreedevi

(e) Pet names of males:
Appu
Appukuttan
Kuttan
Balan

(f) Pet names of females:
Nani (Narayani)
Mathu (Madhavi)
Kunju (Kunjukutti)
Eacheri (Easwari)
Parukutti.

551 The names of males given under (a) are those which appear
564 to be caste names, probably given by the Nambuthiris, who are generally fond of these contracted and disguised appellations. The Nambuthiris say, that the Sudras were so ordained by Manu as not to be called by fair names. They were the landlords and priests, and the Nayars had to do servile work for them. They thought that they ought to keep the Sudras in complete ignorance, and could not endure to hear them talking distinctly in their presence. On one occasion, it is said that when a Sudra servant uttered the words "*Sûrya Rasmi* (sun's rays)," his master was so displeased, that he closed his ears, for he could not bear to hear a servile fellow using so elegant a phrase from Sanskrit. On another occasion, when a Brahman overheard a Sudra uttering the words *ahimsa paramo dharma* (the highest of all duties is not to injure anybody), he said to himself, "what a pity it is, that a Sudra should be able to quote a vedic expression!". Their influence in these and other matters began gradually to diminish after the time of the great Malayalam
[776] peot, Thunjathu Rámanujan. The names of the caste-men given under (b) are chiefly the various designations of Krishna, Rama and Siva, all of whom are worshipped with equal rever-
[782] ence. Some think that the Nayars are chiefly the worshippers of Vishnu, but the fact that, when at Benares, Rameswaram and
[769] other places, they perform the ceremonies of offering of rice-balls in honour of their deceased ancestors, calling their ancestors

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Sivagothrakûr (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawâd* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *kâranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 [114] With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The [611] two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they [420] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they [351] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green [342] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 115 We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him. [551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

community. It was confirmed that this name, meaning "headman", is really a title (like so many others in Kerala – Nayar, Panikkar, Kurup, Menon, etc.) by which the Tiyas of south Malabar are known. He also answered questions about *tarawad* and *kiriyam*, marriage rites and cross-cousin preference, the prevalence of polyandry in the community and the changing times, points which have all been accounted for in the first part of this chapter.

On the second day, I made out the family's genealogy, which is given in the accompanying Table 3. A few words of comment are no doubt needed here. I had three informants in all, since two others were added, later, to the first. I have marked them as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The generation to which the first informant belonged had originally consisted of nine children, from Kunji, the eldest, to Narayana, the youngest. Their *tarawad* was patrilineal and exogamous, as was also their matrilineal *kiriyam* in principle, but the rules of the latter were not observed very much any more beyond their immediate acquaintance. Kunji, now sixty two, was married at twenty; Kali, married when she was sixteen, divorced a year later and lived with her brothers; she was now sixty. All five brothers, when they were young, had been married polyandrously to Devaki, the eldest, Mayadi, now deceased, being sixteen at the time. Nani and Raman were issued from that marriage, and the young Raman and his family lived here, with his elder namesake in the same house. Devaki died when she was twenty nine, and the brothers were then all remarried, again polyandrously by their parents, to Kuniyama. Mayadi, then aged thirty, died the following year, and Raman senior became the *karanavan*.

Sankara then suddenly said that he was displeased with the common wife. He expressed a desire to break away, and asked his father and maternal uncle to find him another wife. There was considerable opposition to begin with, but, eventually, they gave in, and Kodamah was found for Sankara, who, however, did not move out and put up another household, but stayed in the family mansion with Raman. The latter retained Kuniyama as his wife and had four children by her – Krishna, Janeki, Kerthiyani, and Madivi. Sankara and Kodamah, now forty five and thirty five respectively, had one daughter, Devaki, whom they married off three years ago when she was sixteen.

The breaking away of their elder brother, Sankara, seems to have given Panju and Narayana ideas of liberty as well. Kuniyama was apparently not a very popular common spouse, or else Raman monopolized her too much – it was difficult to find out which, for all that I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595* Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601 to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [115] [551] helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582] matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 427 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465 ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 791 went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast- 853 feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with
551 the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 In view of the great number of communities that have remained
171 untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman,
121 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and
593 inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated
[604] at all *rites de passage,* and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's
[764] funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con-
121 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the
593 rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com-
764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar
[604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p.
[171] 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

121 There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil-
593 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa-
605 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the
121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of
602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea-
171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy:
812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort,
77 Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.
[601] Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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[553]

Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan ...	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi ...	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvittil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Rámuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Rámuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Rârappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak. 553 552

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd. 613 552

URÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

141
564*

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	..	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	* 120·8	74·0	* 120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave [553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the [588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, [881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony [843] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to [769] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the [765] subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem- [783] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides [885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
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ÚRÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

141
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Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	* 120·8	74·0	* 120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil	Krishnan	Cultivator	52
Paritbil	Achutan	Do.	27
613 Malabîtil	Sivarâman	Do.	22
Cholale	Râman	Do.	20
551 Muthîra	Narrâyanan	Teacher	26
Kanakath	Kunhi Krishnan * ...	Unemployed ...	22
463 Mannareth	Shangaran	Trader	30
Kûmbiyal	Kannan	Peon	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan	Do.	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564

Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca.1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

*115 564 613 463 551 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below:—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pathushêri	Kanâran ...	... Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
Mâvila	Kumâran ...	... Cultivator	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu ...	... .	22
Puthiotil	Râman ...	... Servant	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan ...	... Cultivator	25
Ramath	Kunhi Râman	... Landlord	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni ...	... Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi	Paidal ...	... Cultivator	25

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

*564 ●553 Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

14 564

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width	15·5	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah. 301 564* [776] [789]

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention. [304]

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family. 163 563

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal. 564*

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

115 551 463 613 564*

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary. [553]

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

582
613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
553 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of
585 themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth it change even in such an important piece of life as
178 marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family. 843 613 [574]

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. 846 564 783 613 [844] [237]

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places. [828]

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important 846 613 553

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

"*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

"Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

"*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

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875 The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say
526 "the body is cool," is the time when, according to
[827] custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises.
[564] At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August
1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a
[553] mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his
name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers
875 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when
526 they are believed to be properly accomplished they are
564 given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things
regulated that no other person was permitted to teach
athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small
[844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only
being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar
women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises
for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his
pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

526

Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sarîravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sarîravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the schoolmaster. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2¼ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

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engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His 773
devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared 791
before him in human form and handed him a grandah, 776
which is to this day the greatest work on magic in [553]
existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts for the prefix " Sûrya " to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of 791
Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case. 789

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in 842
infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talis- 791
man, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan 789
[776]

* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[92] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

14. *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks. [264] [582]

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 554 The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, the origin and significance of which are given below:— Tules.

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha. [551]

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553 554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Asán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Mannátiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564 582 833 783 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous. This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.[1]

Marriage prohibitions.

564 582 783 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolatheri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament 852
of the child is determined by that of the person who thus [828]
sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes [613]
pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during [783]
which period they are prohibited from entering temples and
holy places.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first 553
recurring day of the star under which it was [853]
born, is an important day, on which the [613]
káranavan of the family gives to the child
a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain
fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child
calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the nam- 553
ing ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* 574
day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast [613]
to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met
by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on 853
rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the
flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular
variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose.
Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food.
The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the 852
first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, 853
attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer
fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and
adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid
on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright
brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small
quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered
to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar.
Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down [613]
facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a
mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly
a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the
child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably per- [778]
formed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a
favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the [782]
priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the [465]
deity, with which the child is fed.

First birth-day celebration.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants 422
caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells. 825

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme 634
powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the 585
country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction [182]
who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even [431]
now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the
celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part
of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and
bought his consent with presents. For without such consent
no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His [574]
consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living 595
with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, 634
adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ,
giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus
even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's
power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a 588
girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the 634
local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkáchcha* and other 421
things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return
the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised
to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a
one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect 634
buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the 342
inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile
thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed
only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ
issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restric- [369]
tions are not totally inoperative. In the State His High- [182]
ness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social 643
matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a 566
similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands.
Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies 634
were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the [493]
only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1] [564]
[553]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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634 553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

631 **Village organisation and village life.**

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Náduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. 622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Náduvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

[634] 634 [622] [70] [45] [65] 621 [564]

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

101 been after the Brāhmans changed their title to Aiyar (father), by which name the non-Brāhman people invariably referred to them, that Sūdras began to be termed Pillai. We find that the Vellālas of the Tamil country and the Nāyars of Travancore called themselves Pillai from very early times. The formal ceremony of paying down a sum of money, and obtaining a distinction direct from the Sovereign was known as tirumukham pitikkuka, or catching the face of the king, and enabled the recipients to add, besides the honorary suffix Pillai, the distinctive prefix Kanakku, or accountant, to their name. So important were the privileges conferred by it that even Sanku Annavi, a Brāhman-Dalava, obtained it at the hand of the reigning Mahārāja, and his posterity at Vempannūr have enjoyed the distinction until the present day. The titles Pillai and Kanakku are never used together. The name of an individual would be, for example, either Krishna Pillai or Kanakku Rāman Krishnan, Rāman being the name of the Karanavan or the maternal uncle. A higher title, Chempakaraman, corresponds to the knighthood of mediæval times, and was first instituted by Maharāja Marthanda Varma in memory, it is said, of his great Prime Minister Rāma Aiyyan Dalawa. The individual, whom it was the king's pleasure to honour, was taken in procession on the back of an elephant through the four main streets of the fort, and received by the Prime Minister, seated by his side, and presented with pān-supāri (betel). Rare as this investiture is in modern times, there are many ancient houses, to which this title of distinction is attached in perpetuity. The title Kanakku is often enjoyed with it, the maternal uncle's name being dropped, *e.g.*, Kanakku Chempakaraman Krishnan. Tambi (younger brother) is another title prevalent in

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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

bearers.* The Sūdra clan supplies female servants in the 564
houses of Nambūdiris. The Vattakkād (or Chakkingal : [258]
chakku, oil press) clan, whose proper *métier* is producing
gingelly or cocoanut oil with tne oil-mill, is the lowest
of all, excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in [553]
North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nāyars of
the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkād
to be Nāyars, and say that they have adopted the
honorary affix Nāyar to their names quite recently."
There is some obscurity as regards the sub-divisions
of the Vattakkād clan. To the north of Calicut, in
Kurumbranād, they are divided into the Undiātuna, or
those who pull (to work the oil-machine by hand), and
the Murivechchu-ātune, or those who tie or fasten
bullocks, to work the oil-machine. Yet further north,
at Tellicherry and thereabouts, there are no known
sub-divisions, while in Ernād, to the eastward, the clan
is divided into the Veluttātu (white) and Karuttātu
(black). The white have nothing to do with the [258]
expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary [264]
occupation of the black. The white may eat with
Nāyars of any clan ; the black can eat with no others
outside their own clan. The black sub-clan is strictly
endogamous ; the other, the superior sub-clan, is not.
Their women may marry men of any other clan, the
Pallichchan excepted. Union by marriage, or whatever
the function may be named, is permissible between most
of the other clans, the rule by which a woman may
never unite herself with her inferior being always
observed. She may unite herself with a man of her
own clan, or with a man of any superior clan, or with
a Nambūtiri, an Embrāntiri, or any other Brāhman,

* A manchil is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, and more like a [493]
hammock slung on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palanquin.

564 this tract or nâd there were originally six stânis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Râja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nâyars called Kûttams. Each kûttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Viyyûr, Nelliôt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellôli, Nilanchêri, Rendillat, Pulliyâni, Orakâtteri, and
[553] Venmêri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyôdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nâyar. Of the six stânis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyôdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stâni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyûr and Nelliôt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyôdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyôdis
783 and Orakâtteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattûr, Ara-Eravattûr (or half Eravattûr), and Attikôdan Nâyars, Tonderi Kidâvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mênôkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchôli to which the remaining three stânis belong, Kôthôli, and Kuruvattân-
[553] chêri. All affix Nâyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvânian Nambiyars, Chellâdan Nâyars,
[643] and Vennapâlan Nâyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvânian means great or

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

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613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the
[576] Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere
[613] also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[532] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaris*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants." 564

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. 564 554 [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs. 621 613 564 566 471 427

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristocratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They 564 794

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to vil-
635 lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office.
622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and
726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed
635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When
634 a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral
613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there
● 554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as
[648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their
554 lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
554 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans*' spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5.a boundaries

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale.

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.*

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Nambudiri Brahman

588 182 174 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 564 585 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham* not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered [554] that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

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[P. 1]

CHAPTER I.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS).

Introduction.

THE NAYARS are an interesting caste of people, forming a considerable portion of the population of the Cochin State; they constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of the pure "*Sudras of Malayala*". They were mostly nobles who engaged neither in handicraft, nor in commerce, nor in any other occupation but that of arms, which they always carried; and no one could be called a Nayar who was not of noble lineage. They were in fact the magnates of the rulers of Kerala, and exercised as much authority over their inferiors as their rulers did over them. They formed in ancient times a warlike race with military leaders and civil administrators of all kinds. Very much influenced as they are by modern civilisation, their customs widely differ from those of other people, in marriage, family and social organizations, as also in maternal filiation. These customs, which are primitive, are being tenaciously retained by them; and they are even now, as they have always been, a unique people whose customs may appear peculiarly strange to foreigners.

The word *Nayar*, which is the honourific plural of *Nayan*, is derived from *Nayaka*, which means a leader of the people; and the name, which in the widest sense at present includes a large number of sub-castes quite distinct from one another, may have been given by a class of Brahmans called the Nambuthiris [1] to the Nayars proper, who formed a military class in ancient times. Some consider it to be more correct to derive *Nayars* from *Nagas* (snakes or snake-worshipping Nagas or Scythians) from the worship of the Nagas or snakes which has been the characteristic cult of the community.

1. See account of the Nambuthiris.

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564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

14. *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks. [264] [582]

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 554 Titles. The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, the origin and significance of which are given below:—

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha. [551]

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2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others. 533 554 [644]

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar. [1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play. [874]

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *aván*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British [451]

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

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553
554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Asán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Mannátiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564 582 833 783 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous. This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.

Marriage prohibitions.

564 582 783 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolathiri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

[784] [562] [784]

Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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595 [554] circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *káranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *káranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *káranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

[613] [184] 626 [184] 582

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the [782] drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniyáttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.—There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them:— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Páttu:—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta páttu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati páttu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs:—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam*:—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AWll Kerala AWll
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children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

thorns and planted with big-leaved plantains, flowering bushes such as the hibiscus, and tall, slender arecanut palms, their graceful, shining trunks entwined with betel and pepper creepers. Here and there, a red tiled roof denotes the dwelling of some high-caste person, while elsewhere, the thatched roofs of the ordinary houses reveal the low social status of the majority.

Red laterite dust roads criss-cross this green scenery, highways and lesser paths upon which a continual stream of men and women, scantily clad in white, are forever on the move. Dry river beds in the spring and swollen, muddy torrents in the monsoon season, are crossed together with the broad expanse of calm, smooth backwaters on the way east to the inland red laterite hills. It is here that the majority of the terraced paddy fields are met with, green and flooded in the summer and dried up, with tufts of yellow straw stalks the rest of the year, their fringes strewn with rustling, restless coconut trees.

2. MYTHOLOGICAL BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hindu Brahmin tradition has it, so I heard from my informants in this region, that Kerala (*Malayalam* or *Keralabhumi* as it is called in the *Keralolpatti* and *Kerala Mahatmyam* chronicles) was created from the sea by Parasu Raman, the axe-wielding avatar of the god Vishnu, and given to those Brahmins called Nambudri for their perpetual possession and enjoyment. The myth, to which even the modern Hindu inhabitants of Kerala subscribe, is no doubt symbolic of two things: the geological origin of the land at the foot of the Ghats, which appears really to have been uncovered from the sea in some ancient natural upheaval, and the colonization of Kerala by Aryan invaders from the north in a remote and ill-defined past.

The mythological tale, in detail, is that Parasu Raman was once ordered by his father to kill his mother, because the latter had been seen by her husband smiling at a youth when she was fetching water at the well. The son, in filial obedience to his father, carried out the order, but having done so, attempted in every possible way to atone for the abominable crime of matricide. He consulted Brahmins who requested of him that he exterminate twenty two generations of the rival warrior caste of Kshattryas. This he did, but the Brahmins were not satisfied. Parasu Raman then climbed the Western Ghats and, from the highest point, cast his axe into the sea calling upon it to withdraw, which it did. The land of Kerala thus came into existence and Vishnu's avatar, the

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar
[304] was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many au-
611 thors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hy-
564 pergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by con-
[554] trast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy.
[197] Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region ex-
[171] hibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from struc-
[184] tural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

101 The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people.
564 Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which
613 group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad,* used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan.*[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava,* "to do" in Sinhalese.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight 613
to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of 114
Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape.

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice 613
among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to 114
the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also 184
within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve [554]
(1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles.

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In 613
North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region [184]
around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group [614]
in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan.

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but 591
she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children [844]
(a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when [171]
grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of [851]
matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. 601
I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are [602]
to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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[P. 97]

CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by occupation is not possible. They were at one time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkars* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

Occupation.

564 178 [555]

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

162 [463] [182]

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[769] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHIRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

564 262 466 241

for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

342 [351]

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

342 556

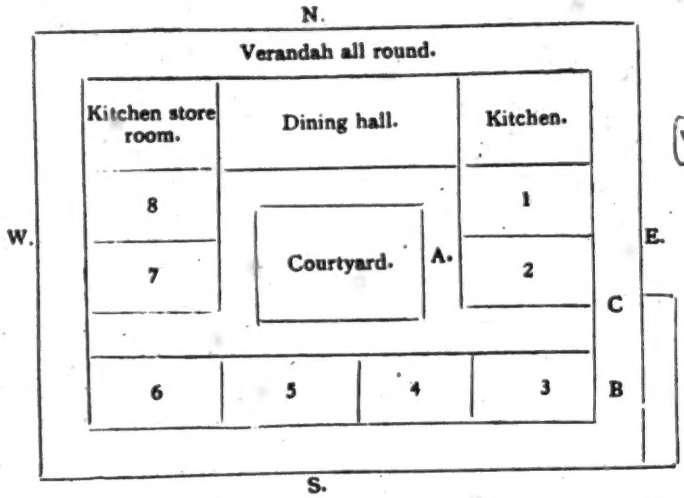

[778]

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon. [115]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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342
558 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
769 between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
778 women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
735 and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
782 of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot afford to make these images, substitute simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside and offered.

The entrance is at C.

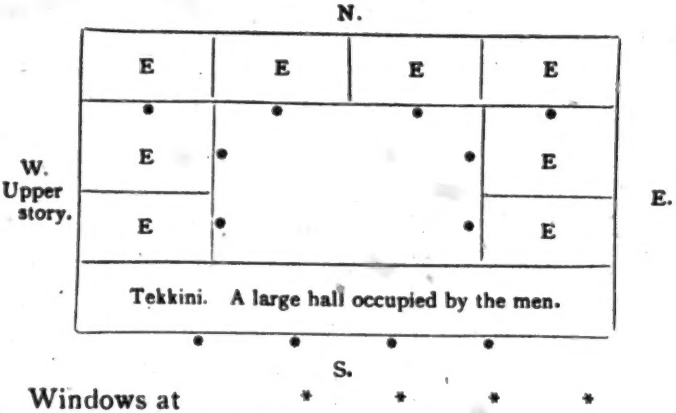

Windows at * * * *

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably, there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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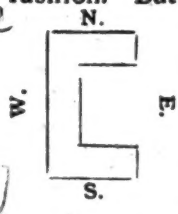

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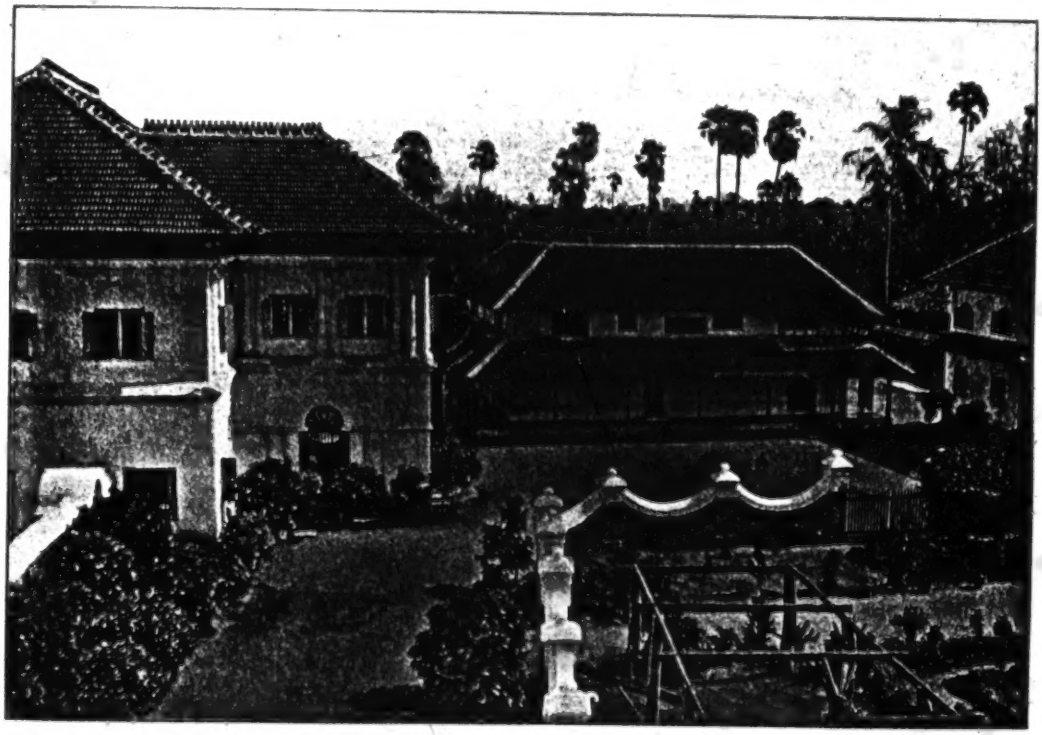

A TYPICAL ARISTOCRATIC NAYAR HOUSE.

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[facing p. 8]

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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated [312] tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [515] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman [574] travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [343] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [245] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which, is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Brahmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnáttu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Brahmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purínic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Bráhmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Asán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

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184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, [586] but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a [581] marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *viváham* 192 is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the 197 *marumakkathâyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *vivâham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradánam* used in South Malabar.

3. *Uzhamporukkuka*, and *Vidúram Kairuga* of North Malabar.

4. The *Kidakkóra kalyúnam* of Palghat and parts of Nedunganád.

Pudamuri, *Vastradánam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidúram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word 184 denoting marriage among the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars. It

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562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo- 556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste, 564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris, 581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar. 581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathâyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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464 564 [212] The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population belong to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning [357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 [515] [771] **Food.** The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worshipping in the temple close at hand. Their meals are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between 262 264 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular [272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for [556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation [562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 556 [357] In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home. A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

101 been after the Brāhmans changed their title to Aiyar (father), by which name the non-Brāhman people invariably referred to them, that Sūdras began to be termed Pillai. We find that the Vellālas of the Tamil country and the Nāyars of Travancore called themselves Pillai from very early times. The formal ceremony of paying down a sum of money, and obtaining a distinction direct from the Sovereign was known as tirumukham pitikkuka, or catching the face of the king, and enabled the recipients to add, besides the honorary suffix Pillai, the distinctive prefix Kanakku, or accountant, to their name. So important were the privileges conferred by it that even Sanku Annavi, a Brāhman Dalava, obtained it at the hand of the reigning Mahārāja, and his posterity at Vempannūr have enjoyed the distinction until the present day. The titles Pillai and Kanakku are never used together. The name of an individual would be, for example, either Krishna Pillai or Kanakku Rāman Krishnan, Rāman being the name of the Karanavan or the maternal uncle. A higher title, Chempakaraman, corresponds to the knighthood of mediæval times, and was first instituted by Mahārāja Marthanda Varma in memory, it is said, of his great Prime Minister Rāma Aiyyan Dalawa. The individual, whom it was the king's pleasure to honour, was taken in procession on the back of an elephant through the four main streets of the fort, and received by the Prime Minister, seated by his side, and presented with pān-supāri (betel). Rare as this investiture is in modern times, there are many ancient houses, to which this title of distinction is attached in perpetuity. The title Kanakku is often enjoyed with it, the maternal uncle's name being dropped, *e.g.*, Kanakku Chempakaraman Krishnan. Tambi (younger brother) is another title prevalent in

556 553 424

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

342 [823] west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nāyars. The following is a plan of a nālapura or four-556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

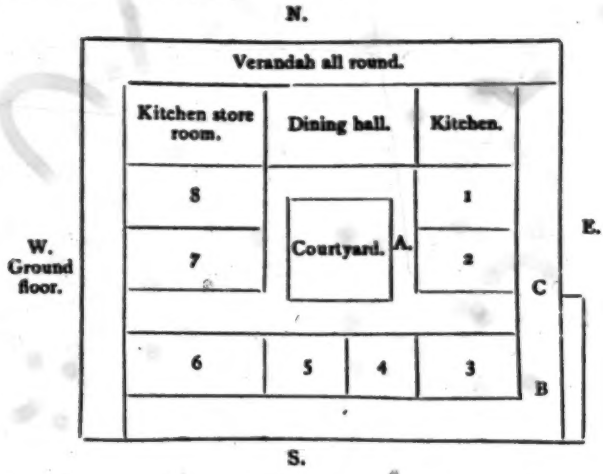

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

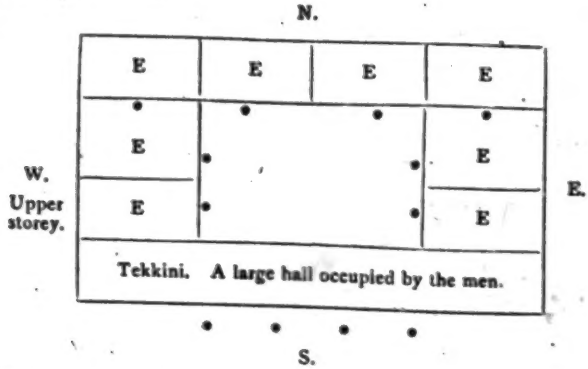

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and 796 carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look 777 at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes 787 a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani 796 is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is [264] in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand [262] appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads [431] of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about [556] four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute [431] paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal [264] the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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in their opinion. There are no other investments so secure, and a little land will feed a man and his family even when he is indisposed to work. Again, a certain amount of prestige is attached to a landed proprietor especially when he is a big one, though there is not such adoration as can sometimes be observed in the attitude of the common people towards the Government officials big and small. 454 [556]

There has been a certain dislocation in the labour market on account of the emigration of certain classes of workers to the rubber and other estates recently established in some parts of the State and elsewhere. Their low wages, their low social position, the baits employed, somewhat nefariously, by the recruiting agents, and the grandiose hopes which the workers entertain of the unseen, have all combined to deplete the village of a certain class of workers from agriculture. The wages not only of agricultural labourers, but of all classes of workers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, coolies, etc., have gone up. Few of the emigrants have returned, and those who return are certainly not very desirous of going back. 464 167

Manual labour is still looked upon as derogatory, and a well-to-do high caste man labouring upon his own compound or his own fields or allowing either his sons or relatives to do the same would be looked upon with contempt. High caste men have always to employ low caste people for any and every work, agricultural or domestic. Skilled work such as carpentry, blacksmithy, masonry, etc., is invariably performed by the particular "castes", which are hereditary and exclusive in character. These occupy a low position in the Hindu hierarchy of caste, but not so low as that other kind of agricultural labourers whom I called "Cherumas" or Pariahs, who occupy the lowest place of all. Each is respectful to his superiors and somewhat exacting to his inferiors, but there is nothing like hatred or dissatisfaction with one's lot in any of the castes. They take it as Nature-given and the social organism works in a smooth fashion, each man having his own work and his own aspirations. Judging from the present state of affairs it is impossible, and I think undesirable, to unsettle this order of things. There is scope however for the diffusion of education and knowledge, for the opening of a diversity of occupation, for infusing better ideals of social life and joint work, for improving agriculture and removing rural indebtedness and providing means of its non-recurrence in the future. But all this requires enlightened and sympathetic workers. 461

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There is no infant marriage except perhaps among the Brahmans. 582
Our girls are given away in marriage between the age of 10 and 12. Formerly it used to be younger. But strictly speaking this is only betrothal, the actual consummation of the marriage taking place only after the girl has attained womanhood at about 16 years of age. Our girls are very healthy and well developed so long as they remain at home. But their husbands take them away with them when they are old enough to the places where they are employed, e.g., there are three of them in Madras, and others nearer home. Boys are seldom married before 20 or 21 and the age is rising. Having to live away from home for their education their health is often impaired and they are less healthy and have less vitality and power of resistance than the girls, and are, in the writer's opinion, more subject to illness when away from home. Brahmans have to pay large dowries, whether they are able or no: the least sum being Rs. 1,000 for a bridegroom whose educational qualifications are measured by the Matriculation examination. Even 'ne'er-do-weels' get a high dowry owing to the unsatisfied demand for bridegrooms. We are groaning under the tyranny of an effete social system which is ruining us. Yet our elders protest against any change in our social system, such as post-puberty marriage. Something is sure to be done to remedy this state of things before long: the social conscience cannot long stand it.

Among other castes there is no infant-marriage, nor the system of dowries as it exists with us.

Among the Nayars there is a curious marriage ceremony 585
performed when a female child is only a few days or months old. Some male person, not necessarily or ordinarily the future husband, ties the sacred marriage thread around the baby's neck. This ceremony is purely formal. Real marriages take place after puberty, and the girl may choose any man she pleases as her husband, this marriage being not at all formal, and great freedom, comparatively, is allowed to the wife. Polyandry, which once [595] prevailed, has now disappeared.

The purdah system does not exist except among the Nambudri 582
community of Brahmans. There are two families of Nambudri [612]
Brahmans in our village. Their females can never see the faces of any males except their husbands and near relations. They seldom go out to any distance, except to the temple, never travel by railway, and hide themselves, when going about, with huge umbrellas made of palm leaves and bamboo sticks. There is post-puberty marriage among them, and only the eldest son of the family marries. Marriages are often exchanges of bride and bridegroom (i.e., a brother and sister marry the sister and the brother of another family), and in that case dowries need not be paid. Otherwise heavy sums are paid. The Numbudri Brahmans are noted for their simple lives, their Vedic learning, and their intense conservatism, though one very enlightened and aristocratic family near my village owns a tile factory at Shoranur and a large
part of a spinning mill at Calicut. They lack western education. 556
This year one Nambudripad (i.e., a member of the Nambudri aristocracy) has joined the Presidency College in Madras as an extraordinary student, to get the benefit of the lectures and the college life. He belongs to the family mentioned above, who also

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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556 own most of the cultivable land in the village. This family draws an income of rather more than 10,000 paras of paddy from the village, husking it in the village and using it to feed a vast household of Nambudri priests and students, and maintain a choultry. It employs a Sanskrit pandit, whose time, as the demand for Sanskrit teaching diminishes, is partly taken up with the recital to the young students of Puranic stories to which the unseen ladies of the household listen eagerly.

312 *Water-supply.*—The water-supply is abundant and is obtained from deep wells and tanks. Water from deep wells alone is used for drinking purposes. Owing to the rocky nature of the subsoil some wells are dry in summer. Each house has one or more wells; it costs about Rs. 20 to bore an ordinary deep well. The quality of well water is excellent and is an asset to the village. All people [515] bathe every day in tanks, sometimes both in the morning and evening, especially Brahmans. The villagers are personally very clean and tidy.

871 *Education.*—One elementary school, started (very recently) and managed by the philanthropic Nambudri landlord of the place, gives free instruction to boys and girls of all castes up to the fifth standard. The school has two tiled buildings, one having an area of 72 by 20 feet, inside, and a verandah of the same length which is 9 feet broad, and the other having an area of 15 by 18 feet. Both are well ventilated and well situated and have a good appearance. There is a small flower garden in front. The school is provided with the necessary furniture, maps, and pictures, and is as far as it goes one of the best equipped of such schools. It teaches reading, writing and arithmetic, music, drawing and gardening. About the practical, as distinct from the cultural value of this education, one must say (like the Scotchman) "I have my doots." There are now no less than 5 "qualified" teachers; how one wishes that "qualified" meant much more than it does mean in educational language! They are so ill-paid (Rs. 7 to 15 per month) that it is hopeless to expect more capable men to be forthcoming or to take real interest in the work of the school. As it is, I know that at least one master is interested in the work. One hundred and twenty-six boys and 42 girls, I am informed, attend the school more or less regularly. These are drawn from all classes, except the very lowest like Cherumas and Paraiyas. The vast majority however are caste Hindus—all the girls are—and come from the Nayar and Brahman families. One could wish for greater regularity in their attendance. But they complain of having work to do at home, in assisting their parents, or they are sometimes too hungry to attend school. They are as a rule too poor to buy their own books or slates and these have to be provided by the school. Numerous prizes of books, slates, etc., are given by liberal villagers and the manager every year, to encourage the pupils to persist and to attract others. The school is steadily growing.

The average duration of school life is about four years. Many 871 students leave before that period owing to the necessity of working for their livelihood.

212 About 18 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular. This

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but ●557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife." [1]

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs.

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*.

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time.

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale.

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly *remained serfs in spite of* the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the 796 Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people; [444] but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

● 561

/Information on the participation of pre-pubescent girls as a body in the Tali-tying (Talikettu Kalyanan) ceremony, will be found in category 588./

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at
[764] a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

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603 took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It
[869] was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed
[861] by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons
[858] as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

604 A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' chil-
429 dren, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was respon-
604 sible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste,
86 in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

604 Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural mat-
[561] ters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout
[613] their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior
[969] generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

[576] The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

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was formalized to the point of avoidance. A boy or man might not touch his mother's brother. Before entering the uncle's presence he removed his upper clothing as a mark of respect. He might not speak first to the uncle but stood with arms folded and head bowed, attentively awaiting commands. He might not sit before his uncle except at mealtimes; he then sat down last and rose as soon as the uncle's meal was finished. When summoned for a lengthy interview he stood half hidden behind a pillar, holding his hand before his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. He might not chew betel leaves, smoke, spit, or use any but the most serious and respectful language in the presence of his senior. These rules of intercourse were most strict in the relationship with the kāranavan. For this reason a kāranavan absented himself as much as possible from family gatherings, living on the upper floor of the granary among his age mates of other lineages who came to visit him. With junior mother's brothers, who were more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's behavior was necessarily more relaxed. Even so, he observed the greatest possible formality, walked several feet behind them, and avoided them when he could.

A man should show loyalty to his mother's brothers in relations with outsiders, if necessary defending them with his life. He was expected to identify with them, receiving and perpetuating the noble traditions of his taravād. In fact Nayars did show great pride in the elders of their taravād as a group, exhibiting their virtues and hiding their weaknesses in the presence of strangers. There was regularly, however, deep hostility in their interpersonal relationships. The Nayars of today are well aware of this and expect acrimonious rivalry between the men of a taravād; hence, they say, the need for formal etiquette and strict ranking on the basis of age. A Nayar will speak of himself as bound to his taravād through natural love for his mother and sisters, and obliged for their sakes to maintain outward decorum in his relations with matrilineal kinsmen. In a modified form this suppressed hostility traditionally extended to all the men of the own, first ascending and second ascending generations. All male elders in the taravād might be collectively called *kāranavar* (singular, kāranavan). Within the property group they were numbered in order of age (irrespective of generation) as first, second, and third men. All owed loyalty and obedience to those above them and protection to those below them, but all envied their seniors and feared the rivalry of juniors. The mother's own brothers were, however, the prototypes for this generalized rivalry. Whether or not Nayars experienced Oedipal hostility

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604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy rctained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within ●561 the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and [588] was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan [586] had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is 835 in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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593 Organized duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been [578] fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of [613] cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars [154] of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's [684] socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

[561] The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

593 Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between 578 brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, collectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [592]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [564]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [623]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not [578]
legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual ●561 occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran 461 errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighbor- [422] ing groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly [613] owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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of second descending generation, primarily own daughter's child. Reference only. 601 613

(15) *Kāranavar* (singular, *kāranavan*). M. and F. speaking. All males of the lineage older than ego, living or dead. Primarily, the eldest living man of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

(16) *Anandravar* (singular, *anandravan*). M. speaking. All males of the lineage younger than ego. Primarily, junior males of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

Comment: Older relatives are addressed by terms; younger, by name.

The overriding of generations which appears in terms 2, 10, and 11 is suitable because the men under 2 are not in the direct line of ascent and their authoritative roles are similar. Terms 15 and 16 further emphasize the age rank of lineage males regardless of segment or generation. [561]

The separation of terms 1 and 3 may be related to the fact that women are in a direct line of descent. Moreover, 1's role is more authoritative than that of 3.

The existence of special terms 8 and 9 points up the interdependence of own brother and sister on which the unity of the sibling group and the cohesion of the property group are based.

The merging of lineals and collaterals within each generation points up the lack of institutional segregation of one woman and her children.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES 601

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Müttacchan* ("Oldest father"). M. and F. speaking. Hu of A1.

(5) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Hu of A3, especially of own mother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya according to age of the man's wife in relation to ego's mother. Followed by the caste title (e.g., Nambudiri) if he is of higher caste.

(6) *Ammāyi*. M. and F. speaking. Wife of A2.

(7) *Aliyan*. M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and his wife's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(8) *Jyēshtatti Amma*. Wife of A4. M. and F. speaking. Sometimes

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses.

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them.

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties.

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations.

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

593 769 613 K 769 613 171 174 184 K 769 171 602 174 561 598 K 769 602 154 578 561 K [753] T 769 613 564 596

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

[561] [532] [782] [515]

* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at 764 the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of 613 the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The [824] whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among [782] the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The [823] corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghī (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravād. Here must be stated [561] the invariable rule that no member of the taravād, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

* The eldest male member of the taravād is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravād.

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, col- [592]
lectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [564]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [623]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [578]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 561 461 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighboring groups. [422] Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, [613] helped them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward neolocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matrilocally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans*' spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide. Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 764
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184
clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Nambūdiri Brahmans

769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
182 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact
626 fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with ri[illegible] on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial o[illegible] and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days o[illegible] following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are 613
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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486 564 784 562 178 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstruation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. 783 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South 841 Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* 564 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, 613 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear 486 (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna 178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more 562 liberty than was formerly possible.

* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:——"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [198]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is 421
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, [613] the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an
● 562 individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and
611

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person *is* and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road *as Zamorin*, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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264 626 564 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were persuaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

621 178 The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 [425] The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar 351/ 613 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women. [562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 421 [178] The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family, according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

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595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

562 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship [871] and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best [875] Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

595 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. 562 But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

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jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife." [1]

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs.

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*.

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time.

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale.

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554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Anin.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Anin*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Manndtiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564 582 833 783 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous. This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.[1]

Marriage prohibitions.

564 582 783 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliance between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolathiri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

[784] [562] [484]

Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the 184
place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom re- [431]
tires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkâram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a mar- 585
riage in the legal or sacramental sense of the 564
term. The views of the members of the 184
orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The [831]
aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and 586
ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kâranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who [562]
denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37.

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562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo-556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste, 564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris, 581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar. 581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

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613 592 [421] by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *káranavan.*

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawád* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawád*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *káranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawád* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The [562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

613 592 82 78 The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *káranavan* and the other members, the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawád* splits up into *távashis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

[562] It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

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of many joint members dependent on the *káranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *káranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *káranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the [578] seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *tívazhis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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464 The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as
564 regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population be-
[212] long to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning
[357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worship-
[515] ping in the temple close at hand. Their meals
[771] are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between
262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice
264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of
[272] the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for
[556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation
[562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged
556 to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by
[357] the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
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*595 114 his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

*595 At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the [853] household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also [962] looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the [841] woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus [983] gradually come to know the children better and to influence their up- [855] bringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is how- [562] ever always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

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This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 849
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
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841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as mattu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by mattu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving mattu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of mattu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that mattu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in mattu. It does
223 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
784
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corresponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a complete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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there will be a specialist for diseases of children, an eye specialist, 759
an ordinary vaidyan who cures all common diseases, and a *mantravati* (hymn-chanter) who pretends to cure diseases by chanting certain hymns within himself, and who is believed in by the masses. There is also a *visha-vaidyan*, or expert in curing snake-bite, in some villages.

The Sub-Assistant Surgeons in charge of Government hospitals are, I am afraid, affected by red tape and carelessness born of security of employment and income.

In rural parts especially I am pained to note that their treatment is getting discredited, for the apothecaries take little pains to know the exact nature of the diseases of the poor persons who resort to the hospital and to prescribe proper medicines for the same. There are of course noble exceptions to this, but it is deplorable that there should be any irregularities at all in this most humane of all charities. The native vaidyans, on the other hand, have a local interest, their families living in the village for generations together and they are very keen to keep up their reputations; while the Government Surgeon is a bird of passage, who comes and goes, none of the villagers knowing whence or whither.

Malayalis, as a rule, are very clean, most of them bathe twice a 515
day; their clothes are kept neat and clean. But there is much scope for the spread of modern ideas on sanitation in very many fields. At child-birth the mother is usually kept in the worst possible room in the house. Children too might be brought up in a more sanitary environment; the education of females on these matters is a very crying necessity. It is also deplorable that Brahmans are gradually neglecting the morning-bath and exercise on which their ancestors insisted. The local Muhammadans are extremely insanitary. They are filthy, their children are filthy, their habits too are filthy.

The habit of keeping the stock very near the house should be avoided. Again except in well-to-do Nayar families kitchens are in the houses; they should be in a different building.

Among the Brahmans, a girl has to be married before the age 582
of puberty, generally 12. Among no other caste is this compulsory, [797]
though a few people, including the Indian Christians, marry their girls before puberty. These Christians are generally converts from low caste * Hindus, and change of religion has not changed their custom in this respect.

The local Muhammadans do not, as in the east of the peninsula, 562
observe purdah; their women freely talk to any person, work for others as coolies and stir abroad. Most of them are converts from low caste Hindus, and so there is no fanaticism, nor such strict observance of the rules of Islam as elsewhere. Nayar ladies are quite free, and among them descent in the female line (Marumakkattayam) prevails. Brahman ladies (not Nambudris) can go out, and be seen by others, but they are subject to their husbands and are not allowed to speak to Brahman men, and Brahman men are not allowed to speak with the women. A newly married Brahman bride is neither allowed to see nor to speak to her husband until she actually joins her husband after the nuptials. But these

* [M. L. K. Anandakrishna Ayyar, Cochin State Anthropologist, informs me that the Syrian Christians of Cochin are mainly the descendants of converts from *high* caste Hindus.—Ed.]

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Kerala AW11

562 women can speak to other caste people, male or female, without breach of decorum. Purdah is observed among the Nambudri Brahman women.

312 Every house contains a well from which water is taken for drinking and domestic purposes. Water is specially good in the village since the ground forms a good filter. Wells are generally not very deep. Few people boil the water before drinking. Generally a raised mound is erected round the well to keep bad water out; nevertheless, during the rainy season water from the compounds runs to the wells with the result that the wells get extremely muddy, but the water is used without compunction by the people. Tank water is used only for bathing.

871 *Education.*—There are only three schools in the whole village, one for boys which has this year (1916) been raised to a high school, a Church school for Christian boys, and a vernacular school for girls up to the primary standard. The high school is a spacious building recently constructed at a cost of nearly Rs. 20,000. There is a prescribed code of study, and pupils are prepared for the School Final Examination which is conducted by the State. Brahman girls never attend the school after the age of 12. But all of them learn now to read and write the vernacular which is Malayalam in these parts, though the language the Brahmans use in their houses is Tamil, with an intonation markedly changed from the Tamil in the eastern parts. I subjoin below the strength of the respective classes in the high school and the girls' primary school. The Church school is maintained by the Christians in their church for their exclusive use. It is classed as a primary school.

Sirkar High School, Watakancheri.

	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Form IV	17	7	3	...	1	28
,, III (*a*)	9	7	3	...	2	21
,, ,, (*b*) ...	10	9	3	...	3	25
,, II (*a*)	13	11	1	...	3	28
,, ,, (*b*)	8	17	12	...	2	39
,, I (*a*)	11	7	4	...	2	24
,, ,, (*b*)	10	9	3	...	2	24
Standard IV (*a*)	7	10	4	1	2	24
,, ,, (*b*)	10	7	5	...	1	23
,, III (*a*)	10	20	6	1	1	38
,, ,, (*b*)	16	12	6	3	2	39
,, II (*a*)	6	10	9	...	6	31
,, ,, (*b*)	7	15	7	...	3	32
,, I (*a*)	16	16	2	...	3	37
,, ,, (*b*) ...	11	11	6	2	4	34
Infants (*a*)	9	13	8	4	6	40
,, (*b*) ...	9	18	6	1	6	40
Total ...	179	189	88	12	49	527

Note.—The Muhammadans are very backward in point of education. So too the lower castes of Hindus.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is
837 prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female.
[586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes, and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make
[585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children
[428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre-
[587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable,
[595] money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

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There is no infant marriage except perhaps among the Brahmans. 582
Our girls are given away in marriage between the age of 10 and 12. Formerly it used to be younger. But strictly speaking this is only betrothal, the actual consummation of the marriage taking place only after the girl has attained womanhood at about 16 years of age. Our girls are very healthy and well developed so long as they remain at home. But their husbands take them away with them when they are old enough to the places where they are employed, e.g., there are three of them in Madras, and others nearer home. Boys are seldom married before 20 or 21 and the age is rising. Having to live away from home for their education their health is often impaired and they are less healthy and have less vitality and power of resistance than the girls, and are, in the writer's opinion, more subject to illness when away from home. Brahmans have to pay large dowries, whether they are able or no: the least sum being Rs. 1,000 for a bridegroom whose educational qualifications are measured by the Matriculation examination. Even 'ne'er-do-weels' get a high dowry owing to the unsatisfied demand for bridegrooms. We are groaning under the tyranny of an effete social system which is ruining us. Yet our elders protest against any change in our social system, such as post-puberty marriage. Something is sure to be done to remedy this state of things before long: the social conscience cannot long stand it.

Among other castes there is no infant-marriage, nor the system of dowries as it exists with us.

Among the Nayars there is a curious marriage ceremony 585
performed when a female child is only a few days or months old. Some male person, not necessarily or ordinarily the future husband, ties the sacred marriage thread around the baby's neck. This ceremony is purely formal. Real marriages take place after puberty, and the girl may choose any man she pleases as her husband, this marriage being not at all formal, and great freedom, [595]
comparatively, is allowed to the wife. Polyandry, which once prevailed, has now disappeared.

The purdah system does not exist except among the Nambudri 582
community of Brahmans. There are two families of Nambudri [562]
Brahmans in our village. Their females can never see the faces of any males except their husbands and near relations. They seldom go out to any distance, except to the temple, never travel by railway, and hide themselves, when going about, with huge umbrellas made of palm leaves and bamboo sticks. There is post-puberty marriage among them, and only the eldest son of the family marries. Marriages are often exchanges of bride and bridegroom (i.e., a brother and sister marry the sister and the brother of another family), and in that case dowries need not be paid. Otherwise heavy sums are paid. The Numbudri Brahmans are noted for their simple lives, their Vedic learning, and their intense conservatism, though one very enlightened and aristocratic family near my village owns a tile factory at Shoranur and a large
part of a spinning mill at Calicut. They lack western education. 556
This year one Nambudripad (i.e., a member of the Nambudri aristocracy) has joined the Presidency College in Madras as an extraordinary student, to get the benefit of the lectures and the college life. He belongs to the family mentioned above, who also

564 ritual pollution decreed that the several lower
783 castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

564 Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a
[361] separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas
437 and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. The Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas
[783] and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not
[611] interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes
361 there were and are in Kerala large groups of
● 563 Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
363 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

24 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
364 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended suc festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the production of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
[496] the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events in this process.

564 **Political and Economic Systems**

[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian—a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—" to entice the public " as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Malayalam has an extensive 122 124
literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampūdiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century [538] literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without 621 an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar [421] individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar 621 families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. 563 For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. 564 All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart [361] in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which 631 was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before 634 the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

of the Brahmins. There are something like sixty four subdivisions of these people, from those ranking highest, in north Malabar, to the non-military, low caste ones of the south and of the Palghat taluk. Because of their very close relation to the Nambudri Brahmins which I shall describe below in detail, it can hardly be said that the Nayars are equal in caste to Sudras elsewhere in India. This is no doubt the reason for which, not only is their true position in the Hindu caste scale generally overlooked, but also why they themselves have a proud and self-assured bearing quite unlike that of the fourth and lowest caste in other parts of the country. 105 564

With the Nayars, the end of the list of caste Hindus is reached. Below come the *outcastes* who, despite their condition, are also graded in accordance with rank. First of these are the Tiyas. These bear different names in the various parts of Kerala, but there seems to be general agreement that they are really all one and the same people. Thus the name Tiya seems reserved for them in north Malabar with the exception perhaps of former north Cochin (Thiyyas); in Palghat, they are known as Iruvans, in south Malabar as Thandans and some as Irava-Panikkars; in south Cochin and north Travancore as Chovans, while in the rest of Travancore they go by the generic name of Iravas (sometimes spelt Izhuvas).

Next are the artisans or Kammalans of which there are properly only four main subdivisions. Their associates, also artisans and craftsmen, are roughly grouped into fourteen different communities. [463]

The Kammalans are followed by another category composed of farm-hands, the Cherumas and Pulayas, and a dozen or so different kinds of aboriginals, jungle and hill folk who are rarely encountered on the coast or in the cultivated area, and have to be sought for in the foothills and jungles of the Western Ghats. [563]

Non-Hindu inhabitants of Kerala include Moslems and Christians, of whom the greater number belong to the first of these two religious communities. They are both known locally as Mappillas, the first as Jonaka Mappillas and the others as Nasrani Mappillas. It is from this name, meaning "mother's son" or "bridegroom" or again "great child", that the more familiar *Mopla* for the Kerala Mohammedans has been coined. All are of the Sunni persuasion, while the Christians belong to a great number of varied denominations; some of them are Roman Catholic (the majority), others "Romo-Syrian" (Uniat), Orthodox Syrian, Malankara Syrian, Assyro-Chaldean (Nestorian), Mar Thomas, and of the Protestant United Church of south India. 105 563 795

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White,
563 Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other
[195] Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian
564 Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more en-
783 lightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a
[184] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy,
[264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a
[463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay-
[484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into
[184] town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala
[841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are
[846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv-
[614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con-
[846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing
[165] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles and interests among the various castes and communities in the state. Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

Kanamdars are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

The aboriginals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are addicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes, and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
Kanada AW10
Kerala AW11

Ka 471 339

with an output of 5–600 m. tiles a year; local sailing coasters supply markets from Karachi to Colombo, and there is some export via Bombay to E Africa, Persia, and Malaya. But competition from Malabar and, much more serious from cement and asbestos roofing is adversely affecting the industry, which appears to be declining.[40] Other industries are of little importance: iron-founding (ancillary to the tile factories), and soap, based on local and imported copra; Mangalore is the main port for the Laccadive islanders. A feature of some interest is the prominence of Portuguese names among the larger concerns, both in coffee-curing and in tile-making.

Kerala

Ke 101 563 564

Both physically and culturally Kerala is one of the most distinctive regions of India.[41] Historically it has been somewhat isolated from the rest of the Peninsula, but accessible to maritime influences. Homogeneous in speech, it is probably more caste-divided than any other area, and it is here that 'untouchability' developed the more fantastic extremes of 'unapproachability' and even 'unseeability', while the Nairs who form the bulk of the minor gentry preserve a matrilinear organisation in which both polygamy and polyandry play a part.[42] Perhaps by reaction against caste, the region has the highest percentage of Christians in all India—28·8 in Cochin and 32·3 in Travancore. This element long antedates the vigorous Portuguese missions, which succeeded in bringing into the Roman fold most of the 'Syrian' (i.e. Nestorian) Christians, whose traditions go back to St Thomas the Apostle; there were Christian communities 1500 years ago. The 'White Jews' of Cochin are another ancient fossil kith; their number is only a few hundreds, but their origin is claimed to be from a Solomonic colony and is undoubtedly very ancient. But there is no end to the ethnographical fascinations of Kerala.

The Physical Setting

Ke 133

Tokens of uplift are numerous and decisive, including the existence of coral reefs below the alluvium some miles from the present coast.[43]

[40] U. Hammaba, *ibid.*, 291–99.

[41] Based mainly on a series of papers by G. Kuriyan in *JMGA* and *IGJ*: "The Industrial Crops of Kerala" (XI (1937), 283–90 and XII (1937), 1–8); "Population and its Distribution in K." (XIII (1938), 125–46); "The Geographic Basis of the Legendary Origin of K." (XVI (1941), 340–54); "Some Aspects of the Regional Geography of K." (XVII (1942), 1–41). On Cochin I am indebted for first-hand information to Sir Robert Bristow, CIE, to whom the development of the modern port is largely due.

[42] The best easily accessible account for geographers is in C. D. Forde, *Habitat, Economy and Society* (1934 and later eds.), Ch. XIII. See also G. Slater, *Southern India* (1936), Chs. XVI–XVII.

[43] Legend ascribes the formation of Kerala to the impatience of a local saint ("during the thousandth year after the [biblical] flood") with the unspecified improprieties of his aged mother. He threw an axe from Gokarna (near Goa) over the sea; it flew to Cape Comorin and the sea retreated beneath its flight. This does correspond with the actual area of emergence.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village. 432

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer. 465

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one-and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days. [804]

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters. 566

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and 563 463

* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

113, 564 Kerala AW11

[For information on the castes of Kerala see 33: Bhattacharya, AW1 India, category 116, pp. 106-108, 126 and 151-152.]

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord.
[794] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-
[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired
[427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
794 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

564 servants, nowadays [20] collectively called Amba-
194 lavasis. The highest of these were the Chakk-
yars or reciters of Puranic stories, and the
Pushpagans or flower-gatherers for temples.
[611] These two castes had a patrilineal descent-sys-
tem of the same type as Nambudiris, and are
said to have once been Nambudiris who were
degraded for ritual offences. They ranked be-
low Nambudiris and above Nayars and the matri-
lineal temple servant castes. These latter in-
[533] cluded Nambyars, a small caste whose work was
to accompany Chakkyar recitations on a metal
drum; Psharodis and Variyars, both of whom
traditionally sweep the temple, clean temple
vessels and make garlands for the idols; Pudu-
vals or drummers on a drum called maddalam;
and Marars or regular drummers on another
drum called chenda.

The temple-servant castes were small and
were chiefly congregated in villages owned by
Nambudiri landlords or by large temples. Four
main types of temple were owned by the higher
castes of Malabar. First came large and weal-
thy temples owned and managed entirely by
groups of Nambudiri landlords and dedicated to
one of the orthodox Brahmanical male deities of
India, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second came the
private temple of each individual Nambudiri fam-
ily in villages owned by Nambudiris; these were
small replicas of the first type, dedicated to the
same types of deities. Third came the large
temples, one of which was associated with each
[776] royal and chiefly matrilineage. These were
usually dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali,
the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the soil.

'194 the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the
564 soil. Fourth came the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, one of which was found in each village or group of villages of the same subcaste where Nayar retainers were present.
[782] In the first two types of temples, animal sacrifice was forbidden; offerings were of flowers, fruits, incense and fire. The priests were
[793] either Nambudiri Brahmans or members of a lower landless caste called Embrandiri Brahmans who are immigrant from South Canara to the north. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which contained a temple of type (1), there was often no Nayar population at all: a group of lineages of one or more temple servant subcastes replaced them as retainers of the Nambudiris and as kanam tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of type (2), there would be one or two individual lineages of one or other temple servant caste, attached to the Nambudiri temple, but also a group of Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple. [22] In villages not headed by Nambudiri Brahmans, there might be only a Bhagavadi temple, managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might also be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple servant castes did not work in village Bhagavadi temples. Similarly in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple owned by the ruling lineage, the temple servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars, but individuals of the

other temple servant castes might come from other villages to assist at special annual ceremonies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi temples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brahman, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the temple and periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. Consistent with these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambudiris and all temple servants were vegetarians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise almost identical in general culture to Nayars, and historically were probably once Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine or intermarry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine) and above the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food from them but not give food to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servant castes and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few social relations outside the temple, and did not interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet,

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[264] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
[611] "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
[783] ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandry, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[437] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
564 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washerman's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

564 ritual pollution decreed that the several lower
783 castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

564 Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a
[361] separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas
437 and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. The Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas
[783] and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not
[611] interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes
361 there were and are in Kerala large groups of
563 Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
563 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

74 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
564 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended such festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[564] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
595 had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

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584

CHART I RITUAL RANKING AND HYPERGAMOUS UNIONS BETWEEN THE HIGHER CASTES OF COCHIN

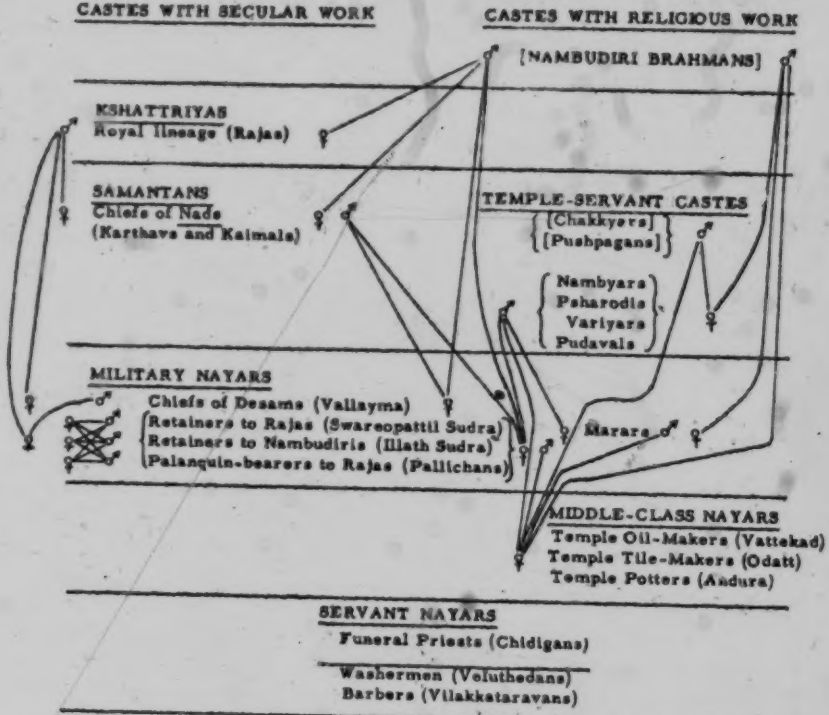

Key

} indicates equivalence of, or dispute for, rank.

A line drawn across the page indicates that all castes above it rank unequivocally above all castes below it.

Oblique lines and curves indicate some amount of hypergamous mating between the castes.

♂-male ♀-female

Castes shown in brackets have patrilineal descent; all others have matrilineal descent.

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Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

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Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957. 175 648 635

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's. [177] [436] [564] [631]

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanac, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin. 631 635 184 [564] [601] [121]

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Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic leaders. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nambudiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaḷs*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

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621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative
[178] power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
[622] in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages iso-
[613] lated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants." 564

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. 564 554 [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs. 621 613 564 566 471 427

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristocratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They 564 794

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564 794 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matrilineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 794 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden. [782] [793] Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as permanent tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the [613] second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 794 613 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhagavadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 564 [793] [791] [782] In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman, attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

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vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

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564 [361] tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 121 564 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes. Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name [703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 162 621 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a separate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

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lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

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563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the popu-
[162] lation in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians
[651] were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth
[564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the
[463] produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and
[592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the
471 village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western
592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell
566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

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originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris*') judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

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564 613 system of Nambudiris. In the Nambudiri patrilineal extended family only the eldest son was permitted to marry (with Vedic rites) within his caste, and beget children for his family. Younger sons had recognized liaisons with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to their mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. These hypergamous unions were regarded by Brahmans as socially acceptable concubinage, for the union was not initiated with Vedic rites, the children were not legitimized as Brahmans, and neither the woman nor her child was accorded the rights of kin. By the matrilineal castes, however, the same unions were regarded as marriage, for they fulfilled the conditions of ordinary Nayar marriage and served to legitimize the child as an acceptable member of his matrilineal lineage and caste.

If a Nambudiri eldest son remained childless the second son might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget children for his family. Unmarried Nambudiri women, of whom there were many, remained in their natal homes and were maintained by their fathers and brothers. The eldest son of a Nambudiri house might however have several Brahman wives (who lived patrilocally with him) and also several Nayar partners whom he visited in their homes. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then dropped to the next generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments and was enabled to maintain its ancestral estate intact over many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man related through some cognatic tie.

The possible directions of hypergamous marriages in the Cochin kingdom are briefly as follows. In the royal lineages marriages were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad royal women married only Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest sub-castes within the kingdom. Royal men married women of chiefly lineages within the kingdom, of village headmen's lineages within their own domain, or of retainer Nayar lineages in the royal villages. In the Calicut kingdom royal women married either Nambudiris or the feudatory princes of higher rank and more ancient lineage than themselves. Royal men married women of the same lower matrilineal groups as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms. Women of the feudatory royal lineages married only Nambudiris; men married royal women or women of chiefly, village headmen's, or retainer Nayar lineages within their own area of rule.

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Each Nayar chiefly lineage, like royalty, normally counted itself a separate caste and married only hypergamously. Women of chiefly lineages married the royals or feudatory royals to whom their lineages were immediately subordinate, or wealthy Nambudiris, usually of their own district. Men of chiefly lineages married women of village headmen's lineages within their district, or women of retainer Nayar lineages, usually in their own villages. 564 613

Village headmen's lineages occasionally contracted marriages reciprocally with other village headmen's lineages of the chiefdom which had originally sprung from the same retainer caste. They also provided wives for chiefs and Brahmans and husbands for retainer women, usually of their own villages. [622]

Among temple servants, Nayar retainers, and Nayar temple menials the majority of marriages were between persons of the same caste. A few women in the Psharodi, Variyar, Poduval, and Nambyar castes married Nambudiris, especially those whose families managed the temples where they worked. A few such women also married men of the Chakkyar and Pushpagan castes, which had descent systems like that of the Nambudiris. A few men of these matrilineal temple-servant castes married women of Nayar retainer and Nayar temple-menial castes in the villages of their work. Nayar women were particularly convenient partners for temple servants and Nambudiri temple priests because of the latters' spatial distribution. Often a temple-servant lineage or a Brahman priestly family held the hereditary right of service in six or eight small temples in villages up to ten miles away. One man of the lineage might spend much of his life working away from home in one of the more distant temples. He would live on food previously offered to the deity, occupy a room attached to the temple kitchen, bathe in the temple bathing pool, and visit a local Nayar wife at nights, returning home for life crises and festivals. 564 794 613

Women of the retainer Nayar castes might receive husbands from all the castes above them. Sudra Nayar women living in Brahman-owned villages or on the estates of large temples were the most likely to form links with Brahmans and temple servants; Charna Nayars and Pallichans, with royalty or chiefs; and Kiriattil women, with village headmen. Thus hypergamous unions entered into by retainer Nayars in general followed the main lines of lord-vassal relationships. However, "odd" marriages with individuals of any higher rank in nearby villages were permitted. 564

Because the higher castes were much smaller than they were, the Nayar retainers probably gave less than 10 per cent of their women

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564 to men of higher caste. Men of the retainer castes made still fewer marriages in the castes of temple menials. The latter also received as husbands a few temple servants and a few Nambudiris of the lowest sub-castes of cooks and household priests. The temple-menial castes did not intermarry, and their men seem thus to have been confined to women of their own caste. Hypergamy stopped at this level and the Nayar servant castes were each endogamous.

564 613 The hypergamy of the Nayar office-bearing lineages fitted their gradual social mobility and lack of rank parity with each other. With time, because of the vicissitudes of war and conquest, a retainer lineage might be appointed as village headmen, and might later even aspire to chiefly rank. Several of the chiefly lineages of Kerala can be traced back to much humbler origins three to six centuries ago. Apart from the regular offices of rule over territorial units, commoner Nayar lineages might also attain special rank as ministers or military leaders. When a lineage received promotion in this way, its members in course of time declared themselves ritually higher than those of the caste from which they sprang and would no longer interdine or intermarry with that caste on equal terms. Hypergamy permitted these isolated office-bearing lineages to marry in unequivocally higher and unequivocally lower groups, but to side-step the awkward question of their precise rank in the hierarchy as a whole.

Hypergamous marriages, like all Nayar marriages, were tenuous and carried few obligations. Nevertheless, the dependence of aristocratic castes on each other for spouses and genitors must have strengthened relations between them. Hypergamy inextricably linked the secular and the religious hierarchies, whose interests in many contexts were opposed. Nambudiris waged a perpetual struggle to preserve their lands and judicial powers from encroachment by kings and chiefs. Their religious laws forbade bloodshed on the estates of their great temples. If a local ruler invaded such an estate or flouted its laws, the Brahmanical assembly exercised its religious authority to fine him in land, cash, or elephants and closed their gates till he repented. This does not mean that the kings were puppets of the Brahmans. When a king conquered a new district its Brahmans came over to his side. They gave him the right to protect their temples and to use their Nayar retainers in war, on receipt of a fine for any personal inconvenience they had suffered. They obviously needed the ruler's military protection of their religious and landed rights. The rulers in turn needed the Brahmans, for the whole social system was sanctioned by religious beliefs of which they were the chief

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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[P.185]

THE NÂYARS OF MALABAR.*

IT is likely that some of the gentle readers of this monograph are not familiar with "The Lusiad," the epic poem of Luis de Camoens, the restless soldier-poet who sailed with a detachment of the Portuguese for the West Coast of India in 1553. Voltaire, who is not given to redundant praise of anybody, styles him the Portuguese Virgil. At any rate he has written a fine epic, and from it I will quote a few lines concerning the Nâyars, with whom he came in personal contact three and-a-half centuries ago.

"Polias the labouring lower clans are named;
"By the proud *Nayres* the noble rank is claimed;
"The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
"The warrior's plumes their haughty brows adorn;
"The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right,
"Their left arm wields the target in the fight;
"Of danger scornful, ever armed they stand
"Around the king, a stern barbarian band." †

A former Governor of Bombay, Johnathan Duncan by name, who visited Malabar in 1792–3, has anticipated me in quoting some of these lines, and with regard to them he observes: "These lines . . . . . contain a good description of a Nâyar, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders." ‡

The Nâyars, the Nareæ of Pilny, (Nat. Hist. VI, 21), were the swordsmen, the military caste of the west coast of India. There are some small sects or castes intervening, but broadly speaking the Nâyars rank after the Nambûtiris in Malabar, and they occupy the same position in the Native States of Cochin and Travancore.

* The first article of this series was in Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where the Nambûtiri Brahmans of Malabar were described.

† Mickle's Translation, London, 1798.

‡ Logan's "Manual of Malabar," page 137.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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162 564 According to the Census Report, 1891, they numbered 377,828 in Malabar. The figures found in this useful document offer an instance of the unreliability of casual observation. The author of "A Manual of Malabar Law" describes the peoples of Malabar to some extent, and in his Introduction says: "The Nâyars constitute the major portion of the Malabar population." One hears of Malabar as the land of the Nâyars, as if its inhabitants were all Nâyars. Certainly they may be said to form the most distinguishing feature of the district; but, when we seek in the spirit of accuracy, we find the surprising fact that they number but 14·2 per cent. of its population.

611 564 The chief immediate interest attached to them lies in the fact of their being the best, that is the fullest, the most complete existing example of matriarchy, or, to be more strictly accurate, of inheritance through females. [171] This system, obtaining at one time amongst the Celts and other races of Europe, was probably universal in the sense that it existed at some period in the life history of every race of mankind, and is now to be found here and there in the world.

611 171 That inheritance through females was once the rule in Southern India is fairly obvious. Amongst others the Maravars, who are, so far as we can surmise at present, aborigines in the sense that we know of no earlier inhabitants in the part of the peninsula occupied by them, to this day offer strong proof of this. I refer to the genuine Maravars—the Kondayan Kottai Maravars of Tinnevelly—and not to the offshoots settled in Trichinopoly and elsewhere, who have almost entirely forsaken all the customs of their fathers.* Amongst the Maravars the girl on marriage joins the sept of her husband, but she retains her own sept name, and her children are of *her* sept; not of their father's. Marriage between persons of the same sept name is prohibited; and this is regulated solely through the mothers. The tribe is endogamous; but the septs within it are exogamous. Thus, a man or a girl cannot marry any one of the same sept, having the same sept name (which is inherited through their mother), and *must* marry some one within the tribe but of a different sept to his or her own—of his father's sept or any other. Though property

* Most of the cigar makers of Trichinopoly are Maravars in origin. Their names — ———Naidu,———Pillay, and so on are borrowed from people of higher castes.

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devolves through the men, the degrees between which marriage is prohibitive are inherited through the women.*

But the circumstance that inheritance through women was once, perhaps, the rule in Southern India cannot be accepted as of itself proof that the Nâyars are identical with the Dravidians, as the people of Southern India are commonly called. It is not yet time to say whether they are or are not. To the ordinary visitor their outward appearance, customs, habitations, mode of life generally, are very different from what he sees in the Telugu or Tamil countries; for Malabar, "the west coast," is as unlike the rest of the Presidency as Burma. The only other district of the Madras Presidency which resembles Malabar, is Ganjám, more particularly the northern part of it, where the people are almost entirely Aryan. The resemblance between these, the Uriyas of Gumsoor and thereabouts, a fine fighting stock, and the Nâyars of Malabar is very striking. It is not, perhaps, a mere coincidence that in these two furthest remote corners of the Presidency alone, the people at large are to be seen wearing umbrella hats to protect them from the sun.

The Nâyars are divided into clans, (we will call them clans for want of a better term), many of which intermingle through marriage, but some of them are endogamous. The precise number of these clans cannot be given, as it is disputed whether certain of them have a right to belong to the cognate Nâyar body. The names of the clans which have come directly under my measuring instruments are these :—

Kiriyattil.	Kitâvu.
Sûdra.	Pallichan.
Kurup.	Muppathinâyiran.
Nambiyâr.	Vlyâpâri or Râvâri.
Úrâli.	Attikkurissi.
Nalliôden.	Mânavallan.
Viyyûr.	Vengôlan.
Akattu Chârna.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Chârna.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Âmayengolam.
Vangilôth.	

This list is not in order of priority.

* An example of this custom existing in another land may be quoted here from a modern book—'The Caroline Islands,' by F. W. Christian, 1899: "Descent is traced through the mother—a custom tolerably common amongst the Oceanic races in general. Members of the same tipu or clan cannot marry." (Page 74.)

564 The Kurup, Nambiyûr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [260] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [851] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race [613] and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493]

* A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

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who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are 613
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The 178
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 486
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

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486 564 784 562 178 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstruation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is 783 effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South 841 Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* 564 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, 613 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear 486 (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Châma 178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more 562 liberty than was formerly possible.

* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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582 endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."
The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where
[837] she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[648] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup
582 clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhú-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

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custom is one which makes for improvement of the race, bound up as it is with the Marumakkattâyam system, which, guided by the anulômam principle, has fewer hindrances in the way of natural selection than perhaps any other marital custom throughout the world.

The divine commands of Srí Parasu Râma, the imputed originator of the Marumakkattâyam system which is followed by 70 per cent. of the people of Malabar, are supposed to be contained in the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam, a work in Sanskrit verse, written on the ordinary Malabar grantham (palm-leaf book). It purports to be a monologue "addressed by the Rishi Garga to Yudhishthira the eldest of the Pândus." Chapter XLIX relates "how certain celestial damsels were brought from Indra's world by Parasu Râma to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kêralam Brâhmans, and it relates how Parasu Râma at Vishabhadri (Trichûr), pronounced his commandment to the women (not being of the Brâhman caste) to satisfy the desires of Brâhmans, enjoining on them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was void of the least taint of sin." Unfortunately no scholar has given his opinion as to the time when this was written. Most likely it is not very ancient, and may be attributed to device of the Nambûtiris. But it is respected as authoritative. "One of the foremost Nambûtiris in Malabar in respect of wealth, rank, sanctity and learning," in common with the rest of his clan, relied absolutely on it, and informed the Commission: "The Smiriti says the Sûdras' appointed path to heaven is serving the Brâhmans." "The practice of Brâhmans . . . . . having sexual intercourse with servile (Sûdra) women is in accordance with the Sâstras." "If a Brâhman wished to have sexual intercourse with a Sûdra's wife, the Sûdra would be bound to gratify the wish." "A Sûdra cannot be sure of the true parentage of the children born of his wife. Hence the Sûdras cannot follow Makkattâyam"—inheritance in the male line. The Zamorin Maharajah Bahadur informed the Commission that "according to Parasu Râma . . . . chastity should not be observed by non-Brâhman females." Again, the "Ettan Tamburan," one of the senior members of the Zamorin's family, a learned Sanscrit scholar said: "It has been ordained by Parasu Râma that in Kêrala, Marumakkatâyam women need not be chaste;" and he quoted a sloka in proof that there

should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is apparent amongst those societies more liable to change.

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than elsewhere. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities connected with the marital connexion will now be attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Commission:—

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungádi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined

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along with those of the boys of her Enangan (a recognised member of one's own clan) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers, is marked out as a fit person to tie the tâli, and a day is fixed for the tâli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Káranavan of the boy's family. On the appointed day the boy is invited to a house near that of the girl, where he is fed with his friends by the head of the girl's family. The feast is called 'Ayani Unu,' and the boy is thenceforth called 'Manaválan' or 'Pillai' bridegroom. From the house in which the Manaválan is entertained, a procession is formed, preceded by men with sword and shield shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her taravâd, to meet the other procession, and after meeting the Manaválan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the pandal erected for that purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour and there his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths on the occasion. The Manaválan is then taken to the centre of the pandal where bamboo-mats, carpets, and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside of the house, and after going round the pandal three times, places her at the left side of the Manaválan, and the father of the girl then presents a new cloth tied in a kambli to the pair, and with this new cloth (technically called 'mantravadi') they change their dress. The wife of the Káranavan of the girl's taravâd, if she be of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting anklets, etc. The Purohita called 'Elayatu' (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tali to the Manaválan, and the family astrologer shouts 'Muhurtham' (auspicious hour), and the Manaválan, putting his sword on the lap, ties tali round the girl's neck, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families a Brâhmini sings certain songs intended to bless the couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a certain Nayâr who is versed in songs performs the office. The boy and the girl are then carried by Enangans to a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank or river, holding each other's hands. After changing cloths, they come home preceded by a procession, which varies in importance according to the wealth of the girl's family. Tom-toms and elephants usually form part of the procession, and saffron water is sprinkled. When they come home the doors of the house are all shut, which the Manaválan is required to force open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce." 564 613 588 [586]

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste. [533]

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction [171] [735] [184] [824] [415]

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891). [113]

564 613 588 [184] [586] [765] [783] of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 585 [588] The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 184 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the
[564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[574] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

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613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

● 564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
553 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of
585 themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth
178 it change even in such an important piece of life as marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place [582] the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In [181] North Malabar, which is much more conservative than [184] the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâra- 585 navan and the women † of his household choose the 564 bride, and communicate their choice to the intending 613 bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they [787] agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for [574] the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the
[574] men and women are separate; at different ends of the house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior
613 woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathira she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for [431] a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallin-[539] mel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

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Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in [787] the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by [824] the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

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the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5.1 boundaries

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765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîkṣha for a [604] year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears [302] the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîkṣha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 764 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": 765 Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîkṣha is one of festivity. After 603 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

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RELIGION.

771 It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in [181] general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and [291] women can scarcely wear less than they do in compa- [515] tibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal [264] cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally [783] twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house 683 and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 564 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching 783

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the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under [178]
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for [201]
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the [773]
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are
[783] sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
● 564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new cloths to women after menstruation, but my information on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the goldsmith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only. 796 564 [294] [326]

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple; Vannân bringing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day. [293]

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword. 796 326 226 564

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the 796 564 [782] [482] [326]

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564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella
[203] in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[34] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

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411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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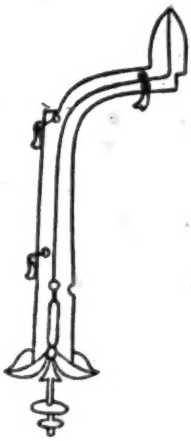

But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

[273] [465] [264] [834] [841] [782] 796 564

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pit, then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and 796 puts down her plate for an instant while she makes 564 profound salaam to the goddess ere going away.

And now the procession starts out from the temple, 796 issuing from the northern gate, and for a moment con- 776 fronts a being so strange that he demands description. 536 Of the many familiar demons of the Malayalis the two most intimate are "Kuttichchâttan" and "Gulikan," who are supposed to have assisted Kâli (who is scarcely the Kâli of Brâhmanism by the by) in overcoming the Asura, and on the occasion of this festival these two demons dance before her. "Gulikan" is represented by the Vannân and "Kuttichchâttan" by the Manûtan who have been mentioned already, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tîyans. I saw poor "Gulikan" being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was and was told he was "a devil." He looked mild enough; but then his "make up" had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the northern entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, his hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; his head and neck was swathed and decorated; a wooden platform arrangement from which hung a red ornamented skirt was fastened to his hips; there was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales's feathers arrangement (made of plank) the top of which reached five feet above his head; and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchâttan was treated in much the same manner.

As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his three minutes' dance, preparation for which occupied all the afternoon, was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he moved at all, let alone dance.

The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchâttan gives his dance,

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776 round by south to the westward, and leaving the enclosure proceeds to a certain banyan tree under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 50 yards are the nine men of the Tîyan caste, mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate—*larger* than the plates used when encircling the fire pit—on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents on this occasion as well as before is called talapôli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tîyan women following, carrying their kalasams and talapôli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of "devil dancers" garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these "devil dancers" who (never ceasing his gyrations, mad-like gestures and contortions), presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment.

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The procession passes through the temple yard, the enclosure, from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tîyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let us note here as we go along the curious distribution of this rice which is heaped in the fire pit. Two-thirds of it go to the four Tîyans carrying the Pû (flower) kalasams and one-third to the five who carried the Jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy, and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is the measure of rice and the measure of paddy covered with plaintain leaves as before, beside them

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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

796 564 [778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

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564 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a
782 a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain
793 room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple
[534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As
[533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale.

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.*

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire. The offering is never an adjunct of the prayers; it is always something done for benefit received. The thing to be noted is that a vow is *always* fulfilled; fulfilled as well as the vower can possibly fulfil it; it is never forgotten or overlooked.

> " When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be
> " When the devil was well the devil a saint was he "

is a couplet inapplicable to the Nâyar, or, indeed, to any people in Southern India, where vows, of objects to be given or animals to be sacrified, are treated always with the utmost sacredness even by people who perhaps in no relation of life behave for an hour with common honesty.

A true Malayali festival is that held at Kottiôr, in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynâd hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. The average rainfall at Kottiôr in July is probably 60 inches at least, so the devotees generally get a good ducking. Though it is a festival for high and low these do not mix at Kottiôr. The Nâyars go first, and after a few days, the Nâyars having done, the Tîyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march; and not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exhuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs.

I have not been able to ascertain with that definiteness which would enable me to offer more than an opinion, the connection between this violence of language and physical force against innocent people who are met *en route*, and the object of worship at Kottiôr, so will leave that part of the subject alone. The other day I visited the Gangamma festival at sacred Tirupati in North Arcot, and observed, together with conduct the most truly religious vows being carried out with the strongest disregard to personal comfort, the use of language truly filthy and obscene *towards the goddess herself!* "Gangamma! You have a—— (using a filthy word for the vagina) as big as a basket." "She is a whore" said another; and each one in the little crowd of votaries, evidently from the same village, as they approached the shrine, tried to out-do the other in insult and vituperation of the goddess to whom they had

796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman [564] caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot* [782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

½ [see cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- An.]

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776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They
[564] are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

● 564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular
825 and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the
776 subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

875 The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say
526 "the body is cool," is the time when, according to
[827] custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises.
[564] At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August
1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a
[553] mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his
name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers
875 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when
526 they are believed to be properly accomplished they are
● 564 given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things
regulated that no other person was permitted to teach
athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small
[844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only
being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar
women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises
for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his
pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

526

Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sariravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sariravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

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/For anthropomorphic differences between various subdivisions of the Nayar caste (called clans by the author), and for similarities and differences in ornamentation, see category 116, pp. 191-224./

776 821 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal [184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three 241 days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, [243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one [132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there [776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; 241 rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 252 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar 241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

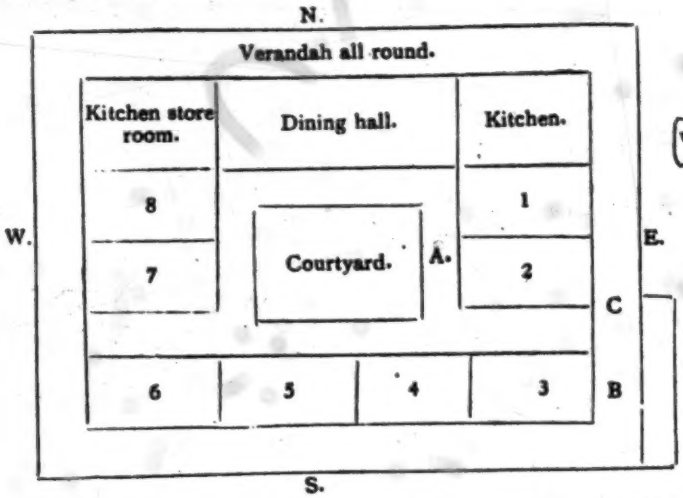

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon.

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the schoolmaster. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2¼ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

The *Santâna gópâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection. 789 842 [834]

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning. 789 [755] [825]

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man. 754 [791] [564]

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain [115]

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces*
[776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common
[824] stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I
[212] should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Sriparamêsvaranûm Sri Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâi Ezhunellumpôl Sri

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754 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic
789 hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan.
754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who
564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there-
[262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have
[673] heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

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bringing them up as their own. The belief that they will steal children helps to some extent to make them dreaded as well as abhorred, but it is as skilled professors of black magic that they are really feared. Ôḍi is the name of the cult, and those who follow it, Parayans as a rule, are able to do many wonderful things. The ordeals to be gone through by the apprentice in the Ôḍi cult are rather trying. Some are so utterly filthy and abominable, eating human excreta being a detail, that even amongst the Parâyans, themselves dirty to a degree and accustomed to anything but a high class diet, very few are able to undergo them. Many try, and are unable to proceed. But the man who has gone through them all is a terror. He can make himself invisible, and he can turn himself at will into any animal in order to accomplish his desires. There occurs now and then the death of a woman—a Nâyar or other—enceinte for the first time, the fœtus having been removed for use in black magic.* 754 564 [673] 754 564 795

The Parayan magician, or Ôḍiyan as he is sometimes called, being a pastmaster in Ôḍi, is credited with power to render himself invisible, using such a fœtus; and even without it, he may force a woman to leave her house at midnight and meet him. There would seem to be some connection, however obscure, with hypnotism and this latter. The Parayan, who turns himself into a bullock, in such guise, circumambulates a house thrice; then, still by means of magic, he compels a certain woman of the household to come out to him. If we follow up popular belief, we find that the Nâyar woman so drawn out of her house is bound to die within three days. But as it is well in a description of this kind, to proceed by illustration when possible, I will quote an authenticated story of a woman having been compelled to leave her house by night. The "walking the dæsil" by the bullock, one of those imaginative performances difficult to account for in human belief, must be left out of the story as no one is said to have seen it. 754

A Nâyar noticed that, for some days, his wife, who was (contrary to the usual custom, as we have seen it to be) living in his house, appeared to be under some occult influence; and under a premonition that something was

* Not very long ago there was a case of this kind, not far from Palghat, and not only was the fœtus removed but a wisp of straw was substituted in its place; apparently with an idea that, if the space were filled up somehow, the wretched woman would not die!

754 going to happen he slept across the doorway, so that she could not without waking him leave the house. The door was closed and fastened, he sleeping *inside*. In the early hours of the morning he awoke, and, fearing something unpleasant had taken place as the door was open, he called his brother who was sleeping upstairs. Together they searched for the woman, and found her lying outside in the yard, unconscious. When she recovered her senses, she said that for some nights previous she felt as if she was being called outside, and she tried hard to resist the impulse to go out of the house into the night. At last she could resist no longer and, altogether against her will, unfastened the door and went out. What happened then she knew not. There was neither removal of a fœtus nor death in this case. Such is the story. It is quite possible that stories of the kind are inculcated by wary husbands to keep the women indoors and prevent their being crowned with horns. At any rate the story is one of the kind such as every Nâyar [364] believes. It is, I may say, quite plainly to be seen that, when the Nâyar constructs his house, he takes care that there are certain conveniences, so that the women need never leave the house at night. My narrator was a native gentleman in a position of authority, living at the scene of this strange story when the events related in it occurred not long ago. The persons were named, but I did not question them, as there is much objection to speak of such things to a stranger.

754 795 564 *The Ôḍi cult.*—The Parayan adepts in the magic Ôḍi cult are to some extent hereditary functionaries.* They form one of those hierarchies, common enough in this country, of which Europeans know so little; of which the people themselves know but little as nothing connected with them or with their system is written. It is custom pure and simple—custom which is the most difficult of all to approach and define within accuracy. We will put down what is known, in the way of popular belief of course, as may be free from error.

Those who belong to it, born into it so to speak, go through a certain novitiate, not easy; but those who wish to join it from outside the fraternity of the cult are required to *prove* themselves worthy to join it; and it is their trials as novices, terrifying and utterly filthy, which

* For much of this which follows I am indebted to Mr. U. Balakrishna Nâyar, who has kindly obtained for me matter which is in a general way, unobtainable to the European.

are truly difficult. Members of the brotherhood are 754
bound to secrecy by solemn oaths, and the secrets of 795
their craft are not allowed lightly to pass to any out- 564
sider. A member of the brotherhood may have one or more disciples or apprentices who are in the first place bound to strict obedience. These apprentices fill vacancies in the brotherhood.

He who would be a member of the Ôḍi cult falls at the feet of him whom he would have as master, and begs for initiation into the mysteries. The master tries to dissuade him, but the would-be Ôḍiyan persists; and then, when assent is given, comes the trial. He follows his master to a lonely place by night. The master disappears in mist, and then re-appears as some terrible beast, now standing still, now rushing furiously towards the novice as if to tear him in pieces. If he stands still and unperturbed the novice is considered to have fulfilled *that* test. He is then required to pass the night alone in the forest, which he is made to believe is peopled with strange beings howling horribly. When he has satisfied the master that he is not afraid, he is subjected to other tests, and he is eventually accepted as a novice. He is introduced formally to the brotherhood on a certain selected day, when, having invited them to a feast, pûja is made to the dread spirit worshipped by them—Nîli of Kallaḍikôd or Kallaḍikôd Nîli, as she is called (Kallaḍikôd is the *place* name), through whose aid the Ôḍiyan works his devilment. Flesh and liquor are consumed, and the novice is taught how to procure the magical *Pilla thilum* (infant oil).

The principal ingredient to be used in preparing this is a fœtus of some 6 or 7 months' growth. The Ôḍiyan fixes his eye on some woman, who may be of any caste other than his own, in her first pregnancy. Then, on a selected day, usually a Friday, he proceeds to her house at midnight, provided, that is, he meets with no inauspicious omen on the way. I am not sure what omens are auspicious or the contrary; but at any rate the Ôḍiyan [787]
returns home should he meet with an omen which is unfavourable, and starts out again some other night. Transforming himself into a dog, a bullock, a cat or some other quadruped, he walks thrice round the house, shaking vigorously a cocoanut-shell containing *gurusi*, a compound of turmeric water, lime and other substances, the colour of which is red. The woman whose appearance is desired comes out. She cannot help herself. If locked in she bangs her head against the wall, and yells

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754
795 until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like
564 a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood —vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment. [824] A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

776
789 A regular working magician tells us something more of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

APPENDIX A.

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[184]

The account of the funeral ceremonies which has been given is not, of course, full and accurate as regards all the clans; but it is precise as regards one, and suffices for the present to give a clear idea of the ceremonies as performed by all. There are many interesting features in the ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil clan. Want of space forbids more than the briefest mention of some of these.

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Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the Taravâd thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are well lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the Taravâd prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the Enangru carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round.

They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men, standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled.

After this is done the "kodali karma" ceremony, using the spade, the axe and a big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all; and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre.

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a ceremony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the deceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members observed death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a

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564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
613 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
776 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common
794 Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power
[588] to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
826 lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of
[784] caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence
681 is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
564 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[823] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 681 564 [784]

castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

613 681 684 564

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

613 682 [696]

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, collectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [592]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [564]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [623]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not [578]
legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers[8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and
564 not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obliga-
[431] tion. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[837] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

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754 particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations
613 of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

586 I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served
581 to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the
588 sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the
[835] girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It
[834] was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

595 With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not
834 promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically,
851 with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

595 It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution
[765] for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands.
[783] For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children in-
[564] dividual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but [564] without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
●564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except
554 that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with
554 her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
592 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of princesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

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corrupted to *chēdatti amma* (Cochin) or *eratti amma* (S. Malabar).

(9) *Chētan.* M. and F. speaking, reference; M. speaking only, address. A particular shortened form of *jyēshtan* (ElBr), reserved for the husband of A6.

(10) *Makan.* M. speaking. Son of ego's wife. Reference only.

(11) *Makal.* M. speaking. Daughter of ego's wife. Reference only.

(12) *Pērakutti.* M. speaking. Child of ego's wife's daughter. Reference only. Not always used.

(13) *Appan.* M. and F. speaking. Ritual husband (*tāli* tier) of ego's mother.

(14) *Manavalan.* F. speaking. Ritual husband. Reference only.

All other affines and cognates were referred to by descriptive compound terms (e.g., *ende acchande marumakan*, "my father's nephew"; *ende anujande bhārya*, "my younger brother's wife"). Persons of 8 and 9 were also often referred to by descriptive compound terms.

A man might *address* his wife's matrilineal kin older than himself by the same terms as she did but he was not obliged to do so. He might also address them by their names and caste titles. They addressed him by his personal name, adding the caste title if he were of higher caste.

A man addressed his wife's younger matrilineal kinsmen by name. Because of the avoidance relationship he and his wife's younger sisters used no terms or names to address each other.

If she knew them and was of the same caste as they were, a woman addressed her husband's older matrilineal relatives by the same terms as he did. She addressed by name those younger than herself. She called her husband's younger sister who was older than herself *jyēshtatti*, (elder sister). Because of the avoidance relationship no terms or names were used between a woman and her husband's brothers who were older than she.

In hypergamous marriages a woman and her husband's natal kin used no terms to address each other.

An individual used no terms, but only names, to address his father's matrilineal kin.

Comment: In general, the restricted use of reference terms for affines and the lack of terms for patrilateral kin other than the father reflect the slenderness of the marriage tie and the lack of obligations to these kin.

Affinal terms were mainly restricted to the spouses of ego's older matrilineal kin, persons with whom he had fairly regular contact. Even these, however, might be *referred* to by descriptive compound

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439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[241] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[464] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
[496] the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564 [566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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Murder among the Nayars

627 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
613 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but
628 even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan
564 (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [965] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [965] [783] [835]

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613 **THE PROPERTY GROUP**

564 The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

422 423 [427]

613 591 Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

[701]

613 592 [596] In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

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601 FaBr, FaSiHu, MoSiHu. The last three are designated "older" or
184 "younger" in the same manner as above.

(8) *Ammāyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of any male of first or second ascending generations within ego's lineage, especially within his property group.

(9) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and Wi's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(10) *Jyēshtatti amma.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of older male of ego's generation within his lineage, primarily within his property group.

(11) *Machunian.* M. and F. speaking. Male cross cousin, i.e., male of ego's father's lineage in ego's generation, or So of ego's own, or classificatory MoBr within his lineage. Extended to male cross cousins of either parent.

(12) *Machunichi.* M. and F. speaking. The female equivalent of B11.

(13) *Makan.* M. speaking. WiSo. Reference only.

(14) *Makal.* M. speaking. WiDa. Reference only.

(15) *Pērakutti.* M. and F. speaking. Reciprocal of B4 and B5. Used primarily of own grandchild through either So or Da. Reference only.

[602] A man or woman used the same terms to address the spouse's natal kin as the own natal kin except in case of an avoidance relationship.

[605] An individual *addressed* all cross-cousins in the same manner as siblings, reserving terms B11 and B12 for reference. He addressed and referred to paternal parallel cousins as siblings.

[564] Kinship terms were used in relationships with affines or cognates of higher or lower matrilineal caste but not in relationships with Nambudiri Brahman relatives.

601 *Comment:* Males and females of the second ascending generation
602 were equated with grandparents, except for the maternal great-uncle and his wife. This fits the fact that relationships with the maternal great-uncle and his wife were distant and authoritative while those with other kin of this generation were non-authoritative and informal. Similarly, in the first ascending generation the mother's brother and his wife are singled out as distant and authoritative figures. All others of this generation are classed with the parents as non-authoritative figures.

The existence of Iroquois cousin terms for reference fits the special joking relationship and preferential marriage between cross cousins as contrasted with the prohibition of marriage between parallel cousins of both sides.

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[P. 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[540] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[114] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[590] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. [629]

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. [694]
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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Nayar
Nambūdiri Brahm
Tamil AW16
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father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

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769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
182 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact
626 fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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his forebears. Thereafter he offers rice balls and other oblations in a *śrāddham* ceremony 184
on each anniversary of the death. 564

Many of these customs are of long standing among the Nāyars. Barbosa[18] reported in 1518 that Nāyar royalty observed *dīkṣā* for the dead in the same manner as Nambūdiris. Sheikh Zein-ud-Deen[19] recorded the custom for commoner Nāyars in 1579. Linschoten[20] reported in 1598 that Nāyars normally cremated their dead. Today, Nāyar death and anniversary rites are almost identical in form with those of Nambūdiris. During the period of death pollution they employ a lower matrilineal caste to instruct them in the rites. (In Cochin, Chidigans fulfill this function; in South Malabar, Attikūrssis; and in North Malabar, Mārārs.) The same caste assists Nambūdiri Brahmans to prepare the ritual materials for their funerals, and has clearly transmitted the Brahmanical rites to the Nāyars. Similarly, at the end of the death pollution on the sixteenth day, during the *dīkṣā* period, and on anniversary days, Nāyars are instructed in their oblations by a priest of a degraded subcaste of Brahmans. (This subcaste is the Elayads in Cochin and South Malabar and the Nambidis in North Malabar.) A few peculiarly non-Brahmanical rites do, however, survive. In Kottayam, poorer Nāyars among commoners customarily bury their dead.[21] In both areas those who burn the dead bury the bones and ashes in a pot under a jack-fruit tree outside the ancestral house near the ancestor shrine. Some leave the bones there permanently and consider that the ghost remains near the bones and the ancestral house. Others dig up the bones after the period of mourning, dispose of half of them in a sacred river, and return the other half to the grave. The bones of *kāranavans* are sometimes [613] placed on an open platform under a jack-fruit tree, to which food offerings are made on days of propitiation. Other rites spring from the Nāyar view that the ghost requires appeasement rather than mere assistance to another world. Brahmans, for example, pour holy water into the mouth of a dying man to purify him for entry into the world of ancestors. Old-fashioned Nāyars offer rice gruel as a last act of appeasement.

Even the Sanskritic rites are in fact so adapted to Nāyar requirements that they 76
carry a quite different emphasis of meaning from that associated with them by Brah- 184
mans. First, the role-structure of the rites is, of course, completely adapted to the 564
descent system. A Nambūdiri deceased's chief mourner is his or her eldest son, or, 613
if there is no Nambūdiri son, the eldest brother's son. A Nāyar woman's chief mourner is her eldest son; that of a man, the man next junior to him in the property group. But all males of the *taravād* junior to the deceased make subsidiary *bali* offerings to him in the period of pollution. Brahman spouses observe mourning and death pollution for each other. Nāyar spouses traditionally observe no mourning or pollution for each other, for they belong to different *taravāds* and have no mutual legal obligations. If a Nāyar dies in a wife's house, his body must traditionally be returned to his *taravād* for cremation. Shortly before or after the death of her husband, a woman goes to view his body for the last time. She is then ceremonially conducted out of the house on the north side—the side opposite to that from which the god of death arrives. She is returned to her natal home, and after this she may never reenter her dead husband's house. In Cochin, where men traditionally had no obligations to their children, a child did not observe death pollution for his genitor. But in North Malabar, [591] where children have an intimate relationship with the father in avunculocal residence during childhood, a man's sons make offerings for him during death pollution, and the eldest son is second-in-command to the chief mourner at the cremation. The

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [1987] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local
[794] government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[613] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
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ravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, aving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight lien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or ow caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently efore marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons illed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they ecome merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhāaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated vith some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, n behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are hiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants ssemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, hey make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by hem, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an ssembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole f several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the urrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. n addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, hrough appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor leities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a ull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing im to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to ne of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch o attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
564 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft,
769 however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad,
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and
152 submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[28] and the initiation rites[29] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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178 613 604 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 594 152 593 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father. Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children [154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond- [769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 564 177 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tendency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox [829] forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 769 564 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out. This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste [755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are [782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *taravād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *taravād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony. 796 782

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas. [354] [801]

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted. [825] [787]

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and 782 796 564 [533] [534]

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AW11 Kerala AW11
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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

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Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

588

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tālikettukalyānam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost 564
all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine 121
this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal
Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North 611
Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the 591
double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, 121
a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other
Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much 588
controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet
no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of [175]
the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each
caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay.
In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about [127]
twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the
same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my
own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was [114]
carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin
village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight
months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, [101]
I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes [114]
that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and [122]
of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

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121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvaris*) of districts (*nāds*). These
175 owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
564 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavaris*) of villages (*desams*).
631 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvari*
613 or *desavari* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukada, Attikurrsis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar Tāli-Rite.* Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

[692] 613

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [787]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri 588 613 [776] [782] 588

588 [564] [793] 588 833 178 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 782 787 793 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 [831] [753] [782] [834] Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

588 [783] [264] The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

588 184 595 [765] [783] [851] In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*asvattha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *vepp* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage [842] ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were 184 too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a 178 clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the tradi- 776 tional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage 588 hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *Adranaren*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, [613] he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on 613 ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony 564 with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before 184 puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. 833 The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambūdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāraṇavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

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Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

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Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

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The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *tarawād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children. [586]

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The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambūdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāḍuvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāḍuvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambūdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has [178]

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collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri, Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges, usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris* fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *deśavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nâduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

The Nayar Kinship System. North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In

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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar. 594 613 851 601 582 613

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen. 585 851

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death. 588 [564] [301] [851] [765] [783]

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri 588 613 [564]

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambūdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tāli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambūdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tāli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tāli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambūdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambūdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambūdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tāli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tāli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tāli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in North Malabar

420 621 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannāns, called Mannāns in the south) and barbers (Kāvutiyyans, called Vātthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [420] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago.

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likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

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Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*. 613

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *tarawād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *tarawād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *tarawād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

[881]

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

[841]
[789]
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These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *taravād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

[833]

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

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The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those [262] stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention [783] to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual [834] desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in*
613 *genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *kāranavan*. This man is
564 usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but par-
602 ticularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen,
[586] sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

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Tiyyar

This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *idli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs. 613 602 588 182 184

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child. 182 184 593 613 843 [827] [822]

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring. [607]

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1] 184 843 789 182 [564] [787] [782]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake- 000

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pradhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *ennar*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the

276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one
782 or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food
787 taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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588 182 184 *sambandham* lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar-mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mathu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [533] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [982] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tâli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tâli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion.

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tâli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'.

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tâli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nâduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nâduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tâli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tâli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tâli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her *daughter from the danger of castration by the caste*.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tâli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances one may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his elder kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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Tiyyar

588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdâvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by [693] name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions [584] and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-[793] broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he [782] makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil [783]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 [588] [793] [852] [764] 564 182

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *taravāḍ*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *taravāḍ* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11

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796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nâdurari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
78 ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted
182 in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
88 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards
182 higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emo-
564 tional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400–03) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333–43).

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with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breadths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note I.

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the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since Marco Polo travelled in Asia.

"In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po! po! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

[1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. I, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampadiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Desams*; and the *Desams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India*. T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home. 621

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*. [346]

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship). 621 622 [874] [576]

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends. 622 [796] [623] 622 585 626

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village 264 564 626

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264 626 564 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were persuaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

621 178 The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 [425] The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar 351 613 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women. [562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 421 [177] The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family, according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] [593] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

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as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother, and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister. She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

Enangar.—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

Marriage Restrictions.—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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daughter never calls you by any name which, in the Hindu code of manners, is done only with regard to the husband. She is your *a priori* wife, if such an expression could be used. She is spoken of as the *Mura Pennu* (*Mura* = customary, and *Pennu* = female or wife, meaning customary wife). 582

Unlike other Hindus a Nāyar may marry a girl from a lower sub-caste as long as she also is a Nāyar. He cannot marry a woman whose caste is higher than his own without the wife losing her caste. A Nāyar lady can choose her husband either from among the allied families or others, provided they are of the same or superior sub-caste. Also, she can marry from anyone of the higher castes, *i.e.*, either from the Brahmins or from the Kshatriyas. The alliance between the Malabar Brahmins and the Nāyars is a social fact of very great interest. In no other part of India is a Brahmin allowed to marry out of his own caste. In Malabar, on the other hand, among the Nambudiris or the Aryan immigrants, only the eldest member of the family can marry among the Brahmins, the others being forced to marry among the Nāyars. The permanence through ages of matrilineal descent among the Nāyars is due to this fact. The Brahmins, being of a superior caste, and the Nāyar wife of the Brahmin being unable to live in her husband's family, the system tended to be matrilineal as well as matrilocal. Also, since the children of such a marriage are Nāyars and not Brahmins, though the father is a Brahmin, the system remained wholly unilateral without any definite bilateral development. It is only the very highest among the Nāyars that have connection with the Brahmins. Through their influence the custom preserved all its strength in the lower classes as well. 582 564

The peculiar custom of the Malabar Brahmins of not allowing their junior members to marry among their own caste introduces a complication into the Nāyar system. The idea underlying such a prohibition is evidently the preservation of the big estates which the Nampudiris own. Since the Nāyar sons of the Malabar Brahmins do not inherit anything from their fathers, their estates remain undivided and descend only to the eldest son. Primogeniture has been the custom in every country where the preservation of big landed property in the hands of a few was aimed at. The undivided family among the Nāyars is also meant to conserve their possession of the land and maintain the political influence resulting from it. A point of utmost importance which should always be kept in mind in this connection is the interaction of economic and social forces. The interest of the Nampudiris to keep their property undivided led to their custom of primogeniture, and this again induced them to use their temporal power and sacerdotal influence to perpetuate the matrilineal system among the Nāyars. Also, the desire to preserve the family estates as a whole, kept the Nāyar families from being divided, making thereby a change to patrilineal system altogether impossible. 428 564 582

the Todas also *Machuno* (or cross-cousin) marriage is the orthodox custom. See p. 512, Rivers, *The Todas*. Also Appendix, "Similarities between the Nāyars and the Todas." 582 171

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588 182 174 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 564 585 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham* not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered [554] that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom 585
stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars [591]
are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. [198]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary [184]
considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in
itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. [581]
It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunder- 586
standing or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the
marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further
formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. [648]
By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break
off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly con-
ducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the
maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the
mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and
marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, 581
there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational
Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* [648]
with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a
marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very
ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six
marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its
distinguished author.

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) 582
there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The
men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions.
A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. [564]
She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed
to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry any-
one who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the
maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress
lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so
closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort.

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any 591
particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's [582]
own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is [178]
strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their
ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a
specially aristocratic privilege.

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This 595
can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for
The last fifty years.

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595 175 the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it [604] must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. [114] Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, 174 whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes 538 minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to 174 be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking 613 of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion [564] and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [787] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the [604] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [593] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution.
783 The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are
[564] untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men
526 of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a
782 vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman.
765 He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not
[527] much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood
302 paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made
412 of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this
326 does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge
178 into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny
611 undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste
564 war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

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gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharawad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intelligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following:

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patrilocal* system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars."

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

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CHAPTER I.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS).

Introduction.

THE NAYARS are an interesting caste of people, forming a considerable portion of the population of the Cochin State; they constitute the third and last of the honoured castes under the name of the pure "*Sudras of Malayala*". They were mostly nobles who engaged neither in handicraft, nor in commerce, nor in any other occupation but that of arms; which they always carried; and no one could be called a Nayar who was not of noble lineage. They were in fact the magnates of the rulers of Kerala, and exercised as much authority over their inferiors as their rulers did over them. They formed in ancient times a warlike race with military leaders and civil administrators of all kinds. Very much influenced as they are by modern civilisation, their customs widely differ from those of other people, in marriage, family and social organizations, as also in maternal filiation. These customs, which are primitive, are being tenaciously retained by them; and they are even now, as they have always been, a unique people whose customs may appear peculiarly strange to foreigners.

The word *Nayar*, which is the honourific plural of *Nayan*, is derived from *Nayaka*, which means a leader of the people; and the name, which in the widest sense at present includes a large number of sub-castes quite distinct from one another, may have been given by a class of Brahmans called the Nambuthiris [1] to the Nayars proper, who formed a military class in ancient times. Some consider it to be more correct to derive *Nayars* from *Nagas* (snakes or snake-worshipping Nagas or Scythians) from the worship of the Nagas or snakes which has been the characteristic cult of the community.

1. See account of the Nambuthiris.

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[173] Origin and tradition of the caste.

According to *Kerala Mahatmyam*, the Nayars are said to be the descendants of the union of the junior members of the Nambuthiri families with the Devagandarva and Rakshasa women brought in by Parasurama from extra-terrestrial regions. The *Keralotpatti* regards them as the descendants of the Sudras who accompanied the Brahman immigrants from outside Kerala.

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Some consider that the Nayars came from Tibet where polyandry prevails, while others consider them to be a very early division of the Newars of Nepal. The mere existence of polyandry in Tibet is not sufficient to suggest a racial identity, nor is the form of polyandry prevailing amongst the Nayars the same as that found amongst the Tibetans;[1] but the marital relations, mode of inheritance and other customs, as well as the style of architecture of Nepal, closely connect them with the Nayars, and go to show a common origin.[2]

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In the serpent worship of the Nayars, and also their matriarchal customs, others have found traces of a Scythian origin. It is said that the Dravidian languages retain a more intimate connection with the Scythian or Turanean tongues. Philology also comes in to support this view. It is said that Tamil and its cognate tongues were founded upon the ancient Asura or Dravidian speech, and this is strongly confirmed by the fact that the language of the Brahuis, a tribe on the borders of Sind, has been found to be closely allied to them. "The Brahuis' language", says Dr. Caldwell, "enables us to trace the Dravidian race to the southern confines of Central Asia, and that this country was the home of the Nagas to which race apparently belonged the founders of the Dravidian kingdoms." It may therefore be safely concluded that the Dravidians of South India were of the same stock as the Nagas of the North, and to these tribes of Naga colonists belonged the original serpent worshipping Nayars.[3] "The name Dravidian Races," says Friedrich Ratzel, "fits only the Tamils, Telugus, and Canarese of Southern India, remoter kindred of the dark aboriginal population to whom Aryan population brought the religion of Brahma, a high civil order and of course the opportunity of extensive intermixture. The selection of the term is connected

1. The Evolution of Marriage, Letourneau, page 80.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, C. F. Oldham, page 158.
3. The Sun and the Serpent, Chapter VII, pages 162-165.

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361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
[417] tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
343 Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
342 order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
[787] ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
[764] ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

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177 342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore. 342 178 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same [343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a [312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from [515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family [574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with [343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut [245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing [175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean. [556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal 352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal 412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife, 184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to 564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality.[1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas; and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-23.

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342 351 823 372 [564] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses.

If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions; in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times.

Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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Internal structure of the caste.

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine displeasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world and in the world to come.

[626] [688]

It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

564 174 [463]

Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

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564 In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

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certain families from time to time are being looked upon as sub-castes. *Jâtinirnayam*, a Malayalam work of some authority, which gives an account of Malayali castes, limits the number of subdivisions to eighteen, fourteen of which belong to the high caste Sudras, the remaining four being of low caste Sudras. In the last Census Report of the Cochin State, the same number is kept up with slight modifications, to which I am not inclined to agree. It is not possible at this stage to state the exact number of subdivisions, and the following are those that have come under my personal investigation in the State:—

1. *Kiriyattil Nayars.*—They form the highest of all the Nayar subdivisions in the Cochin State as well as south Malabar. The word *kiriyattil* or *kiriyam* is said to be derived from the Sanskrit, *graham*, which means a house. The derivation is doubtful. The members of this subdivision are believed to have been the descendants of the early Brahmans in their union with the Deva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women brought into Kerala by Parasurama, and their duty has been primarily to serve them. The members of the aristocratic class, who still bear the titles of Panikkar, Kurup, Kaimal, Kartha, Menon, and Menokki belong to this class; in this class are included the old *nâduvâzhis*, and *desavâzhis*—rulers of *nâds* and *desams*—the military leaders, Pattola Menons and other *sthânis* or titled persons. Being superior to the members of other subdivisions, the *Kiriyattil* Nayars can cook for all others. The Nayars of this class are, according to current tradition, connected with the sixty-four families of Vellalas, whom Dr. Oppert has tried to identify with the Pallavas.

2. *Illattu Nayars.*—They are known in Cochin and South Malabar also as Sudra Nayars. They are par excellence the attendants and retainers of the Nambuthiris. In many parts of the State and in Malabar, they have, by close contact with the Nambuthiris, fashioned many of their personal habits after the truly Brahmanical style, and are, on that account, classed among the high class Nayars. Very seldom does a Nambuthiri woman go outside without being accompanied by a maid-servant or *dasi* belonging to this class, and every woman of this class is her constant attendant and is indispensable for her various ceremonies. They are, I understand, found very largely in Travancore also, where they form

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the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illams*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patindluvittukar* and [357] *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chàrnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[167] 4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chàrna Nayars or Chàrnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of [582] the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice* [264] *versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[451] 5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

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The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State. 564

6. *Márár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies. [534]

7. *Pádamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision. [788]

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Vániyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :— 564 326

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1] [778]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses. 564

12. *Edachéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

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564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

~~14.~~ *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks. [264] [582]

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, the origin and significance of which are given below:—
554 Titles.

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha. [551]

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554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Asán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Mannátiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

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582 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous.

Marriage prohibitions.

833 This is the general rule, though exceptions
783 may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam* from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted. [1]

564 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere
582 observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris,
783 Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolatheri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

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Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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Ambalavâsis form alliances with Nayar women, but the latter and their children cannot touch their husbands and fathers without polluting them. The children of this union belong to the mother's family. In the clan system, descent was at first reckoned in the female line; consequently, uterine ties alone constituted kinship. The father was not regarded as related even to his children, and not considered as a member of the family. In this system all the children bear the clan name, and the clan name becomes the test of blood relationship. But the moment the descent is recognised through the male, the clan system breaks down. Among the Nayars the kinship is still reckoned through the female line. 564 582 783

Marriage is endogamous among the low caste Sudrâs. The following restrictions are however in force among all classes of Sudrâs. There cannot be intermarriages between the descendants of any female ancestor. It is strictly prohibited even in the case of two persons belonging to the same *tarawid* or family whose relationship cannot be traced to its origin, but is only traditional. A man cannot marry the sister of his deceased wife. The custom is more changing. A man cannot marry from the family of his deceased wife, but is now limited to the *thâvashi* to which his wife belonged. Even this is now being overlooked. 564 582 [614]

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *táli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pán supári*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *pdyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkàram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a marriage in the legal or sacramental sense of the term. The views of the members of the orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kàrànavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37.

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562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo-
556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste,
● 564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris,
581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar.
581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

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177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawadds*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Polyandry.

Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

[593] [604] [582] [564] The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of death.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sámanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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/For information on the function of the Taravād as a clan, lineage and matrilineal household unit, the researcher is advised to check all three categories listed above./

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595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathâyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of [833] a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the [564] barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it [184] certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to 852 purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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551 The names of Nayars present great varieties and those most commonly met with are the following:—

(a) Andi Menon
Kandar Menon
Kannan Menon
Ittirayarachan
Korappan
Koman Menon
Kumara Menon
Thenchu Menon
Konthu Nayar
Eacharan Nayar

(b) Raman
Krishnan
Govindan
Gopalan
Achyuthan
Sankaran
Narayanan
Madhavan
Sreedharan
Raghavan
Neelacandhan
Velayudhan

(c) Names of females:
Kunjikavu
Chirutha
Ichon
Kotha
Nangeli
Ooli
Cheeru
Cheeronna
Ichi
Ittiri
Mukami
Oonni Maya

(d) Kalyani
Lakshmi
Madhavi
Rugmani
Seetha
Subhadra
Narayani
Dakshayani
Karthyayani
Meenakshi
Gowri
Bhargavi
Janaki
Parvathi
Sreedevi

(e) Pet names of males:
Appu
Appukuttan
Kuttan
Balan

(f) Pet names of females:
Nani (Narayani)
Mathu (Madhavi)
Kunju (Kunjukutti)
Eacheri (Easwari)
Parukutti.

551 564 The names of males given under (a) are those which appear to be caste names, probably given by the Nambuthiris, who are generally fond of these contracted and disguised appellations. The Nambuthiris say, that the Sudras were so ordained by Manu as not to be called by fair names. They were the landlords and priests, and the Nayars had to do servile work for them. They thought that they ought to keep the Sudras in complete ignorance, and could not endure to hear them talking distinctly in their presence. On one occasion, it is said that when a Sudra servant uttered the words "*Súrya Rasmi* (sun's rays)," his master was so displeased, that he closed his ears, for he could not bear to hear a servile fellow using so elegant a phrase from Sanskrit. On another occasion, when a Brahman overheard a Sudra uttering the words *ahimsa paramo dharma* (the highest of all duties is not to injure anybody), he said to himself, "what a pity it is, that a Sudra should be able to quote a vedic expression!". Their influence in these and other matters began gradually to diminish after the time of the great Malayalam [776] peot, Thunjathu Rámanujan. The names of the caste-men given under (b) are chiefly the various designations of Krishna, Rama and Siva, all of whom are worshipped with equal rever- [782] ence. Some think that the Nayars are chiefly the worshippers of Vishnu, but the fact that, when at Benares, Rameswaram and [769] other places, they perform the ceremonies of offering of rice-balls in honour of their deceased ancestors, calling their ancestors

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious"[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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rights. Thus did these *kúttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

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Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste 623 disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 688 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 564 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There [671] was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

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564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days during which every method of torture known to the keepers of the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrapped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan immigration, there appears to have been a complete military organisation among the Sudras of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divisions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nad*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désavázhi.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles [1]

1. Vide pages 28-30.

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553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 **Village organisation and village life.**

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Nádduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja.
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622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Nádduvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

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1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

564 771 776

Religion.

The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-chattan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kávus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, and require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic. 564 771 776 [782]

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand maladies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which Brahmans also share. 769 [532] 771 776 [789] [754]

Serpent worship.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattán kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be found in the compounds of every Nayar house in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi. 771 778 825

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve their condition, returned to their old country. After their departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or *Páthála* took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled 773 778 825 [776]

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 778 771 825 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 771 778 825 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Izhuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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CHAPTER V.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

Among the high caste Nayars, the recognition of caste by occupation is not possible. They were at one time a military caste, and as a relic of it, the small force of infantry maintained by the State is still known by the name of the ancient military caste of Kerala. Aristocratic military leaders of the feudal ages, who then derived their incomes chiefly from landed property, in these times of uninterrupted peace and tranquillity, are but shadows of their former state. Some of them are almost penniless, and while a few families maintain their ancient position, most of them have lost prestige and influence. Among the lower classes of Nayars, there are sub-castes who by occupation were potters, weavers, oil-mongers, and copper-smiths; but the men of these sub-castes have abandoned their traditional occupations, and even consider it a disgrace to be known by their original occupation. This is partly due to the acquisition of wealth by a number of the caste-men, and partly to their attempts to rise in the social scale by engaging themselves in other walks of life. There are again some classes (*Illakkirs* or *Sudras*) of Nayars who rendered personal services to the Nambuthiris or to their own community, and the tendency has been to discontinue the services and take to other more respectable calling.

Occupation.

564 178 [355]

The Nayars numbered 1,11,837 at the last Census, and of these, 28,786 are agriculturists. These include tenant farmers, agricultural labourers, growers of special products and those connected with agricultural training and forests. Very few take to manufacture and trade. The sentiments generated by the old feudalism, a rigid conservatism of caste and their residence in rural areas account for it to a great extent.

162 [463] [182]

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464 The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as
564 regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population be-
[212] long to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning
[357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worship-
[515] ping in the temple close at hand. Their meals
[771] are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between
262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice
264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular
[272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for
[556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Food.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation
[562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged
556 to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by
[357] the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home. A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

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The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 591 593 429

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 564 491

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. 114 122

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Mairabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. 113

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

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except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements. 613 182

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system. [114] 613 594 182

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad*; and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. 613 182

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar. 613 121 [162] 613 564 121 [628] [582]

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the ...

[text continues on p. 21]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of
[212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also
[871] very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is
[212] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography.
105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala
● 564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or
[463] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With
[565] them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

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of the Brahmins. There are something like sixty four subdivisions of these people, from those ranking highest, in north Malabar, to the non-military, low caste ones of the south and of the Palghat taluk. Because of their very close relation to the Nambudri Brahmins which I shall describe below in detail, it can hardly be said that the Nayars are equal in caste to Sudras elsewhere in India. This is no doubt the reason for which, not only is their true position in the Hindu caste scale generally overlooked, but also why they themselves have a proud and self-assured bearing quite unlike that of the fourth and lowest caste in other parts of the country. 105 564

With the Nayars, the end of the list of caste Hindus is reached. Below come the *outcastes* who, despite their condition, are also graded in accordance with rank. First of these are the Tiyas. These bear different names in the various parts of Kerala, but there seems to be general agreement that they are really all one and the same people. Thus the name Tiya seems reserved for them in north Malabar with the exception perhaps of former north Cochin (Thiyyas); in Palghat, they are known as Iruvans, in south Malabar as Thandans and some as Irava-Panikkars; in south Cochin and north Travancore as Chovans, while in the rest of Travancore they go by the generic name of Iravas (sometimes spelt Izhuvas).

Next are the artisans or Kammalans of which there are properly only four main subdivisions. Their associates, also artisans and craftsmen, are roughly grouped into fourteen different communities. [463]

The Kammalans are followed by another category composed of farm-hands, the Cherumas and Pulayas, and a dozen or so different kinds of aboriginals, jungle and hill folk who are rarely encountered on the coast or in the cultivated area, and have to be sought for in the foothills and jungles of the Western Ghats. [563]

Non-Hindu inhabitants of Kerala include Moslems and Christians, of whom the greater number belong to the first of these two religious communities. They are both known locally as Mappillas, the first as Jonaka Mappillas and the others as Nasrani Mappillas. It is from this name, meaning "mother's son" or "bridegroom" or again "great child", that the more familiar *Mopla* for the Kerala Mohammedans has been coined. All are of the Sunni persuasion, while the Christians belong to a great number of varied denominations; some of them are Roman Catholic (the majority), others "Romo-Syrian" (Uniat), Orthodox Syrian, Malankara Syrian, Assyro-Chaldean (Nestorian), Mar Thomas, and of the Protestant United Church of south India. 105 563 795

105 563 [1995] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 1783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [1984] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into [1984] town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [1965] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

000 Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Par-
ent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not 105
wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. 564
Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always 576
praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya 291
factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of 104
the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and 105
of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their 564
mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. 614
Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and [611]
through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in [428]
matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in [613]
principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, mar- [582]
riage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in [591]
the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. [611]
They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and [613]
patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden [582]
days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his
caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons 105
were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devo- 564
tees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as [588]
sambandham to which we shall revert in a moment. They were main- [463]
tained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a [582]
meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by [428]

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger
564 Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam*
581 property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger
428 sons.

105 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar
564 and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow
611 artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [992] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative
564 such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child
[58] after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle
564 of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort
588 with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible. 105 564 588

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish. 105 564 588 428 [648] [614]

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union. 105 588

105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and
[423] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as
[464] to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state.
●564 Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brahmins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[427] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[393] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[963] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[464] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aboriginals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
154 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of im-
Ponderable evil, The reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: "... and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

The polyandry of the Kammalans, of the four sub-castes of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and bell-metal smiths, is in every way identical with that of the Thandans and Tiyas of the central area. This may be because they claim a common Sinhalese origin for it. The legend relates that one of the early Perumal kings of Kerala, having received some useful hints as to how to have his washing done by a *dhobi* (washerman) promised to give him a girl of the Asari (carpenter) caste in marriage. This revolted the Kammalans, and in order to avoid the degrading proposition, they emigrated in a body to Ceylon, leaving their king with none but a few workmen specialized in making roofs for the temples. The pre-historic boycott had its desired effect. The Perumal monarch, in dire distress, promised to give up the marriage he had had in mind and appealed to the king of Ceylon for the return of his indispensable artisans. These agreed to come back, but were given protection by the king of Sinhala in the form of an escort of his own subjects who brought the coconut with them, settled in Kerala and became the ancestors of the Tiyas. Presumably, the Kammalans learned the advantages of polyandry when they were in the kingdom of Kandy, and have never ceased to practise it since. 595 173 [564] [326]

I found all the artisan families which I visited polyandrous, and I was told that the custom is still very vigorous, in spite of what outsiders have to say. The same applies to those associated craftsmen castes, the Kolla- and Vil-Kurups, the Tol-kollan, Kanisans, Mannans, Panans and Pulluvans, who do not seem either to have given up polyandry in any great numbers. Their form of the institution differs in no way from that of their fellows of the senior caste. 595 564

B. POLYANDRY IN THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR AND IN NORTH COCHIN

Personal Observations

It was into this complex maze of Kerala society that I ventured, a few years ago now, to study the polyandry of some of its people. In the following pages, I give the results of this personal investigation. Thanks to my helpers and interpreters, I was able to find polyandrous households almost immediately. My first visit to the Palghat taluk and to Walluvanad allowed me to confirm that the Tiyas still practised what I was searching for, and that what I had heard about them was not incorrect. While in Tellicherry, I had the same experience, even though 595*

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India.

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first.

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns.

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.")

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
582 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
601 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
582 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age are some of the un-
132 married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
● 564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

[i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]
[Text Continues on p. 194]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11.

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there.

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan.

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-*

[Text Continues on P. 197]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p 199]

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Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 619 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[Live in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

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Kammalans

*595 601 lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names, and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave [614] village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.

● [564] After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan [584] would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

614 564 I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad* names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they [582] observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed [582] exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for 428 those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*,
564

[Text Continues on P. 204]

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Kammalans
Kolla-kurups

428 and boys had preference over girls in this matter, but the latter could 564 inherit if there were no male heirs.

427 The plot of land upon which the house was built was leased to the family as a sort of *kudiyiruppu*. It cannot be called a fully orthodox one, since Krishnan said that he had paid fifty rupees to the former resident, a coolie of the Ertachan caste (low caste Nayar), twenty three years ago when he took over from him, and another fifty rupees to the *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin called Manjalata Nambudri. Since then, rent had been fixed at eight annas and six pies a year, but he had not paid it for the last two years, he said, because nobody had asked him to do so! He made his living all right as a brazier, although it was not a very lucrative profession.

*595 Having been to polyandrous families of the four sub-castes of the 564 Kammalans, I next went on to investigate the polyandry of their associated artisan sub-castes, of which six were reliably reported to practise [305] it. I began with the *Kolla-kurups* or shampooers, masseurs and leather [282] shield makers. To these are assimilated also the *Vil-kurups* or bow makers, but I did not have the opportunity to see any. There are a subdivision of the main sub-caste, on the basis of speciality, as the *Puri-asari* are of the regular *Asari*.

361 On the 20th of November, 1949, I went to the house of a *Kolla-kurup* near Palappuram. This town is on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, east of Ottappalam, just before reaching the cross-roads of Lak-kidi. We left the car on the highway, and proceeded on foot to the 348 south of it, along a narrow, winding path which took us past luscious, [348] green paddy fields lined with coconut trees, to a largish house, built of clay and laterite but thatched in the usual way, standing on an elevated [351] piece of ground, like a platform. There was a gate to pass through, and as we went in we saw members of the family sitting about on a kind of rough, dried-clay verandah running round the walls of the building.

*595 There were quite a lot of them, and they were all very gay and noisy. They started singing at the sight of us, and, laughing and shouting, made a considerable fuss of us. The contrast to the rather dismal atmosphere of the other houses that we had visited was very marked. After my guides and interpreters had somewhat quietened the children, we managed to speak to a man called Shankaran, aged thirty six, who was the eldest living male member of the family's second generation. With him were his wife and children, as well as his twenty five year old sister, [391] Kalyany. None of the people wore anything from the waist upwards, and only a piece of cotton cloth covered the lower part of their bodies.

[Text continues on P. 206]

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Kolla-Kurups

614 564 The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in [428] the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

*595 601 I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing [126] at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

*595 427 465 The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

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any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

564 siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no rela-
614 tion between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the
428 informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *mak-kathayam*.

* 595 The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections.
601 The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

* 595 Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrol-
791 ogers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a
[427] workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

564 On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house
[296] of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play
305 an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash
535 the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also daneers in the temple on festive occasions.

361 We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village
351 of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

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Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his employees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the verandah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once polyandrous union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breastfeeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 [868] [126] Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

●564 614 [428] Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house *595 [429] was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our 568 759 771 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

[Text continues on P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

*595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 614 428 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text Continues on P. 216]

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Pulluvans

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married. 595* 837

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well. 595* 578 152

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union. 851 564 428

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collectively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu- 595* 851

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

told me that they knew of no instances. They nevertheless seemed alive to such a possibility and readily gave me the above information as theoretically feasible. 597

Divorce was a stumbling block to my questioning, and I found it difficult to get a clear picture of it from the informants. That divorce does exist, there seemed to be no doubt in their minds. The woman was returned to her parents' house with what remained of her dowry, and a piece of cloth which was handed to her father and mother, if they were alive, or to her brothers if the former were dead. The intention of divorce had to be declared publicly before representatives of both the wife's and the husbands' families. The bride-price could be claimed, but this is not often done any longer. What happened if a woman wished to divorce rather than the men, was a possibility which they did not seem to be able to visualize. When I asked about it, Panju said it did not happen, and women did not take this initiative. I mentioned the case of the Pulluvan family which I had visited on the 21st of November, and in which Kalyany had not accepted the polyandrous marriage with two brothers and had eventually left them to go back home to her parents (see p. 214). But both Panju and his brother said that this was another caste, and that such things "did not happen with Thandans". 586 586 564●

Panju was surprised at the idea which I put to him that, if one of the husbands in a polyandrous household wished to break away and set up another home for himself with a woman of his choice, divorce from the common wife might be necessary. He insisted that all he had to do was to obtain the consent of his brothers, or, if he needed the help of his mother's brother to get new wife for him, this uncle's approval of his plan. This was not "divorce", he insisted, since the common wife remained in the family with the elder brother or brothers. His outlook appeared to stem, it seemed to me, from the polyandrous concept of the household constituted as such. The common wife was married to the household rather than to the individual men, and even if one of them broke away, the union between the principal and herself was not affected. There could thus be no "divorce", the term being reserved for the break-up of the latter marriage, which would be a much more serious occurrence. 595* 586

But what then of the property? If the deserting husband took a portion of it away for himself, did that not make it look more like a divorce from the wife shared in common? And what about the children? With whom did they remain in the case of a real divorce, such as we had first spoken about?

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 124 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
158 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known,
755 had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

172 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

177 564 members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

177 564 595 Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheritance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

[1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

There appears to be no doubt that Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of the central area are gradually giving up polyandry. Others have reported on the speed with which it is disappearing, sometimes exaggerating the rapidity, it seems to me, but nevertheless correctly stating that not many more years will pass before the custom has become simply a memory, as it is with the Nayars. I think a distinction should be made, however, between the more wealthy, upper members of the caste and the lower, poorer ones. In fact, polyandry with the Thandans and Tiyas is being abandoned from the top, and this observation is valid not only for their community, but also for polyandry in general in Kerala. 177 564 595

It is the upper castes, who have had greater opportunity to educate themselves, adapt themselves to higher standards and lead a more modern, Europeanized type of life, who are giving it up as something primitive and unworthy of self-respecting citizens. Within the castes, however, it is not always the upper strata that has progressed in this way, as can be seen with the Nayars, where polyandry is reputed to be practised still in the conservative court circles of Cochin and Travancore. Among the Thandans and Tiyans it is the other way round, the upper class either professes not to follow the custom any longer or really abstains from doing so. The Kammalans and associated artisans nearly all continue to be polyandrous, and as they are without exception people of very slender means, a distinction such as the one made here does not apply.

Aiyappan, discussing new trends in the Irava community, has written: "Differences in occupations and income and the development of new sexual standards are two active forces that one sees in operation against polyandry." (*Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 103.) Iravas, according to him, had formerly very few avocations from which to choose. They pooled their resources and worked for the house, their common wife and their children, without making any individual reservations. Today, matters have changed and the men each want a different type of work, chosen from among the numerous new occupations which are open to them, and aspire to have their own family, wife and children. The old ways are no longer fashionable, and are even despised and considered to be primitive and barbarous. Jealousy thus reappears, and asserts itself in no uncertain way. The women, too, do not want to be shared any longer by a number of brothers, and prefer to return home or refuse polyandrous marriages rather than be joined in wedlock in the traditional manner. In North Cochin, however, it was the progress of the people in higher levels of the Thiyya caste that brought about a legal inter- 177 595 463 177 595 [152]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

177 595 diction of polyandry. (For a synopsis of the Act of 1940, see p. 238 ff.)

While travelling round with my guides and interpreters in 1949, I had ample opportunity to hear what the polyandrous families were thinking about the ancient form of matrimony which was beginning to be despised. Here are some of the remarks which were made to me in the course of my interviews:

177 564 595 Raman, the informant of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, said that if only twenty five per cent of two hundred and fifty Thandan families in the Walluvanad taluk still practised polyandry today, it was because the Moplas, Nayars and Brahmins ridiculed the practice as low-caste and primitive. The Thandans wanted to reform themselves and aspired to higher things, therefore they had to give up polyandry as representing something backward.

Velu, informant of the Kereghetil household of the Katukulangara *tarawad,* told me that as long as the property was undivided, they practised polyandry, as it kept them from having many wives in whose quarrels they might become involved and thus break with each other. But now, as each man wanted to go his way, things were different, and polyandry was no longer possible.

It will be remembered that, on the 2nd of November, 1949, I attempted to visit a rich Tiya household near Kunnamkulam in north Cochin, only to be put off by an old man, accompanied by a younger one, who assured me that no one was polyandrous in their family any more. When I went on to a poor labourer's house nearby, I was told that this was not true. There were three brothers in the older generation (one of whom was the elder of the two men to whom we had spoken) and they lived in polyandry, although, being wealthy, they did not like to admit it.

In the Kaladiwalapil household, that of the miserable Tiya labourers next door, in the village of Perumpillav, the informant, Raman, said that the ancient custom by which brothers shared a common wife, and thus avoided the quarrelling among sisters-in-law in which they feared to become embroiled, was changing now because the younger people found it "more convenient" to be monogamous. When I asked him what he meant exactly by this phrase, he replied that "times have changed" and that it is "easier" thus. Not yet satisfied, I insisted on more clarification, whereupon I heard that polyandry is "not done any longer", that it was "out of fashion", and not "modern". Raman was unable to express himself better, and seemed plainly puzzled and embarrassed by my request for a more precise explanation.

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I obtained the same kind of answer from Panju of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, it will be recalled, when I asked him how it was that his maternal uncle consented to get a new wife for him and his brother, Narayana, when they refused to live any longer in polyandry with Raman and Kuniyama. He said that his mother's brother had certainly begun by resisting the request, but that, in the end, he had given in because "times have changed" and he could not very well force them to remain in their present marriage if they said that they were dissatisfied with it.

It was Panju, too, who gave me the unexpected information that it was "immorality" that was breaking up polyandrous households. Women were not at all chaste any longer, he said, and anybody could have them "for a song". So every man now wanted a wife of his own whom he could control, instead of submitting himself to the old discipline and consenting to remain without complaint in the old polyandrous type of union.

My experience with Kammalans and other artisan castes was different. Polyandry with them is also threatened, but it cannot be said that it has deteriorated to the same extent with them as it has with the higher castes. Jealousy, however, seems to be coming very much to the surface, and I heard many tales of serious quarrelling among the men, leading to separation and to division into splinter households.

Raman, the *Asari* informant of the Perinkulam household, interviewed at Palappuram, said that polyandry was dying out because "Civilization is spreading". When I asked him what he meant by "civilization", he answered, rather simply, that people did not tie up their hair any longer in the typical Malayalam way, a top knot in front over the forehead, and that many had taken to growing moustaches. He added, however, to these very personal criteria of his, that women refused now to be wedded to many men; some wealthier people, he revealed, even go so far as to insert a clause into the marriage contract by which it is stipulated that their daughter will not be given in marriage to more than one man. He concluded by sighing, shrugging his shoulders and exclaiming that it was not right, but what could be done about it?

Kunji, the daughter of old Kurumba of the *Tolkolan* Palakaparampil household near Meitenadeshan, also complained of too much quarrelling among the men of a polyandrous family, and said that because of this, the women did not want to be married in this way any longer. She attributed to these reasons the fact that her household had already given up polyandry in the previous generation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

177 595 Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

671 *Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.*

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

[101] [564] [938] Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

[585] Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

snake-bite, the Nāyādis wear a brass toe-ring. And, when engaged in catching rats in their holes, they wear round the wrist a snake-shaped metal ring, to render them safe against snakes which may be concealed in the hole.

The Nāyādis who live within the jurisdiction of the Kavalapāra Nāyar near Shoranūr wear the kuḍumi (front lock of hair), as there are no Māppillas (Muhammadans) to molest them. The Kavalapara Nāyar was at one time an important chief, and directed all Nambutiri jenmis (landlords) who held land within his jurisdiction to bind themselves not to let the land to Māppillas. Nāyādis of other parts are not allowed by the Māppillas to wear the kuḍumi, and, if they do so, they are taken for Parayans and professional sorcerers, and beaten.

Some Nāyādis have become converts to Christianity, others to Muhammadanism, and maintain themselves by begging for alms from Muhammadans. They are called Thoppyitta (cap-wearing) Nāyādis.

The priest of the Nāyādis is called Mūppan. His appointment is hereditary, and he enquires into all matters affecting the community, and can excommunicate a guilty person.*

Average height, 155 cm.; nasal index, 86.

Nāyar.—"The Nāyars," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "are a Dravidian caste, or rather a community, for we find several distinct elements with totally different occupations among the people who call themselves by this title. The original Nāyars were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia, but the present Nāyar caste includes persons who, by hereditary

* This note is based mainly on articles by Mr. S. Appadorai Aiyar and Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyar.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

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land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood 173
combined with the physical peculiarities of the country 564
would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars 175
as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that 564
"in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom 701
in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn [868]
the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their [186]
Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And. Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

> 'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
> By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

175
564 went on to observe: 'These lines, and especially the two
701 last, contain a good description of a Nayr, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in
[411] their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders' (Asiatic Re-
726 searches, V. 10, 18). M. Mahé de la Bourdonnais, who
175 had some experience of their fighting qualities in the field,
564 thus described them: 'Les Nairs sont de grands hom-
701 mes basanés, légers, et vigoureux: Ils n'ont pas d'autre profession que celle des armes, et seraient de fort bons soldats, s'ils étiaent disciplinés: mais ils combattent sans ordre, ils prennent la fuite dès qu'on les serre de près avec quelque supèriorité; pourtant, s'ils se voient pressés avec vigueur et qu'ils se croient en danger, ils reviennent à la charge, et ne se rendent jamais' (M. Esquer, Essai sur les Castes dans l'Inde, page 181). Finally, the only British General of any note—Sir Hector Munro—who had ever to face the Nâyars in the field, thus wrote of their modes of fighting:—

'One may as well look for a needle in a Bottle of Hay as any of them in the daytime, they being lurking behind sand banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the Fort, and then they appear like bees out in the month of June.' 'Besides which,' he continued, 'they point their guns well, and fire them well also' (Tellicherry Factory Diary, March, 1761). They were, in short, brave light troops, excellent in skirmishing, but their organization into small bodies with discordant interests unfitted them to repel any serious invasion by an enemy even moderately well organised. Among other strange Malayâli customs, Sheikh

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Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in ravaging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

726 175 564 701 643 796 762 175

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson, London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

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175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
184 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
● 564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. . . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise."

175 868 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is

175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat * that the Nāyars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

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to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept Kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

● 564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

mentioned in vernacular books, are Kiriyam, Illam, Svarupam, Itacheri or Idacheri, Pallichan, Ashtikkurichchi, Vattakātan, Otatu, Pulikkal, Vyapari, Vilakkitalavan, and Veluthetan. Of these Ashtikkurichchi and Pulikkal are divisions of Mārān, Vyapari is a division of Chettis, and Vilakkitalavan and Veluthetan are barbers and washermen respectively. 564 [463]

"The chief divisions of Nāyars, as now recognised, are as follows:—

1. Kiriyam, a name said to be a corruption of the Sanskrit griha, meaning house. This represents the highest class, the members of which were, in former times, not obliged to serve Brāhmans and Kshatriyas.

2. Illakkar.—The word illam indicates a Nambūtiri Brāhman's house, and tradition has it that every illam family once served an illam. But, in mediæval times, any Nāyar could get himself recognised as belonging to the Illam division, provided that a certain sum of money, called adiyara, was paid to the Government. The Illakkar are prohibited from the use of fish, flesh, and liquor, but the prohibition is not at the present day universally respected. In some parts of Malabar, they have moulded many of their habits in the truly Brāhmanical style. [262] [273] [178]

3. Svarupakkar.—Adherents of the Kshatriya families of Travancore. The members of the highest group, Parūr Svarupam, have their purificatory rites performed by Mārāns. It is stated that they were once the Illakkar servants of one Karuttetathu Nambutiri, who was the feudal lord of Parūr, and afterwards became attached to the royal household which succeeded to that estate, thus becoming Parūr Svarupakkar.

4. Padamangalam and Tamil Padam were not originally Nāyars, but immigrants from the Tamil

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the
[463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation
of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield 564
before them.

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakketam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tāli-kettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, [783] and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water [793] from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution.

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at [765] the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family.

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu [797] recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled.

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

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in the hereditary occupation of oil-pressing, and occupies a lower position in the social scale than the other."

The following list of "clans" among the Nāyars of Malabar whom he examined anthropometrically is given by Mr. F. Fawcett * :—

Kiriyattil.	Vangilōth.
Sudra.	Kitavu.
Kurup.	Pallichan.
Nambiyar.	Muppathināyiran.
Urāli.	Viyapāri or Ravari.
Nalliōden.	Attikurissi.
Viyyūr.	Manavalan.
Akattu Charna.	Adungādi.
Purattu Charna.	Adiōdi.
Vattakkād.	Amayengolam.

"The Kurup, Nambiyar Viyyūr, Manavālan, Vengōlan, Nelliōden, Adungādi, Kitāvu, Adiōdi, Āmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise, or correspond with the group of clans first named from North Malabar. The Akattu Charna clan is divided into two sub-clans, one of which looks to the Zamorin as their lord, and the other owns lordship to minor lordlings, as the Tirumulpād of Nilambūr. The former are superior, and a woman of the latter may mate with a man of the former, but not *vice versâ*. In the old days, every Nāyar chief had his Charnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Charna are the outside adherents, or fighters and so on, and the Akattu Charna are the inside adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urālis are said to have been masons; the Pallichans manchil

* Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

bearers.* The Sūdra clan supplies female servants in the houses of Nambūdiris. The Vattakkād (or Chakkingal : chakku, oil press) clan, whose proper *métier* is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with tne oil-mill, is the lowest of all, excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nāyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkād to be Nāyars, and say that they have adopted the honorary affix Nāyar to their names quite recently." There is some obscurity as regards the sub-divisions of the Vattakkād clan. To the north of Calicut, in Kurumbranād, they are divided into the Undiātuna, or those who pull (to work the oil-machine by hand), and the Murivechchu-ātune, or those who tie or fasten bullocks, to work the oil-machine. Yet further north, at Tellicherry and thereabouts, there are no known sub-divisions, while in Ernād, to the eastward, the clan is divided into the Veluttātu (white) and Karuttātu (black). The white have nothing to do with the expression and preparation of oil, which is the hereditary occupation of the black. The white may eat with Nāyars of any clan ; the black can eat with no others outside their own clan. The black sub-clan is strictly endogamous ; the other, the superior sub-clan, is not. Their women may marry men of any other clan, the Pallichchan excepted. Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be named, is permissible between most of the other clans, the rule by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior being always observed. She may unite herself with a man of her own clan, or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambūtiri, an Embrāntiri, or any other Brāhman,

* A manchil is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, and more like a hammock slung on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palanquin.

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
484
564

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841 783 [613] menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. [689] [613] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does 823 784 not account for the superstition against crossing water, 562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 784 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a 562 chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

564 this tract or nâd there were originally six stânis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Râja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nâyars called Kûttams. Each kûttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Viyyûr, Nelliôt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellôli, Nilanchêri, Rendillat, Pulliyâni, Orakâtteri, and
[553] Venmêri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyôdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nâyar. Of the six stânis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyôdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stâni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyûr and Nelliôt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyôdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyôdis
783 and Orakâtteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattûr, Ara-Eravattûr (or half Eravattûr), and Attikôdan Nâyars, Tonderi Kidâvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mênôkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchôli to which the remaining three stânis belong, Kôthôli, and Kuruvattân-
[553] chêri. All affix Nâyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvânian Nambiyars, Chellâdan Nâyars,
[643] and Vennapâlan Nâyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvânian means great or

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principal oil-man ; and it is the duty of this caste to present the Kurumbranād Rāja with oil on the occasion of his formal installation. The fifth group consists of the three kulams, Mannangazhi, Paramchela, and Pallikara Nāyars, all observing fifteen days' pollution. A member of the first-named class has to place an āmanapalaga (the traditional seat of Nambūdiris and other high castes) for the Kurumbranād Rāja to sit on at the time of his installation, while a member of the second has to present him with a cloth on the same occasion. The sixth group consists of four kiriyams named Patam, Tulu, Manan, and Ottu respectively, and has the collective name of Rāvāri. The seventh group consists of six kulams, Kandōn, Kannankōdan, Kotta, Karumba, Kundakollavan, and Panakādan Nāyars. All observe fifteen days' pollution, and the women of these six kulams have certain duties to perform in connection with the purification of women of the Vengalat, Paṭṭillat, and Orakatteri kulams. Besides these seven groups, there are a few other classes without internal sub-divisions. One such class is known as Pāppini Nāyar. A woman of this class takes the part of the Brāhmini woman (Nambissan) at the tāli-kettu kalyanam of girls belonging to the kulams included in the third group. Another class called Pālattavan takes the place of the Attikurissi Nāyar at the funeral ceremonies of the same three kulams."

In illustration of the custom of polyandry among the Nāyars of Malabar in by-gone days, the following extracts may be quoted. "On the continent of India," it is recorded in Ellis' edition of the Kural, "polyandry is still said to be practiced in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayālam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brāhmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. [851] A woman without shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

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comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595
without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564
maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nayres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851]
ing that there are always several men attached to one [604]
woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578]
term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tipū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648]
since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind." †

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

595 As to the present existence or non-existence of polyandry I must call recent writers into the witness-box. The Rev. S. Mateer, Mr. Fawcett writes,* "informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry among the Nāyars of Travancore—that he had 'known an instance of six brothers keeping two women, four husbands to one, and two to the other. In a case where two brothers [797] cohabited with one woman, and one was converted to [177] Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition.' I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nāyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that, if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), it certainly did not long [564] ago." Mr. Gopal Panikkar says † that "to enforce this social edict upon the Nairs, the Brāhmans made use of the powerful weapon of their aristocratic ascendancy in the country, and the Nairs readily submitted to the Brāhman supremacy. Thus it came about that the custom of concubinage, so freely indulged in by the Brāhmans with Nair women, obtained such firm hold upon the country that it has only been strengthened by the lapse of time. At the present day there are families, especially in the interior of the district, who look upon it as an honour to be thus united with Brāhmans. But a [178] reaction has begun to take place against this feeling, and Brāhman alliances are invariably looked down upon in respectable Nair tarwads. This reactionary feeling took shape in the Malabar Marriage Act." Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar says: "There is nothing strange or to be ashamed of in the fact that the Nāyars were originally of a stock that practiced polyandry, nor if the

* *Op cit.*

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

588 invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and, in the presence of friends and castemen, ties a tāli (marriage badge) round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. [587] Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined along with those of her enangan (a recognised member of one's own class) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers is marked out as a fit person to tie the tāli, and a day is fixed for the tāli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Karanavan * (senior male in a tarwad) of the boy's family. The feast is called ayaniūnu, and the boy is thenceforth called Manavālan or Pillai (bridegroom). From the house in which the Manavālan is entertained a procession is formed, preceded by men with swords, and [613] shields shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her tarwad, to meet the other procession, and, after meeting the Manavālan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the booth erected for the purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour, and his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths. The Manavālan is then taken to the centre of the booth, where bamboo mats, carpets and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside the house, and, after going round the booth three times, places her at the left side of the Manavālan. The father of the girl then presents new cloths tied in a kambli (blanket) to the pair, and with this [613] new cloth (called manthravadi) they change their dress. [564] The wife of the Karanavan of the girl's tarwad, if she be

* The rights and obligations of Karanavans are fully dealt with by Moore, Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd edition, 1905.

 588

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the proces- [231] sion, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[924] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

184
on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782] juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824] waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844 "women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564 some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846 mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564] of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764] lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825] woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824] Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828] superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613] pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

852 846 564 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or [844] may not be Mannāns. On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance. [626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kērala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.

852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend. [591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband, [564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
782 rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the 613
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [769]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [775]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, [787]
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [534] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

The spirits of those who
have committed suicide, or met death by any violent 766
means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome 775
to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering
miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they [782]
are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman
priests are called in, and appease them by means of
tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and
ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it."

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting 764
features in the death ceremonies as performed by the 184
Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre 613
are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each [564]
carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members
of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the
southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are
lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the south-
wards without looking round. Close to the northern
end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground,
and tied together with a cloth, over which water is
poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to
the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu
carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home
without looking round. They pass to the northern side
of the house under an arch made by two men standing
east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at
the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under
the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the
pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali
ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These
are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain.
Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all,
and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre."

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted 763
in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 184

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

291 177 564 564 184 576 643

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar 301 789
wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who
died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which
a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be 304
favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only
practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon.
Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore [177]
by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it
has become rare. The operation is performed by women [564]
of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the
twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. 776
Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the
proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear
the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely
meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and
Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Saṅka-
racharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities,
the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several
minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan,
Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of [532]
these have granite representations, or at least such [778]
emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with
a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met [775]
with accidental death, and girls who have died before [766]
their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped
under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannich-
chavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic [791]
amulets are attached to the waist by members of both [789]
sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar,
is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits [782]
are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of
Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Nayar

he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [482] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

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796 man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

796 788 776 536 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 796 564 788 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 578 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796
Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 788
Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564] by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785] and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783] as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [195] ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782] assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. 788 796 In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror [776] in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and [783] sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respective homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, 526 "when the Malayâlis say the body is cool, is the time 875 when, according to custom, the Nâyar youths practice 564 physical exercises. At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in 526 a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

6:Spate N-4 (no date)1954 AW1 India
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with an output of 5–600 m. tiles a year; local sailing coasters supply markets from Karachi to Colombo, and there is some export via Bombay to E Africa, Persia, and Malaya. But competition from Malabar and, much more serious from cement and asbestos roofing is adversely affecting the industry, which appears to be declining.[40] Other industries are of little importance: iron-founding (ancillary to the tile factories), and soap, based on local and imported copra; Mangalore is the main port for the Laccadive islanders. A feature of some interest is the prominence of Portuguese names among the larger concerns, both in coffee-curing and in tile-making.

Kerala

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Both physically and culturally Kerala is one of the most distinctive regions of India.[41] Historically it has been somewhat isolated from the rest of the Peninsula, but accessible to maritime influences. Homogeneous in speech, it is probably more caste-divided than any other area, and it is here that 'untouchability' developed the more fantastic extremes of 'unapproachability' and even 'unseeability', while the Nairs who form the bulk of the minor gentry preserve a matrilinear organisation in which both polygamy and polyandry play a part.[42] Perhaps by reaction against caste, the region has the highest percentage of Christians in all India—28·8 in Cochin and 32·3 in Travancore. This element long antedates the vigorous Portuguese missions, which succeeded in bringing into the Roman fold most of the 'Syrian' (i.e. Nestorian) Christians, whose traditions go back to St Thomas the Apostle; there were Christian communities 1500 years ago. The 'White Jews' of Cochin are another ancient fossil kith; their number is only a few hundreds, but their origin is claimed to be from a Solomonic colony and is undoubtedly very ancient. But there is no end to the ethnographical fascinations of Kerala.

The Physical Setting

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Tokens of uplift are numerous and decisive, including the existence of coral reefs below the alluvium some miles from the present coast.[43]

[40] U. Hammaba, *ibid.*, 291–99.

[41] Based mainly on a series of papers by G. Kuriyan in *JMGA* and *IGJ*: "The Industrial Crops of Kerala" (XI (1937), 283–90 and XII (1937), 1–8); "Population and its Distribution in K." (XIII (1938), 125–46); "The Geographic Basis of the Legendary Origin of K." (XVI (1941), 340–54); "Some Aspects of the Regional Geography of K." (XVII (1942), 1–41). On Cochin I am indebted for first-hand information to Sir Robert Bristow, CIE, to whom the development of the modern port is largely due.

[42] The best easily accessible account for geographers is in C. D. Forde, *Habitat, Economy and Society* (1934 and later eds.), Ch. XIII. See also G. Slater, *Southern India* (1936), Chs. XVI–XVII.

[43] Legend ascribes the formation of Kerala to the impatience of a local saint ("during the thousandth year after the [biblical] flood") with the unspecified improprieties of his aged mother. He threw an axe from Gokarna (near Goa) over the sea; it flew to Cape Comorin and the sea retreated beneath its flight. This does correspond with the actual area of emergence.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

361 *Preliminary.*—Watakanchery is a Government division, rather than a true village, being marked out merely for convenience of revenue assessment. It stretches from east to west a distance of nearly four miles along the foot of a hill. A water-course which runs from east to west forms the northern boundary; the maximum distance from north to south is nearly a mile and a half. The whole area is 3,692·64 acres (nearly 5½ square miles). It is an area containing a few groups of houses intersected by paddy fields and "parambas," i.e., land on which paddy cultivation is not undertaken.

Watakanchery proper, or the town of Watakanchery, as it is called in the village accounts, is at the easternmost boundary of the Government village area and is the headquarters of the taluk containing all the public offices. Two tracts of land, one inhabited by Mappillas (Muhammadans) and another by Syrian Christians (locally known as Nasranees, i.e., Nazarenes) are included in the "town" of Watakanchery from the contiguous areas of the adjoining Government villages on the north and south respectively. Its area is 1½ square miles.

The Taluk of Talapilli contains 74 such "villages" divided solely for revenue purposes. In the "town" Brahmans live in great numbers, while the lower castes occupy the rest of the village area. This block I shall designate Watakanchery (T) and the whole area Watakanchery (V) in the following.

162 *Population.*—Watakanchery (T) has about 2,000 inhabitants;
[779] Watakanchery (V) about 4,000. Watakanchery (T) contains within
• 564 its limits three religions—Hindus in the centre and Mappillas (Muhammadans) and Christians to the north and south, respectively. Among the Hindus the Brahmans form the majority in the "town," while there are a few "vocational" castes such as barbers, goldsmiths, etc., and a few Nayars. Though the term "castes" is in strictness to be applied to Hindus alone the Mappillas and Christians are regarded as two other castes. The Mappillas and the Christians cannot touch the Hindu caste-people without polluting them, while there are castes within the Hindu fold itself, such as carpenters, goldsmiths, masons, Cherumas (vide below), Eluvas, etc., who are
[113] kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority.

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[778] * [In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri Brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

•564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

296 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to [791] house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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178 426 The increase in the number of families must not be taken for a sign of prosperity. I have sought out its causes. It has both a social and an economic cause. The breaking up of the old 'Tharvads' into small homesteads, owing to want of harmony among the members, mismanagement of property due to ignorance and rank illiteracy, growing indebtedness of the once rich Tharvads to the local money-lenders or the landlord, are the causes of the downfall of the great Tharvads of old which half a century ago were gracing this desam; the stories yet current in those parts of men of high worth and talents who belonged to them, and the occasional ruined foundations of their family houses alone remain. Indeed joint families have almost all broken up and the Tharvad properties all absorbed by the local 'Jenmis.' The people are day by day being reduced to want and dependence on the landlord and the creditor.

● 564 The desam cannot be called a 'caste' desam strictly speaking. There are no separate quarters allotted on the basis of caste difference. In spite of the rigorous observance of the 'system of pollution' between caste and caste, peculiar to the Malabar country, all castes hold lands, work, and have families promiscuously throughout the land. For example, every landholding farmer, who is usually a Nayar, has in his family precincts (indeed far enough away to be out of reach of pollution) small homesteads of his labourers who are generally Cherumas or Pulayas * by caste.

There are—

3	Brahman	families ...	24	individuals.
3	Ambalavasi	" ...	36	"
137	Nayar	" ...	956	"
85	Tiyya	" ...	584	"
80	Cheruma	" ...	390	"
24	Muhammadan	" ...	27	"
1	Christian family	...	6	"

[463] The *Tiyya* class includes the families of the artisans—'Asari' (carpenter—two families), 'Karuvan' (blacksmith—one family), 'Kollan' (shoemaker—two families), 'Thattan' (goldsmith—one family), 'Mannan' (washerman of the lower class—one family), 'Panikkan' (stone-mason—one family).

Children living	... ...	642	
" dead	... ...	188	Born within the last ten years.
" born lifeless	... ...	67	

Children below ten are alone included in this. This has been ascertained by enquiry among the mothers.

342 Homesteads number 266. The homesteads of the villagers are miserable looking and squalid, frequently being only mud hovels of eight by five feet, more or less. Not more than 40 houses out of 333 are houses worthy of the name. The rest are simply hovels, often the very picture of poverty and famine.

* Between these two depressed castes there are only minute differences.

3L: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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VATANAMKURUSSI VILLAGE (WALLUVANAD TALUK).

[*By N. Sundara Aiyar, Presidency College, Madras.*]

361 *Preliminary.*—The village lies in the interior of the district, thirty miles west of the municipal town of Palghat on the high road 489 that passes from Palghat to Ponnani. It is to the north of the railway line passing from Calicut to Palghat, and about equidistant from the two railway stations of Shoranur and Pattambi on that line (South Indian Railway). It is fifty-four miles south-east (by railway) of the port of Calicut, the capital of the district.

361 The village is more or less surrounded by low hills on all sides, and there is a small forest to the east of it. A portion of the village 131 has for its southern boundary the Bharata Puzha (called the Ponnani river, because it joins the sea at Ponnani). The river is of little use for navigation, since it is in flood during the rains and almost dry in summer. The railway passes through the village, for about a mile, though the nearest railway station is 4½ miles distant. The trunk road from Palghat also passes through the middle of the village. The village is roughly in the shape of a triangle with its apex to the north and the base on the south. Being in the midst of hilly country, dry soil abounds in the village, though the few wet acres are comparatively good.

162 *Population.*—The total population of the village in Census years was as follows :—

Year.	Occupied houses.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.
1891 ...	322	1,055	1,134	2,189	2,116	73
1901 ...	369	1,130	1,187	2,317	2,226	91
1911 ...	398	1,210	1,270	2,480	2,373	107

The figures include those of an adjacent small village, of which the total population in 1911 was 124, all Hindus.

564 There are Brahmans and Sudras, the latter split up into a large number of sub-castes and sects like the Nayars, Nambiyars, Menons, Chettis, etc., and the lower classes like the Thiyyas, or Ezhuvans, and the depressed classes of Cherumas, Pariahs and Nayadis. Nayars predominate in the village. There are a few Muhammadans, but no Christians at all.

Of Brahmans there are ten families comprising 60 individuals resident in the village. There are two families of Nambudiri Brahmans with some 30 members.

162 The great majority are Nayars, of whom there are about 150 families with nearly 1,500 individuals. Cherumas may number between 300 and 400, the Thiyyas or Ezhuvans about 500. The chief minor sub-castes in the village are Chettis (34), Kunparars (Potters, about 50), Asaris (Carpenters, 28), Karuvans (blacksmiths, 21), Thattars (goldsmiths, 19), Panans (makers of bamboo and palm leaf umbrellas, 29), Masons (13), Pariahs (42), and five families of Mannans, washermen of the lower classes, who also make mud walls, engage themselves as herdsmen and act as Pujaris, i.e.,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the group with B; they are the claims A has upon *a* and her children being expressed by A's children. It is these claims of the brothers and sisters upon each other which are the fundamental principle Dumont has detected as the common background in South Indian kinship. I am concerned neither with debunking the role of the "alliance" nor with defending the "principle of the unity of siblings," but merely with examining this idea of the "transfer of affinity" from generation to generation. Notice, however, that this formulation permits us to understand the formal customary background of a sister's daughter marriage mentioned in connection with the Brahman. That type of marriage is simply a tightening of the claims in accordance with the emphasis on endogamy and hypergamy in the Brahman caste. A description of the claims between brothers and sisters explains what appears to be a curious phenomenon much more adequately than Dumont's recourse to the "inheritance" of affinity.

To return to general issues: Dumont must be given credit for having detected the uniformity in some fundamental features of South Indian kinship systems, but he has expressed the matter still in lineal terms as an opposition between "kin" and "affines." I suggest that uniformity is better explained in terms of kin categories and the fundamental claims of the brothers and sisters upon each other. This is the reason why we find a centripetal tendency so clearly at work in South India. Smaller and smaller circles of endogamy form purer and purer circles of kin who may be permitted to claim—at least in their own minds—higher ritual status. This also explains the curious aversion, even among the humblest caste, against "mixtures" in their pedigrees.

Our formulation of South Indian kinship draws attention to the shifting character of descent. On the basis of a very similar kin structure, different groups operate various descent preferences: even within the same caste we find some who choose patrilineal descent and some who choose matrilineal descent as distinctive characteristics. It should be clear that the important kin groups are the circles—*curru*—noted by Karve, Banks ("sondakara castes"), and others. Descent is sometimes so secondary that, as Dumont observes, succession and inheritance run counter to descent ideas in numerous castes (1957*b*, p. 20). I would suggest that we have in these low castes a Kandyan preference based on endogamy and bilateral kinship. We shall see, when we turn toward the Malabar coast, that with the development of matrilineal descent, hypergamy again makes its unmistakable appearance.

THE MALABAR COAST

In our consideration of South Indian kinship systems we have been concerned, first, to detect an underlying pattern for the bewilderingly

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many authors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hypergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by contrast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy. Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region exhibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from structural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people. Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad,* used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan.*[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava,* "to do" in Sinhalese.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussions it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[594] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61). 121 602

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough. 602 613 114

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin." 602 614 114 [582]

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific. 602 611 [582]

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy. 121 564 582 613

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 but *B* will from *A*; furthermore, *A* will not 'give' women to *B*, but
564 will 'take' women from *B*." The second method (hypergamy), though
582 only a logical development of the first, and a very precise way of
613 manifesting superior status, has complex implications. In effect, a progressive distinction of status is made between the children of the sister (superior) and the children of the brother (inferior). Hence not merely the caste but the entire network of kinship is placed on a gradient of ritual status. Furthermore, if hypergamy is to be combined with lineages, it should be clear that, although the matter can be harmoniously combined with matrilineages (i.e., the brother partaking of the superior ritual connections of his sister), the patrilineal principles raise difficult problems, since the sister is given "away" to a superior group and the brothers can partake in the increase in ritual status only by reason of their claims on her children or in some other indirect fashion. Also, since the position of the woman affects the status of her children in both matrilineal and patrilineal contexts, it appears difficult to combine intracaste hypergamy with patrilineal descent at least in South India. Thus we get ZD marriage (i.e., symmetrical exchange) coupled with Brahman caste endogamy in Tanjore, but an entire scale of hypergamous matrilineages all the way from Kshatriya to Sudra status in Malabar. A similar feature was observed in eastern Ceylon.

The first method (endogamy) permits the ethnographer to make simple statements about discrete categories of people; the second (hypergamy) is more complex, since the status-bearing unit can be a single lineage with hypergamous connections and it may be difficult in the continuous descending steps of status to say exactly where one "caste" category ends and the next begins (see fig. 37).

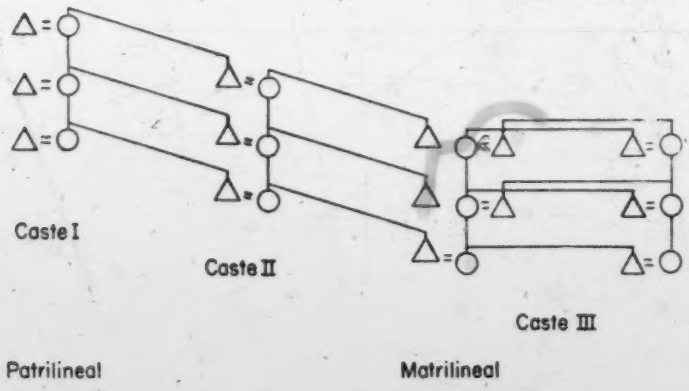

Figure 37. Patrilineal and matrilineal hypergamy.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent. [114] [184]

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

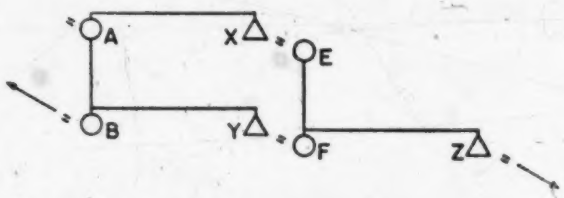

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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perior but politically inferior to the royal lineages. This would indicate that the arguments emanating from the power structure are of limited value. Nor does the psychoanalytic argument carry conviction (see Yalman, 1963). 121 114 564 613

Dumont further suggests that the Nayar position has significant cultural affinities to certain practices of the Basavi. Among the Basavi, a girl is given in marriage to a god. She may then be approached by all kinds of men, and the children she may bear belong to her own family. Thus by virtue of her marriage to a god, her children are freed from the constraints of the rule of patrilineal descent and follow matrilineal descent. In the same fashion, Dumont thinks the girls of aristocratic matrilineages are married to Nambudiri Brahman, who are referred to as "Gods of the Earth."

Dumont's point is worth making, for it shows the element of piety involved in these customs which have been severely misunderstood in India and elsewhere. The man of the matrilineage sacrifices his own children (who belong to others) in order to give his sister to a god and keep her children.

This may indeed be one of the cultural dimensions of hypergamy in this region, but the system is so clearly and effectively associated with the fundamental structural principles of matrilineal descent groups in a caste context that the specific cultural features (piety, etc.) do not need to be treated as a necessary part of the picture. A similar set of structural circumstances gives rise to an essentially similar picture in Ceylon. 121 564 613 [171]

The general principles of status differentiation in Cochin have been subsumed under the following ideal formula by Karve (1953, p. 269):

Nambudiri	m.	marries	Nambudiri f.	Children	become	Nambudiri	[851]
Nambudiri	m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	Kshatriya	
Ksatriya	m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	non-Kshatriya [*sic.*]	
Nambudiri	m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 1	
Ksatriya	m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 2	
Nayar	m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 3	

It is quite clear that we find the matrilineal *taravad* in its most impressive development as a corporation precisely at the highest levels of society. At the other end of the scale we have only the desire for prestige:

The Tharvad is always named after an ancestress and referred to as the Tharvad of so and so (woman). If a man does not belong to a Tharvad he is not respected and I was told by an officer in a mill that though he was well educated and a salaried man he had not the requisite social position as

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 they were landless orphans. If he bought land, built a house and settled there
564 with his sister, bringing up her children, he would gain social status. He said
613 he knew of many a poor labourer serving in the mill, saving money to establish a Tharvad in his sister's name and become "somebody" in his caste. (Karve, 1953, p. 267)

The problem of finding suitable husbands for the women of aristocratic matrilineal Tharvads has been solved by the Nambudiri Brahman connection in Cochin. The situation is not very different with North Malabar aristocrats. We are told that the Kolattiri lineage had difficulty in getting accepted as of high status among the ancient "Kshatriya" lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad, so the Kolattiri Rajas brought a caste called Koil Tamburan from Travancore. "Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambudiri men and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 56).

Karve with her usual insight and evocative examples puts the issue simply (1953, pp. 258–259): "The Kshatriyas claim descent from the sun-family of the ancient Hindu Kshatriyas of the north—the house of Rama. All the sons born in Kshatriya families, i.e., ruling houses of Travancore and Cochin have Sanskrit names of the Sun-god with the suffix varmā . . . We have already seen that in olden times as a rule and even now generally the Kshatriya women have Nambudiri Brahmins as husbands. . . . There is a village near Cochin belonging to a rich Nayar Thārvad . . . which is called the 'village of evening visits of the Nambudris.' " And this accurate and colorful picture is rounded up with the direct statement, "Among poorer Nayars cross-cousin marriage is favoured."

Other Evidence from Malabar

121 We have considered the evidence from Malabar from the point of
611 view of other South Indian systems and have, I believe, been able to establish both the principles of the general structure and the association of systems of hypergamy with unilineal descent. A further point to note is that systems of descent, at least in this region, could be considered as a secondary feature to a large extent independent of the specific forms of kinship and marriage. Very similar groups appear to follow different forms of descent in various regions. We should
[171] recall that even the Sinhalese, who are regarded as being "patrilineal" by many authors today, followed "matrilineal" descent at least among the royal family in the seventeenth century. And conversely one author has noted that in some parts of Kerala "the Nairs also follow the father right social system" (D'Souza, 1959, p. 493).

[564] There is a vast body of literature, especially in connection with

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

565 Nayar subjects within the kingdom. Between
613 kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and
631 would not intermarry: though exogamous, therefore, each lineage considered itself to form a separate and unique [13] subcaste. The Cochin lineage, being more ancient than the rest, claimed the ritual rank of Kshattriyas (the second of the four varnas or major caste-groups of ancient North India Vedic Society, in ancient times kings and warriors.) The Walluvanad and Calicut lineages, of more recent Nayar origin, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas, but were accorded the title of Samantans, a Sanskrit word meaning "leaders." In each royal lineage, the oldest man of the whole lineage, irrespective of branch, was the crowned king and administered traditional secular rule with assistance from advisers of wealthy Nambudiri families of the kingdom, some of whom were employed as ambassadors.

[643]

Each kingdom was divided into nads or chiefdoms. In the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, some of these nads were former independent kingdoms which had been conquered by Calicut but were still ruled by their traditional monarchs who paid tribute to Calicut. These nads included Parappanad, Beypore and Chavakkad, each of whose rulers, though feudatory, claimed and were accorded higher ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage by reason of their more ancient tradition of government. Other nads of the Calicut kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (naduvaris) originally appointed by the Zamorin. [14] These ruled with

525 similar powers to those of the feudatory mon-
613 archs, but, though they were accorded the title
631 of Samantans, were considered of lower ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage. Similarly, some nads of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory kings of higher ritual rank than, but administratively subordinate to, the royal lineage, and others by lower ranking Samantan chiefs appointed by the king. Within each kingdom, the Samantan chiefs' lineages formed a single subcaste.

525 Each nad was in turn divided into villages or
621 desams, the basic units of the political system.
423 A desam appears usually to have covered from one to four square miles, comprising one or more stretches of dry garden land surrounded by, or surrounding, flats of alluvial paddy land. The land in each desam was owned by one landlord family of superior ritual rank to the other occupants of the villages. In some villages, the land was owned by a single Nambudiri partilineal extended family whose large house stood in a central position in the village. In others, it was owned by one or other branch of the royal matrilineage which had built a small palace in the village and whose eldest male member acted as a village headman. In other villages, the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineal lineage of the nad, whether this [15] were of feudatory rank of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live in a small palace in the centre of the village and fulfill the role of headman. In other villages, the land was owned by some famous Hindu temple of the kingdom, often

565 at a distance of several miles, and managed by
621 Nambudiri Brahmans. In this case a represen-
423 tative Nambudiri patrilineal family might live in the village and play the role of headman. In yet other villages, which probably comprised about half the villages in the kingdom, the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (desavari) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the nad. The Nayar desavaris of a chiefdom collectively formed a subcaste ritually lower than the subcaste of chiefs of their kingdom. In Walluvanad and Calicut the subcaste of village headmen was called Kiriattil Nayar; in Cochin they were called Vellayma Nayars.

565 The landowning families in all of these types
622 of villages were called janmis. In every case,
423 no matter whether the janmi were of a patrilineal or a matrilineal caste, the eldest man of the extended family had legal guardianship of his own family, and in another sense, of the village lands and the lower caste inhabitants. [16] In addition to his economic rights, the janmi had administrative rights. First, he must sanction marriages of all castes in the village, none of which could be performed without his consent. Second came ambalapadhi or control of ceremonies in the village temple(s); and third urayma or direction of temple lands and servants.
[346] (It should be made clear that each village had its public temple apart from the larger temples of the chiefdom and the kingdom.) While headman of the village and a landowner in a certain sense, however, the janmi could not sell away his lands

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
565 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
[701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31]of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

613 the expansion of overseas' trade with the Arabs
644 and later, the Europeans, from the twelfth to
631 the eighteenth centuries; the developments of better means of communication in the larger kingdoms of the plains, where this was not too difficult; some ammassing of wealth in the hands of rulers; and leading from this, their ability to organize larger armies which (especially after the adoption of gun-warfare) permitted them to conquer neighbouring weaker nads. The persistence of these larger units seems to have depended on the strength of their new political institutions, chiefly [98] the militia and the central courts of justice, as well as on a widening of the field of social relations of the "good" castes who controlled the administra-
613 tion. Along with this went a very slow process
644 of social mobility in the upper reaches of the
631 society. The caste system of rulers, chiefs,
565 village headmen and retainers was not entirely stationary: retainer-lineages which had distinguished themselves in war were sometimes appointed as desavaris and gradually changed their ritual rank, and it was possible for a desavari lineage to increase in wealth and be made a naduvari lineage, or for a small naduvari lineage to increase in wealth (as did the Zamorins), expand its territory, and call itself a royal lineage, claiming the rank of Kshattriyas. This process took some time, indeed: it was not until the eighteenth century that the Zamorin's lineage, after going through a ceremony in which its members passed through the body of a golden cow, were able to claim that

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable
613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of [212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is [871] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate [212] (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography. 105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala 564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or [463] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With [565] them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

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621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
•566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord. [994] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired [427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
794 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[564] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated without religious rites) underlined the necessity to the lineage of marriage and procreation, and the exclusion of the individual husband and father from a legally and socially significant role in relation to it.

594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them. This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in the world, was evidently made possible by their specialized role as one caste group in a larger society in which, in general, marriage and the elementary family were institutionalized. First, the Nayar system could probably not have come about in any but a leisure class supported by the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of this, young Nayar men need give economic [78] support neither to their wives nor to their sisters. Women were the people who sat at home on the land; their maintenance was assured by the payment of rents from low caste tenants and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
585 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied men for their occupation as a mobile militia. In explaining their peculiar marriage relationships, I am inclined to emphasize the military organization even more than the status of Nayars

595 and girls of suitable age. But only older men
701 were permitted to marry and form a household with their wives and children.

The similarity between systems like the Masai and the Nayar system is that in those groups of the population organized for warfare, male sexuality was divorced from the upbringing of children, which among Nayars took place within the lineage and concerned only lineage members. Among the Masai this freeing of a man's sexual life from the responsibilities of child-rearing concerned only certain age-groups of men, while in Calicut and Cochin it applied to the total male population of one caste.

595 The extent to which Nayar kinship was in-
701 fluenced by their relation to the land and by the
• 566 military organization becomes clearer when we
184 compare the kinship system in Calicut and Cochin with that of Nayars in the northern kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam and Kadattunad, north of the Kora River which formed the northern boundary of the Calicut kingdom at the height of the Zamorin's power.

Apart from the narrow coastal belt, the country in north Malabar was rocky and mountainous, and comprised much waste land and virgin forest. Perhaps because of this, the sparsely populated northern kingdom never achieved the degree of political centralization found in the central kingdom. Government was ostensibly by nadavaris owing a tenuous allegiance to their Rajas. In fact, however, in all these kingdoms chiefs perpetually rebelled against their Raja and shook off his power for long periods, while

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage; infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes 564
two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants."

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied 564
in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, 554
and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages 621
of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property 613
groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the 564
king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet 566
paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure 471
was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of 427
retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs.

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristo- 564
cratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, 794
nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They

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563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the popu-
[162] lation in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians
[651] were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth
[564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupa-
[463] tions and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and
[592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the
471 village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western
592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell
566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

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originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

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651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [631] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of 621
intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later [692]
in connection with the lineage. [623]

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar 622
retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or 692
trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in
Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil 564
disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own
or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their [566]
Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death
over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave 692
crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' 564
(*nāduvaris*') judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but
feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with
power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the
Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon
some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege,
treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of
a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally
punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however,
were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among
Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood,
which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the of-
fender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital [567]
offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among 564
the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group 571
of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and
retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social
relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the
kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as 564
is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher
"clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger
territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By
hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man
of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent 564
613

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding. 613 462 [296] [243]

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast. 613 566 357

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law. 613 592 [692]

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries. [423]

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and 613 592 681 [687]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made pos-
[566] sible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The
work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty
of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their
conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of
these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group
only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the
household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and
given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obliga-
tions to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women
should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as
the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom
in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from
forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and en-
couraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the
matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same
time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and
a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of
the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs
regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their
districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of
group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted
the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons)
[178 organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between
group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in
that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, al-
though matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group mar-
riage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous mar-
riage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally
polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fa-
thers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE
592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when
423 the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Corre-
spondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[168] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564
[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially if the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar

.113 G. Roheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (New York, 1950), pp. 134, 135, 432; F. L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (New York, 1948), pp. 240-243; Mead, 1949, pp. 40-41; J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 263-304.

[12] Nāyar *Kāranavans* are of course not ancestors in the strict sense. However, I use this term for convenience as they fulfill roles similar to those of ancestors in many patrilineal societies.

[13] For an account of Īrava social organization and culture, see A. Aiyappan, *Iravas* and *Culture Change*, Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., 5 (1945).

[14] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 158-165.

[15] For a brief account of Tamil Brahman kinship, see E. K. Gough, "Brahman Kinship in a Tamil Village," *American Anthropologist*, XVIII, (1956), 826-853.

[16] See, e.g., Thurston, V (1909), 152-240.

[17] Fortes, 1949, p. 235.

[18] H. E. J. Stanley, trans., Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt, 1886), p. 15.

[19] R. Rowlandson, trans., Sheikh Zein-ud-deen, *Tohfut ul Mujahideen*. An Offering to Warriors Who Shall Fight in Defence of Religion Against Infidels (Hakluyt, 1883), p. 63.

[20] A. C. Burnell, trans., *The Voyage of John Hughyen Van Linschoten to the East Indies* 600 (From the Old English Translation of 1598) (Hakluyt, 1885), p. 284.

[21] All castes on the southwest coast bury or cremate the dead in the southwest corner of the [764] ancestral garden. This custom contrasts with that of Hindus in the eastern districts, who burn or bury the dead on communal sites, each owned jointly by a caste community, outside the residential area of the village.

[566] [22] The castes of agricultural serfs are absent in Kottayam, agricultural labor being done by Īrava tenants or by the Nāyars themselves.

[23] This form of propitiation of alien ghosts in Kottayam is called a *teyyam tira*. It closely resembles the *kāranava tēre* of the neighboring Coorgs (Srinivas, 1952, pp. 158-165.) In Coorg, however, lower caste officiants impersonate the Coorg *taravād's* own ancestors. In Malabar, lower caste propitiants impersonate only alien ghosts attached to the Nāyar *taravād*.

[24] Witchcraft (*odi*), a witch (*odiyan*). For a more detailed account of witchcraft, see Thur- [113] ton, VI (1909), 36-41, 122-127.

[25] M. Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa* (Manchester, 1954).

[26] Gluckman, *The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies. Social Structure*, M. Fortes, ed. (Oxford, 1949), pp. 145-167.

[114] [27] All of these statements apply to conditions in 1947-9. I observed no major changes in ritual activities during a brief revisit in 1952. The Malabar Coast, as the newly formed State of Kerala, [642] elected a Communist government in April 1957, and I have little information on conditions after that date.

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7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held 175
the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including 564
the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia 613
headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the king- 631
dom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-
castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these [701]
Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal [566]
castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kin- 613
ship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of
fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits [601]
of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into [783]
small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group [771]
is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls
their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is [769]
still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before break- [592]
fast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste,
and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous [591]
unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly [595]
associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after
the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs [178]
of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, 613
and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub- 582
castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were
all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling 564
sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible
outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore,
these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and
men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank,
had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place
during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining
with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses
in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women
of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between
Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and
royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal line-
ages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards
and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri
men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only
some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages
of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins
and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's
lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while con-
tinuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukada, Attikurisis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

7;Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131
133 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *taravâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breaths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [563]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

[1] See note at the end of the essay, on "The Origin of the Word Nāyars," Appendix. Note I.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1]

1. Vide pages [illegible].

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that [361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and 165 the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	96	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths [361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land. [465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of 566 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The 462 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]

[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].

‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land*—

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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The statistics of births and deaths of this desam are obtainable only for the year 1915. They are given below :— 163 165

Births.

Males	50	Hindu	84
Females	43	Muhammadan	9
	93		93

Deaths.

According to age—

Lifeless deliveries	7
Below one year	9
Between 1 and 10	13
" 10 and 20	1
" 20 and 30	7
" 30 and 40	3
" 40 and 50	...
" 50 and 60	3
" 60 and 80	5
	48

According to sex and castes—

Males	24	Hindus	43
Females	24	Muhammadans	5

There is no paracheri in the strict sense of the term. The depressed classes, mostly Cherumas, are still in a state of semi-serfdom, depending for everything on their landlords and masters. 566

Land.—The area of the desam by settlement is 1,803·40 acres. This desam together with Mattupalli, Peringode, Pillakkattiri, Tolukad, Mathur, Alikara, Kuttanad, Perumannur and Chalisseri desams formed the old revenue amsam of Kothachira. Now Kothachira revenue amsam includes only Kothachira, Mathur and Peringode desams. 631

The areas under each description of land— 423 311

—	Wet.	Garden.	Occupied dry.	Unoccupied dry.	Unassessed.	Inam.	Porambokе.	Total.
	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS C.	ACS. C.			ACS. C.
Private Jenmi.	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	..	...	...	1,787 57
Government Jenmi.	...	...	...	..	...		..	...
Unregistered lands.	...	...		...	15 83	...	...	15 83
	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	15 83	..	...	1,803 40

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village. 432

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer. 465

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one-and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days. [804]

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters. 566

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and 563 463

* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
Central Kerala Nayar

or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris*') judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

with high and noble peaks. These shut the Nāyar country entirely out of the rest 13
of India and have helped to a very great extent to preserve the peculiar customs of marriage and relationships of Malabar. The monsoon which these Ghats receive makes Malabar the most picturesque part of India, an ever green country with lofty trees, luxuriant vegetation, noble rivers and magnificent lakes. There is nowhere a place which so much approximates to the description of

> "Larger constellations burning, mellow moons and happy skies,
> Breaths of tropic shade and cluster knots of paradise;
> Droops the heavy blossomed bower, hangs the heavy fruited tree,
> Summer isles of Eden lying in the purple sphere of sea."

The extreme fertility of the valley and the rich tropical luxuriance of the forest 181
have made life extremely easy, which even the importation of machines, mills, and factories has not been able entirely to change. Malabar is to a great extent, therefore, a land of idleness, and I may say of intellectual culture, for nowhere is learning, art, and poetry so much esteemed as among the Nampudiris and Nāyars of Malabar.

There are various reasons to believe that the Nāyars were very early comers 174
in this place.[1] That they were not the aboriginal inhabitants of the place is evident 101
from the fact that all over Malabar, from Mangalore to Cape Camorin, Nāyar families [566]
possess agricultural serfs who are distinctly of the negroid type. The Nāyars are a Dravidian race whose culture has only been superficially influenced by the Aryan immigration; of this more later.

The other communities of Malabar among whom the Nāyars live, are the 101
Nampudiris, the Tiyas and the Pulayas. The Nampudiris are Brahmin landlords 564
whose intercourse with and influence on the Nāyars we shall have to consider in detail later. A few families of Kshatriyas form the petty royalty of Malabar. The Tiyas are toddy drawers, people who are free men in theory but still show traces [566]
of serfdom in their relation with Nāyars, living as their tenants and doing their work for them. And the Pulayas, who till lately were slaves on whom was built up the [567]
agricultural life of the country. There are innumerable minor tribes, but they are [463]
small communities differentiated on the basis of their profession, like the Kanyans (astrologers), Asaris (carpenters), etc.

In this order Nāyars come next to the Brahmins and Kshatriyas and have pre- 564
cedence over all other castes. They are considered generally as a Dravidian variety of the Aryan Kshatriyas, which is, however, absolutely spurious in theory and is true only in so far as their *de facto* position is concerned. Any way, they form the feudal aristocracy of Malabar. Burke on a famous occasion classed them with

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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

000 and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi.*
651 There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and
434 the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed
[423] demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either
[427] by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit.
[439] Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with
[567] a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves
[768] or wives to *Chettis.* The estates of persons who died without
[597] heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and
175 various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco
651 Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know
434 that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she
648 has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

643 Among the animals that became the property of the Raja
422 were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man
825 or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulles Marco Polo, page 374.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

175
to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.
† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.
‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
563 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

564 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
564 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended such festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[564] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
●571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
595 had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village head-
men, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

Hypergamous unions, even more than other
582 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
613 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the
837 lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most
circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate
in his natal household and was maintained by it;
he visited his mistress after supper and left be-
fore breakfast, after which he took a purifying
bath before re-entering his natal house. He
might not eat in his mistress's household, and
following the morning bath might not touch her
or his children. The only exception to these
[144] residential rules arose in the case of Nambu-
diris who had liaisons with royal women. These
were received as temporary occupants of the
palace and housed in separate buildings at the
expense of the royal lineage, at some distance
from the buildings occupied by the princes and
the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri gen-
itors of Nayar children, however, they [39]
visited their mistresses at night and in the day-
time carried out their ritual duties in private,
attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serv-
ing men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
• 571 knit together the several castes concerned with
the secular administration and with the religious
law and public rituals of the state. Though not
recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly mem-
bers of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

613 lineages still take pride in the fact that for cen-
837 turies, their lineages have been partly fathered
571 by men of the higher castes of royalty, chiefs, and (particularly) priests. The allegiance of Nayar soldiers to their headmen, of headmen to their chiefs, and of chiefs to the king, was undoubtedly strengthened by this network of sexual ties, as was the unity of the secular and religious hierarchies, which might otherwise have been opposed.

613 IV The Traditional Lineage System of the Nayars

(1) Structure and Functions

[621] In each traditional village, four to six "military" Nayar lineages of one subcaste was present as retainers of the janmi. The retainer lineage commonly had a depth of nine to twelve generations and usually comprised between 12 to 100 members. It was called a taravad, derived from tara, the word for the raised foundation on which a house is built. Taravad can mean both the members of a lineage, living and dead, and the ancestral house from which they sprang: it corresponds to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and place. The members of a taravad are a group, usually of actual and not merely putative matrilineal kin, descended from a common ancestress (whose name may or may not be known), but they describe themselves as a group whose matrilineal forbears once lived in one house. That their lineage should be associated with the house befits the sedentary economy of the Nayars and the importance of their ancestral land. Powerful

592 together only by loyalty to the group as a whole
602 and a sense of pride in being able to submit to discipline from male elders for the sake of their natal kinswomen. A man may be extremely proud of his taravad and of his karanavan as a good manager and spokesman, but he has a less intimate personal relationship with him than does a patrilineal man with his father. In the Brahman patrilineal extended family, by contrast, individual interpersonal ties between father and son and between brothers, who form the core of the group, may be marked by deep devotion, while loyalty to the patrilineal lineage as a corporate unit, and its overall solidarity, are much weaker.

592 (c) The Splitting of Property-Groups
571 The property-groups of retainer Nayars divide at a particular point in their development. The Nayars themselves do not know this. They regard partition of the property-group as an unfortunate occurrence which takes place because of the greed or envy of individual men, or because of unwonted increase in the membership of the group. It is true that before the increase in population of the hundred years, individual property-groups must often have remained intact over many generations, simply reproducing their numbers. However, genealogies from the histories I collected of over thirty taravads show that retainer property-groups in fact partition with unfailing regularity at a particular point in their development. This occurs when the group contains two or more segments descended

592 from sisters, whose maternal uncles and broth-
571 ers are all dead, and when each segment has an adult son or [63] grandson old enough to become karanavan in his own right. Since the armies were disbanded and men came home to live on their estates (about 1810), it is probable that groups have partitioned slightly more quickly than they formerly did, for over the past hundred years men have considered themselves old enough to become karanavans of new groups (if their uncles and older brothers are all dead) by the age of 30 to 40, whereas they appear traditionally to have been still in the army until about the age of 50. But the structure of the group at its time of partition appears to have been the same at all periods until the most recent(discussed later.) Traditionally, as long as the karanavan is own brother, mother's brother or mother's mother's brother to all members of the group, partition cannot take place, because men cannot separate from their mothers and sisters. A sibling group can never split into two, nor a junior man secede from his own mother's brother: the relationship between these men is an inter-personal one and they are within the same minimal segment of the lineage. Partition can take place only between men of different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.) who are no longer held together by common submission to a living karanavan of the parental or grandparental generation, and whose relationship is therefore structured in terms of the relationship between groups.

592 [64] Every woman is thus the potential founder
71 of a property-group, and often, after her brothers have in turn been karanavans and are dead, she lives to see her segment's property divided from that of her sisters, and her son or even daughter's son established as head of her group. However, some women do not of course become founders of groups, either because they have no children or because they have only daughters who themselves become founders in their own right when their sons are old enough. Again, a group of brothers with no sisters was traditionally unlikely to form a separate group, since they would have no women to perpetuate their group(or for that matter, to cook for them). They would be likely to remain volunatrily attached to a parallel segment, succeeding, along with their classificatory brothers, to karanavanship as they became in turn oldest member of the group. Alternatively they might split away and adopt one or more girls from collateral segments to perpetuate their separate group.

In all cases of partition, division of the property was stirpital: equal shares accrued to segments of the same order which were descended from sisters. The segment which contained the old karanavan at the time of partition usually retained the ancestral house.

592(d) Kinship Relations within the Group
602 The karanavan was traditionally unequivocal
868 head of the group. He managed the property, built new houses, repaired the old, leased land from the janmi, and controlled [65] the labour

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris'*) judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *tarawād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *tarawād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from
361 a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of otheir religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1¼ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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613
castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis 681
ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the 564
whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess [784]
and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a 613
whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage 681
normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections 684
with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a 564
case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled 613
by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. 681
The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by 564
certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which [783]
they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses [574]
(such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to 613
a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court 682
of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same [696]
or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 592 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 [576] Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relationships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 576 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility—characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [895] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

000 574 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob- [593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions [604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two 582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although [593] they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and [764] sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom [848] kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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along with those of the boys of her Enangan (a recognised member of one's own clan) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers, is marked out as a fit person to tie the tâli, and a day is fixed for the tâli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Káranavan of the boy's family. On the appointed day the boy is invited to a house near that of the girl, where he is fed with his friends by the head of the girl's family. The feast is called 'Ayani Unu,' and the boy is thenceforth called 'Manaválan' or 'Pillai' bridegroom. From the house in which the Manaválan is entertained, a procession is formed, preceded by men with sword and shield shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her taravâd, to meet the other procession, and after meeting the Manaválan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the pandal erected for that purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour and there his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths on the occasion. The Manaválan is then taken to the centre of the pandal where bamboo-mats, carpets, and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside of the house, and after going round the pandal three times, places her at the left side of the Manaválan, and the father of the girl then presents a new cloth tied in a kambli to the pair, and with this new cloth (technically called 'mantravadi') they change their dress. The wife of the Káranavan of the girl's taravâd, if she be of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting anklets, etc. The Purohita called 'Elayatu' (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tali to the Manaválan, and the family astrologer shouts 'Muhurtham' (auspicious hour), and the Manaválan, putting his sword on the lap, ties tali round the girl's neck, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families a Brâhmini sings certain songs intended to bless the couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a certain Nayâr who is versed in songs performs the office. The boy and the girl are then carried by Enangans to a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank or river, holding each other's hands. After changing cloths, they come home preceded by a procession, which varies in importance according to the wealth of the girl's family. Tom-toms and elephants usually form part of the procession, and saffron water is sprinkled. When they come home the doors of the house are all shut, which the Manaválan is required to force open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt

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184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the
[564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[574] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, which is much more conservative than the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâranavan and the women † of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

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Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

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* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are separate; at different ends of the
[574] house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
613 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathira she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family. 843 613 [574]

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. 846 564 783 613 [844] [237]

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places. [828]

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important 846 613 553

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

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613 event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to
553 the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar
[574] and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

853 "*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the
852 Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, [787] of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are† served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

[301] "Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

844 "*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman
352 is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[825] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is
[231] thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it.
The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
613 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
574 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
783 place of cremation. During these seven days no member
[824] of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the
dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider
enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however,
removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of
the dead during these seven days must bathe before he
can enter his own house. During these seven days the
Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence
from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on
Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat,
chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their
houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
bring with them small presents in money or kind to help
[431] the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the
funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
the third day after the death, all those who are related by
613 marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and
give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the
neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from
each house. The person so invited is expected to come.
This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a
return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased
to all relatives and neighbours.

Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no
[783] ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd
remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth
day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the
calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male
members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and,
picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find
there, place these in an earthen pot which has been
sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
[574] accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

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CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635
published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [762] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his [574] nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid 178 aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end 527 of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar [114] Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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342 recently were thatched are now being tiled with tiles of European pattern manufactured either locally or in Mangalore.
342 In these days of comparative peace and security of life and
178 property from marauders and free-booters, the necessity for massive structures has ceased to exist, and, coupled with this, the improved notions of architecture, derived from an easy intercourse with more civilised centres, the rapid progress of education, and with it a better knowledge of, and regard for, sanitation and hygiene, have wrought remarkable changes in the construction of buildings, so that a better class of houses, well built, airy, and commodious, is displacing the old ones with their small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms.

351 As part of the surroundings of the dwellings in the same
[343] compound, there are frequently seen a cattle shed, an excavated tank for bathing purposes, often full of fish and water lilies, a
[312] well so arranged as to admit of water being drawn directly from
[515] it to the kitchen, an out-house *(matam)* for the Brahman travellers or visitors, and, lastly, a small edifice for the family
[574] deity. The gardens surrounding the houses are adorned with
[343] mango and jack trees, immense bananas, groves of cocoanut
[245] and areca palms and various kinds of flowers. Thus, in most places, their houses, which are occupied by fine types of humanity, (well made men and shapely women), are situated beneath the grateful shade of magnificent avenues of trees.

356 Four hundred years ago, a Portuguese traveller, writing
[175] on the subject, remarks upon the Nayar houses as being scrupulously clean and neat. Without any exaggeration it may be said that they are proverbially so, and the women are either naturally endowed with a taste, or are trained from early child-
352 hood, to keep the houses and everything therein neat and clean.
[556] Those of the richer and middle classes are in these days fur-
[177] nished with articles of European manufacture, and all their domestic utensils, for daily use, are made either of bell-metal, copper or brass, all well cleaned and washed early every morning.

415 The furniture of the poorer classes is very simple; a metal
352 pot with a spout, a few metal plates and saucers, a few metal
412 pans of different sizes, a spitoon of brass, a few mats, a knife,
184 a cot or two, a betel box, and a few wooden bins for grains, are nearly all the requirements of a household in this respect.

342 The house itself is called by several names according to
564 the occupant's caste, that of an ordinary Nayar being a *veedu*

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinmittu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Bráhmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purínic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *tâli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Athâzham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Brâhmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *tâli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpâd in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the maternal uncle or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and brings the girl, who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with ornaments,
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. She is then
[326] seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes presents of cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *tâli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *táli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pán supíri*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *páyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *válkannáti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 9.

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881 she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. [184] In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day. In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

585 The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only [184] two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs con- [582] nected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other [584] classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bride- [787] groom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kâranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bride-groom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly wel- comed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Râmâyanam* or other sacred book, referring to [533] marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read by the Asân or village school master. Some music is also [574] provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *kâranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *kâranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pûvu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvâthira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyânam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, 585
that the principal features of this *sambandham* ceremony all 184
over Keralam, are, in the main, the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the [787]
examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether the stars agree astrologically, the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony, the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place, the presentation of the *dánam* (gifts) to the Brahmans, the sumptuous banquet, the meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are the features which will invariably be found in all well conducted *sambandhams* in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state, that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all *sambandhams* among respectable Nayars, and I would further say, that they ought to be gone through at every *sambandham*, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of *sambandham*, with the particular incident attached to certain forms of *sambandham* in South Malabar. I shall describe the *Pudamuri* or *Vastraddnam* as celebrated in North Malabar, and show how the other forms of *sambandham* are related to it. I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The preliminary ceremony in every *Pudamuri* is 585
the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom 184
by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride 787
in the presence of the relations of the bride and the bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculation on a piece of palmyra leaf with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's *kúranavan* and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bride- [574]
groom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the [431]
former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth, and this preliminary ceremony is invariably performed

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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [78] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by [564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 852 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

First birth-day celebration.

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613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things 592 has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured 178 customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kāranavan*. 592 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large num- 613 ber of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kāranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kúvalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkákaruppan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *káranavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nentranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*,

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kāranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Pūrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 198.

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824 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring
765 with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an
782 obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread
613 some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank
[825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the
[775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave
[231] any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

During the seven days the house of the deceased and all
765 its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the mem-
783 bers of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can
613 members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting them-
574 selves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home. A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*I*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

*595 We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very [574] hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

*595 601 He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this regulation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In contrast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected, and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work" (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

Kollans
Kanisans

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala
West Tibetans AJ4

We were taken to a camp two miles further on where we found some 114
black, yak-hair, Tibetan tents, standing, as they do, like spiders because of their strange construction. There were flocks of sheep about, as well as a few yaks (*gYag*), animals from which our present hosts, the nomads, made their living. A tent, larger than the others, proved to be that of the *goba*, and we were taken close to it and invited to put up our own tents nearby.

Very soon after our arrival, we attended a masked dance at the [792]
monastery, and the abbot himself acted the Black Hat dancer which is [796]
the principal role. There were many spectators present, all the nomads [535]
of Rupchu taking a particular and obvious pleasure in what they saw. Another day, we witnessed a ceremony called *zor* (*Zor*) in which a [796]
torma, made of the head, backbone and entrails of a goat, standing on [789]
the animal's skin, was destroyed by lamas armed with great knives, as a way of exorcising devils and evil spirits.

Then came a reception in the *goba's* tent, a festive function at which [574]
there were many guests. We were entertained with *chang*, dried meat, *tsampa*, turnips and buttered tea, and the party was a very gay one in which most of the guests, the *goba* and the abbot included, got roaring drunk.

At another reception to which we were invited at the monastery before leaving and in which all our caravaneers received coloured bits of rag as talismans from the hands of the *tulku*, I was able to inform myself about the marital customs of the nomads.

The day after the reception at the *gompa*, we left for Leh, capital of Ladak (7th August, 1938). It was a cold journey as there was frost already on the high passes, and we had three to cross before we reached lower ground near Tso Kar (*mTs'ho dKar*), "the White Lake". From here, we continued down the Gya valley, where we encountered the first houses and fields again and received our first letter in many weeks, addressed to us by the Superintendent of the Moravian Mission in Ley, the Reverend Walter Asboe. A few stages further on, we crossed the Indus near Upshi, and followed its right bank past Himis and Tikse *gompas* to Sheh, one stage before our destination.

On the 22nd August, 1938, we came to Leh in the early afternoon and were received at the entrance of the town by the Moravian Missionary, the local authorities and a crowd of Ladakis, men, women and children. We were taken past the mile long *mani* walls to the Residency in the south-westerly quarter, where we had been authorized to stay during the period of our visit to Ladak. Very soon, we met those who

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 528
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavālan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574] entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nāyar houses will feed 1,000 Brāhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tāli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nāyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801] represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622] a Nāyar tāli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

A song is sung called
ammachampattu, or the song of the maternal uncle. If 588
there are several brides, they sit in a row, each holding 184
in her hand an arrow and a looking-glass, and the [533]
ornaments are tied on their necks in the order of their ages. Unless enangans are employed, there is usually only one tāli-tier, whatever may be the number of girls. In cases where, owing to poverty, the expenses of the ceremony cannot be borne, it is simply performed in front of a Brāhman temple, or in the pandaramatam, or house of the village chieftain. In many North Travancore taluks the girl removes her tali as soon as she hears of the tali-tier's death." It is noted by the Rev. S. Mateer * that " a Nair girl of Travancore must get married with the tāli before the age of eleven to avoid reproach from friends and neighbours. In case of need a sword may even be made to represent a bridegroom." Sometimes, when a family is poor, the girl's mother makes an idol of clay, adorns it with flowers, and invests her daughter with the tāli in the presence of the idol.

In an account of the tali-kettu ceremony, in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, it is stated that " the celebration of the ceremony is costly, and advantage is therefore taken of a single occasion in the course of ten or twelve years, at which all girls in a family, irrespective of their ages, and, when parties agree, all girls belonging to families that observe death pollution between one another go through the ceremony. The ceremony opens with the fixing of a post for the construction of a pandal or shed, which is beautifully decorated with cloth, pictures and festoons. The male members of the village are [574] invited, and treated to a feast followed by the distribution

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., XII, 1883.

588
184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is
[574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by
[424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain
[643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is
[782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

stool in the pandal. A male member of the family, 588 generally a brother or maternal uncle of the girl, washes 184 the feet of the bridegroom. The girls are covered with new cloths of cotton or silk, and brought into the pandal, and seated screened off from one another. After the [431] distribution of money presents to the Brāhmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the tāli, or thin plate of gold shaped like the leaf of aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), and tacked on to a string, to the Tirumulpād, who ties it round the neck of the girl. A single Tirumulpād often ties the tāli round the neck of two, three, or four girls. He is given one to eight rupees per girl for so doing. Sometimes the tāli is tied by the mother of the girl. The retention of the tāli is not at all obligatory, nay it is seldom worn or taken care of after the ceremony. These circumstances clearly show the purely ceremonial character of this form of marriage. The Karamel Asan, or headman of the village, is an important factor on this occasion. In a conspicuous part of the marriage pandal [622] he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which a grass mat, a black blanket, and white cloth are spread one over the other. Before the tāli is tied, his permission is solicited for the performance of the ceremony. He is paid 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 puthans (a puthan = 10 pies) per girl, according to the means of the family. He is also given rice, curry stuff, and pān-supāri. Rose-water is sprinkled at intervals on the males and females assembled on the occasion. With the distribution of 574 pān-supāri, scented sandal paste and jasmine flowers to 588 the females of the village and wives of relatives and 184 friends, who are invited for the occasion, these guests return to their homes. The male members, one or two from each family in the village, are then treated to a sumptuous feast. In some places, where the Enangu

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
[574] day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During
[536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

sambandham ceremony all over Kēralam are in the main 585
the same. As there are different local names denoting 184
marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examina- [787]
tion, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically; the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony; the usual hour at which the ceremony takes place; the presentation [431]
of dānam (gifts) to Brāhmans; sumptuous banquet; the [574]
meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted sambandhams in all parts of Kēralam alike. But here I would state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all sambandhams among respectable Nāyars; and I would further state that they ought to be gone through at every sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the pudamuri or vastradānam as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of sambandham, I consider the pudamuri the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The prelimi- [787]
nary ceremony in every pudamuri is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, [574] and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the [574] Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

The cloths are placed in the western room of the house (padinhatta), in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and ashtamangalyam, which consists of eight articles symbolical of mangalyam or marriage. These are rice, paddy (unhusked rice), the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round box called cheppu. These will be found placed on the floor of the room as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groomsman enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloths and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east, with the ashtamangalyam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groomsman then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride sprinkles rice over the lamps and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom, who immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. Next morning, the vettilakettu or salkâram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is feasting in honour of the occasion. Uzhamporukkuka or vidâram kayaral is a peculiar form

575 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the
184 description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. [574] There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett [582] states that "my informant says in the first place that the [178] man should not enter into sambandham with a woman until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running [181] wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, [582] which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787]
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

A sambandham ceremony at
585 Calicut is recorded by Mr. Fawcett, at which there were
[574] cake and wine for the guests, and a ring for the bride.

[184] In connection with sambandham, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes from Travancore that "it is known in different localities as gunadosham (union through good or evil), vastradānam or putavakota (giving of cloth), and uzhamporukkal (waiting one's turn). It may be performed without any formal ceremony whatever, and is actually a private transaction confidentially gone through in some families. The bridegroom and his friends assemble at the house of the bride on the appointed night, and, before the assembled guests, the bridegroom presents the bride with a few unbleached cloths. Custom enjoins that four pieces of cloth should be presented, and the occasion is availed of to present cloths to the relatives and servants of the bride also. The girl asks permission of her mother and maternal
[431] uncle, before she receives the cloths. After supper, and the distribution of pān-supāri, the party disperses. Another day is fixed for the consummation ceremony.
[574] On that day the bridegroom, accompanied by a few friends, goes to the bride's house with betel leaves and nuts. After a feast, the friends retire."

It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that one name for the sambandham rite is kitakkora, meaning
881 bed-chamber ceremony. In the same report, the following account of a puberty ceremony is given. "The tirandukuli ceremony is practically a public declaration that a girl has reached the age of maturity. When a girl attains puberty, she is seated in a separate room, where a lamp is lit, and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass called vālkannādi, literally a looking-glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by korava

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, "when a sambandham has been registered in the manner

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593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife [602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. 843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in [574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring. [593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a [604] brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

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[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] [778] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those who know the past, present, and future. It is due to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made bold by its means to predict even the future of his father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him, are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally believed in. In the category of good omens are placed the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf, married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey, a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient, cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans, are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad. On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, which takes place in the last week of August, or first week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merriment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking
for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and
other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should
offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting
to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious
laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely per-
sons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should ac-
cept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If
he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in
law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedi-
ence to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Through-
out her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her
his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his
caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matri-
lineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sis-
ters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander
or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he
must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his
natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He
should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in
the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of
friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the
interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death
must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of
her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of
impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [776]
impious son. [755]

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and
converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the
affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip
and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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603 took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It
[869] was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed
[861] by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to
[858] maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

604 A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' chil-
429 dren, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was respon-
604 sible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste,
86 in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

604 Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural matters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout
[561] their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior
[613] generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings
[969] in propitiation of their spirits.

The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers
[576]

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was formalized to the point of avoidance. A boy or man might not touch his mother's brother. Before entering the uncle's presence he removed his upper clothing as a mark of respect. He might not speak first to the uncle but stood with arms folded and head bowed, attentively awaiting commands. He might not sit before his uncle except at mealtimes; he then sat down last and rose as soon as the uncle's meal was finished. When summoned for a lengthy interview he stood half hidden behind a pillar, holding his hand before his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. He might not chew betel leaves, smoke, spit, or use any but the most serious and respectful language in the presence of his senior. These rules of intercourse were most strict in the relationship with the kāranavan. For this reason a kāranavan absented himself as much as possible from family gatherings, living on the upper floor of the granary among his age mates of other lineages who came to visit him. With junior mother's brothers, who were more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's behavior was necessarily more relaxed. Even so, he observed the greatest possible formality, walked several feet behind them, and avoided them when he could.

A man should show loyalty to his mother's brothers in relations with outsiders, if necessary defending them with his life. He was expected to identify with them, receiving and perpetuating the noble traditions of his taravād. In fact Nayars did show great pride in the elders of their taravād as a group, exhibiting their virtues and hiding their weaknesses in the presence of strangers. There was regularly, however, deep hostility in their interpersonal relationships. The Nayars of today are well aware of this and expect acrimonious rivalry between the men of a taravād; hence, they say, the need for formal etiquette and strict ranking on the basis of age. A Nayar will speak of himself as bound to his taravād through natural love for his mother and sisters, and obliged for their sakes to maintain outward decorum in his relations with matrilineal kinsmen. In a modified form this suppressed hostility traditionally extended to all the men of the own, first ascending and second ascending generations. All male elders in the taravād might be collectively called *kāranavar* (singular, kāranavan). Within the property group they were numbered in order of age (irrespective of generation) as first, second, and third men. All owed loyalty and obedience to those above them and protection to those below them, but all envied their seniors and feared the rivalry of juniors. The mother's own brothers were, however, the prototypes for this generalized rivalry. Whether or not Nayars experienced Oedipal hostility

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32). 581 85 121

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family. 582 593 576 [551] [564] [783]

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere- 595 [851]

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 592 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 [576] Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relationships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 576 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility—characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward ne-olocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matri-locally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

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613 576

tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

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A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

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Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravad.

[844]

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's niece.

[593] [584] [184]

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman
[607] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

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588 to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets
[114] to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent
[613] people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the
[787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the
[791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar*
[301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the
[576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The
[605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (i.e., her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to 252 556 the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large 574 number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those 564 served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given 252 when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the 564 polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may some- [264] times eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is [574] curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occa- [796] sions, good many formalities have to be observed in the [576] allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The [262] consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water [271] from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes [793] their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give [783] *punnydham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life 291 of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar [293] always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

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291 is no covering for the head. This forms the costume of a [292] large majority of them. On special occasions or when he goes to public places, he has the same loin cloth, while a richer cloth (*pávu mundu*), somewhat longer and broader, is worn over [464] the upper part of the body. As has already been said, Nayars [177] are to be found in all grades of public service, and these as well as others wear a kind of a neat loin cloth, with a shirt and coat together with a turban to cover the head, while others more fashionable appear in European costume with turbans instead of hats: others again wear hats as well, but their number is few. Among the poorer classes, the loin cloth is not larger than a yard-and-a-half or two by three-fourth of a yard.

302 The men shave their faces and bodies clean, leaving an oval patch of hair on the top of the head, while some grow it over a large surface of the head. In both cases, care is taken to keep the tufts sufficiently long, smooth and oily, and this [177] adds considerably to their neat and handsome appearance; but it is becoming the fashion to crop the hair and to dress it in the fashion of the Europeans.

291 The Nayar women wear an inner garment round the loins and this is covered by an outer garment which is usually two-and-a-half yards in length and one-and-a-half yards in breadth. Sometimes, instead of two cloths, one cloth sufficiently long for the purpose is worn. The dress is white, and sufficiently decent to cover the lower part of the body, and a small upper cloth serves as a covering above the waist. The Nayar women of the present day wear petticoats and cover the upper part of their body [369] with a piece of cloth. It is curious to notice that this form of [178] dress does not find favour (in the rural parts) with the Nambuthiris who are either their landlords or to whom they owe some kind of allegiance or subordination. The absence of any covering for the bosom in ordinary female dress has drawn much ridicule on the Nayars, and this custom has been much mis- [548] understood by foreigners. So far from indicating immodesty, it is looked upon by the people themselves in exactly the opposite light, for among them prostitutes only cover the breasts. "A custom has in it nothing indecent when it is universal," as [171] one of the travellers philosophically remarks (Dall). It is, in [576] fact, a mark of disrespect to one's own elders and betters for either a male or female of the Nayar caste, and of all castes

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below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Par-
ent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not 105
wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. 564
Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always 576
praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya 291
factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of 104
the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and 105
of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their 564
mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. 614
Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and [611]
through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in [428]
matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in [613]
principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, mar- [584]
riage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in [591]
the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. [611]
They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and [613]
patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden [582]
days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his
caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons 105
were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devo- 564
tees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as [588]
sambandham to which we shall revert in a moment. They were main- [463]
tained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a [582]
meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by [428]

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

553
613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shântikâran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pûja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambûdri, or another Nâyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the
[576] Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kâthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pâla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

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In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

595 613 577 [593] 595 764 613

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

595 754 613 593 [54] [586]

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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

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613 were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The [592] reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

613 592 768 However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmentation within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which [614] had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

613 In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels [578] between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the households of the disputants and were normally settled through ap- [692] peal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

[614] [834] As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

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WOMAN-DAUGHTER

593 A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's [868] intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and [864] physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household re- [769] sponsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was ex- [843] pected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, how- [606] ever, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she [586] had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious [518] mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters. 604

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister. [601] [551]

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling. [601] [602] [613] [617] [578]

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and 603

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was formalized to the point of avoidance. A boy or man might not touch his mother's brother. Before entering the uncle's presence he removed his upper clothing as a mark of respect. He might not speak first to the uncle but stood with arms folded and head bowed, attentively awaiting commands. He might not sit before his uncle except at mealtimes; he then sat down last and rose as soon as the uncle's meal was finished. When summoned for a lengthy interview he stood half hidden behind a pillar, holding his hand before his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. He might not chew betel leaves, smoke, spit, or use any but the most serious and respectful language in the presence of his senior. These rules of intercourse were most strict in the relationship with the kāranavan. For this reason a kāranavan absented himself as much as possible from family gatherings, living on the upper floor of the granary among his age mates of other lineages who came to visit him. With junior mother's brothers, who were more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's behavior was necessarily more relaxed. Even so, he observed the greatest possible formality, walked several feet behind them, and avoided them when he could.

A man should show loyalty to his mother's brothers in relations with outsiders, if necessary defending them with his life. He was expected to identify with them, receiving and perpetuating the noble traditions of his taravād. In fact Nayars did show great pride in the elders of their taravād as a group, exhibiting their virtues and hiding their weaknesses in the presence of strangers. There was regularly, however, deep hostility in their interpersonal relationships. The Nayars of today are well aware of this and expect acrimonious rivalry between the men of a taravād; hence, they say, the need for formal etiquette and strict ranking on the basis of age. A Nayar will speak of himself as bound to his taravād through natural love for his mother and sisters, and obliged for their sakes to maintain outward decorum in his relations with matrilineal kinsmen. In a modified form this suppressed hostility traditionally extended to all the men of the own, first ascending and second ascending generations. All male elders in the taravād might be collectively called *kāranavar* (singular, kāranavan). Within the property group they were numbered in order of age (irrespective of generation) as first, second, and third men. All owed loyalty and obedience to those above them and protection to those below them, but all envied their seniors and feared the rivalry of juniors. The mother's own brothers were, however, the prototypes for this generalized rivalry. Whether or not Nayars experienced Oedipal hostility

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604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy rctained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and [588] was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan [586] had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 835 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, col- [592]
lectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [564]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [623]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [578]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [885] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

607 Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade. Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups. The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, supported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656 the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches, and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thirteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and, except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid-eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In
such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and
[607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[13] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [554] 083 [541]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564 There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627 This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627 this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634 when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627 another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634 chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578 being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525] two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652] wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423 to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in 427 contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178] the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821] a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [712] people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . [76] after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11

Nayar

613 Again in all the groups studied the

776 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
782 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
787 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

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[562]

of many joint members dependent on the *káranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *káranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *káranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable ; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *távazhis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

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1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

631 and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and plea-
643 sure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many
[644] of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the funda-
mental and long established laws of the country.

676 Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by
[203] right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were
[428] despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

643 The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were
676 conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuo-
578 sity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly
[687] sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
656 the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad*
occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad*:

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
● [578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Manans

*595 It was called Onadi Paramben house, and our informant turned out to
60 be an old lady called Kunji, now married to only one husband, Shangh-
[115] uni, seventy two, but of whose three other brothers she had once upon a time been the wife also. The genealogy which I made out from what she told me, was an intricate one, and it took a lot of questioning and counterchecking to do. The genealogy is given in Table 17.

From a single, monogamous father were issued four boys and one girl. The latter, Kunji, was today sixty years old and lived, childless, with her husband, Viran, at Mangod village where he came from. The four men, Shanghuni, seventy two, Erechen, sixty five, Raman, sixty and Krishnan who had died at the age of forty five, had all been married, when young, by their father and maternal uncle to the informant, Kunji, when she was twenty five. Three daughters were born from the marriage, of which the second, Lakshmi, only lived three years.

[578] Then Krishnan, the youngest husband, who never took to the marriage properly and was always quarrelling with his brothers, got himself another wife, also called Kunji, today aged fifty three, and with the permission of his former co-husbands, brought her home to live with them all. He was still resident there at the time of his death. He had had four children, of whom two were sons, and who were still in the house with their families. One daughter was married out, and the other, aged twenty and unmarried, lived with her brothers. The informant said that after Krishnan had left the polyandrous marriage, the first Kunji had given birth to another girl called Paru, twenty years old now and unmarried.

Ten years after they had all been married to Kunji, and therefore five years after Krishnan's defection, Erechen and Raman decided also to secede. Their reason for leaving was the same: there was too much quarrelling in the family. Together, they took Kali of Mangode village, to wife, and brought her home to live with them. Kunyimalu, a girl, was born from this new polyandrous arrangement, and she was now thirty and happily married off to Krishnan of Kutil *tarawad*.

A further split took place just a year later. Erechen and Raman could not agree in the new set-up, and Raman ran away. He took Chiru of Kalapara *tarawad* to wife and went on to live at Karimpuzha as the local washerman. He had a boy and a girl, and was doing well. His wife was still alive, and he was a grandfather five times over. After his departure from the house, Erechen and Kali had further offspring; a son, now aged twenty five and married, and a daughter now aged twenty, still unmarried. They had not stayed in the family house, but had

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married.

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well.

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union.

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collectively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

I obtained the same kind of answer from Panju of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, it will be recalled, when I asked him how it was that his maternal uncle consented to get a new wife for him and his brother, Narayana, when they refused to live any longer in polyandry with Raman and Kuniyama. He said that his mother's brother had certainly begun by resisting the request, but that, in the end, he had given in because "times have changed" and he could not very well force them to remain in their present marriage if they said that they were dissatisfied with it.

It was Panju, too, who gave me the unexpected information that it was "immorality" that was breaking up polyandrous households. Women were not at all chaste any longer, he said, and anybody could have them "for a song". So every man now wanted a wife of his own whom he could control, instead of submitting himself to the old discipline and consenting to remain without complaint in the old polyandrous type of union.

My experience with Kammalans and other artisan castes was different. Polyandry with them is also threatened, but it cannot be said that it has deteriorated to the same extent with them as it has with the higher castes. Jealousy, however, seems to be coming very much to the surface, and I heard many tales of serious quarrelling among the men, leading to separation and to division into splinter households.

Raman, the *Asari* informant of the Perinkulam household, interviewed at Palappuram, said that polyandry was dying out because "Civilization is spreading". When I asked him what he meant by "civilization", he answered, rather simply, that people did not tie up their hair any longer in the typical Malayalam way, a top knot in front over the forehead, and that many had taken to growing moustaches. He added, however, to these very personal criteria of his, that women refused now to be wedded to many men; some wealthier people, he revealed, even go so far as to insert a clause into the marriage contract by which it is stipulated that their daughter will not be given in marriage to more than one man. He concluded by sighing, shrugging his shoulders and exclaiming that it was not right, but what could be done about it?

Kunji, the daughter of old Kurumba of the *Tolkolan* Palakaparampil household near Meitenadeshan, also complained of too much quarrelling among the men of a polyandrous family, and said that because of this, the women did not want to be married in this way any longer. She attributed to these reasons the fact that her household had already given up polyandry in the previous generation.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595
without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564
maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nayres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851]
ing that there are always several men attached to one [604]
woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578]
term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tīpū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648]
since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind." †

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [482] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

796 564 [193] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 578 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple, by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghât (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

Kerala AW 11

601, 113, 59, 58, 611, 428

[For information pertaining to the above categories, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 252-270.]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

582 endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her
[837] this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

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184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

● 58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion, suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 585 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

"*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important ceremony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1948)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambūdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tāli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambūdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tāli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tāli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambūdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambūdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambūdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tāli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tāli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tāli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 621 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannāns, called Mannāns in the south) and barbers (Kāvutiyyans, called Vātthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [420] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangan* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangan* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The [782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of [789] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the [582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge:– a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a 582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while 58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal [593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin 564 613

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*.

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger
564 Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam*
581 property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger
428 sons.

105 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar
564 and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow
611 artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [192] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative
564 such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child
[58] after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle
564 of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort
588 with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

581 perpetuate their lineage. Shortly before or after
613 puberty, they might, following this ceremony,
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons
621 (called sambandham - "joining together") with
581 one or more men of their own or an appropriate
613 higher subcaste, including, if they wished, the
man who had tied the tali. These men visited
them in their natal houses at night. Similarly a
Nayar man, (whether or not he had ever performed a tali-rite) might enter into relationships
with any number of women of his own or an
appropriate lower subcaste. These marital
customs are further discussed below: here it
is relevant to point only to the role of the enangar bridegroom. Since the e nangar stand to the
lineage as formal representatives of the local
subcaste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tali-rite as a ceremony at which the [46]
subcaste group as a whole "married" the immature girls of the lineage as a whole, and ritually
set free their procreative powers for the perpetuation of their lineage. It was also significant in that it appears that in general among the
Nayars, enangar relationships between lineages
(i.e., hereditary intergroup relationships) fulfilled the functions of integrating the total local
community which in many unilineal systems
(e.g., the patrilineal system of the lower castes)
are fulfilled by interpersonal cognatic and affinal ties. This was possible, and necessary, because the marital tie was so weak among Nayars
that all the interpersonal kinship ties between
individuals of different lineages were also insufficiently stable to carry these functions of
ritual and other social cooperation.

592 with their parents into any convenient vacant
[582] room. At the same time, the separate, unique role of each woman as potential founder of a new taravad is recognized in certain rules: both sororate and sororal polygymy are traditionally forbidden, for example, since the inter-personal unity between sisters, as well as their separate positions each at the head of a line of matrilineal descendants, must not be endangered or distorted by their extra-lineage ties.

592 [72] (2) The Traditional Institution of Marriage.
581 Consistent with the unity and multiplex economic, legal and ceremonial functions of the taravad as a corporate group, marriage was traditionally the slenderest of ties, while as a
592 social concept fatherhood scarcely existed. We
582 have mentioned already that at the tali-rite of
608 retainer, middle class and servant Nayars and of temple servants, the immature girls of a lineage were collectively "married" and divorced before puberty by their local caste group as a whole, represented by their individual enangar. In desavari, chiefly and royal lineages the tali was usually tied by a man of a higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers for its women in hypergamous liaisons. The women of desavari lineages were thus usually "married" by naduvari men, naduvari and royal women either by Nambudiri men or by men of some higher-ranking royal lineage more ancient than their own. In all castes, the tali-tier had no subsequent responsibilities and if he wished need never visit the woman again.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare. [581]

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

[588] Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him. [604] [578] [586]

593 835 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32). 581 85 121

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family. 582 593 576 [551] [564] [783]

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere- 595 [851]

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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601 corrupted to *chēdatti amma* (Cochin) or *eratti amma* (S. Malabar).

(9) *Chētan.* M. and F. speaking, reference; M. speaking only, address. A particular shortened form of *jyēshtan* (ElBr), reserved for the husband of A6.

(10) *Makan.* M. speaking. Son of ego's wife. Reference only.

(11) *Makal.* M. speaking. Daughter of ego's wife. Reference only.

(12) *Pērakutti.* M. speaking. Child of ego's wife's daughter. Reference only. Not always used.

(13) *Appan.* M. and F. speaking. Ritual husband (*tāli* tier) of ego's mother.

(14) *Manavalan.* F. speaking. Ritual husband. Reference only.

All other affines and cognates were referred to by descriptive compound terms (e.g., *ende acchande marumakan*, "my father's nephew"; *ende anujande bhārya*, "my younger brother's wife"). Persons of 8 and 9 were also often referred to by descriptive compound terms.

601 A man might *address* his wife's matrilineal kin older than himself
602 by the same terms as she did but he was not obliged to do so. He
[551] might also address them by their names and caste titles. They ad-
[554] dressed him by his personal name, adding the caste title if he were of higher caste.

A man addressed his wife's younger matrilineal kinsmen by name. Because of the avoidance relationship he and his wife's younger sisters used no terms or names to address each other.

If she knew them and was of the same caste as they were, a woman addressed her husband's older matrilineal relatives by the same terms as he did. She addressed by name those younger than herself. She called her husband's younger sister who was older than herself *jyēshtatti*, (elder sister). Because of the avoidance relationship no terms or names were used between a woman and her husband's brothers who were older than she.

In hypergamous marriages a woman and her husband's natal kin used no terms to address each other.

An individual used no terms, but only names, to address his father's matrilineal kin.

601 *Comment:* In general, the restricted use of reference terms for
[551] affines and the lack of terms for patrilateral kin other than the father reflect the slenderness of the marriage tie and the lack of obligations to these kin.

Affinal terms were mainly restricted to the spouses of ego's older matrilineal kin, persons with whom he had fairly regular contact. Even these, however, might be *referred* to by descriptive compound

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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564 should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst
837 the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

581 The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

585 The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem
784 to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see
182 relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

591
184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion, suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 585 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915

AWll Kerala AWll

Nayar

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [198]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [124]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the ' 'f relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [589]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-Rite. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 20 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564] [587]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom 585
stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars [597]
are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. [198]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary [184]
considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in [581]
itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage.
It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunder- 586
standing or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the
marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further
formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. [648]
By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break
off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly con-
ducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the
maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the
mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and
marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, 581
there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational [648]
Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham*
with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a
marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very
ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six
marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its
distinguished author.

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) 582
there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The
men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions.
A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. [564]
She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed
to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry any-
one who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the
maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress
lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so
closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort.

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any 591
particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's [582]
own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is [178]
strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their
ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a
specially aristocratic privilege.

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This 595
can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for
The last fifty years.

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585 184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, [586] but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as [581] happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 192 197 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *vivâham* is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *vivâham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradânam* used in South Malabar.

3. *Uzhamporukkuka*, and *Vidâram Kairuga* of North Malabar.

4. The *Kidakkóra kalyânam* of Palghat and parts of Nedunganád.

Pudamuri, *Vastradânam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidâram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 184 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word denoting marriage among the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars. It

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562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo-556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste, 564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris, 581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar. 581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 136.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 85.

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Sivagothrakúr (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

595 realised, the women among the Nāyars not being [585] restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Nāyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same 586 time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which from the frailty of nature domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man 581 another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off, and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age."

595 In a note on the Nāyars in the sixteenth century, [20] Cæsar Fredericke writes as follows.* "These Nairi having their wives common amongst themselves, and when any of them goe into the house of any of these women, he leaveth his sworde and target at the door, and the time that he is there, there dare not be any so

* The Voyage and Travell of M. Cæsar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice, into the East Indies and beyond the Indies (1563). Translation. Hakluyt Voyages, V, 394.

practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli-tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

692 shrine and temporary ostracism were the chief
681 punishments, but at least among Iravas, grave offenders were sometimes excommunicated with the consent of the janmi and sold in slavery to
623 Arab traders. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages, who met
[582] chiefly at marriages and funerals. In all of these castes, the local group of the assembly, while not strictly endogamous, was the group within which the majority of marriages took place.

631 Among retainer-Nayars, the local group might
692 comprise either one large desam, or a group of
681 two to four adjacent desams when these were occupied by retainer Nayars of the same sub-caste. Such an area was called a tara in South Malabar and a kara in Cochin, the assembly, a tara-koottam or kara-yogam. The assembly comprised the headmen of all Nayar property-groups who met to settle intra-caste disputes, adjudicate in trials of offences against caste law and arrange the public ceremonies of their common Bhagavadi temple. Offences such as wrongful interdining with low caste men, small debts, thefts and adultery with women of the lower polluting castes were punished by fines paid to [34] the Bhagavadi temple, or in grave cases by excommunication, and sale into slaver. Similarly intra-caste offences were settled among desavaris within an assembly of the nad, and among nadavaris within an assembly of the kingdom. The local Nayar assembly also had power to arbitrate in disputes and offences against the village at large among the lower castes. Some

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
131 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
[595] had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

576 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their
natal houses and were maintained by their kins-
595 men. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
might however have several Nambudiri wives
and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri
younger sons lived and ate in their natal house-
holds, headship of which passed from the eldest
son down the line of his brothers and then dropped
to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this
way the Nambudiri family was prevented from
splitting into segments, and was enabled to
maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
597 many generations. If in any generation a family
had no son, succession was ensured by the
adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of
a family related in the cognatic line.

613 In the royal lineages, since each lineage,
582 though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate
837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were
entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluva-
nad, royal women had liaisons only with (37) Nam-
budiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes
within the kingdom; royal men, with women of
chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lin-
eages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to
power later and took time to establish its ritual
rank, royal women till the 18th century had
liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men
of the ancient royal lineages of tributary king-
doms, who though through conquest were sub-
ordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still re-
garded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 when they had established themselves as of high
582 ritual rank, and when some of their vassal lin-
837 eages had died out, the Zamorins too looked only to Nambudiri for genitors. Royal men similarly had liaisons with women of the lower matrilineal subcastes, as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms.

582 Among temples servants, retainer-Nayars
837 and middle class Nayars, the majority of unions took place between individuals of the same subcaste. A small proportion of retainer and middle class Nayar women had liaisons with Nambudiris of the lower subcastes, Embrandiri Brahman priests (who followed the same descent system as Nambudiris) or with royal, chiefly, village headmen or temple servant men. In the Nayar village headmen's lineages, a larger proportion of women had liaisons with men of the chiefly or royal lineages, or with Nambudiris; and in the chiefs' lineages, with royal or Nambudiri men, though in these subcastes too, individuals of the same subcaste but different lineages might have unions with each other. Similarly, a small [38] proportion of men in each Nayar subcaste, down to re tainers, had liaisons with Nayar women of a lower subcaste, down to the rank of middle class Nayars. Chart I shows the mutual ritual ranking and the direction of hypergamous unions between the higher castes of the kingdom. In the temple servant castes, whose occupational allegiance was exclusively with Nambudiris, women had liaisons either with Nambudiris or with men of their own caste. There was no intermarriage either way between temple

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village head-
men, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

Hypergamous unions, even more than other
582 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
613 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the
837 lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate in his natal household and was maintained by it; he visited his mistress after supper and left before breakfast, after which he took a purifying bath before re-entering his natal house. He might not eat in his mistress's household, and following the morning bath might not touch her or his children. The only exception to these
[644] residential rules arose in the case of Nambudiris who had liaisons with royal women. These were received as temporary occupants of the palace and housed in separate buildings at the expense of the royal lineage, at some distance from the buildings occupied by the princes and the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri genitors of Nayar children, however, they [39] visited their mistresses at night and in the daytime carried out their ritual duties in private, attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serving men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
571 knit together the several castes concerned with the secular administration and with the religious law and public rituals of the state. Though not recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly members of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

592 with their parents into any convenient vacant
582 room. At the same time, the separate, unique role of each woman as potential founder of a new taravad is recognized in certain rules: both sororate and sororal polygymy are traditionally forbidden, for example, since the inter-personal unity between sisters, as well as their separate positions each at the head of a line of matrilineal descendants, must not be endangered or distorted by their extra-lineage ties.

592 [72] (2) The Traditional Institution of Marriage.
581 Consistent with the unity and multiplex economic, legal and ceremonial functions of the taravad as a corporate group, marriage was traditionally the slenderest of ties, while as a
592 social concept fatherhood scarcely existed. We
582 have mentioned already that at the tali-rite of
608 retainer, middle class and servant Nayars and of temple servants, the immature girls of a lineage were collectively "married" and divorced before puberty by their local caste group as a whole, represented by their individual enangar. In desavari, chiefly and royal lineages the tali was usually tied by a man of a higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers for its women in hypergamous liaisons. The women of desavari lineages were thus usually "married" by naduvari men, naduvari and royal women either by Nambudiri men or by men of some higher-ranking royal lineage more ancient than their own. In all castes, the tali-tier had no subsequent responsibilities and if he wished need never visit the woman again.

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognized the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage: infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

582 Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well
595 as marriage to the dead spouse's sibling, were
835 thus automatically forbidden. This rule appears to relate to the paramount need to keep minimal the potential rivalries between individuals of the same sex within the group. It was also consistent with the relationship of respect between
585 them. Even today, when ceremonies mark the
602 start of the post-puberty marriage, a man's
595 lineage elders may not attend his marriage ceremonies and feast. He goes to the bride's house with unrelated friends of his own age or with affines, ideally, his sister's husbands. For marriage is a jolly undertaking and only such men may joke together about sexual scandals in the village. But [81] reticence is required in discussing their own marriage, and the respect a woman owes her older kinswomen demands that she interfere in no way in their marital life. Today, a woman treats her father or step-father with affectionate respect of a less formal kind than that accorded to the mother's brother, but she should not touch him after puberty. With her elder sister's husband she observes still greater formality, based on the incest prohibition. The ban on sororal polygyny is particularly comprehensible in view of the fact that Nayar women were traditionally open rivals for the attentions of men: many writers mention this and it is still discernible in villages today. The mutual respect and amity required of women of the same property-group was incompatible with such rivalry.

835 However, the ban on relations with two persons
582 of the same group was less stringent than the

835 rule of lineage exogamy. Even today, cases
582 occur very occasionally in which a man cohabits both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage, or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies. This appears to be because
[611] traditionally, only matrilineal kinsfolk are regarded as kin in the true sense of the word: incest prohibitions outside this range are a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

582 No other unions outside the lineage and within the appropriate caste appear traditionally to have been prohibited. Relations with the father's sister (or rather with the sister of the mother's lover, since paternity was often uncertain) were disfavoured because of generation difference but even today they are not prohibited. Unions were definitely permissible between the Nambudiri son and the Nayar daughter of a Nambudiri eldest son (i.e., between paternal step-siblings); it is [82] not certain whether they were ever permitted between two Nayars known to be paternal step-siblings, but they are not permitted today. Marriage to the brother's daughter and the paternal parallel cousin are still permitted, though they are not preferential marriages between Nayars. Marriage is however preferential between a Nambudiri and his paternal parallel cousin of a matrilineal caste. This is particularly true of unions between aristocratic Nambudiris and royal women, since it perpetuates a bond between two groups both of which are small and highly

582 specialized in wealth and power. This is the only case I know of in South India of preferential marriage to the paternal parallel cousin: it is a function of the unique hypergamous relationship between patrilineal and matrilineal castes.

Incest prohibitions were therefore in full harmony with the Nayar emphasis on the unity and exclusiveness of the matrilineage and their minimal recognition of marital and patrilineal ties.

582 Today, cross cousin marriage is much fav-
602 ored and serves to harmonize the modern conflicting claims of a man's natal and his conjugal kin. It has been common for at least a hundred years since polyandry began to die out. It was certainly of course permissible in the traditional system and must often have occurred, since enangar are often cross cousins and unions between enangar of the local group were presumably the most numerous and most stable. A likely guess is that a preference for unions between cross cousins, when these were known, traditionally existed alongside plural marriages, though the two seem at first sight mutually opposed. For these institutions (cross cousin marriage and very weak plural marriages) are both functions of the unity of the lineage. They are opposite, but alternative, methods of dealing with the "matrilineal puzzle". (13) When matrilineal bonds are of para-[83]mount strength as they were among the Nayars, a weak and transient conjugal tie is likely, because natal and conjugal ties inevitably oppose each other. Plural liaisons with frequent separation cater for matrilineal bonds by minimizing conjugal

582 ties, and these were traditionally the common
602 solution in this area. But even in a promiscuous community, it seems likely that the effective relationship between a man and children he believes to be his cannot always be altogether overridden and may assert itself in face of matrilineal ties. When this happens some other solution to the conflict is required. Cross cousin marriage, particularly matrilateral, (14) is one such partial solution, since it harmonizes for two members and for two generations of a lineage conjugal interests which would otherwise be opposed.

601 (4) Kinship Terms

As might be expected, the traditional Nayar terminology of this area includes terms only for matrilineal kin, their spouse, and the children of ego's wife. Today, terms are sometimes used to address cognates, but they are very seldom used in reference; descriptive terms like "my father's nephew" and my mother's father" are used instead. Contrary to the view of Murdock and Emeneau, (15) the Nayars of this area do not have a bifurcate merging system with Iroquois cousin terms: indeed none of the matrilineal groups of Kerala (North Malabar Nayars, Tiyyars and Muslims, South Malabar and Cochin Nayars, or Travancore Iravas and Nayars) have such a system, which in this region is confined to the patrilineal and double unilineal castes below Nayars.

Within the lineage, men of the first and second ascending generations are equated as "male

1:Gough-102 E-4, 5(no date)1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

113 1921), p. 241.

(11) A. I. Richards, Some Types of Family Structure amongst the Central Bantu, in African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950).

582 (12) Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred to patrilateral, since it harmonizes the conjugal interests of a man and his sister's son, the most rivalrous relationship between men. It is also of course possible with hypergamous unions, whereas patrilateral cross cousins unions are not. In one Cochin village 7.2% of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; 1.6% had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. [103] Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 13.9% of marriages were to the father's nephew, 9.0% to the uncle's son. In Walluvanad division, South Malabar, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11.2% had married the father's nephew, 4.7% the uncle's son (own or classificatory).

613 (13) In Murdock's sense of a matrilineal, matri-
593 local unit with the husbands of the women as permanent residents. However, in a true matriclan adult male members of the matrilineage or matrisib would be living away with their wives whereas in the royal lineages princes lived at home and merely visited their wives nearby. In most naduvari and all lower subcaste lineages, women were visited only occasionally by their Nambudiri lovers who lived in their own households.

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CHART I RITUAL RANKING AND HYPERGAMOUS UNIONS BETWEEN THE HIGHER CASTES OF COCHIN

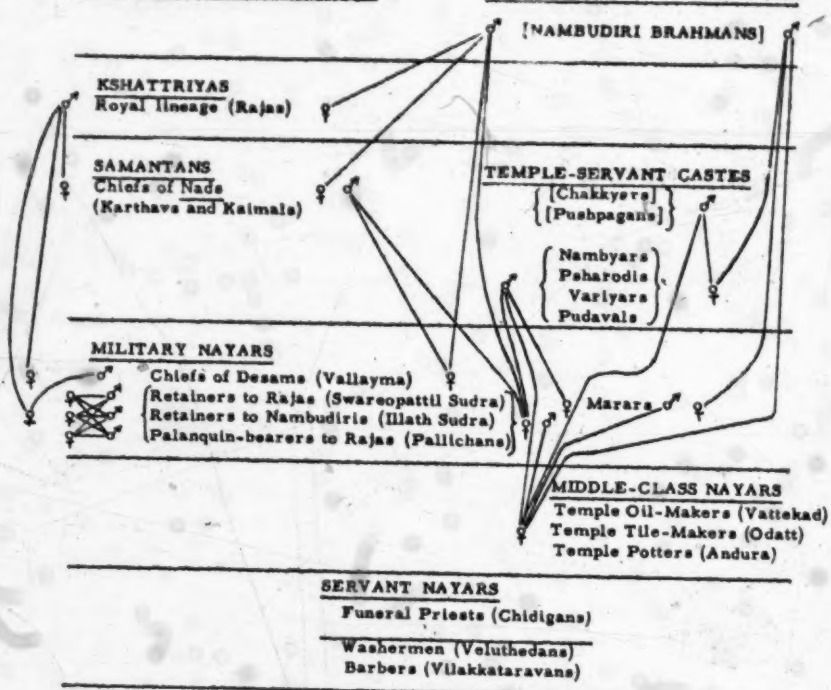

Key

} indicates equivalence of, or dispute for, rank.

A line drawn across the page indicates that all castes above it rank unequivocally above all castes below it.

Oblique lines and curves indicate some amount of hypergamous mating between the castes.

♂-male ♀-female

Castes shown in brackets have patrilineal descent; all others have matrilineal descent.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age. 602 [605] [588]

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose. 582 [835]

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today, the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly [586]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 592 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 [576] Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relationships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 576 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility—characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

627 Murder among the Nayars
613 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
628 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

614 THE CLAN
564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's niece.

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000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. 574 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob- [593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions [604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two 582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often [593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a [764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his [848] wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [851] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race [613] and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493] * A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live 613
there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The 562
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

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In two individuals (out of 8) the cephalic length was over 20 cm. In three the nasal height was 5 cm. and over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on two subjects are—

(1) Forehead high. Supraciliary arches distinctly developed. Very deep nasal notch. Nasal point elevated above the line of the nose.

(2) Supraciliary arches not apparent. Nasal point slightly elevated.

Figure.—The greater number are noted as slight; about one-third as medium to stoutly built.

Hair.—Much as those of the other clans. The man who said he was 72, but who looked 58, showed no sign of baldness; his hair was but moderately grey. Another, aged 36, a very strongly-built man, was becoming bald. Baldness at his age is, I should say, rare. 142 564*

Colour of the skin.—The average is a trifle darker than 29 (Broca). The fairest was fairer than 29, and the darkest was No. 43.

Colour of the eyes.—The average colour of those examined is between 1 and 2 (Broca).

Ornaments call for no remark; they are much as those worn by other Nâyars. Ears are always pierced and earrings worn. 301 564* 304

It would be profitless to deal separately with the measures of the individuals comprising the group A in the same way as the others which are more or less complete, with the exception of the Kurup clan. As said already in the group A consists of— 141 564*

2 of the Nelliôden clan.		3 of the Pallichan clan.	
2 „ Viyyûr clan.		1 „ Muppattinâyiran clan.	
1 „ Vangilôth clan.		2 „ Vyâpâri clan.	
1 „ Kitâvu clan.		1 „ Attikkurissi clan.	

and their measures taken collectively have been quoted. The Attikkurissi are endogamous, and the Kitâvu do not wear earrings. [301]

At page 60, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where, speaking of the Nambûtiri Brâhmans, it was said that possibly it may be found that marriage between a brother's daughter and a sister's son may be found to produce the finest issue; to be the best for preservation of the race. This kind of marriage of first cousins, but never of progeny of sisters or of brothers, is in a general way the rule throughout Southern India, and it obtains amongst the 582 [564]*

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582
*[564] endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58

"The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits
[582] with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where
[837] she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[628] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the
582 Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhû-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is 421
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [589]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

582
613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

-564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
553 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of
585 themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth
178 it change even in such an important piece of life as marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

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585
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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place [582] the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In [181] North Malabar, which is much more conservative than [184] the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâra- 585 navan and the women † of his household choose the 564 bride, and communicate their choice to the intending 613 bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they [787] agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for [574] the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
• [582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
825 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavâyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804] * Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

● 582

/Information on tests of marriageability required of Tiyyar girls prior to the Tali-tying, will be found in category 588./

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurnis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

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564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāraṇavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukaḷyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. [692] *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. 613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 29–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

131 PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

133 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambûdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tâli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambûdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tâli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tâli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambûdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambûdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambûdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tâli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tâli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tâli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tâli*-Rite in North Malabar

422 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannâns, called Mannâns in the south) and barbers (Kâvutiyyans, called Vâtthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [420] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *manger* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *manger* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The
[782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from
[787] the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the
[582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a
582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while
58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-
605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal
[593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-[765] offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do 582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished 595 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of 585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each [606] husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the 595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern [601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the [428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

184 588 589 This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

184 588 331 The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdurari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

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as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother, and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister. She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

Enangar.—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an intermarrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

Marriage Restrictions.—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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daughter never calls you by any name which, in the Hindu code of manners, is done only with regard to the husband. She is your *a priori* wife, if such an expression could be used. She is spoken of as the *Mura Pennu* (*Mura* = customary, and *Pennu* = female or wife, meaning customary wife). 582

Unlike other Hindus a Nāyar may marry a girl from a lower sub-caste as long as she also is a Nāyar. He cannot marry a woman whose caste is higher than his own without the wife losing her caste. A Nāyar lady can choose her husband either from among the allied families or others, provided they are of the same or superior sub-caste. Also, she can marry from anyone of the higher castes, *i.e.*, either from the Brahmins or from the Kshatriyas. The alliance between the Malabar Brahmins and the Nāyars is a social fact of very great interest. In no other part of India is a Brahmin allowed to marry out of his own caste. In Malabar, on the other hand, among the Nambudiris or the Aryan immigrants, only the eldest member of the family can marry among the Brahmins, the others being forced to marry among the Nāyars. The permanence through ages of matrilineal descent among the Nāyars is due to this fact. The Brahmins, being of a superior caste, and the Nāyar wife of the Brahmin being unable to live in her husband's family, the system tended to be matrilineal as well as matrilocal. Also, since the children of such a marriage are Nāyars and not Brahmins, though the father is a Brahmin, the system remained wholly unilateral without any definite bilateral development. It is only the very highest among the Nāyars that have connection with the Brahmins. Through their influence the custom preserved all its strength in the lower classes as well. 582 564

The peculiar custom of the Malabar Brahmins of not allowing their junior members to marry among their own caste introduces a complication into the Nāyar system. The idea underlying such a prohibition is evidently the preservation of the big estates which the Nampudiris own. Since the Nāyar sons of the Malabar Brahmins do not inherit anything from their fathers, their estates remain undivided and descend only to the eldest son. Primogeniture has been the custom in every country where the preservation of big landed property in the hands of a few was aimed at. The undivided family among the Nāyars is also meant to conserve their possession of the land and maintain the political influence resulting from it. A point of utmost importance which should always be kept in mind in this connection is the interaction of economic and social forces. The interest of the Nampudiris to keep their property undivided led to their custom of primogeniture, and this again induced them to use their temporal power and sacerdotal influence to perpetuate the matrilineal system among the Nāyars. Also, the desire to preserve the family estates as a whole, kept the Nāyar families from being divided, making thereby a change to patrilineal system altogether impossible. 428 564 582

the Todas also *Machuna* (or cross-cousin) marriage is the orthodox custom. See p. 512, Rivers, *The Todas*. Also Appendix, "Similarities between the Nāyars and the Todas." 582 171

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595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

562 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship [871] and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best [875] Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

585 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. 562 But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

588 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be
182 performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This
174 seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a
564 Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham*
585 not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own *community.* Generally, therefore, the younger
[554] sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. 585 [591] [198]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunderstanding or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly conducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its distinguished author. [184] [581] 586 [648] 581 [648]

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions. A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry anyone who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort. 582 [564]

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a specially aristocratic privilege. 591 [582] [178]

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for the last fifty years. 595

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Note 3.—*McLennan and the Nāyar Type of Polyandry.*

McLennan, in his well-known book, *Studies in Ancient History*, divides polyandry into two classes, and calls one the Nair type and the other the Tibetan type. "It is in the nature of the cases," says he, "that all the possible forms of polyandry must lie between the Nair and Tibetan forms." A good deal of what McLennan says about the Nāyar customs is vitiated by the unsatisfactory character of the information at his disposal. Buchanan, on whom he chiefly depends, made a journey through Malabar, and his account is wholly untrustworthy. The loose character of the sexual tie and the licentious habits of the richer Namputiri landlords, as far as their immediate Nāyar tenants were concerned, were naturally enough interpreted as polyandry by foreign observers. As a matter of fact distinct polyandry of any type was very rare in Malabar except among the Kāniyāns (or the astrological caste) and among them it is of the Tibetan type. 595 114

If there existed any tendency towards polyandry among the Nāyars it was not certainly towards what McLennan calls the "Nair type." The wife of a brother is looked upon as a person to whom one could openly though not legitimately pay court; and any favour short of sexual relationship which she confers upon him is allowed by public opinion. A wife, for example, is the only woman who is allowed to smear oil on a man's back; and when a woman does it to a man it is considered to be a sort of semi-marital function. A man can always ask his brother's wife to do it for him, and it is done very often, even in the presence of the brother. Such customs are, however, open to two interpretations. As we have seen elsewhere, the *Machuna* marriage (or the marriage of cross-cousin) is the orthodox form of marriage among the Nāyars. To all the brothers alike the girl stands in the same relation before the marriage. *She could have been, in fact, the wife of any of them*, provided she was not older than her cousins. Even after her marriage with one of them this potential relationship continues to exist, and therefore all the brothers treat her "half as a sister and half as a wife."[1] [582]

Or, it may be explained, that such relationship is a survival of a Tibetan type of polyandry among the Nāyars. It may be argued that these semi-marital functions which all the brothers can claim from each others' wives, prove the prevalence in a former time of a community of marriage relationship among the brothers. This does not seem to me to be true. Nāyar tradition gives no support to this view. We have no Nāyar stories that speak of one woman who was the common wife of her cross-cousins. In fact we have no tradition of any polyandry at all. Nevertheless, we find McLennan giving the Nair name to a particular type of polyandry supposed by him to be practised universally among them.

[1] It has been argued by Spencer and Gillen that the system of supplementary spouses affords definite evidence of a system of group marriage in a previous age. Their inferences on this subject have now been subjected to very damaging criticism, especially by Mr. N. W. Thomas, *Kinship and Marriage in Australia*, pp. 111-141.

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the highest class. There are many who profess to belong to certain Nambuthiri *illams*, such as the Azhavancheri and other *illams*. They are obliged to be strict vegetarians owing to their service in the Nambuthiri families.

3. *Swarupattil Nayars.*—The members of this class render services to the Kshatriyas. There are, it is said, three minor subdivisions, namely, *Pindiyánmar*, *Patindluvittukar* and [357] *Chitayans*. The members of the first class serve as menials in the houses of Kshatriyas; those of the second have to supply them with everything necessary for the performance of all kinds of ceremonies; and those of the third serve them during pollution. They appear to correspond to the Chárnavar and Sudras. Swarupattil Nayars or Swarupakkár (from *swarupam*, princely house) are so called because of their service in princely houses or Kshatriya families. They are next in rank to *Illakkars*.

[167] 4. *Agattu and Purattu Charna Nayars.*—The Chárna Nayars or Chárnavar who are mostly immigrants from Malabar include the two subdivisions, Agattu Chárnavar and Purattu Chárnavar, "inside and outside retainers," respectively. There are two explanations of the terms. According to one, the Purattu Chárnavar are the armed retainers of the various chieftains, while the Agattu Chárnavar are the personal and domestic servants. According to the other explanation, the distinction refers to their position at *yágams* (sacrifices) at which it is said that various duties inside the *yágasala* or sacrificial pandal are to be performed by the Agattu Chárna Nayars, while the Purattu Chárna Nayars remain on guard outside. In point of social precedence, the Purattu Chárnavar are ranked superior to the Agattu Chárnavar, probably because the latter do not belong to any of the fighting clans. A woman of [582] the former may mate with a man of the latter, but not *vice* [264] *versa*. Only the men of the two subdivisions may eat together, but the women may mate with men of their own clan or of any other or with a Nambuthiri. The men of this class form *sambandhams* in South Malabar with the Kiriyattil women. The caste-men affix the title of Nayar after their names. There are many of this class found in the State.

[451] 5. *Menókki and Pattóla Menon.*—Men of these castes serve as accountants in temples and in aristocratic families,

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564 13. *Anduran Nayars.*—These Nayars are the manufacturers of earthenware for use in temples.

14. *Attikurusi Nayars.*—They are the priests who officiate at funeral ceremonies for all sub-castes above them.

In respect of the fourteen subdivisions of the high caste *Sudrás*, it must be said that the non-military classes, namely, the Otattu Nayars, Chempukotti, Anduran, Pallichán and Vattékád Nayars, have to be treated as an intermediate class of *Sudrás*, because there is neither interdining nor intermarriage between the members of these subdivisions and those treated as high caste *Sudrás*; but they are classed among the high caste *Sudrás* on account of their services in temples, which give them the privilege to enter them and bathe in public tanks. [264] [582]

Under the head of low caste Sudrás are included four sub-castes, namely Tharakans, Velakkathalavans, Veluthédans, and Cháliyans, who pollute other Nayars by touch, and who are on that account called low caste Sudrás. Pollution by touch appears to be the basis for the above classification, and on this principle, the three castes except the Tharakans are treated as low caste *Sudras*; for, their touch pollutes all castes above them. The Tharakans had been a trading class, but they have now taken to other professions. They are a Tamil class and are the least Malayáli to be brought on a level with the high caste Sudrás, though in their customs they are almost like the latter. A similar process of assimilation has been and is still going on among some of the Tamil castes of the Chittur Taluk as well as elsewhere, by which the members of such castes are developing themselves into Nayars.

553 The Nayars affix to their names one of the following titles, the origin and significance of which are given below:—
554 Titles.

1. *Kartha.*—The word means a 'doer', and appears to have been used as a title by some of the old Madura kings. The rulers of Cochin are said to have confirmed this title on some influential Nayar families, and made them petty chieftains subject to their paramountcy. All the Karthás belong to the *Illam* division of the Nayar caste. Among the old families in the Cochin State still possessing this title are Chéránellur Kartha near Ernakulam, Kódasséri Kartha near Chálakudi, and Kuzhupilli Kartha. [551]

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554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Asán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Mannátiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

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582 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous,
833 while the low caste Sudras are endogamous.
783 This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.

Marriage prohibitions.

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582 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere
783 observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolatheri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

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Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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Ambalavásis form alliances with Nayar women, but the latter and their children cannot touch their husbands and fathers without polluting them. The children of this union belong to the mother's family. In the clan system, descent was at first reckoned in the female line; consequently, uterine ties alone constituted kinship. The father was not regarded as related even to his children, and not considered as a member of the family. In this system all the children bear the clan name, and the clan name becomes the test of blood relationship. But the moment the descent is recognised through the male, the clan system breaks down. Among the Nayars the kinship is still reckoned through the female line. 564 582 783

Marriage is endogamous among the low caste Sudrás. The following restrictions are however in force among all classes of Sudrás. There cannot be intermarriages between the descendants of any female ancestor. It is strictly prohibited even in the case of two persons belonging to the same *taravád* or family whose relationship cannot be traced to its origin, but is only traditional. A man cannot marry the sister of his deceased wife. The custom is more changing. A man cannot marry from the family of his deceased wife, but is now limited to the *thávazhi* to which his wife belonged. Even this is now being overlooked. 564 582 [614]

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 585 Marriage customs. There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity, [1] and the omission or neglect of it [688] will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the [782] performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *kúranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of [787] the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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881 she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. [184] In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

585 The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only [184] two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs connected with each of the latter differ in different places: [582] nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other [584] classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bride-[787] groom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kúranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bride-groom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly welcomed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Rámáyanam* or other sacred book, referring to [533] marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read [574] by the Asán or village school master. Some music is also provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

Sambandham.

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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 136.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 25.

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intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawads*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

Polyandry.

Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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595 [554] circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved [613] only with the consent of the *kâranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kâranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kâranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvâthira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad;* and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

[text continues on p. 21]

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*I*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

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Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was
[429] already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 564 581 428 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam* property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger sons.

105 564 611 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [492] [515] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 564 [58] Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 564 588 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

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105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 [183] It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

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who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India. 595* 591 [589] [582]

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first. 595* [656] [428]

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns. 595* 178

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.") 595* [103] [101] [564]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

tarawad name was Neripatta, and the property now belonged to the old woman and her sons. They were *verumpattam* cultivators for a Nayar *kanamdar*, the Shoranur *desammangalam* (village headman) whom I had met. They paid a rent of five rupees. 595* 601 [427]

I heard that of the old generation, the four brothers, Paini, Krishna, Raman, Aiyappan and Narayan, were dead – although there was some doubt about Narayan, the last one. As he had emigrated to Singapore and had never come back, they presumed that he had died there. They had all been wed polyandrously to Kali when she was seventeen, and she was now left with her four sons, who had begun by being polyandrous, but who had eventually taken wives of their own, the common wife, Paru, having stayed with the eldest, Velandi. The property had, however, not been split up, and they lived in the mansion-sized house, which was happily large enough to contain them all. Presumably it was also sufficiently big to keep the women from quarrelling and dragging the men into their squabbles – something which people who live in polyandry seem particularly to fear. Of the third generation, the two grandsons, Velu and Krishna, had also lived polyandrously, having taken one Kalyany as a common wife. Like their two sisters they had, however, died, aged thirty and twenty respectively, leaving a couple of boys with their widow to look after. There had thus been three generations of polyandrous marriages in this family. [167]

Another point of interest was the fact that two of Kali's sons, Paragnoden and Krishna had broken away, the former after having first been married with his elder brothers to Paru. They had married their fathers' sisters' daughters, Vali in the first case, and Janeki in the second. When I enquired why this was so, I found it difficult to get a precise answer. I was told that was because this was a "right" marriage, and that if possible, marriage with a *machchunan* is "best". But I evoked only silence and some quizzical looks when I asked why then Paragnoden was first married polyandrously to Paru. It seemed to me – although this is only my personal impression and I was not told so – that the polyandrous marriage was gone through with because it was customary in those days, when the elder brother got married, for the younger ones to join in. Later, when Paragnoden, for reasons which he did not impart to me, felt like putting up a household of his own, he naturally turned to his cross-cousin, on his fathers' side. He was eighteen when he married Paru, with his brothers, and twenty two when he left her and took Vali to wife. This would not account, however, for Krishna, the youngest, not having also been married to Paru. It may be, of course that he was 595* 582 601

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Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
●581 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
601 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
587 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age are some of the un-
[132] married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

[i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old --Analyst]
[Text Continues on p. 194]

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Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11. 595 601 [582]

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there. 595* 564 326 [351]

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan. 595* 601 [853]

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-* [614]

[Text continues on p. 197]

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Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p 199]

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Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

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Kammalans

*595 601 lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names, and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave 614 village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.

[564] After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan [584] would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

614 564 I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad* names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they [582] observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed [582] exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for 618 those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*, 564

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 204]

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Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his employees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the verandah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once polyandrous union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breastfeeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

* 595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village 514 names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exoga- 428 mous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *mak-kathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon ●582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text Continues on P. 216]

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Pulluvans

564 582 588 114 427 534 162 564 [115]

ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

575 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the
184 description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. [574] There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett [582] states that "my informant says in the first place that the [178] man should not enter into sambandham with a woman until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running [181] wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, [582] which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

there will be a specialist for diseases of children, an eye specialist, 759
an ordinary vaidyan who cures all common diseases, and a *mantravati* (hymn-chanter) who pretends to cure diseases by chanting certain hymns within himself, and who is believed in by the masses. There is also a *visha-vaidyan*, or expert in curing snake-bite, in some villages.

The Sub-Assistant Surgeons in charge of Government hospitals are, I am afraid, affected by red tape and carelessness born of security of employment and income.

In rural parts especially I am pained to note that their treatment is getting discredited, for the apothecaries take little pains to know the exact nature of the diseases of the poor persons who resort to the hospital and to prescribe proper medicines for the same. There are of course noble exceptions to this, but it is deplorable that there should be any irregularities at all in this most humane of all charities. The native vaidyans, on the other hand, have a local interest, their families living in the village for generations together and they are very keen to keep up their reputations; while the Government Surgeon is a bird of passage, who comes and goes, none of the villagers knowing whence or whither.

Malayalis, as a rule, are very clean, most of them bathe twice a 515
day; their clothes are kept neat and clean. But there is much scope for the spread of modern ideas on sanitation in very many fields. At child-birth the mother is usually kept in the worst possible room in the house. Children too might be brought up in a more sanitary environment; the education of females on these matters is a very crying necessity. It is also deplorable that Brahmans are gradually neglecting the morning-bath and exercise on which their ancestors insisted. The local Muhammadans are extremely insanitary. They are filthy, their children are filthy, their habits too are filthy.

The habit of keeping the stock very near the house should be avoided. Again except in well-to-do Nayar families kitchens are in the houses; they should be in a different building.

Among the Brahmans, a girl has to be married before the age 582
of puberty, generally 12. Among no other caste is this compulsory, [797]
though a few people, including the Indian Christians, marry their girls before puberty. These Christians are generally converts from low caste * Hindus, and change of religion has not changed their custom in this respect.

The local Muhammadans do not, as in the east of the peninsula, 562
observe purdah; their women freely talk to any person, work for others as coolies and stir abroad. Most of them are converts from low caste Hindus, and so there is no fanaticism, nor such strict observance of the rules of Islam as elsewhere. Nayar ladies are quite free, and among them descent in the female line (Marumakkattayam) prevails. Brahman ladies (not Nambudris) can go out, and be seen by others, but they are subject to their husbands and are not allowed to speak to Brahman men, and Brahman men are not allowed to speak with the women. A newly married Brahman bride is neither allowed to see nor to speak to her husband until she actually joins her husband after the nuptials. But these

* [M. L. K. Anandakrishna Ayyar, Cochin State Anthropologist, informs me that the Syrian Christians of Cochin are mainly the descendants of converts from *high* caste Hindus.—Ed.]

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582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The 837 Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female. [586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make [585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children [428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre- [587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is [595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. In the case of a Nambudri

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

There is no infant marriage except perhaps among the Brahmans. 582
Our girls are given away in marriage between the age of 10 and 12. Formerly it used to be younger. But strictly speaking this is only betrothal, the actual consummation of the marriage taking place only after the girl has attained womanhood at about 16 years of age. Our girls are very healthy and well developed so long as they remain at home. But their husbands take them away with them when they are old enough to the places where they are employed, e.g., there are three of them in Madras, and others nearer home. Boys are seldom married before 20 or 21 and the age is rising. Having to live away from home for their education their health is often impaired and they are less healthy and have less vitality and power of resistance than the girls, and are, in the writer's opinion, more subject to illness when away from home. Brahmans have to pay large dowries, whether they are able or no: the least sum being Rs. 1,000 for a bridegroom whose educational qualifications are measured by the Matriculation examination. Even 'ne'er-do-weels' get a high dowry owing to the unsatisfied demand for bridegrooms. We are groaning under the tyranny of an effete social system which is ruining us. Yet our elders protest against any change in our social system, such as post-puberty marriage. Something is sure to be done to remedy this state of things before long: the social conscience cannot long stand it.

Among other castes there is no infant-marriage, nor the system of dowries as it exists with us.

Among the Nayars there is a curious marriage ceremony 585
performed when a female child is only a few days or months old. Some male person, not necessarily or ordinarily the future husband, ties the sacred marriage thread around the baby's neck. This ceremony is purely formal. Real marriages take place after puberty, and the girl may choose any man she pleases as her husband, this marriage being not at all formal, and great freedom, comparatively, is allowed to the wife. Polyandry, which once [595]
prevailed, has now disappeared.

The purdah system does not exist except among the Nambudri 582
community of Brahmans. There are two families of Nambudri [612]
Brahmans in our village. Their females can never see the faces of any males except their husbands and near relations. They seldom go out to any distance, except to the temple, never travel by railway, and hide themselves, when going about, with huge umbrellas made of palm leaves and bamboo sticks. There is post-puberty marriage among them, and only the eldest son of the family marries. Marriages are often exchanges of bride and bridegroom (i.e., a brother and sister marry the sister and the brother of another family), and in that case dowries need not be paid. Otherwise heavy sums are paid. The Numbudri Brahmans are noted for their simple lives, their Vedic learning, and their intense conservatism, though one very enlightened and aristocratic family near my village owns a tile factory at Shoranur and a large part of a spinning mill at Calicut. They lack western education. 556
This year one Nambudripad (i.e., a member of the Nambudri aristocracy) has joined the Presidency College in Madras as an extraordinary student, to get the benefit of the lectures and the college life. He belongs to the family mentioned above, who also

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere
[613] also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access
585 to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
171 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61).

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough.

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin."

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific.

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy.

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 but *B* will from *A*; furthermore, *A* will not 'give' women to *B*, but
564 will 'take' women from *B*." The second method (hypergamy), though
582 only a logical development of the first, and a very precise way of
613 manifesting superior status, has complex implications. In effect, a progressive distinction of status is made between the children of the sister (superior) and the children of the brother (inferior). Hence not merely the caste but the entire network of kinship is placed on a gradient of ritual status. Furthermore, if hypergamy is to be combined with lineages, it should be clear that, although the matter can be harmoniously combined with matrilineages (i.e., the brother partaking of the superior ritual connections of his sister), the patrilineal principles raise difficult problems, since the sister is given "away" to a superior group and the brothers can partake in the increase in ritual status only by reason of their claims on her children or in some other indirect fashion. Also, since the position of the woman affects the status of her children in both matrilineal and patrilineal contexts, it appears difficult to combine intracaste hypergamy with patrilineal descent at least in South India. Thus we get ZD marriage (i.e., symmetrical exchange) coupled with Brahman caste endogamy in Tanjore, but an entire scale of hypergamous matrilineages all the way from Kshatriya to Sudra status in Malabar. A similar feature was observed in eastern Ceylon.

The first method (endogamy) permits the ethnographer to make simple statements about discrete categories of people; the second (hypergamy) is more complex, since the status-bearing unit can be a single lineage with hypergamous connections and it may be difficult in the continuous descending steps of status to say exactly where one "caste" category ends and the next begins (see fig. 37).

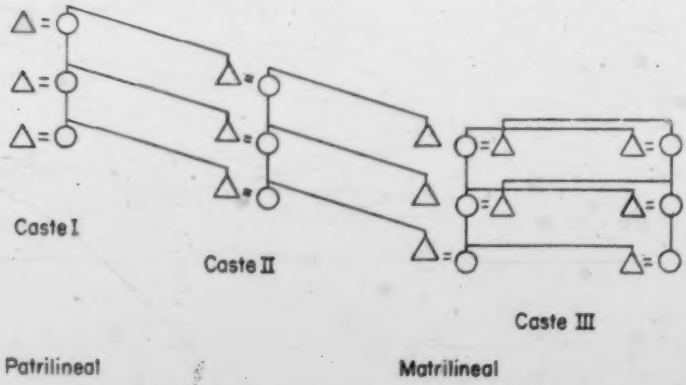

Figure 37. Patrilineal and matrilineal hypergamy.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
121 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
114 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
613 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
184 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question
[605] of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent. [114] [184]

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

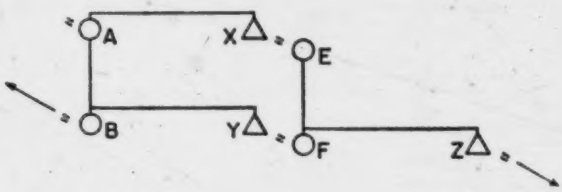

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyyar
[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

Panju and Narayana had taken their share of the two fifths of the common *tarawad* property undivided, as I have explained earlier, and this gave them a relatively more prosperous household in which to live and bring up their children. They were landowners in their own right, and not tenants like most of the Thandans in the area. This enabled them to work in their paddy fields for themselves, and in those of their brothers of the bigger house, and saved them from paying rent or giving part of the crop away to the *janmi* as others had to do. 595*

Accompanied by my interpreters, I spent many hours in the courtyard of the Appayl Wattakkeh farmhouse, watching the work of the men, the domestic chores of the women, and the games of the children. I was obliged occasionally to question them and to press them for answers about situations which I did not have time to watch develop, although I would naturally have much preferred to remain simply a silent onlooker. By preference, I used to go them rather than get them to come to me, for I believed that if I saw them in their own setting, I got to know them better. 124

It appeared that each time the men of Appayl Wattakkeh had been married (three times in the case of Panju and Narayana, to Devaki, Kuniyama and Nani), there had been the customary arrangement between the two families and a public wedding ceremony. Money had been given to the fathers of the bride by the boy's father and maternal uncle, and cloth to her mother. For Nani, their mother's brother had given her eldest father (she had three) twenty eight *fanans* (or sixteen rupees, fifteen annas), and a piece of cotton material to her mother. In exchange, she had brought with her a dowry which consisted of two hundred rupees worth of jewelry, household brass vessels and two gold sovereigns. This was quite exceptionally good for the Thandan caste, I was told. 583 [584]

In all three marriages, the husbands had lined up with their common bride and drunk coconut milk with her, in the presence of the respective families and their guests. The ceremony had always taken place at the woman's house, and it was only after a few days that she had gone to live with her husbands. This period varied considerably, I heard; in some cases weeks and even months went by without the partners having any sort of marital relations. People were not in a hurry to consumate marriage in Kerala, it seemed. 595* 585

I had read in Aiyappan's *Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 101, that when one husband was with the common wife, it used to be the custom that he leave his knife etc. on the door frame of the bedroom to signal 595* 114

595 away from his village on military service. Buchanan, as late as 1807, reports that Nayar women vied with each other as to the number of lovers they could obtain. (p. 411).

595 [76] Until late in the nineteenth century, women
584 evidently had freedom to choose their own lovers.
644 This was until recently still the case in the royal lineages, where women selected their lovers from a small group of aristocratic Nambudiri families. Young men of these families were introduced into the palaces by older kinsmen already established there, and might become ensconced as regular occupants of the Nambudiri quarters until such time as they were dismissed by their royal mistresses. The princes of the lineage appear to have had little say in arranging these unions. I was told by one informant that the senior Raja periodically held an audience at which Nambudiris currently living in the palace were presented to him by his secretaries, but that otherwise he had little knowledge of
595 marital life within the palace. Today, as also
584 in commoner lineages, this is no longer the case: monogamy has been customary in all subcastes for the past forty to fifty years, and the prospective husband of a woman is selected by her karanavan or elder brother. In orthodox families of the retainer subcastes, at least for the past fifty years, the karanavan or the elder brother of a woman has had the right to dismiss a husband of whom he disapproved. Alternatively
[586] a woman may still, as of old, divorce her husband at will by refusing him admittance or causing her kinsmen to place his sleeping mat

584 outside on the verandah before he comes to visit
595 her.

These statements however again require some modification in the case of hypergamous unions. In recent years at all events, a powerful Nambudiri or royal landowner might occasionally force his attentions on a Nayar woman, whose family would be unlikely to oppose him. In two cases I even heard of Nambudiris who had succeeded in carrying on a liaison with a dead Nayar wife's younger sister, though this is contrary to Nayar rules of mating and led to unhappiness and strong covert [77] disapproval among the woman's kinsmen. In general, however, the traditional picture of Nayar marriage is one in which women voluntarily seek the favours of men: rape, for example, is a crime
[684] apparently unheard of among them. Certainly, cases are recorded of the dismissal of a higher caste man by a Nayar woman.

613 Combined polyandrous and polygynous mating
595 had a function in maintaining the unity of the
592 lineage. It seems that in every matrilineal system one basic conflict is inherent, namely the conflict between a man's ties to his natal kin on the one hand and to his kin by marriage and procreation on the other. In the Nayar system in this area, the conflict was resolved by almost completely eliminating the claims of the father and his kin. Polyandry and polygyny, combined, minimized the rights of the husband and father, and dispersed their roles between a number of men. This preserved the unity of the lineage, by preventing the close attachment of men to

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy retained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to [776]
Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at [613]
Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign [586]
that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obliga-
[431] tion. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[837] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

613 tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal 576 etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates 591 a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. 593 The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various 591 particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some 582 of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. [428] Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's [593] descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or 591 widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. 593 Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at [844] the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more [593] usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North [584] Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's [184] niece.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

585
184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the
[564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[574] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdurari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 780 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] 305 [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

881 she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. [184] In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

585 The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only [184] two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs con- [582] nected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other [584] classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bride- [787] groom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kúranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bride-groom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly wel- comed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Rámáyanam* or other sacred book, referring to marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read [533] by the Asán or village school master. Some music is also [574] provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

Sambandham.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names, and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.

After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad* names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*,

[TEXT Continues on P. 204]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595 already been to see them twice, and I had become quite well acquainted with them. I had found the two younger men, Panju and Narayana, especially pleasant to talk to and, as they lived in polyandry whereas the rest of the family had given it up, it seemed most appropriate to get to know them better still. Appayl Wattakkeh too, appeared to be one of the few larger and well-to-do Thandan households in the neighbourhood willing to talk about polyandry. I began the special study of this family on the 11th of November, 1949, and went back repeatedly to visit them until my stay in Kerala came to an end in December of the same year.

*595 I have explained earlier (p. 179) how all five brothers of the older generation had been married polyandrously to Devaki; then, when she died, how they had taken Kuniyama to be their new common wife, until Mayadi, the eldest husband, died, Raman became *karanavan* and Shankara broke loose to marry Kodamah, whom his father and mother's brother had found for him. This had seemed to give ideas to the two younger men, Panju and Narayana. Very soon, they too, requested that [584] their maternal uncle provide them with a wife of their own, and they obtained her in the form of Nani, the present thirty five year old mother of their four boys, all born in polyandry.

The interesting thing about these two men was that, although they had not accepted the common wife whom they had previously shared with their elders, they had apparently no objection to polyandry as such, and were quite willing to remain wedded in this way, provided it was limited to them, and to a woman who pleased them both. I was naturally intrigued by this, and did not fail to ask Panju, who became my [115] principal informant (No. 2 in the genealogy, Table 3, facing p. 179), what were his reasons for it. It took a long time to get from him that he was fond of his younger brother and that he had for the latter none of the feelings which he nursed against his elder brothers. Narayana, too, seemed happy with Panju, but there was perhaps more passivity in his case towards his partner than there was in the elder of the two men vis à vis his junior. Why had Nani had accepted the situation was more understandable: born and bred to expect that form of matrimony, she had raised no objection when it had been decided to marry her to the two younger members of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. She was the mistress of her home, too, since her husbands had put themselves up in a smaller house, separate from the rest of the family. She had thus no sister-in-law or mother-in-law to cope with, and seemed very pleased with the arrangement.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Thandans

Panju and Narayana had taken their share of the two fifths of the common *tarawad* property undivided, as I have explained earlier, and this gave them a relatively more prosperous household in which to live and bring up their children. They were landowners in their own right, and not tenants like most of the Thandans in the area. This enabled them to work in their paddy fields for themselves, and in those of their brothers of the bigger house, and saved them from paying rent or giving part of the crop away to the *janmi* as others had to do. 595*

Accompanied by my interpreters, I spent many hours in the courtyard of the Appayl Wattakkeh farmhouse, watching the work of the men, the domestic chores of the women, and the games of the children. I was obliged occasionally to question them and to press them for answers about situations which I did not have time to watch develop, although I would naturally have much preferred to remain simply a silent onlooker. By preference, I used to go them rather than get them to come to me, for I believed that if I saw them in their own setting, I got to know them better. 124

It appeared that each time the men of Appayl Wattakkeh had been married (three times in the case of Panju and Narayana, to Devaki, Kuniyama and Nani), there had been the customary arrangement between the two families and a public wedding ceremony. Money had been given to the fathers of the bride by the boy's father and maternal uncle, and cloth to her mother. For Nani, their mother's brother had given her eldest father (she had three) twenty eight *fanans* (or sixteen rupees, fifteen annas), and a piece of cotton material to her mother. In exchange, she had brought with her a dowry which consisted of two hundred rupees worth of jewelry, household brass vessels and two gold sovereigns. This was quite exceptionally good for the Thandan caste, I was told. 583 [584]

In all three marriages, the husbands had lined up with their common bride and drunk coconut milk with her, in the presence of the respective families and their guests. The ceremony had always taken place at the woman's house, and it was only after a few days that she had gone to live with her husbands. This period varied considerably, I heard; in some cases weeks and even months went by without the partners having any sort of marital relations. People were not in a hurry to consumate marriage in Kerala, it seemed. 595* 585

I had read in Aiyappan's *Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 101, that when one husband was with the common wife, it used to be the custom that he leave his knife etc. on the door frame of the bedroom to signal 595* 119

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the [574] Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

● 585

/Information on the Tali ceremony as a form of temporary pre-pubescent ritual marriage for the Nayar and Tiyyar girl will be found in category 588./

582 Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well
595 as marriage to the dead spouse's sibling, were
835 thus automatically forbidden. This rule appears to relate to the paramount need to keep minimal the potential rivalries between individuals of the same sex within the group. It was also consistent with the relationship of respect between
585 them. Even today, when ceremonies mark the
602 start of the post-puberty marriage, a man's
595 lineage elders may not attend his marriage ceremonies and feast. He goes to the bride's house with unrelated friends of his own age or with affines, ideally, his sister's husbands. For marriage is a jolly undertaking and only such men may joke together about sexual scandals in the village. But [81] reticence is required in discussing their own marriage, and the respect a woman owes her older kinswomen demands that she interfere in no way in their marital life. Today, a woman treats her father or step-father with affectionate respect of a less formal kind than that accorded to the mother's brother, but she should not touch him after puberty. With her elder sister's husband she observes still greater formality, based on the incest prohibition. The ban on sororal polygyny is particularly comprehensible in view of the fact that Nayar women were traditionally open rivals for the attentions of men: many writers mention this and it is still discernible in villages today. The mutual respect and amity required of women of the same property-group was incompatible with such rivalry.

835 However, the ban on relations with two persons
582 of the same group was less stringent than the

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, [776]
bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, [613]
and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign [586]
that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food [585]
shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād.

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year.
574 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob-
[593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions
[604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of
this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two
582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger
the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a
613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together,
591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often
[593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although
they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early
[763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal an-
cestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively
[586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and
sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a
[764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed
in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their
[431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, im-
portant distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal
kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing
to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part
of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship
(sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's
sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant.
[686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to
him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the
husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out
with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for
a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been
consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially con-
ducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received
into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his
wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom
[848] kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after
divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

585 684 848

and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

593 [591]

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

[264] [844] [613] [431]

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

[595]

586

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

587

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

[858]

593 184 858 [613]

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

582
* [584] endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her
[837] this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

b:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

564 should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst
837 the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

581 The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

585 The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem
784 to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see
182 relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy.
They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are
less influenced by considerations of property than else- [421]
where. The desire to maintain property within the
family is the curse of all natural relations between the
sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon
mankind! We have some strange examples of these in
Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-
post of the house, and the house owner begets children
on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries
his child to a woman, and himself begets children on
her, and the individual who stands in the position of
father may be but a few years older than the son. But
we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous
customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural
selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate
customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital
relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly
natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be [127]
attempted. The first of these, described as "most
peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-
kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in
different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in
some form, is essential, and must be performed for every
Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-
kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony
of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the
neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravi-
dian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a
Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries
undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal
families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and
among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's
house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in
the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck,
and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble.
Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

564 613 588 [184] [586] [765] [783] of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 585 [588] The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 184 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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"The variations of the Sambandham are the Pudamuri, Vastradánam, Uzhamporukkuka, Vitáram Kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malayali who would not readily understand what is meant by *Sambandham tudan guga* (to begin Sambandham). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout Kéralam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. 585 184

"It is thus found that Sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among Marumakkattayam Nâyars. It will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this Sambandham ceremony, all over the Kéralam, are in the main the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically: the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony: the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place: the presentation of the *danam* (gifts) to the Brahmans: the sumptuous banquet: the meeting of the bride and the bridegroom,—are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted Sambandhams in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to, are gone through at all Sambandhams among respectable Nâyars, and I would further say that they ought to be gone through at every Sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the Sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of Sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the Putamuri, or Vastradanam, as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of Sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of Sambandham I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. Of course my description will be borne out by the evidence that is before us. The preliminary ceremony, in every Putamuri, is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes 585 787 184

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184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The
[613] bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the
[564] day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[578] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

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the lit-up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and the 585
bridegroom, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, 184
as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the [431]
persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride.

"This is an unvarnished account of a 'Putamuri.' Next morning the Vettilakkettu or Salkâram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is a feasting, etc., in honour of the occasion.

"Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídáram Kayaral is a peculiar form of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the description given above, that the Putamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people generally resort to the less costly ceremony of Uzhamporukkuka or Vídáram Kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as Putamuri; but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The toasting is confined to the relations of the married couple. The particular incident attached to this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular Putamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídáram Kayaral ceremony, and with grown-up children being the issue of such marriage, undergoing the Putamuri ceremony some 15 or 20 years after Uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally.

"The Sambandham of South Malabar, and the Kidakkora-kalyánam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of Putamuri, except the presenting of the cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also *Salkâram* ceremony, wanting in South Malabar as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

But all this formality and ceremonial is not the rule. The Sambandham is always a matter for careful arrangement, in which the wishes of the parties to it are considered, and which it is expected will bring mutual benefit to the two Taravâds concerned.

In South Malabar the girl or woman never lives in her 591
husband's house; she lives on in her own Taravâd house 184
and is there visited by her husband. The ordinary huggermugger, which sometimes stultifies all pleasure in existence, is thus avoided. In North Malabar the woman

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184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony,
[848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not
585 be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification.
[684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

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613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
553 dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
585 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth
178 it change even in such an important piece of life as marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection. 564 585 178

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, which is much more conservative than the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâranavan and the women † of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home." [582] [181] [184] 585 564 613 [787]

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd), [574]

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

"The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are separate; at different ends of the house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A few days after completion of the ceremony the senior woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathira she sends besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

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with any Nambūdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambūdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambūdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

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In addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurusi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [569] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [565] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilateral or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilateral ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished
585 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Āchāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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is strong or (as we should expect) permits divorce and return to the brother's household; whether her natal kinsmen retain strong rights in a woman throughout her life; and whether the virgin is in any way associated in myth with a phallic mother-goddess.[1]

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[1] The male fear of deflowering a virgin, who may be unconsciously associated with the mother and is thus thought of as the rightful property of a father-figure or of an infant son-figure, appears in the marriage customs of several other South Indian peoples. The patrilineal Tamil Non-Brahmans of Tanjore, who have post-puberty marriage, formerly required the brahman priest who performed their marriage rites to deflower the girl as well. The fact that in these castes the mother's brother is considered the rightful husband of a girl gives further evidence of the belief that a girl should rightly be married by a man of the parental generation. Thurston (1906, pp. 49-50) reports that in the Malayali hill-tribe of Salem (also Tamil) a small boy is married to a mature woman, but the bride's father-in-law and not the husband cohabits with her and begets children on behalf of his son. When the son reaches maturity and his own legal sons are married, he in turn cohabits with their wives and raises children on behalf of his 'sons'. The Vellalas of Coimbatore are said to have a similar custom, in which a boy marries a mature woman, with whom the girl's father-in-law cohabits until the boy is adult. Similarly among the Reddis of Tinnevelly, a boy of five is reported often to be married to a girl of twenty. The girl after marriage cohabits with one of her own kinsmen on the maternal side, frequently her mother's brother, or else with the father of her boy-husband. When the husband grows up, he may in some cases never cohabit with his wife, but instead forms a liaison with the wife of some other boy-kinsman. Among the Tamil Vallambans a boy is obliged to marry one or other type of cross-cousin, who may be older than himself. The girl then cohabits with her husband's elder brother, mother's brother or father, and the boy-husband legitimatizes the children when he comes of age. In all these customs we appear to have the reflection of a strong Oedipal conflict which, on the one hand, prevents a man from deflowering and sometimes from cohabiting at all with his wife and causes him to give her to his father or some other father-figure, and, on the other hand, gives such free rein to incestuous desires towards women of the filial generation as to permit men to deprive their social 'sons' of their legal wives. The defloration of a girl by one who is a father-figure to her husband is not, of course, confined to India, but appears for example in the European custom of the *droit du seigneur*. At the initation of a Banaro girl, her prospective bridegroom's father, being 'ashamed' to do it himself, engaged his sub-friend to deflower the girl (Thurnwald 1916, p. 261).

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

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588 182 174 cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

582 564 585 The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham* not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered [554] that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

585 The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

[582] If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom 585
stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars [591]
are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. [178]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary [184]
considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in [581]
itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage.
It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunder- 586
standing or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the
marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further
formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. [649]
By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break
off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly con-
ducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the
maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the
mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and
marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, 581
there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational [648]
Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham*
with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a
marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very
ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six
marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its
distinguished author.

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) 582
there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The
men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions.
A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. [564]
She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed
to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry any-
one who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the
maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress
lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so
closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort.

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any 591
particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's [582]
own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is [178]
strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their
ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a
specially aristocratic privilege.

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This 595
can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for
The last fifty years.

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati.*"[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "ɑ" to "ɤ" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 609–70.

114 giving a cloth as the essential marriage ceremony . . . Throughout the greater
585 part of the Malabar coast the essential feature of the marriage ceremony is that the man gives a piece of cloth to the woman. The ceremony of the *Sambandham* marriage (among the Nairs) consists in giving a cloth, and various names such as *Muntu Kodukkuka*, *Vastadanum poduvakota*, and *Putamuri* all mean cloth-giving."[1]

114 Now with regard to this "essential feature" of the Nāyar *Sambandham*, it may
585 be useful to remember that cloth-giving as a name for marriage did not exist in the
174 earlier half of the eighteenth century. The poet Kunchan Nampiyar, in his works
171 (thirty-two of which are directly or indirectly descriptive of Nāyar life) uses the word "cloth-giving" for *Sambandham* only once:

> "*Pennimu Putava Kotulthennullathumunnikkittan Potti paranju*"
> "*Patrachaicham.*"

This "essential feature," therefore, is most certainly a development of the
[195] later half of the eighteenth century. It is, as a matter of fact, only within the last fifty years that cloth-giving as a synonym for marriage has come to be used widely, and even now it is used mostly by the ultra-refined, who consider it improper to utter the name of marriage in company. Therefore, to say that the Todas emigrated from the Malabar coast because of similarity in custom which, among the Nāyars at least, is a very late development, does not carry conviction.

114 Again, Dr. Rivers sees a "possible link" between Malabar and the Todas in
192 the word *Pul-palu*[2] of the Todas and the ceremony of *Puli Kudi* of the Nāyars.
171 Because of the similarity in these words, Dr. Rivers has suggested[3] "the name
174 *Pulipal* may mean tamarind dairy and be a survival of community between the Toda ceremony and that of Malabar." This is a supreme example of the danger of drawing conclusions from questionable etymological premises. Now *Puli* is a well-known Dravidian word which means both the tamarind tree and the sour taste. It is also used as a verb, in which case it means to make anything sour. Now *pul-pali* does not mean tamarind dairy, but the dairy of sour milk. How this could be a link "between Malabar and the Todas" it is utterly impossible for me to see.

114 Dr. Rivers has enumerated a number of points in which he sees "a close resemblance between the customs of the peoples of Malabar and the customs of the Todas." But I would submit that all his points in which any similarity could be seen are Dravidian customs belonging not only to the peoples of Malabar but to the rest of the non-Aryan peoples of South India. Therefore the arguments Dr. Rivers has brought forward prove only that the Todas are a Dravidian people. They do not prove that there was any connection, other than that of neighbours, between the Nāyars and the Todas.

[1] Except the last, which means cloth-cutting.
[2] Pp. 701–2.
[3] P. 702.

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity,[1] and the omission or neglect of it will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

585 Marriage customs.

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *káranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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588 171 *kalyánam* of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials [533] in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, [789] one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pattu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig védic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathayam* Hindus, the *táli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathayam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the 588 part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at 194 hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on 585 the occasion of *táli* tying. The reason for this departure may have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the [182] early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Bráhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day. In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

Sambandham.

The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs connected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bridegroom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kúranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bridegroom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly welcomed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Rámáyanam* or other sacred book, referring to marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read by the Asán or village school master. Some music is also provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

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A NAIR GIRL FOR SAMBANDHAM (MARRIAGE) WITH HER BRIDESMAIDS.

[facing p. 31]

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585 184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, [586] but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a [581] marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *vivâham* 192 is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the 197 *marumakkathâyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *vivâham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradânam* used in South Malabar.

3. *Uzhamporukkuka*, and *Vidâram Kairuga* of North Malabar.

4. The *Kidakkóra kalyânam* of Palghat and parts of Nedunganád.

Pudamuri, *Vastradânam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidâram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word 184 denoting marriage among the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars. It

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will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this *sambandham* ceremony all over Keralam, are, in the main, the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether the stars agree astrologically, the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony, the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place, the presentation of the *dánam* (gifts) to the Brahmans, the sumptuous banquet, the meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are the features which will invariably be found in all well conducted *sambandhams* in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state, that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all *sambandhams* among respectable Nayars, and I would further say, that they ought to be gone through at every *sambandham*, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of *sambandham*, with the particular incident attached to certain forms of *sambandham* in South Malabar. I shall describe the *Pudamuri* or *Vastraddnam* as celebrated in North Malabar, and show how the other forms of *sambandham* are related to it. I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The preliminary ceremony in every *Pudamuri* is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride in the presence of the relations of the bride and the bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculation on a piece of palmyra leaf with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's *kúranavan* and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth, and this preliminary ceremony is invariably performed

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184 at all *Pudamuris* in North Malabar. It is called *Pudamuri*
[787] *Kodukkal* (giving pieces of cloth for dressing), and it is unknown in South Malabar.

Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the *Pudamuri*, the bridegroom visits his *kúranavans* and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nut, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house of the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends, to seats
[431] provided in the *tekkini* or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*dúnams*) or money gifts to the Brahmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now the time for the
(787) astrologer to appear and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *patinjáttu* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated and turned into a bed room for the occasion.
[354] There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps and *ashtamangalyam* which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangalyam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, lighted fire and a small round wooden box called a *cheppu* made in a peculiar fashion. They will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his best man enters the room through the western door accompanied by the bride's aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the *ashtamangalyam* and lits up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom are touched, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to
[431] perform another duty. At the *tekkini* or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes and betel leaves and

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed room with the bride. 184 [431]

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkàram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a marriage in the legal or sacramental sense of the term. The views of the members of the orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State. 585 564 184 [p31]

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kdranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive 586 [562]

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37,

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562 *marumakkathdyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathdyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathdyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 556 564 581 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristocracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste, as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris, of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar. 581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 136.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 85.

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177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawads*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

Polyandry.

593 604 582 585 The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of death

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

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Thandans

Panju and Narayana had taken their share of the two fifths of the common *tarawad* property undivided, as I have explained earlier, and this gave them a relatively more prosperous household in which to live and bring up their children. They were landowners in their own right, and not tenants like most of the Thandans in the area. This enabled them to work in their paddy fields for themselves, and in those of their brothers of the bigger house, and saved them from paying rent or giving part of the crop away to the *janmi* as others had to do. 595*

Accompanied by my interpreters, I spent many hours in the courtyard of the Appayl Wattakkeh farmhouse, watching the work of the men, the domestic chores of the women, and the games of the children. I was obliged occasionally to question them and to press them for answers about situations which I did not have time to watch develop, although I would naturally have much preferred to remain simply a silent onlooker. By preference, I used to go them rather than get them to come to me, for I believed that if I saw them in their own setting, I got to know them better. 124

It appeared that each time the men of Appayl Wattakkeh had been married (three times in the case of Panju and Narayana, to Devaki, Kuniyama and Nani), there had been the customary arrangement between the two families and a public wedding ceremony. Money had been given to the fathers of the bride by the boy's father and maternal uncle, and cloth to her mother. For Nani, their mother's brother had given her eldest father (she had three) twenty eight *fanans* (or sixteen rupees, fifteen annas), and a piece of cotton material to her mother. In exchange, she had brought with her a dowry which consisted of two hundred rupees worth of jewelry, household brass vessels and two gold sovereigns. This was quite exceptionally good for the Thandan caste, I was told. 583 [584]

In all three marriages, the husbands had lined up with their common bride and drunk coconut milk with her, in the presence of the respective families and their guests. The ceremony had always taken place at the woman's house, and it was only after a few days that she had gone to live with her husbands. This period varied considerably, I heard; in some cases weeks and even months went by without the partners having any sort of marital relations. People were not in a hurry to consumate marriage in Kerala, it seemed. 595* 585

I had read in Aiyappan's *Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 101, that when one husband was with the common wife, it used to be the custom that he leave his knife etc. on the door frame of the bedroom to signal 595* 114

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Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

e) by mutual consent evidenced by a registered instrument attested by not less than two witnesses." 671 [585]

Art. 12: "A polyandrous marriage performed after this Act shall be void." [595]

Chapter III. Maintenance and Guardianship. Three articles.

Chapter IV. Succession.

Five articles on testamentary succession.

Art. 26: "For the purpose of succession there is no distinction between the self-acquired property and the ancestral property or between the property of a male and that of a female except as otherwise provided by this Act." 671 428

Eight articles on Intestate succession.

Art. 28: "Property in respect of which a Thiyya has died intestate devolves upon the wife or husband or upon those who are of the kindred of the deceased in this order and according to the rules herein prescribed."

Art. 29: "When the intestate had left more than one widow, the distribution of inheritance referred to in sections 30, 31, 32 and 33 shall be made as if there is only one widow, all the widows together taking equally one widow's share."

Art. 30. "When the intestate has left a widow, if he has also left a son, or lineal descendant of a son, a share equal to that of a son shall belong to the widow."

Eleven articles on distribution of intestate's property.

Art. 39, (b): "If some of them (lineal descendants) are his (the intestate) sons and others are his daughters, each daughter shall take a half of the share of a son if the intestate is a male, and if the intestate is a female all children shall take equally."

It should be remembered that this legislation is that of a former princely state which has ceased to exist as a separate unit. Today, since the coming into being of the State of Kerala, made up of Malabar, Mahe, Cochin and Travancore, this Act has been superseded by the provisions of the India Code in force now in the whole of the Indian Republic. In accordance with the stipulations of the Code, a larger share of inheritance is granted to daughters and widow than was formerly allowed by the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act. [648]

[PP 241 579 not Processed]

595 realised, the women among the Nāyars not being [585] restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Nāyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same 586 time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which from the frailty of nature domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man 581 another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off, and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age."

595 In a note on the Nāyars in the sixteenth century, [20] Cæsar Fredericke writes as follows.* "These Nairi having their wives common amongst themselves, and when any of them goe into the house of any of these women, he leaveth his sworde and target at the door, and the time that he is there, there dare not be any so

* The Voyage and Travell of M. Cæsar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice, into the East Indies and beyond the Indies (1563). Translation. Hakluyt Voyages, V, 394.

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The opinion was expressed by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Winterbotham, one of the Malabar Marriage Commissioners, that the Brahman tāli-tier was a relic of the time when the Nambūtiris were entitled to the first fruits, and it was considered the high privilege of every Nāyar maid to be introduced by them to womanhood. In this connection, reference may be made to Hamilton's 'New Account of the East Indies', where it is stated that [793] "when the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambūdri, or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and he, if he pleases, may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships. And some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the clergy the same tribute, but the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the priests' places themselves."

588 Of those who gave evidence before the Malabar Commission, some thought the tāli-kettu was a marriage, some not. Others called it a mock marriage, a formal marriage, a sham marriage, a fictitious marriage, a marriage sacrament, the preliminary part of marriage, a meaningless ceremony, an empty form, a ridiculous farce, an incongruous custom, a waste of money, and a device for becoming involved in debt. "While," the report states, "a small minority of strict conservatives still maintain that the tāli-kettu is a real marriage intended to confer on the bridegroom a right to cohabit with the bride, an immense majority describe it as a fictitious marriage, the origin of which they are at a loss to explain. And another large section tender the explanation accepted by our President (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) that, in some way or other, it is an essential caste observance preliminary to the forming of sexual relations."

588 178 Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the 174 Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better [585] classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, [613] especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was [174] nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for [184] husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

sambandham ceremony all over Kēralam are in the main 585
the same. As there are different local names denoting 184
marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examina- [787]
tion, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically; the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony; the usual hour at which the ceremony takes place; the presentation [431]
of dānam (gifts) to Brāhmans; sumptuous banquet; the [574]
meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted sambandhams in all parts of Kēralam alike. But here I would state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all sambandhams among respectable Nāyars; and I would further state that they ought to be gone through at every sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the pudamuri or vastradānam as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of sambandham, I consider the pudamuri the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The prelimi- [787]
nary ceremony in every pudamuri is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the [574] Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

The cloths are placed in the western room of the house (padinhatta), in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and ashtamangalyam, which consists of eight articles symbolical of mangalyam or marriage. These are rice, paddy (unhusked rice), the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round box called cheppu. These will be found placed on the floor of the room as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groomsman enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloths and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east, with the ashtamangalyam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groomsman then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride sprinkles rice over the lamps and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom, who immediately leaves the room, as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride. Next morning, the vettilakettu or salkāram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is feasting in honour of the occasion. Uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral is a peculiar form

585 184 [342] [574]

575 184 of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the description given above that the pudamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people resort to the less costly ceremony of uzhamporukkuka or vīdāram kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as pudamuri, but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. [574] There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The feasting is confined to the relations of the couple. The particular incident of this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular pudamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by the uzhamporukkuka ceremony, and with grown-up children as the issue of such marriage, undergo the pudamuri ceremony some fifteen or twenty years after uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally. The sambandham of South Malabar, and the kidakkora kalyānam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of pudamuri, except the presenting of cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also salkāram ceremony wanting in South Malabar, as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

585 In connection with the following note by Mr. C. P. Rāman Menon on sambandham among the Akattu Charna or Akathithaparisha (inside clan), Mr. Fawcett [582] states that "my informant says in the first place that the [178] man should not enter into sambandham with a woman until he is thirty. Now-a-days, when change is running [181] wild, the man is often much less. In North Malabar, [582] which is much more conservative than the south, it was,

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however, my experience that sambandham was rare [181] on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The [582] Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women [584] of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are [787] informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, 585 and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same 574 age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel [431] leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the [613] taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again [276]

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 585
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. 574
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day [787]
he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

A sambandham ceremony at
585 Calicut is recorded by Mr. Fawcett, at which there were
[574] cake and wine for the guests, and a ring for the bride.

In connection with sambandham, Mr. N. Subramani
[184] Aiyar writes from Travancore that "it is known in different localities as gunadosham (union through good or evil), vastradānam or putavakota (giving of cloth), and uzhamporukkal (waiting one's turn). It may be performed without any formal ceremony whatever, and is actually a private transaction confidentially gone through in some families. The bridegroom and his friends assemble at the house of the bride on the appointed night, and, before the assembled guests, the bridegroom presents the bride with a few unbleached cloths. Custom enjoins that four pieces of cloth should be presented, and the occasion is availed of to present cloths to the relatives and servants of the bride also. The girl asks permission of her mother and maternal
[431] uncle, before she receives the cloths. After supper, and the distribution of pān-supāri, the party disperses. Another day is fixed for the consummation ceremony.
[574] On that day the bridegroom, accompanied by a few friends, goes to the bride's house with betel leaves and nuts. After a feast, the friends retire."

It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that one name for the sambandham rite is kitakkora, meaning
881 bed-chamber ceremony. In the same report, the following account of a puberty ceremony is given. "The tirandukuli ceremony is practically a public declaration that a girl has reached the age of maturity. When a girl attains puberty, she is seated in a separate room, where a lamp is lit, and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass called vālkannādi, literally a looking-glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by korava

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 881
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vêlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vêlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vêlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vêlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vêlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pân-supâri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vêlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tâluks, the Vêlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tâluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 585
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
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therein laid down, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father, respectively, and to succeed to half his self-acquired property, if he dies intestate; while the parties to such a sambandham cannot register a second sambandham during its continuance, that is, until it is terminated by death or by a formal application for divorce in the Civil Courts. The total number of sambandhams registered under the Act has, however, been infinitesimal, and the reason for this is, admittedly, the reluctance of the men to fetter their liberty to terminate sambandham at will by such restrictions as the necessity for formal divorce, or to undertake the burdensome responsibility of a legal obligation to maintain their wife and offspring. If, as the evidence recorded by the Malabar Marriage Commission tended to show, 'a marriage law in North Malabar, and throughout the greater part of South Malabar, would merely legalise what is the prevailing custom,' it is hard to see why there has been such a disinclination to lend to that custom the dignity of legal sanction." * The following applications to register sambandhams under the Act were received from 1897 to 1904:—

[586]

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182
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—	Nayars.	Tiyans.	Others.	Total.
1897	28	6	2	36
1898	8	2	4	14
1899	8	2	4	14
1900	8	..	9	17
1901	3	...	1	4
1902	...	...	...	...
1903	2	...	...	2
Total ...	57	10	20	87

* Gazetteer of Malabar.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his 593

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

426 money-lenders is absorbed in no time. In the last five years the number of money-lending shops has doubled and their funds invested by this means have trebled. There is yet a demand for money which is unsatisfied.

Another method of supporting, as it were, the poor, is to lend the seed for sowing on the promise that for every 100 measures lent they will return after the first crop, i.e., after four months from the time of lending, 120 or 130 measures. This means an interest of 60 per cent per annum. The cultivators do not as a rule save their own seed, because when they have no means of living they natually use their seed for food. I am told this is the case with every paddy cultivator excepting the three rich agriculturists who are landowners. It must be confessed here that without such borrowing the cultivation itself could not at present be carried on.

The village is free from padials. The debtors only pay interest, but in the Palghat taluk the system of padials survives.

The causes of indebtedness are not far to seek. Economic backwardness is the primary cause. Waste of money on drink and evil habits is not uncommon. In some cases debt is due to ambi- [585] tious schemes which fail. Excessive display in marriage is not common in Malabar as in eastern districts. Non-Brahmans, especially the castes below the Nayars, pay only Rs. 20 or Rs. 30, according to their means, to the bridegroom, and sometimes not even that. Another Rs. 25 will raise a marriage above the ordinary level. Taking into account that a marriage will be performed in a family only once in five or six years this expenditure of Rs. 50 or so cannot be deemed great.

The ordinary labourers, who number about 500, maintain themselves by their daily work and they are never in debt. It is the agricultural classes and those who are engaged in petty trade that [427] are in debt. The only asset of the tenants is that they have to pay as advance one year's rent to the landowners and they receive for the advance 6 per cent interest. Even this is paid in some cases by borrowing.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

476 *Communal life.*—The Brahmans of this village have formed themselves into a society for mutual aid and convenience. This 794 organization of the society is on the model of the old village republics. It exists for social purposes only. Two persons are elected biennially to look after the affairs and the income of the society. Every house is represented by its head in the village assembly and that assembly elects the persons. The sources of income to the society are--

(1) the interest on the already existing property which is about Rs. 3,000;

(2) for all social functions such as marriage, etc., the society as a whole has a claim for a fixed sum. The total income from these two sources may be estimated at Rs. 350.

The duty of the society is to appoint the village priest, village barber, village trumpeter and other persons essential for the performance of social or religious functions.

The whole income is spent on the worship of God. The particular ways in which it should be spent have been fixed long ago, and comprise a special feast for the Brahmans once a year, provision of a burial-ground and other public and necessary places

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The 837 Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a [428] different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female. [586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make [585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children [428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre- [587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is [595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

There is no infant marriage except perhaps among the Brahmans. 582
Our girls are given away in marriage between the age of 10 and 12. Formerly it used to be younger. But strictly speaking this is only betrothal, the actual consummation of the marriage taking place only after the girl has attained womanhood at about 16 years of age. Our girls are very healthy and well developed so long as they remain at home. But their husbands take them away with them when they are old enough to the places where they are employed, e.g., there are three of them in Madras, and others nearer home. Boys are seldom married before 20 or 21 and the age is rising. Having to live away from home for their education their health is often impaired and they are less healthy and have less vitality and power of resistance than the girls, and are, in the writer's opinion, more subject to illness when away from home. Brahmans have to pay large dowries, whether they are able or no: the least sum being Rs. 1,000 for a bridegroom whose educational qualifications are measured by the Matriculation examination. Even 'ne'er-do-weels' get a high dowry owing to the unsatisfied demand for bridegrooms. We are groaning under the tyranny of an effete social system which is ruining us. Yet our elders protest against any change in our social system, such as post-puberty marriage. Something is sure to be done to remedy this state of things before long: the social conscience cannot long stand it.

Among other castes there is no infant-marriage, nor the system of dowries as it exists with us.

Among the Nayars there is a curious marriage ceremony 585
performed when a female child is only a few days or months old. Some male person, not necessarily or ordinarily the future husband, ties the sacred marriage thread around the baby's neck. This ceremony is purely formal. Real marriages take place after puberty, and the girl may choose any man she pleases as her husband, this marriage being not at all formal, and great freedom, comparatively, is allowed to the wife. Polyandry, which once [595]
prevailed, has now disappeared.

The purdah system does not exist except among the Nambudri 582
community of Brahmans. There are two families of Nambudri Brahmans in our village. Their females can never see the faces [612]
of any males except their husbands and near relations. They seldom go out to any distance, except to the temple, never travel by railway, and hide themselves, when going about, with huge umbrellas made of palm leaves and bamboo sticks. There is post-puberty marriage among them, and only the eldest son of the family marries. Marriages are often exchanges of bride and bridegroom (i.e., a brother and sister marry the sister and the brother of another family), and in that case dowries need not be paid. Otherwise heavy sums are paid. The Numbudri Brahmans are noted for their simple lives, their Vedic learning, and their intense conservatism, though one very enlightened and aristocratic family near my village owns a tile factory at Shoranur and a large
part of a spinning mill at Calicut. They lack western education. 556
This year one Nambudripad (i.e., a member of the Nambudri aristocracy) has joined the Presidency College in Madras as an extraordinary student, to get the benefit of the lectures and the college life. He belongs to the family mentioned above, who also

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well. 121 591 60 [564] [114]

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom. 60 171

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58). 604 588

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on. 605 582 585 [171]

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which 564 611 591

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage. [114]

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[594] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

595 664 651 by immediate death. For this reason it was necessary, when a woman became pregnant, for her to be able to name one or more lovers of appropriate subcaste who might have fathered the child. These men must then acknowledge their responsibility by paying the expenses of delivery (petta chilavu - clothing, rice and vegetables) to the barber-midwife who attended at births. If no appropriate lover came forward to do so, the woman was deemed to have cohabited with a low caste man and was excommunicated. Even today, a girl who becomes pregnant before the (modern) marriage ceremony is easily exculpated if she can name a Nayar or higher caste lover who will pay her deliver expenses. She is then by old custom tacitly regarded as having been married to him, and if he chooses not to visit her again, has little difficulty in finding a second husband. If however no expenses are paid, she is assumed to have had relations with a low caste man, a Christian or a Muslim, and though excommunication is not now effectual, she falls into social disgrace. She is unlikely henceforth to find a Nayar husband, and her household may find difficulty in marrying away other girls of her generation

595 586 In addition to the delivery expenses, a Nayar of the local subcaste group who entered into a relationship with a girl was expected to present her with a loincloth on the first night of visiting her. Thereafter, if he continued to visit her, he must make customary gifts of clothing, [75] bathing- and hair-oil, and vegetables, at Onam, Vishu and Tiruvadhira, (10) the three main

595 [586] festivals of the year. If he failed to do so on one of these occasions, it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. However, it seems clear from the literature that though a woman might have a small number of regular visitors of her local group - or even only one - these had no exclusive sexual rights, and that she might receive others at will if they were passing through her village. The evidence in uncertain, however, about the total number of men a woman might entertain concurrently. Nicolo di Conti (1444) writes that "The Nayar women are allowed to take several husbands, so that some have ten or more". Varthema (1510), writes that "One woman has five, six or seven husbands, or even eight. And one sleeps with her one night and one another night" (p. 146). These reports suggest that the number of lovers a woman might have was limited. Hamilton states that in the eighteenth century this was definitely so, and that a woman might have "twelve but no more at one time." (p. 310) Barbosa, however, writing in 1520, says that "in addition to the three or four lovers whom every woman has, they never refuse themselves to any Brahmene or Nayre who gives them money." His view is supported by Pietro della Valle (1624), who says "The Gentile Nairi have no peculiar wives, but all women are common amongst them" (II, p. 379). It seems probable, therefore, that each woman had a small number of fairly regular lovers who made ceremonial gifts to her at the festivals, but that a man might without difficulty gain access to a strange woman when he was

595 away from his village on military service. Buchanan, as late as 1807, reports that Nayar women vied with each other as to the number of lovers they could obtain. (p. 411).

595 584 644 [76] Until late in the nineteenth century, women evidently had freedom to choose their own lovers. This was until recently still the case in the royal lineages, where women selected their lovers from a small group of aristocratic Nambudiri families. Young men of these families were introduced into the palaces by older kinsmen already established there, and might become ensconced as regular occupants of the Nambudiri quarters until such time as they were dismissed by their royal mistresses. The princes of the lineage appear to have had little say in arranging these unions. I was told by one informant that the senior Raja periodically held an audience at which Nambudiris currently living in the palace were presented to him by his secretaries, but that otherwise he had little knowledge of

595 584 marital life within the palace. Today, as also in commoner lineages, this is no longer the case: monogamy has been customary in all subcastes for the past forty to fifty years, and the prospective husband of a woman is selected by her karanavan or elder brother. In orthodox families of the retainer subcastes, at least for the past fifty years, the karanavan or the elder brother of a woman has had the right to dismiss a husband of whom he disapproved. Alternatively

[582] a woman may still, as of old, divorce her husband at will by refusing him admittance or causing her kinsmen to place his sleeping mat

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

WOMAN-DAUGHTER

A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household responsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was expected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, however, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

[588] Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her [586] husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is 835 in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād.

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological

2: Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this
[431] again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obligation. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or
[837] village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[564] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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754 particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations
613 of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

586 I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served
581 to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the
588 sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the
[835] girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It
[834] was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

595 With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not
834 promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically,
851 with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

595 It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution
[765] for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands.
[783] For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children in-
[564] dividual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [601] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but [564] without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age. 602 605 588

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose. 582 535

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today, the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly [586]

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their
554 lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
554 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year.
594 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob-
[593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions
[604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of
this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two
582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger
the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a
613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together,
591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often
[593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although
they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early
[763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal an-
cestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively
[586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and
sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a
[764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed
in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their
[431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, im-
portant distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal
kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing
to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part
of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship
(sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's
sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant.
[686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to
him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the
husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out
with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for
a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been
consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially con-
ducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received
into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his
wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom
[848] kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after
divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which [431] she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village head- [595] men, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case tradi- tionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no cus- tomary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891).

564 613 588 [184] [586] [715] [783] of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [832] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 585 [588] The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 184 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:——"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they
264 take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
262 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be
[586] present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'. 588 184 595 851

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death. 588 586 184 [065]

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage. 588 184 582 [613] [114]

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life. 588 833 114

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers. 588 114

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston & 124 588 184 431

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

with any Nambūdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambūdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāḍuvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāḍuvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambūdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
631 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *taravâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

586 Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
595 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
684 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
851

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 99 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 9 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-[765] offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do 582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished 595 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of 585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each [606] husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the 595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were [601] large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern [428] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kāsam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564] [587]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

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This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

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Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

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The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

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000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

[262] [783] [834]

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the *girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous* desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189-90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 613 564 602 [586]

Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *karanavan*. This man is usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but particularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

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between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāri* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

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why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavo* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammavo* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 56) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, *i.e.*, elder mother, small mother, *i.e.*, younger mother.

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom 585
stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars [591]
are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. [178]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary [184]
considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in
itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. [581]
It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunder- 586
standing or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the
marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further
formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. [648]
By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break
off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly con-
ducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the
maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the
mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and
marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, 581
there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational [648]
Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham*
with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a
marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very
ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six
marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its
distinguished author.

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) 582
there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The
men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions.
A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. [564]
She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed
to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry any-
one who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the
maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress
lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so
closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort.

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any 591
particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's [582]
own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is [178]
strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their
ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a
specially aristocratic privilege.

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This 595
can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for
The last fifty years.

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *tâli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pân supâri*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *pâyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *táli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *táli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkákkarappan* temple and tie the *táli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahádévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpád is the *táli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *táli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *táli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tálikettu kalyánam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tálikettu*

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585 184 six months," and a reply is given in the terms "Be it so". Thus, the permission of the senior lady of the bride's family is asked and given to the bridegroom to visit the bride for a period of six months.

[556] The young men of some aristocratic families who wish to perform *sambandham* have the brides brought to them on an auspicious day without any formal ceremony, and henceforth look upon them as their wives.

585 The union is generally effected with the mutual consent, [586] but is terminable at the will of either party. Practically, a [581] marriage thus effected is, in the majority of instances, found as happy and enduring as others more formal and ceremonial.

The following is the account given by the late Mr. Chandu Menon of the ceremonies constituting the marriage among the Nayars of Malabar. It is quoted here, because it is a typical description which covers all forms of the union :—

585 192 197 "*Sambandham* is the principal Malayalam word as *viváham* is in Sanskrit. Whatever may be the *sambandhams* of the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars, there can be no doubt that the idea which the word conveys to a Malayali is the same as the word *vivâham*. The generic term, *sambandham*, which, in South Malabar between Calicut and Nedunganad, and in Ponnani, Cochin, and parts of Travancore, is the old name to denote marriage includes—

1. *Guna dósham* as used in South and North Malabar.

2. *Pudamuri* or its Sanskrit synonym for *Vastradánam* used in South Malabar.

3. *Uzhamporukkuka*, and *Vidúram Kairuga* of North Malabar.

4. The *Kidakkóra kalyánam* of Palghat and parts of Nedunganád.

Pudamuri, *Vastradánam*, *Uzhamporukkuka*, *Vidúram Kiaruga* are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would hardly be a Malayali who would not really understand what is meant by *sambandham thudanguka* (to begin *sambandham*). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout the Keralam in the same way, and there cannot be any ambiguity about it.

585 184 It is thus found, that *sambandham* is the principal word denoting marriage among the *marumakkathâyam* Nayars. It

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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the 184
place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom re- [431]
tires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkàram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a mar- 585
riage in the legal or sacramental sense of the 564
term. The views of the members of the 184
orthodox community in Malabar, who are the expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The [831]
aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and 586 ●
ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kàranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who [562]
denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37.

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562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo-
556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste,
564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris,
581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar.
581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

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595 [554] circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *kiranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kiranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kiranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

[613] [184] [626] [184] [582]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595
601

AIYAPPAN †

NARAYAN † ?[1]

PARAGNODEN
informant2[2]

KRISHNA
m. to
Janeki
of Odevan-
gatil t.[3]

Paru
m. to
ARMUGHAN
of Kanga-
lata t.

RAMAN
22

Devaki
20

Madevi
12

NARAYAN
10

of
atot-

all of them unmarried

BOY
irl

[1] Emigrated to Singapore, fate unknown, presumed dead.
[2] Now eighty years old
[3] 2° m. (at 43, now 55, after 15 years of first marriage) to:
Tina
of Peralli t.

KESEVAN
11

Lakshmi
9

[4] 2° m. (at 22, now 45, after 4 years of first marriage) to:
Vali, his fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[5] His fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[6] At Manjara. Now divorced; the children are with the mother because they are still very small.
[7] Velu died of "fever"; Krishna of a "stomach ache"; Kali fell into a well; Devaki died of dysentry.

[586]
[165]

[facing P. 192-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

told me that they knew of no instances. They nevertheless seemed alive to such a possibility and readily gave me the above information as theoretically feasible. 597

Divorce was a stumbling block to my questioning, and I found it difficult to get a clear picture of it from the informants. That divorce does exist, there seemed to be no doubt in their minds. The woman was returned to her parents' house with what remained of her dowry, and a piece of cloth which was handed to her father and mother, if they were alive, or to her brothers if the former were dead. The intention of divorce had to be declared publicly before representatives of both the wife's and the husbands' families. The bride-price could be claimed, but this is not often done any longer. What happened if a woman wished to divorce rather than the men, was a possibility which they did not seem to be able to visualize. When I asked about it, Panju said it did not happen, and women did not take this initiative. I mentioned the case of the Pulluvan family which I had visited on the 21st of November, and in which Kalyany had not accepted the polyandrous marriage with two brothers and had eventually left them to go back home to her parents (see p. 214). But both Panju and his brother said that this was another caste, and that such things "did not happen with Thandans". 586 ● 586 564

Panju was surprised at the idea which I put to him that, if one of the husbands in a polyandrous household wished to break away and set up another home for himself with a woman of his choice, divorce from the common wife might be necessary. He insisted that all he had to do was to obtain the consent of his brothers, or, if he needed the help of his mother's brother to get new wife for him, this uncle's approval of his plan. This was not "divorce", he insisted, since the common wife remained in the family with the elder brother or brothers. His outlook appeared to stem, it seemed to me, from the polyandrous concept of the household constituted as such. The common wife was married to the household rather than to the individual men, and even if one of them broke away, the union between the principal and herself was not affected. There could thus be no "divorce", the term being reserved for the break-up of the latter marriage, which would be a much more serious occurrence. 595* 586

But what then of the property? If the deserting husband took a portion of it away for himself, did that not make it look more like a divorce from the wife shared in common? And what about the children? With whom did they remain in the case of a real divorce, such as we had first spoken about?

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

*595
586

Panju and my interpreters agreed that even if a seceding husband took part of the family property away to found a new home of his own, no procedure of divorce was needed from the principal part, from the holders of the remaining main section, the other husbands and the common wife. He just left with the consent of the others, and to all practical purposes was henceforward considered as separated from the common spouse, without the formalities of a public divorce. It was a detachment from the family household, agreed to by the community of husbands, and the man was free to remarry as if he had been given formal permission to do so. Nobody outside or within the kin circle could possibly object.

With regard to the fate of children involved in a regular divorce of their parents in a polyandrous household, Panju and my interpreters were prepared to reply only to questions concerning the divorce of a common wife by her husbands. The case of a woman leaving her husbands simply appeared too unreal and fantastic for them to imagine. As to the departure of one of the husbands to found another family, since there was no divorce properly speaking, the situation was plain: the children were those of the community of himself and his brothers and they therefore remained with the principal, usually with the elder brother, if all the others had decided to leave, one by one. This was the case of the family under study, Nani and Raman junior having remained with Raman senior at the death of Mayadi until Nani was married away. Krishna, Janeki, Karthiyani and Madivi stayed in the large house with the present *karanavan*, Raman senior, but then they were born after the remarriage of Sankara and the departure of Panju and Narayana. If they had been born before these events, however, the position would have been exactly the same, and they would have been left behind with Raman senior and Kuniyama; neither Sankara nor Panju and Narayana would have had any claims on them at all.

Should a woman be divorced by her husbands – a rare occurrence, both my informant and my interpreters assured me – she would be obliged to leave behind all the children whom she had had with them. The only exception to this rule would be if they were too small to be separated from their mother, who might still be suckling them. In that case she would be allowed to take them away temporarily until they were weaned, and then they would have to be returned to their fathers. They were the heirs of the household and, even if there were girls among them, they belonged to it in accordance with the *makkathayam* rule, and there could therefore be no question of them remaining with the mother.

595 realised, the women among the Nāyars not being [585] restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Nāyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same 586 time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which from the frailty of nature domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man 581 another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off, and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age."

595 In a note on the Nāyars in the sixteenth century, [201] Cæsar Fredericke writes as follows.* "These Nairi having their wives common amongst themselves, and when any of them goe into the house of any of these women, he leaveth his sworde and target at the door, and the time that he is there, there dare not be any so

* The Voyage and Travell of M. Cæsar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice, into the East Indies and beyond the Indies (1563). Translation. Hakluyt Voyages, V, 394.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613]
on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564]
Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793]
to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787]
muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556]
a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533]
couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783]
a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534]
drums) and elephants usually form part of the proces- [231]
sion, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264]
boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586]
constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184]
Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765]
which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

585 217 656 therein laid down, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father, respectively, and to succeed to half his self-acquired [586] property, if he dies intestate; while the parties to such a sambandham cannot register a second sambandham during its continuance, that is, until it is terminated by death or by a formal application for divorce in the Civil 585 Courts. The total number of sambandhams registered 182 under the Act has, however, been infinitesimal, and the 656 reason for this is, admittedly, the reluctance of the men to fetter their liberty to terminate sambandham at will by such restrictions as the necessity for formal divorce, or to undertake the burdensome responsibility of a legal obligation to maintain their wife and offspring. If, as the evidence recorded by the Malabar Marriage Commission tended to show, 'a marriage law in North Malabar, and throughout the greater part of South Malabar, would merely legalise what is the prevailing custom,' it is hard to see why there has been such a disinclination to lend to that custom the dignity of legal sanction." * The following applications to register sambandhams under the Act were received from 1897 to 1904:—

—	Nāyars.	Tiyans.	Others.	Total.
1897	28	6	2	36
1898	8	2	4	14
1899	8	2	4	14
1900	8	..	9	17
1901	3	...	1	4
1902	...	...	...	...
1903	2	...	...	2
Total ...	57	10	20	87

* Gazetteer of Malabar.

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

31: Slater S-5' (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The 837 Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female. [586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes, and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make [585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children [428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre- [587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is [595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[594] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access
585 to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
171 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which [431] she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village head- [595] men, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 ● what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case tradi- tionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no cus- tomary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

presence of *maagar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kāsam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *tarwād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *tarwād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *tarwād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 283–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānas* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The
837 Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female.
[586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make
[585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children
[428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre-
[587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is
[595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave [553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the [588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony [881] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to [843] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem- [969] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar [765] also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the [783] fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides [885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings
were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
776 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
794 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrol-
[588] oger might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
826 lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of
[784] caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence
681 is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
564 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[823] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous training in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts,
241 and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and [588] was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's [578] children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan [586] had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 835 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age. 602 [605] [588]

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose. 582 [335]

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today, the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly [586]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [885] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

607 Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 574 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang.

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy.

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection.

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen.

unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than elsewhere. [421] The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be [127] attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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along with those of the boys of her Enangan (a recognised member of one's own clan) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers, is marked out as a fit person to tie the tâli, and a day is fixed for the tâli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Káranavan of the boy's family. On the appointed day the boy is invited to a house near that of the girl, where he is fed with his friends by the head of the girl's family. The feast is called 'Ayani Unu,' and the boy is thenceforth called 'Manavâlan' or 'Pillai' bridegroom. From the house in which the Manavâlan is entertained, a procession is formed, preceded by men with sword and shield shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her taravâd, to meet the other procession, and after meeting the Manavâlan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the pandal erected for that purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour and there his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths on the occasion. The Manavâlan is then taken to the centre of the pandal where bamboo-mats, carpets, and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside of the house, and after going round the pandal three times, places her at the left side of the Manavâlan, and the father of the girl then presents a new cloth tied in a kambli to the pair, and with this new cloth (technically called 'mantravadi') they change their dress. The wife of the Káranavan of the girl's taravâd, if she be of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting anklets, etc. The Purohita called 'Elayatu' (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tali to the Manavâlan, and the family astrologer shouts 'Muhurtham' (auspicious hour), and the Manavâlan, putting his sword on the lap, ties tali round the girl's neck, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families a Brâhmini sings certain songs intended to bless the couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a certain Nayâr who is versed in songs performs the office. The boy and the girl are then carried by Enangans to a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank or river, holding each other's hands. After changing cloths, they come home preceded by a procession, which varies in importance according to the wealth of the girl's family. Tom-toms and elephants usually form part of the procession, and saffron water is sprinkled. When they come home the doors of the house are all shut, which the Manavâlan is required to force open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891).

564 613 588 [184] [586] [715] [783] of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 585 [588] The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 184 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tālikettukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

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This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

121 588 [175] [127] [114]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

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[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

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121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvāris*) of districts (*nāds*). These
175 owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
564 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavāris*) of villages (*desams*).
631 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sūdras and Swaroopattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal
613 family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvāri* or *desavāri* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 851 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite.* Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam.* This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar. Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. [692] 613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [787]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *taru*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri 588 613 [776] [782] 588

marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâvanatan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâvanatan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

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588 184 43 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the [842] arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were 588 184 178 796 too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, [613] he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 713 813 564 184 833 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambūdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambūdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambūdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

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collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri, Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges, usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris* fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nâduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

The Nayar Kinship System. North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In

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In addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambūdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tāli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambūdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tāli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tāli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambūdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambūdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambūdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tāli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tāli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tāli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 621 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannāns, called Mannāns in the south) and barbers (Kāvutiyyans, called Vātthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [422] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

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Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families.

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death.

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house.

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants.

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

[North Malabar]

588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The [782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of [789] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the [582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a 582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while 58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal [593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyyar

likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *tarawād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

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Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *tarawād*.

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kāsam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll

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On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

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This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

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Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

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The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *tarawād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 307-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

Nayar
Tiyyar

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

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[827]
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The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

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The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

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Again, in all the groups studied the *taravād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pradhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *iman*.

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184 68 The unconscious - E. KATHLEEN GOUGH
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
593 the spirits of dead *kāraṇavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavans'* spirits,
are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is
775 male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests
of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their
595 mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation
with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers
to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar
system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset
184 of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect
593 that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are
towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among
Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with
182 his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children
613 for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates
the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
182 who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
184 avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between
a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed,
however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother.
He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are per-
mitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister
is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal
kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the
spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar
mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there
182 is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear
593 that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under
the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a
woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
593 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond
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7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

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588 182 184 sambandham lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambūdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [533] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 782 533 The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

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pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face. 000

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion. 881 588 564 533 182

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'. 588 783 182 831 588 783 182

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual 588 182 564

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of ostracism by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tāli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his elder kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdhavari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 789 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [159] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by [693] name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions [584] and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-[793] broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death [782] he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he [783] makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

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I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

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My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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Tiyyar

up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-theertham* ('disc-water').

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *Kannichāru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 92).

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vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol.

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I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son.

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My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet.

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796 831 78 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nâdhvari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 831 78 182 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is normally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women 564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a 588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards 88 higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' 182 bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty, 182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so 831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man. 613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emo- 564 tional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend- 423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per- 593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400–03) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333–43).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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to the mother. It seems likely that the same unconscious Oedipal fears lie behind the institution of 'real' pre-puberty marriage in high Hindu castes in other parts of India,[1] whose kinship systems, though strictly patrilineal, are similarly characterized by gerontocratic authority and the joint holding of property by lineage-segments. The disappearance of the *tāli*-rite among Nayars and Tiyyars in the past twenty years, and its replacement by a 'normal' post-puberty marriage ceremony, is undoubtedly associated with the collapse of their lineage systems; with the development of cash wages and personal property and thus of a new economic autonomy of young men and a decline in attitudes of submission to elders; with the associated strengthening of the marriage-tie and weakening of the bonds with the mother and other natal kinswomen; with, related to this, a decline of observance of avoidance associated with incest-taboos in the lineage, and a relaxing of the rule of lineage exogamy; and, finally, with an increased emotional autonomy of both men and women in respect of the parental generation which, it must be supposed, accompanies a gradual decline in strength of Oedipal wishes and fears among young and middle-aged men.

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It seems probable that my hypothesis concerning Nayar and Tiyyar *tāli*-rites might be shown, given sufficient data, to apply also to certain Middle Indian pre-puberty token marriages recently described by Dr S. C. Dube (1953). In these groups, as in the Malabar castes, the pre-nubile girl who has not been married is regarded as sacred; she would be permanently polluted by any sexual act which took place before the rite was performed. Should she attain puberty before the rite, she falls, like the Malayali girl, into permanent ritual pollution and, though she is not excommunicated, she is inauspicious, is suspected of witchcraft, and may not marry with the normal rites. The token-marriage gives her the status of a married woman, and is followed some years later by a real post-puberty marriage. As among modern Nayars in some parts of South Malabar and Cochin, and among Tamil temple-dancers, the proxy-bridegroom is a weapon (here an arrow instead of a sword). Alternatively it may be a wooden paddy-pounder, probably a phallic symbol throughout southern and middle India. It may be significant that the man who goes through the rites and carries the phallic symbol is the girl's elder sister's husband, a probable father-image to her; and that, like the Malabar 'bridegroom', he is paid for his services. It seems clear from Dr Dube's account that the rite is a symbolic defloration, that it releases the girl from the sexual guardianship of her natal kinsmen, and changes her from a dangerous, sacred, and forbidden creature into a normal woman who may be married without fear. It would be interesting to know whether it is preceded by a mock menstruation ceremony. To test my hypothesis, that pre-puberty mock marriage issues from strong incest taboos and the (originally Oedipal) fear of deflowering a virgin, we should need also to know whether, like the *tāli*-rite, this rite marks a change in the etiquette of behaviour between a girl and her natal kinsmen; whether the incest taboos in these groups are culturally elaborated; whether economic and legal power are in the hands of old men of the kin-group; whether the post-puberty marriage tie

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[1] This is particularly clearly so in the Tamil institution Brahman of pre-puberty marriage. Traditionally, a girl must be married before puberty and the marriage consummated in the fifteen days following the first menstruation, if possible, to avoid loss of the female seed after menstruation has begun. Failure to carry out the pre-puberty marriage and prompt consummation after puberty brought opprobrium on the girl's father, who was regarded as an unclean man guilty of embryo murder through failing to give away his daughter's fertility. Pre-puberty marriage (*kanniga dhānam*, 'gift of a virgin') is said to transfer the sexual sin of the girl's father to the son-in-law and thus ensure the father's salvation after death. The Brahmanical pre-puberty marriage is therefore at least partly prompted by incest taboos. The unconscious fear of deflowering a virgin appears in the Brahmanical consummation rites, at which the bridegroom declares his wife to have been previously married to the Vedic gods Soma, Agni, and Gandharva. In some groups, at the rites before consummation, a stick representing Gandharva is placed between the couple and removed before the consummation, at which the bridegroom says: 'O Visvavasu Gandharva, I pray you to make this girl my wife. Unite her to me. Leave her and take another.' Similarly, Brahmans rhapsodize over their former pre-puberty marriages when the girl was an infant and the boy often ten to fourteen years old, on the grounds that the participants were innocent of the sexual implications of the ceremony. As among Tiyyars, the couple were brought to the ceremony on the shoulders of their maternal uncles.

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is strong or (as we should expect) permits divorce and return to the brother's household; whether her natal kinsmen retain strong rights in a woman throughout her life; and whether the virgin is in any way associated in myth with a phallic mother-goddess.[1]

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[1] The male fear of deflowering a virgin, who may be unconsciously associated with the mother and is thus thought of as the rightful property of a father-figure or of an infant son-figure, appears in the marriage customs of several other South Indian peoples. The patrilineal Tamil Non-Brahmans of Tanjore, who have post-puberty marriage, formerly required the brahman priest who performed their marriage rites to deflower the girl as well. The fact that in these castes the mother's brother is considered the rightful husband of a girl gives further evidence of the belief that a girl should rightly be married by a man of the parental generation. Thurston (1908, pp. 49-50) reports that in the Malayali hill-tribe of Salem (also Tamil) a small boy is married to a mature woman, but the bride's father-in-law and not the husband cohabits with her and begets children on behalf of his son. When the son reaches maturity and his own legal sons are married, he in turn cohabits with their wives and raises children on behalf of his 'sons'. The Vellalas of Coimbatore are said to have a similar custom, in which a boy marries a mature woman, with whom the girl's father-in-law cohabits until the boy is adult. Similarly among the Reddis of Tinnevelly, a boy of five is reported often to be married to a girl of twenty. The girl after marriage cohabits with one of her own kinsmen on the maternal side, frequently her mother's brother, or else with the father of her boy-husband. When the husband grows up, he may in some cases never cohabit with his wife, but instead form a liaison with the wife of some other boy-kinsman. Among the Tamil Vallambans a boy is obliged to marry one or other type of cross-cousin, who may be older than himself. The girl then cohabits with her husband's elder brother, mother's brother or father, and the boy-husband legitimatizes the children when he comes of age. In all these customs we appear to have the reflection of a strong Oedipal conflict which, on the one hand, prevents a man from deflowering and sometimes from cohabiting at all with his wife and causes him to give her to his father or some other father-figure, and, on the other hand, gives such free rein to incestuous desires towards women of the filial generation as to permit men to deprive their social 'sons' of their legal wives. The defloration of a girl by one who is a father-figure to her husband is not, of course, confined to India, but appears for example in the European custom of the *droit du seigneur*. At the initation of a Bánaro girl, her prospective bridegroom's father, being 'ashamed' to do it himself, engaged his sib-friend to deflower the girl (Thurnwald 1916, p. 261).

CHART I. *Variations in Essential Features of the Tali-Rite in Four Groups*

Essential Features of the Ceremony	*South Malabar and Cochin Nayars*	*North Malabar Nayars*	*North Malabar Tiyyars*	*South Malabar and Cochin Tiyyars*
Basic economic and residential group in the Kinship System	Matrilineal lineage segment, uxorilocal	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence; or patrilineal or ambilineal group	Patrilineal, patrilocal extended family
Descent and inheritance systems	Exclusively matrilineal	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Double unilineal descent; patrilineal inheritance
Age of girl at *tāli*-rite	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty
Place of ceremony	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house or father's own house	Patrilineal group's ancestral house
Expenses of ceremony met by	Matrilineal lineage as a whole	Matrilineal lineage as a whole with help from fathers	Senior MB and father jointly	Father with help from senior MB
Preliminary mock menstrual seclusion	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes
Girl ceremonially 'given away' by	Brother or head of matrilineal group	Brother or head of matrilineal group	MB, MBW, or father	Father; secondarily, MB
Tāli tied by	*Enangan*, district chief, or elderly Nambūdiri Brahman	Elderly Nambūdiri Brahman	MBW, FSs, prospective mother-in-law, or barber woman (Barbers – elderly man)	Young boy, sometimes prospective husband
Supplementary 'fertility' or 'deflloration' rites performed by	Nambūdiri Brahman priest or village military leader	Marar (lower caste of funeral priests)	Barber	Village headman's wife
Subsequent seclusion of girl	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Uncertain	Girl secluded with 'bridegroom' or with bridegroom's loincloth

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jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife."[1]

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs.

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*.

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time.

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale.

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to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *chepp* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar* house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The eldest girl's father's sister's son (i.e., her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

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the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day. 588

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families. 194 182 588

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous. [851] [595]

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to [765] [171]

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Nambudiri Brahman

cast off one husband and choose another, the religious rites of marriage had to be performed without any definite marital relationship with any particular man. This seems to be the explanation of *Talikettu Kalyanam.*

The real marriage *de jure* and *de facto* is the *Sambandham.* "*Sambandham*" is a Sanskrit word, meaning good and close union. A Nāyar girl can have *Sambandham* not only with a Nāyar man, but with Brahmins and Kshatriyas. As a matter of fact the whole system of Nāyar customs seems to have been regulated to suit the purpose of the Nampudiri Brahmins. It must be remembered that a very strict system of primogeniture is prevalent among the Nampudiris, and only the eldest male member in a Nampudiri family marries from among his own caste. Only in case the eldest has no issue, or is incapable of having any, is it that one of his brothers gets the chance to marry in his own community. Generally, therefore, the younger sons of a Nampudiri family marry among the Nāyars. It must also be remembered that it is considered an honour reserved only for the highest Nāyar families to be allied to Nampudiri families by marriage.

The *Sambandham* customs are of the simplest nature. If the suitor is a Brahmin he goes and tells the *Kārnavan* of his desire to marry the girl. The *Kārnavan* then consults the astrologer for an auspicious date, and informs the village elders. The Brahmin brings some *Pudakas* (*i.e.*, clothes which the wife wears) and hands them over to the girl in the presence of her relations and the neighbours, and it is duly announced that they are married.

If the suitor is a Nāyar he is generally the girl's father's sister's son. As we have said before, this is considered to be the most proper marriage. In this case it must be remembered the head of the suitor's family approaches the girl's uncle with a proposal that such marriage is eminently desirable, and the *Kārnavan* informs all the necessary people, and the *Pudaka* is given without much ceremony. It is when a stranger wants to marry in the family that all the formalities have to be gone through. Then all the village and all people in any way related are informed and, in the case of rich families, invited to a feast on the auspicious day. After an elaborate and sumptuous meal the village headman and family elders assemble in a hall. A lighted lamp is placed in the middle, and before it a plantain leaf with rice, betel-nut, lemons and spices. The bridegroom is ushered in here nearly half an hour before the ceremony, and he comes accompanied by some members of his family and the chief men of his village. There is a sort of social reunion for some time, and when the auspicious moment arrives, the bride, accompanied either by her mother (or, in some parts, by her mother's brother's wife) enters and approaches the bridegroom. In ordinary cases the bridegroom stands up and takes the clothes which some of his party had brought for him and gives them to the bride. In some cases the uncle of the bridegroom gives them to the mother of the girl.

The ceremony is now supposed to be over. The bride retires with her mother, and for some time a general conversazione, including sometimes recitals of odes,

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 585 Marriage customs. There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity, [1] and the omission or neglect of it will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *kúranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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Nayar

which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnittu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Bráhmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purinic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *táli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Atházham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Bráhmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *táli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpád in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the maternal uncle or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and brings the girl, who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with ornaments,
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. She is then
[326] seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes presents of cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *táli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

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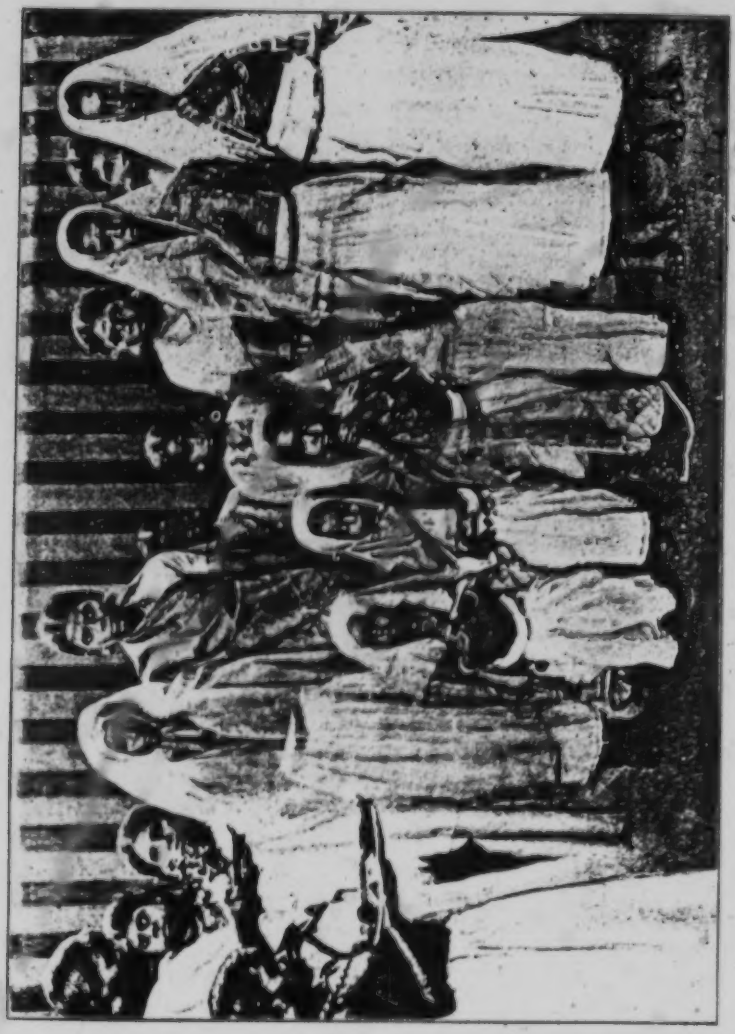

A TALI-TYING GROUP OF NAIR GIRLS.

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[facing p. 24]

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *tili* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *tili* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *tili* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *kiranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *tili* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Brihmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Asán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *tāli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pān supāri*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pakarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *pāyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremony the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *tâli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkâkkarappan* temple and tie the *tâli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahâdévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpâd is the *tâli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *tâli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tâlikettu kalyânam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tâlikettu*

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588 171 *kalyánam* of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials [533] in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, [789] one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pittu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig vedic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathâyam* Hindus, the *tâli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathâyam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at 588 hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on 174 the occasion of *tâli* tying. The reason for this departure may 585 have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the [182] early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *vâlkannâti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 8.

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sdmanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants 422
caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells. 82

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme 634
powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the 585
country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction [182]
who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even [431]
now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the
celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part
of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and
bought his consent with presents. For without such consent
no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His [574]
consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living 595
with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, 634
adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ,
giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus
even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's
power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a 588
girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the 634
local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other 421
things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return
the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised
to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a
one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect 634
buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the 342
inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile
thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed
only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ
issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restric- [369]
tions are not totally inoperative. In the State His High- [182]
ness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social 643
matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a 566
similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands.
Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies 634
were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the [493]
only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1] [564]
[553]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards. 105 564 576 291

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1] 104 105 564 614 611 428 613 587 591

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by 611 613 587 105 564 588 463 582 428

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

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105 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger
564 Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam*
581 property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger
428 sons.

105 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar
564 and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow
611 artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [192] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative
564 such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child
[58] after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle
564 of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort
588 with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible.

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish.

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an [183] unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
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* 595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 614 428 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text Continues on P. 216]

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ries "brother" but which really refer to someone of another village and *kiriyam*.[1]

The Putanpumakkil house stood on ground belonging to a Nayar *janmi*, cousin of the former Secretary of the States Ministry in New Delhi, Sri V. P. Menon, called Wuppala Shankara Narayana Menon. They paid a *kudiyiruppu* rent of one *fanan* (annas four and pies six) yearly. They made their miserable living from plying their traditional trade. To give me a sample of their musical abilities, they offered me a concert on the instruments which they used; those included the famous *Pulluva-kudam*, a sort of stringed instrument cum drum; but I am afraid that the effect was not pleasing to my ears.

While carrying out these investigations among polyandrous households in the Walluvanad taluk, I endeavoured to obtain statistics concerning the proportions of the sexes of the two principal polyandrous castes studied, the Thandans and the Kammalans, but they were unobtainable. The Tahsildar of the Walluvanad taluk, on instruction from the Collector of Malabar, however, sent me the following letter:

"Tuluk Office, Walluvanad
Perintalmanna, Dt. 9-12-49

Sir,
Statistics of certain populations
Called for – Furnished.
Collector's Ref. W-4-1450/49 dated 4-12-49

As ordered by the Collector's reference cited, the statistics of Izhuvas and Kammalans are not available in the Census records available in this office. The figures now furnished are approximate and are based on local enquiries made by me and my subordinates.

	Male	Female
Thandans (Izuvans) / /	5100	6100
Kammalans (Karuvans, Thattan, Musari & Assari)	2600	3100

signed
? Menon
Tahsildar
9.12.49"

[1] Iyer, in *The Cochin Tribes and Castes* (Vol. I, p. 148, 1909 ed., see Bibliography), says that, with the Pulluvans "nor can a woman allow herself to conjugal servitude to more than one". In view of the above evidence, this pronouncement does not appear to be correct.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli-tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

588 invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and, in the presence of friends and castemen, ties a tāli (marriage badge) round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. [787] Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined along with those of her enangan (recognised member of one's own class) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers is marked out as a fit person to tie the tāli, and a day is fixed for the tāli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Karanavan * (senior male in a tarwad) of the boy's family. The feast is called ayaniūnu, and the boy is thenceforth called Manavālan or Pillai (bridegroom). From the house in which the Manavālan is entertained a procession is formed, preceded by men with swords, and [613] shields shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her tarwad, to meet the other procession, and, after meeting the Manavālan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the booth erected for the purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour, and his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths. The Manavālan is then taken to the centre of the booth, where bamboo mats, carpets and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside the house, and, after going round the booth three times, places her at the left side of the Manavālan. The father of the girl then presents new cloths tied in a kambli (blanket) to the pair, and with this new cloth (called manthravadi) they change their dress. [613] [504] The wife of the Karanavan of the girl's tarwad, if she be

* The rights and obligations of Karanavans are fully dealt with by Moore, Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd edition, 1905.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

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588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called
[301] a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes

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consider a coral necklace an essential. In her right hand she holds a vālkannādi (brass hand mirror), and in her left a charakkal (a highly ornate arrow). In front of the girl are placed, in addition to the five-wicked lamp and nirachaveppu, a metal dish or talam of parched rice, and the eight lucky things known as ashtamangalyam. A woman, termed Brahmini or Pushpini, usually of the Nambissan caste, sits facing her on a three-legged stool (pidam), and renders appropriate and lengthy songs, at the close of which she scatters rice over her. About midday there is a feast, and in the evening songs in the macchu are repeated. Next morning, the ceremonial in the macchu is repeated for the third time, after which the paraphernalia are removed to the nearest tank or to the east of the household well, where the Pushpini sings once more, goes through the form of making the girl's toilet, and ties a cocoanut frond round each of her wrists (kappōla). The girl has then to rise and jump over a kindi (vessel) of water with an unhusked cocoanut placed on the top, overturning it the third time. The party then proceed to the pandal, two men holding a scarlet cloth over the girl as a canopy, and a Chāliyan (weaver) brings two cloths (kōdi vastiram), which the girl puts on. In the evening, the previous day's ceremonial is repeated in the macchu. The third day is the most important, and it is then that the central act of the ceremony is performed. For this the girl sits in the inner pandal richly adorned. In some cases she is carried from the house to the pandal by her karnavan or brother, who makes a number of pradakshinams round the pandal (usually 3 or 7) before he places her in her seat. Before the girl are the various objects already specified, and the hymeneal ditties of the Pushpini open the proceedings. At the auspicious moment the

589 184 Manavālan arrives in rich attire. He is often preceded by a sort of body guard with sword and shield who utter a curious kind of cry, and is met at the gate of the girl's house by a bevy of matrons with lamps and salvers decorated with flowers and lights, called talams. A man of the girl's family washes his feet, and he takes his seat in the pandal on the girl's right. Sometimes the girl's father at this stage presents new cloths (mantravādi or mantrokōdi) to the pair, who at once don them. The girl's father takes the tāli, a small round plate of gold about the size of a two-anna bit, with a hole at the top, from the goldsmith who is in waiting, pays him for it, [787] and gives it to the Manavālan. The karnavan or father of the girl asks the astrologer thrice if the moment has arrived, and, as he signifies his assent the third time, the Manavālan ties the tāli round the girl's neck amidst the shouts of those present. The Manavālan carries the girl indoors to the macchu, and feasting brings the day to [533] a close. Tom-toming and other music are of course incessant accompaniments throughout as on other festal occasions, and the women in attendance keep up a curious kind of whistling, called kurava, beating their lips with their fingers. On the fourth day, girl and Manavālan go in procession to the temple richly dressed. The boy, carrying some sort of sword and shield, heads [782] the party. If the family be one of position, he and the girl must be mounted on an elephant. Offerings are made to the deity, and presents to the Brāhmans. They then return home, and, as they enter the house, the Manavālan who brings up the rear is pelted by the boys of the party with plantains, which he wards off with his shield. In other cases, he is expected to make a pretence of forcing the door open. These two usages are no doubt to be classed with those marriage ceremonies which take the

form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 588
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavâlan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574] entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nâyar houses will feed 1,000 Brâhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tâli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nâyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801] represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622] a Nâyar tâli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

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●588 184 [787] astrologer, and those youths in the tarwads who have passed the age of eighteen, and whose horoscopes agree with those of the girls, are declared to be eligible. The ola (palm-leaf) on which the Kaniyan (astrologer) writes his decision is called the muhurta charutu, and the individual who receives it from him is obliged to see that the ceremony is performed on an auspicious day in the near future. The next important item is the fixing of a wooden post in the south-west corner or kannimula of the courtyard. At the construction of the pandal (booth) the Pidakakkar or villagers render substantial aid. The mandapa is decorated with ears of corn, and hence called katirmandapa. It is also called mullapandal. On the [533] night of the previous day the kalati or Brāhman's song is sung. A sumptuous banquet, called ayaniunnu, is given at the girl's house to the party of the young man. The ceremony commences with the bridegroom washing his feet, and taking his seat within the pandal. The girl meanwhile bathes, worships the household deity, and is dressed in new cloths and adorned with costly ornaments. A Brāhman woman ties a thread round the girl's left wrist, and sings a song called Subhadraveli, which deals with the marriage by capture of Subhadra by Arjuna. Then, on the invitation of the girl's mother, who throws a garland round his neck, the bridegroom goes in procession, riding on an elephant, or on foot. The girl's brother is waiting to receive him at the pandal. A leading villager is presented with some money, as if to recompense him for the permission granted by him to commence the ceremony. The girl sits within the mandapa, facing the east, with her eyes closed. The bridegroom, on his arrival, sits on her right. He then receives the minnu (ornament) from the Ilayatu priest, and ties it round the girl's neck. A song is sung, called

A song is sung called
ammachampattu, or the song of the maternal uncle. If 588 there are several brides, they sit in a row, each holding 184 in her hand an arrow and a looking-glass, and the [533] ornaments are tied on their necks in the order of their ages. Unless enangans are employed, there is usually only one tāli-tier, whatever may be the number of girls. In cases where, owing to poverty, the expenses of the ceremony cannot be borne, it is simply performed in front of a Brāhman temple, or in the pandaramatam, or house of the village chieftain. In many North Travancore taluks the girl removes her tali as soon as she hears of the tali-tier's death." It is noted by the Rev. S. Mateer * that " a Nair girl of Travancore must get married with the tāli before the age of eleven to avoid reproach from friends and neighbours. In case of need a sword may even be made to represent a bridegroom." Sometimes, when a family is poor, the girl's mother makes an idol of clay, adorns it with flowers, and invests her daughter with the tāli in the presence of the idol.

In an account of the tali-kettu ceremony, in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, it is stated that " the celebration of the ceremony is costly, and advantage is therefore taken of a single occasion in the course of ten or twelve years, at which all girls in a family, irrespective of their ages, and, when parties agree, all girls belonging to families that observe death pollution between one another go through the ceremony. The ceremony opens with the fixing of a post for the construction of a pandal or shed, which is beautifully decorated with cloth, pictures and festoons. The male members of the village are [574] invited, and treated to a feast followed by the distribution

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., XII, 1883.

588 184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is [574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by [424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain [643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is [782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

stool in the pandal. A male member of the family, 588 generally a brother or maternal uncle of the girl, washes 184 the feet of the bridegroom. The girls are covered with new cloths of cotton or silk, and brought into the pandal, and seated screened off from one another. After the [431] distribution of money presents to the Brāhmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the tāli, or thin plate of gold shaped like the leaf of aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), and tacked on to a string, to the Tirumulpād, who ties it round the neck of the girl. A single Tirumulpād often ties the tāli round the neck of two, three, or four girls. He is given one to eight rupees per girl for so doing. Sometimes the tāli is tied by the mother of the girl. The retention of the tāli is not at all obligatory, nay it is seldom worn or taken care of after the ceremony. These circumstances clearly show the purely ceremonial character of this form of marriage. The Karamel Asan, or headman of the village, is an important factor on this occasion. In a conspicuous part of the marriage pandal [622] he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which a grass mat, a black blanket, and white cloth are spread one over the other. Before the tāli is tied, his permission is solicited for the performance of the ceremony. He is paid 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 puthans (a puthan = 10 pies) per girl, according to the means of the family. He is also given rice, curry stuff, and pān-supāri. Rose-water is sprinkled at intervals on the males and females assembled on the occasion. With the distribution of 574 pān-supāri, scented sandal paste and jasmine flowers to 588 the females of the village and wives of relatives and 184 friends, who are invited for the occasion, these guests return to their homes. The male members, one or two from each family in the village, are then treated to a sumptuous feast. In some places, where the Enangu

588 184 [574] system prevails, all members of such families, both male and female, are also provided with meals. On the third day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart. [431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the [787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During [536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli [735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

beg some of their relations and friends to marry these 588 184
daughters, and they do so. It must be said that they have some gold jewel made, which will contain half a ducat of gold, a little shorter than the tag of lace, with a hole in the middle passing through it, and they string it on a thread of white silk; and the mother of the girl stands with her daughter very much dressed out, and entertaining her with music and singing, and a number of people. And this relation or friend of hers comes with much earnestness, and there performs the ceremony of marriage, as though he married her, and they throw a gold chain round the necks of both of them together, and he puts the above mentioned jewel round her neck, which she always has to wear as a sign that she may now do what she pleases. And the bridegroom leaves her and goes away without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation; and, if he is not so, he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it. And from [833] that time forward the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women."

The tāli-kettu ceremony is referred to by Kerr, who, 588
in his translation of Castaneda, states that "these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nāyar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel round her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life, as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives."

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The opinion was expressed by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Winterbotham, one of the Malabar Marriage Commissioners, that the Brahman tāli-tier was a relic of the time when the Nambūtiris were entitled to the first fruits, and it was considered the high privilege of every Nāyar maid to be introduced by them to womanhood. In this connection, reference may be made to Hamilton's 'New Account of the East Indies', where it is stated that [793] "when the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambūdri, or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and he, if he pleases, may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships. And some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the clergy the same tribute, but the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the priests' places themselves."

588 Of those who gave evidence before the Malabar Commission, some thought the tāli-kettu was a marriage, some not. Others called it a mock marriage, a formal marriage, a sham marriage, a fictitious marriage, a marriage sacrament, the preliminary part of marriage, a meaningless ceremony, an empty form, a ridiculous farce, an incongruous custom, a waste of money, and a device for becoming involved in debt. "While," the report states, "a small minority of strict conservatives still maintain that the tāli-kettu is a real marriage intended to confer on the bridegroom a right to cohabit with the bride, an immense majority describe it as a fictitious marriage, the origin of which they are at a loss to explain. And another large section tender the explanation accepted by our President (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) that, in some way or other, it is an essential caste observance preliminary to the forming of sexual relations."

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes * : "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . . This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

588 178 174 [585] [613] Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 [174] ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for [184] husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

chelakkamotiram, amatāli, arumpumani, and kumilatāli 301
are fast vanishing. The kuttu-minnu is worn on the [588]
neck for the first time by a girl when her tāli-kettu is
celebrated. This ornament is also called gnali. Prior
to the tāli-kettu ceremony, the girls wear a kāsu or
sovereign. The inseparable neck ornament of a Nāyar
woman in modern days is the addiyal, to which a
patakkam is attached. The only ornament for the ears
is the takka or toda. After the lobes have been dilated [304]
at the karnavedha ceremony, and dilated, a big leaden
ring is inserted in them. The nose ornament of women
is called mukkuthi, from which is suspended a gold wire
called gnattu. No ornament is worn in the right nostril.
The wearing of gold bangles on the wrists has been
long the fashion among South Indian Hindu females of
almost all high castes. Round the waist Nāyar women
wear chains of gold and silver, and, by the wealthy, gold
belts called kachchapuram are worn. Anklets were not [177]
worn in former times, but at the present day the kolusu
and padasaram of the Tamilians have been adopted. So,
too, the time-honoured toda is sometimes set aside in
favour of the Tamil kammal, an ornament of much smaller
size. Canter Visscher (who was Chaplain at Cochin in 291
the eighteenth century) must have been much struck by
the expenditure of the Nāyar women on their dress, for
he wrote * 'there is not one of any fortune who does
not own as many as twenty or thirty chests full of
robes made of silver and other valuable materials, for
it would be a disgrace in their case to wear the same
dress two or three days in succession'."

It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the Venetian sequin, 177
which probably first found its way to Malabar in the days 301

* Letters from Malabar.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
121 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
114 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
613 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
184 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question
[605] of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957*a*).

[South Malabar and Cochin]

presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India.

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first.

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns.

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.")

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

It would appear, therefore, that, far from there being an excess of men, it is the other way round: there is a shortage of them. What happens then to the unmarried women? It was even more difficult to answer that question, as only a painstaking and lengthy investigation could do this. I enquired from my guides and interpreters, from those I interviewed, from officials and from fellow anthropologists, and the consensus of opinion, which I also share, is that the spinsters stay at home – with their parents, as long as they live, and with their brothers when the parents have died. The genealogies given above somewhat confirm this view, although perhaps not as decisively as one would like. 589 [162]

C. POLYANDRY IN A THANDAN FAMILY OF THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR

While engaged in a general survey of polyandry in Kerala, in the course of which I came into contact with people of all sorts and conditions, in this complex State, it was not possible for me simultaneously to make a more special study of the distinctive features of the custom. At first, I really only obtained a superficial impression which, with time, I came to look upon as insufficient for me to speak with any authority on the polyandry practised by some of the distinctive castes and sub-castes of this south-west part of India. 595* 114 124

Because I wanted to deepen my research and also out of a feeling that the opportunity to gather everything that I could while I was there should not be missed, I decided to choose one family from among those that I had already visited with my guides and interpreters, to put it under scrutiny and study its structure and activity in greater detail. Actually, I would have liked to have chosen one family in each caste or even sub-caste, but I soon realised that this meant work over a period of time far greater than I could possibly hope to have at my disposal in Kerala. So I resigned myself to enquiring where it was thought that I stood the best chance of making such a special study. I was advised to return to the Thandan family which I had first visited on the 25th and 26th of October, immediately after I had started to work in 1949. This family, it will be remembered, was called Appayl Wattakkeh, its *tarawad* had the same name, Appayl, and it was located about two miles outside the village of Ottappalam in the Walluvanad taluk of south Malabar.

The advantages of studying these people were numerous. They were close to where I lived, and to the residence of my interpreters. We had

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601, 113, 59, 58, 611, 428

[For information pertaining to the above categories, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 252-270.]

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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

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a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law. 595 175 184

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison. 595 175 184 178 [591] [114]

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms. 595 171 [174]

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Murder among the Nayars

627 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
613 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but
628 even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

614 THE CLAN

564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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613 564 422 423 [427]

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591 [901]

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

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423 613 429 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head- [634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[761] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward neolocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has
[562] carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matrilocally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

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tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's niece.

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000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, observed rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions—during their periods of co-residence.

Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

MARRIAGE

Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which [431] she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. [595] Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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593 184 858 [613] will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may receive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 613 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could [764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu- [783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 613 184 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some resemblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate [783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 613 593 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them. A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād [867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The [868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks, 593 613 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was [584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not [431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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[P. 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[551] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[844] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[114] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 A W11 Kerala A W11
Nayar

between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184
clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Nambūdiri Brahmans

 76 184 564

his forebears. Thereafter he offers rice balls and other oblations in a *śrāddham* ceremony on each anniversary of the death.

Many of these customs are of long standing among the Nāyars. Barbosa[18] reported in 1518 that Nāyar royalty observed *dīkṣā* for the dead in the same manner as Nambūdiris. Sheikh Zein-ud-Deen[19] recorded the custom for commoner Nāyars in 1579. Linschoten[20] reported in 1598 that Nāyars normally cremated their dead. Today, Nāyar death and anniversary rites are almost identical in form with those of Nambūdiris. During the period of death pollution they employ a lower matrilineal caste to instruct them in the rites. (In Cochin, Chīdigans fulfill this function; in South Malabar, Attikūrssis; and in North Malabar, Mārārs.) The same caste assists Nambūdiri Brahmans to prepare the ritual materials for their funerals, and has clearly transmitted the Brahmanical rites to the Nāyars. Similarly, at the end of the death pollution on the sixteenth day, during the *dīkṣā* period, and on anniversary days, Nāyars are instructed in their oblations by a priest of a degraded subcaste of Brahmans. (This subcaste is the Elayads in Cochin and South Malabar and the Nambidis in North Malabar.) A few peculiarly non-Brahmanical rites do, however, survive. In Kottayam, poorer Nāyars among commoners customarily bury their dead.[21] In both areas those who burn the dead bury the bones and ashes in a pot under a jack-fruit tree outside the ancestral house near the ancestor shrine. Some leave the bones there permanently and consider that the ghost remains near the bones and the ancestral house. Others dig up the bones after the period of mourning, dispose of half of them in a sacred river, and return the other half to the grave. The bones of *kāranavans* are sometimes placed on an open platform under a jack-fruit tree, to which food offerings are made on days of propitiation. Other rites spring from the Nāyar view that the ghost requires appeasement rather than mere assistance to another world. Brahmans, for example, pour holy water into the mouth of a dying man to purify him for entry into the world of ancestors. Old-fashioned Nāyars offer rice gruel as a last act of appeasement. [613]

Even the Sanskritic rites are in fact so adapted to Nāyar requirements that they carry a quite different emphasis of meaning from that associated with them by Brahmans. First, the role-structure of the rites is, of course, completely adapted to the descent system. A Nambūdiri deceased's chief mourner is his or her eldest son, or, if there is no Nambūdiri son, the eldest brother's son. A Nāyar woman's chief mourner is her eldest son; that of a man, the man next junior to him in the property group. But all males of the *taravād* junior to the deceased make subsidiary *bali* offerings to him in the period of pollution. Brahman spouses observe mourning and death pollution for each other. Nāyar spouses traditionally observe no mourning or pollution for each other, for they belong to different *taravāds* and have no mutual legal obligations. If a Nāyar dies in a wife's house, his body must traditionally be returned to his *taravād* for cremation. Shortly before or after the death of her husband, a woman goes to view his body for the last time. She is then ceremonially conducted out of the house on the north side—the side opposite to that from which the god of death arrives. She is returned to her natal home, and after this she may never reenter her dead husband's house. In Cochin, where men traditionally had no obligations to their children, a child did not observe death pollution for his genitor. But in North Malabar, where children have an intimate relationship with the father in avunculocal residence during childhood, a man's sons make offerings for him during death pollution, and the eldest son is second-in-command to the chief mourner at the cremation. The

76 184 564 613 [591]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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the lit-up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and the 585
bridegroom, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, 184
as he has to perform another duty. At the tekkini or southern hall he now presents his elders and friends with cakes, and betel leaf and nuts. Betel and nuts are also given to all the [431]
persons assembled at the place. After the departure of the guests the bridegroom retires to the bed-room with the bride.

"This is an unvarnished account of a 'Putamuri.' Next morning the Vettilakkettu or Salkâram ceremony follows, and the bridegroom's female relations take the bride to the husband's house, where there is a feasting, etc., in honour of the occasion.

"Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídâram Kayaral is a peculiar form of marriage in North Malabar. It will be seen from the description given above, that the Putamuri is necessarily a costly ceremony, and many people generally resort to the less costly ceremony of Uzhamporukkuka or Vídâram Kayaral. The features of this ceremony are to a certain extent the same as Putamuri; but it is celebrated on a smaller scale. There is no cloth-giving ceremony. The toasting is confined to the relations of the married couple. The particular incident attached to this form of marriage is that the husband should visit the wife in her house, and is not permitted to take her to his house, unless and until he celebrates the regular Putamuri ceremony. This rule is strictly adhered to in North Malabar, and instances in which the husband and wife joined by Uzhamporukkuka, or Vídâram Kayaral ceremony, and with grown-up children being the issue of such marriage, undergoing the Putamuri ceremony some 15 or 20 years after Uzhamporukkuka, in order to enable the husband to take the wife to his house, are known to me personally.

"The Sambandham of South Malabar, and the Kidakkora-kalyânam of Palghat have all or most of the incidents of Putamuri, except the presenting of the cloths. Here money is substituted for cloths, and the other ceremonies are more or less the same. There is also *Salkâram* ceremony, wanting in South Malabar as the wives are not at once taken to the husband's house after marriage."

But all this formality and ceremonial is not the rule. The Sambandham is always a matter for careful arrangement, in which the wishes of the parties to it are considered, and which it is expected will bring mutual benefit to the two Taravâds concerned.

In South Malabar the girl or woman never lives in her 591
husband's house; she lives on in her own Taravâd house 184
and is there visited by her husband. The ordinary huggermugger, which sometimes stultifies all pleasure in existence, is thus avoided. In North Malabar the woman

591
184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion, suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the
585 exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:——"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tāliketukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nayars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikursis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
175 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nāduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nād*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
appointed by the Raja or the *nāduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nāduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *taravād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambûdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tâli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambûdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tâli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tâli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambûdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambûdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambûdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tâli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tâli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tâli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tâli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannâns, called Mannâns in the south) and barbers (Kâvutiyyans, called Vâtthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [422] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangan* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, passim) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangan* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyyar

likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin 564

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*. 613

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom 585
stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars [591]
are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. [178]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary [184]
considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in [581]
itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage.
It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunder- 586
standing or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the
marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further
formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. [649]
By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break
off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly con-
ducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the
maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the
mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and
marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, 581
there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational [648]
Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham*
with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a
marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very
ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six
marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its
distinguished author.

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) 582
there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The
men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions.
A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. [564]
She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed
to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry any-
one who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the
maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress
lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so
closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort.

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any 591
particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's [582]
own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is [178]
strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their
ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a
specially aristocratic privilege.

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This 595
can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for
The last fifty years.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharawad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intelligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following:

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patrilocal* system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars."

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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595 564 184 responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathúyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders 178 of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In 591 ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in 592 her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the 842 function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 592 178 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. 592 613 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large number of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

IN this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 591 593 429

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 564 491

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. 114 122

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. 113

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkatharam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
656 the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad*
occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
● 591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 173 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 173 591 968 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death. Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 175 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898, the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 591 593 182 175 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations, took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 591 175 182 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name "Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one.

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12* and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband, Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their elementary families, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional visiting marriage; the second daughter *29* returned to this house after her husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children, occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional *tarwad*, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
602 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
353

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not 105
wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. 564
Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always 576
praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya 291
factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of 104
the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and 105
of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their 564
mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. 614
Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and [611]
through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in [428]
matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in [613]
principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, mar- [580]
riage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in [591]
the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. [611]
They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and [613]
patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden [582]
days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons 105
were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devo- 564
tees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as [588]
sambandham to which we shall revert in a moment. They were main- [463]
tained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a [582]
meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by [428]

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (*Thiyyas*) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

The informant, Velu, with whom we spoke, kept us outside the house on some chairs in the drive leading up to the property. He did not seem inclined to let us come in. 595* [123]

I made the accompanying genealogy with Velu. It is rather an extensive one since the family was large, and therefore I have laid it out in two Tables (4 & 5), separating the two lots of polyandrous families in which the older generation was divided. As regards the name, the informant told me that the *tarawad* contained five households, of which this was one; they had appellations principally of the four cardinal points, the name of his household meaning "eastern". 595* 601

Velu and his two younger brothers were married polyandrously to Kalyany, who had become their wife after her elder sister, Amalu, had died. This appeared to be somewhat reminiscent of sororate, but I understand that it was not so, the brothers simply having taken their sister-in-law in marriage because they liked her and thought it a good idea. The two elder brothers who were now dead, Pangan and Karapan, had also been married polyandrously to Mogami, who was still alive; she was sixty five at the time of my research work. They had had her all to themselves, because the three younger men had not wanted her. although for what reason it was impossible to make Velu say. All that he would impart to us was that they did not want her, and brought in Amalu as their wife, and kept her in the same house with the others. Even today, he said, they all lived together, without the property having been divided up between them.

Mogami had had eighteen children of whom thirteen were still alive. 595* I had an opportunity to meet this remarkable woman some weeks later, and I found her a lively and intelligent person, who did not appear to be the slightest bit worn out by her two husbands and many children. She was thin and rather small with flashing eyes and a very sharp brain. She told me many anecdotes of her former married life, with great relish and obvious pleasure, as if she had been extremely happy in it. She was quite unashamedly proud of her achievements and her present widowed life was kept interesting by the memories for which she lived.

Two of her eldest daughters, Lakshmi and Kuniyukuti, had been married polyandrously, and still lived under that arrangement, although Chankuni, the elder husband of Kuniyukuti, was rarely at home; he was employed as a peon in Ceylon, and only paid brief visits to Kerala. This brought the total number of polyandrous families in the Kereghetil household to four. [164] [167]

It should be noted, however, that only the men and their families as [591]

[Text continues on p. 183]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India. 595* 591● [589] [582]

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first. 595* [656] [428]

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns. 595* 178

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.") 595* [103] [101] [564]

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 585
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. 574
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day [787]
he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of
the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife).
They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl
with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of
her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right
leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a
burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede
her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice,
and some plantains are placed before her. One of the
younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece
of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called
madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then
sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or
cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house.
After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house
on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 595
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely
the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the
Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her
share of whatever good things may be going. Hence
the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind
her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

852
846 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a
564 characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or
[844] may not be Mannāns. On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance.
[626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kérala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.
852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend.
[591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband,
[564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

K 131 595 596 428 591

Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

T 123 To 123 K 123

General Conclusions. I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

T 155 To 155 K 155

As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182

As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape. 613 114

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve (1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles. 613 114 184 [554]

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan. 613 [184] [614]

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children (a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. 591 [844] [171] [851] [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the 601 [602]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely dimi-
[613] nution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well. 121 591 60 [564] [114]

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom. 60 171

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58). 604 588

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on. 605 582 585 [171]

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which 564 611 591

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage. [114]

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

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/Information on the tarawad as a matrilineal joint family will be found in category 613./

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/For information on the function of the Taravād as a clan, lineage and matrilineal household unit, the researcher is advised to check all three categories listed above./

421 was headed by its oldest male member (karana-
van) who was the legal guardian of all members
and represented them in the local subcaste as-
sembly. When spoken of in its own right the
property-group, like the lineage, was called a
taravad; when spoken of as a segment of the lin-
eage it was called a tavari (lit. - "mother's
line"). Tavari could also be used of any inter-
mediate segment of the lineage or of a minimal
segment of one [54] mother and her children with-
in the property-group had a separate garden
name in addition to its lineage-name: each indiv-
idual was called by his taravad-name, property-
group name, personal name and caste-title (e.g.,
Kolangatt Thekkedil Govindan Nayar - "In the
place of the bathing pool, the southern side,
Govindan Nayar.")

421 Usually, a property-group owned only one
592 house and was simultaneously a dwelling group.
In wealthier desavari and naduvari lineages,
however, a group which increased in size might
build two or more adjacent houses. In some
cases a minimal segment descended from one
sister occupied each of these houses, and cook-
ing was separate. Much more commonly, the
two adjacent houses would be used indiscrimin-
ately by all members, cooking being carried on
in only one.

592 A traditional house of the retainer or desavari
342 subcastes comprises a central large building
with two storeys, separate staircases for men
and women, and in the centre of it a separate
courtyard open to the sky. The house faces
east and is fronted by a spacious verandah used

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents
[343] by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group - Analyst]

543 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation ground, while at another corner is a dense shrub-
[778] bery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
●592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts
[764] cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man,

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

592 nagas or cobra-deities which were believed to
782 guard each group were housed in the snake-grove in a corner of the garden and annually given offerings of milk and eggs by the karanavan in the presence of members. As well as warding
592 off ordinary sickness and misfortune they were
782 particularly [58] believed responsible for the fertility or barrenness of taravad women. Special offerings were made to them if a woman failed to conceive, and a performance was held a at which men and women of a low caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the snakes in the grove to appear. A
[787] group of women of the taravad, after purifying themselves by fasting and sex-continence for several days previously, then became possessed by the snake-gods (who are said to have "entered into them") and performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voice of the snakes and announce what propitiations were necessary to appease
[158] them. Sometimes the ceremony ended with one or more women falling into a fit. It seems
592 fairly certain that the snake-gods were (as so
786 commonly elsewhere) worshipped as phallic symbols. Since they were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forbears, but were capable of alternately withholding fertility from taravad women or causing them to conceive, it is a plausible guess that they collectively symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property-group, who had been so essential to its perpetuation yet

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual sexual promiscuity within the caste, and minimal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus Complex [59] which caused men to fear and propitiate the phallic representatives of their fathers, and women to have fantasies about "possession" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfortunately snake worship is now practically extinct; I never saw it, and found present-day informants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic, dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility of the father, which must have been experienced by Nayar children since they slept, and do today, in the mother's room till age four or five and have opportunity to witness parental intercourse, would be repressed before latency and leave its mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about the father which could be translated into the cultural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods. Such archaic representations contrast with the less distorted ones of male forbears of the taravad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

592 devoted to dead karanavans' spirits, opening off
769 the inner courtyard, contains a number of small
778 wooden stools on which the spirits are believed to come and sit. In those branches of the taravad which have remained in situ for many generations, retaining [60] an old ancestral house while collateral segments hived off into new ones (6), the ancestor shrine contains many stools, placed in order and named with the names of the karanavans going back to the first of the segment or of the lineage as a whole. In newer houses built by segments which have recently left the parent house there may be only one or two, starting with the stool of the man who built the house and was its first karanavan. (7) Offerings of cooked good, with delicacies of the kind most enjoyed by the recipient during his lifetime, are made before each stool by the living karanavan, in the presence of all members, twice annually on the new moon days of April-
592 May and October-November. The spirits of
769 dead karanavans are thought of as vindictive and
152 fearsome, ever prone to take offence against living members who fail in any of the details of ritual performances and general care of the taravad house and lands which are their duty, and to vent hostility on them out of all proportion to their offence. They are placated with fear and reverence but without affection. Their character contrasts with that of the patrilineal ancestral spirits of Tamil Brahmans, who are thought of as harmless, straving, lonely, pitiful beings who must be given food to sustain them in the life in the world of the dead. This

592 difference in the character of ancestral spirits
769 probably relates to the fact that among Nayars,
152 hostility to the mother's brother, the karanavan and all older men, though curbed by strict rules of etiquette and [61] social distance, is often either fully conscious or dealt with by projection: the mother's brother may be thought of as persecuting and his discipline strongly resented, though loyalty to the mother and the group prevents a man from openly venting his aggression. Among Brahmans, aggressive impulses against the father, elder brothers and other older men are deeply repressed; such older male figures are thought of a protective and nurturant, and inner opposition to them arouses much guilt. Perhaps because of this, their spirits are also harmless, and what is projected in beliefs about them is rather the individual's own oral dependency longings.

592 The propitiation only of heads of the property-
769 groups, by the living head on behalf of all members, underlines the corporate character of the group. Brahmans instead propitiate each man his own line of recent patrilineal forbears - father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather and their wives - thus emphasizing the strength of the asymmetrical interpersonal tie between father and son, at the expense of the
592 solidarity of the patrilineal group. Among Na-
602 yars, interpersonal relations between men of the matrilineal group are neither structurally strong nor emotionally intense: men are bound to the group and incidentally to each other by their primary ties to women (mother and sisters); rivalry between them is acute and they are kept

592 together only by loyalty to the group as a whole
602 and a sense of pride in being able to submit to discipline from male elders for the sake of their natal kinswomen. A man may be extremely proud of his taravad and of his karanavan as a good manager and spokesman, but he has a less intimate personal relationship with him than does a patrilineal man with his father. In the Brahman patrilineal extended family, by contrast, individual interpersonal ties between father and son and between brothers, who form the core of the group, may be marked by deep devotion, while loyalty to the patrilineal lineage as a corporate unit, and its overall solidarity, are much weaker.

592 (c) The Splitting of Property-Groups
571 The property-groups of retainer Nayars divide at a particular point in their development. The Nayars themselves do not know this. They regard partition of the property-group as an unfortunate occurrence which takes place because of the greed or envy of individual men, or because of unwonted increase in the membership of the group. It is true that before the increase in population of the hundred years, individual property-groups must often have remained intact over many generations, simply reproducing their numbers. However, genealogies from the histories I collected of over thirty taravads show that retainer property-groups in fact partition with unfailing regularity at a particular point in their development. This occurs when the group contains two or more segments descended

592 from sisters, whose maternal uncles and broth-
571 ers are all dead, and when each segment has an adult son or [63] grandson old enough to become karanavan in his own right. Since the armies were disbanded and men came home to live on their estates (about 1810), it is probable that groups have partitioned slightly more quickly than they formerly did, for over the past hundred years men have considered themselves old enough to become karanavans of new groups (if their uncles and older brothers are all dead) by the age of 30 to 40, whereas they appear traditionally to have been still in the army until about the age of 50. But the structure of the group at its time of partition appears to have been the same at all periods until the most recent(discussed later.) Traditionally, as long as the karanavan is own brother, mother's brother or mother's mother's brother to all members of the group, partition cannot take place, because men cannot separate from their mothers and sisters. A sibling group can never split into two, nor a junior man secede from his own mother's brother: the relationship between these men is an inter-personal one and they are within the same minimal segment of the lineage. Partition can take place only between men of different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.) who are no longer held together by common submission to a living karanavan of the parental or grandparental generation, and whose relationship is therefore structured in terms of the relationship between groups.

592 [64] Every woman is thus the potential founder
571 of a property-group, and often, after her brothers have in turn been karanavans and are dead, she lives to see her segment's property divided from that of her sisters, and her son or even daughter's son established as head of her group. However, some women do not of course become founders of groups, either because they have no children or because they have only daughters who themselves become founders in their own right when their sons are old enough. Again, a group of brothers with no sisters was traditionally unlikely to form a separate group, since they would have no women to perpetuate their group(or for that matter, to cook for them). They would be likely to remain volunatrily attached to a parallel segment, succeeding, along with their classificatory brothers, to karanavanship as they became in turn oldest member of the group. Alternatively they might split away and adopt one or more girls from collateral segments to perpetuate their separate group.

In all cases of partition, division of the property was stirpital: equal shares accrued to segments of the same order which were descended from sisters. The segment which contained the old karanavan at the time of partition usually retained the ancestral house.

592(d) Kinship Relations within the Group

602 The karanavan was traditionally unequivocal
868 head of the group. He managed the property, built new houses, repaired the old, leased land from the janmi, and controlled [65] the labour

592 of serfs. He could command all other members,
602 male or female, and children were trained to
868 obey him with reverence. He[1] had the rights of a pater over small children: till puberty he was responsible for having them educated in Malayalam reading and writing, must discipline them like a father in patriliny, and might beat them if they disobeyed. Even today in orthodox
[593] houses, the father of a child has no share at all in the karanavan's rights of pater: he may not interfere in education or discipline or question the karanavan's right to dispose of a child's career and services.

As their legal guardian, the karanavan must traditionally pass on to young men the martial traditions, swords and other weapons of the taravad. He must educate them also in the management of lands and serfs and the cultivation of gardens. Even today in villages, every Nayar has expert knowledge of paddy and garden cultivation and the planning of household architecture. Such information is learned with great care from the karanavan and younger brothers of the mother, all of whom play a part in the child's education after the age of four to five. In spite of interpersonal rivalry between men, Nayars show great loyalty to the group as a whole, pride in the military skill, dignity and financial integrity of their karanavans of past ages, and eagerness to identify with their mothers' brothers and eventually take their place as leaders of the property-group. This pride in the offices and public status of the group is of course most marked in royal lineages, [66] but

1/1 [the Karanavan --- Analyst]

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men; [827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Co[illegible] all karanavans are legally obliged to do this [illegible] to make available their accounts for inspectio[illegible] by junior members [67] once a year. However,

592 602 671 few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust towards elders of the taravad.

592 602 695 421 Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of property. If a dispute arose between segments within the group, it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator outside the lineage, and a settlement reached and embodied in a document called a karar, which legally bound all adult members. Such a settlement was likely in the case of a very old karanavan who decided to retire in favour of the second man. In a wealthy taravad he might then by common consent be allotted a small house and pension for the duration of his life. In desavari and naduvari taravads, karars were sometimes made to allot separate houses with lands for the maintenance of each of the old women of the group (often the karanavan's own sisters) to live on with their children and grandchildren. All lands continued to be managed by the karanavan, but he paid a sum of paddy from her allotted lands each year to the senior woman of each segment. If one sibling group in a taravad contained only brothers, a karar was sometimes made to allot to them a separate house with lands for the duration of their lives; this then reverted to the group as a whole after their deaths. Karars are however common only in village headmen's, chiefly or royal taravads: toolittle property is usually 592 involved in the taravads of retainer Nayars. 602 Here effective management is commonly divided

592 between the karanavan and the oldest woman.
602 The former carries out all economic transactions outside the group and controls the total income; he also keeps the key of the outer granary in the courtyard. The latter plans cookery, keeps the keys of paddy chests within the house, organized the work of women and presents to the karanavan her requirements for day-to-day expenditures. (8) Particularly when the karanavan is the son or own younger brother of the oldest woman, management runs smoothly and the oldest woman may be de facto head of the group. If she is a younger sister or classificatory sister a more formal division of roles is common.

[601] Under the karanavan, men of the group are ranked by seniority. All those older than ego are sometimes collectively called karanavar and are accorded respect and obedience (within the limits set by overall obedience to the head) all younger, whether they be mother's brothers, younger brothers, maternal nephews or great nephews, may be commanded and disciplined. The social distance between men of a property-group is great, far greater than between father and son, or between brothers, in any patrilineal South Indian group. Indeed, though learning and skills are passed on between them, the relationships between men are, when possible, formalized to the point of avoidance. By traditional etiquette, a man may not touch his karanavan or any maternal uncle; before approaching him he must remove his upper cloth. To speak to the karanavan he stands respectfully half hidden

592 from sight behind a pillar, holding his hand be-
602 fore his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. [69] With younger mother's brothers more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's etiquette is necessarily relaxed, but he observes the greatest possible formal respect before them. A similar etiquette is preserved before older brothers and classificatory brothers: after puberty these never joke, sit or chew betal and areca nuts together. A junior man never sits before his senior except at mealtimes when all men may sit in the dining hall in order of age, served by women of the group who eat later in company in the kitchen. In general, age overrides generation and also segment in the formal structuring of relationships between men of a property-group: mother's mother's brother is accorded the same etiquette as mother's brother, and classificatory older brother as older brother. Emotionally, however, there tends to be less acrimony and more tenderness, as might be expected, between alternate than between proximal generations; there is also a strong tendency for own siblings to support each other against classificatory sib-
613 lings. This is part of the process of clear-cut
593 segmentation in the lineage along lines descending through sisters: it culminates regularly in quarrels between classificatory brothers and division of property between the segments. This process of segmentation throughout the whole lineage derives from the paramount strength of the mother-child bond, the key-pin of the kinship system. For both men and women,

613 no other personal relationship can override this:
593 both sexes have their permanent home with the mother throughout her life and accord her unfailing [70] reverence and affection. From this bond issues the unity of the sibling group, (9) particularly the strong tie between brother and sister which emotionally reflects the dependence of men on their mothers. With the elder sister as with the mother a man has an intimate relationship of reverence mingled with easy familiarity: the two may sit together and discuss affairs of their kin-group, and the sister early accords her brother the right to discipline her children. With her elder brother, as with her maternal uncle, after her puberty, a woman must maintain a formal etiquette of partial avoidance: she may not sit before him speak to him unasked, or be alone in a room or a house with him. Only if she gravely offends against traditional morality, he may traditionally beat her even after puberty, for a Nayar woman owes the same obedience to all older matrilineal kinsmen as a collectivity as does a woman of the patrilineal castes to her father and later her
[684] husband. Incest with the younger sister or classificatory sister or sister's daughter is a most heinous crime, formerly punishable by death, and in modern times by total ostracism by the caste and lineage. It does however occasionally take place and is evidently recognized as a temptation under matrilocal residence, hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.

592 In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the

592 periphrey, though the legal power is in their hands. They are bound to it by their interpersonal ties with their mothers and sisters, [71] hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.

In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the periphery, though the legal power is in their hands. They are bound to it by their interpersonal ties with their mothers and sisters, but to some extent drawn away from it by their mutual rivalries and by their sexual liaisons with women in other lineages. The bonds between a woman and her daughters, as between sisters, are much more intense and less rivalrous than are those between men of the group. Residential separation, between a woman and her daughters, even for visits of more than a day or two, is traditionally unthinkable, and sisters even today often stay together until torn apart by the rivalries of their respective children. Cooking is communal in a taravad: the mother or oldest woman arranges the division of female labour. Apart from clothing (freely borrowed between women), property, even jewelry, is communally owned. Though a general respect is owed to all older women, the etiquette of behavior between them is easy and informal. In the house, the small group of one woman and her children receives little spatial recognition. In the daytime, all work and play together in the kitchen, upstairs rooms and back verandah; at night, older children sleep with their grandmothers in the main hall, while young ones go

592 with their parents into any convenient vacant
[582] room. At the same time, the separate, unique role of each woman as potential founder of a new taravad is recognized in certain rules: both sororate and sororal polygymy are traditionally forbidden, for example, since the inter-personal unity between sisters, as well as their separate positions each at the head of a line of matrilineal descendants, must not be endangered or distorted by their extra-lineage ties.

592 [72] (2) The Traditional Institution of Marriage.
581 Consistent with the unity and multiplex economic, legal and ceremonial functions of the taravad as a corporate group, marriage was traditionally the slenderest of ties, while as a
592 social concept fatherhood scarcely existed. We
582 have mentioned already that at the tali-rite of
608 retainer, middle class and servant Nayars and of temple servants, the immature girls of a lineage were collectively "married" and divorced before puberty by their local caste group as a whole, represented by their individual enangar. In desavari, chiefly and royal lineages the tali was usually tied by a man of a higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers for its women in hypergamous liaisons. The women of desavari lineages were thus usually "married" by naduvari men, naduvari and royal women either by Nambudiri men or by men of some higher-ranking royal lineage more ancient than their own. In all castes, the tali-tier had no subsequent responsibilities and if he wished need never visit the woman again.

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognized the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

584 outside on the verandah before he comes to visit
595 her.

These statements however again require some modification in the case of hypergamous unions. In recent years at all events, a powerful Nambudiri or royal landowner might occasionally force his attentions on a Nayar woman, whose family would be unlikely to oppose him. In two cases I even heard of Nambudiris who had succeeded in carrying on a liaison with a dead Nayar wife's younger sister, though this is contrary to Nayar rules of mating and led to unhappiness and strong covert [77] disapproval among the woman's kinsmen. In general, however, the traditional picture of Nayar marriage is one in which women voluntarily seek the favours of men: rape, for example, is a crime
[684] apparently unheard of among them. Certainly, cases are recorded of the dismissal of a higher caste man by a Nayar woman.

613 Combined polyandrous and polygynous mating
595 had a function in maintaining the unity of the
592 lineage. It seems that in every matrilineal system one basic conflict is inherent, namely the conflict between a man's ties to his natal kin on the one hand and to his kin by marriage and procreation on the other. In the Nayar system in this area, the conflict was resolved by almost completely eliminating the claims of the father and his kin. Polyandry and polygyny, combined, minimized the rights of the husband and father, and dispersed their roles between a number of men. This preserved the unity of the lineage, by preventing the close attachment of men to

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated without religious rites) underlined the necessity to the lineage of marriage and procreation, and the exclusion of the individual husband and father from a legally and socially significant role in relation to it.

594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them. This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in the world, was evidently made possible by their specialized role as one caste group in a larger society in which, in general, marriage and the elementary family were institutionalized. First, the Nayar system could probably not have come about in any but a leisure class supported by the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of this, young Nayar men need give economic [78] support neither to their wives nor to their sisters. Women were the people who sat at home on the land; their maintenance was assured by the payment of rents from low caste tenants and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
595 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied men for their occupation as a mobile militia. In explaining their peculiar marriage relationships, I am inclined to emphasize the military organization even more than the status of Nayars

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563 [162] The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received [651] land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth [564] century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the [463] produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and [592] redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the 471 village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western 592 landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell 566 his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–236.

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originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative.

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft.

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain.

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270).

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land-

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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Nayar retainers resided. A neighborhood normally contained some six to ten lineages and probably had a population of about three hundred Nayars. 613

The lineage was called a *taravād*. If it occupied the ancestral village of the clan its members used the ancestral house name as both clan and lineage names. If it lived elsewhere its members added a distinctive name, derived from their new locale, to the clan name. Each segment of a lineage occupying one house in turn had its own house name, and each Nayar had a personal name followed by the caste title. A typical Nayar name might therefore be "Thengiparambil Padikkil Kirakkutt-Velappil Govindan Nayar"—"Clan of the coconut garden, lineage of the gatehouse, household of the eastern garden, Govindan (personal name) Nayar." Usually one branch of a lineage continued to occupy and to rebuild the oldest ancestral home of the clan. The clan, lineage, and house names of these members would then be collapsed into one.

A lineage normally comprised some four to eight households, each a matrilineal segment of three to six generations' depth, including the youngest children and the common ancestress. Sometimes the households of a lineage might occupy adjacent gardens on a continuous stretch of dry land in the high-caste residential area of one village. Alternatively the houses of a lineage might become scattered throughout the high-caste residential areas of the several villages of the neighborhood. For it was possible for Nayar tenants, with the consent of the various overlords concerned, to buy or exchange the tenures of gardens. Further, a branch of a lineage which was expanding might be allotted the tenure of a newly developed garden at some distance from its former abode. Normally, however, the gardens in which their houses were built remained in the possession of one or other branch of a lineage over many generations. 613 592

Some writers would not apply the word lineage to the group which I am discussing. It was not always a lineage in the sense of a matrilineal group tracing descent from a common ancestress through a determinate number of generations (cf. *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*, 1952: 88–89). This definition applied to lineages which had occupied a neighborhood only for six or seven generations. It might also apply to an older lineage some of whose branches had died out, or to an older lineage whose membership had not happened to expand greatly over several generations. Often, however, there would be very old lineages whose most distantly related segments no longer remembered their exact genealogical relationship and whose members 613

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613 were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The [592] reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

613 However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be 592 forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmenta- 768 tion within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which [614] had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

613 In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the [578] households of the disputants and were normally settled through ap- [692] peal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

[614] As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations [834] were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave
[553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the
[588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month,
[881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to
[843] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem-
[769] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar
[765] also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the
[783] fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides
[885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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613 birth pollutions were not extended to them by their host lineage. In-
182 stead, as we have seen, they continued to observe these rites for several generations along with their clansfolk elsewhere.

The information on this procedure is incomplete because it does not take place in modern times. It is not known whether a lineage segment ever became incorporated into a new retainer caste as well as a new neighborhood, although this seems unlikely. It is not known whether an indigenous lineage which shrank to the size of one small property group ever allied itself in putative matrilineal kinship with another established lineage. It is also uncertain whether major segments of a very large lineage might over time break the pollution bond and gradually cease to observe exogamy. Some evidence from a Cochin village suggests that this may have happened. Shortly before my stay a man and woman of two lineages which had the same enangar and had never been known to marry, entered into a traditional type of informal marriage relationship. Elders of the village then began to wonder whether the lineages had not once formed one lineage, either by true matrilineal kinship or by joint performance of the tāli rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to the junior generation the marriage persisted. Thus, what may once have been an ancient tie of lineage and clan exogamy was quietly broken. I do not know whether fission within a lineage was traditionally possible or whether it occurs only in modern times, when the neighborhood assembly and the lineage itself are both disintegrating.

THE PROPERTY GROUP

613 *Structure* The property group among Nayar retainers was a seg-
● 592 ment of the lineage having a time depth of some three to six generations, including the youngest members and the common ancestress. It therefore typically comprised a group of brothers and sisters (real or classificatory), together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint-property-owning unit. Its members were from birth equal co-parceners in the buildings, land, movables, serfs, and all other property which had come to them from their matrilineal forebears, or had been conferred on them by their feudal lord, or had been acquired by the efforts of individual members. The group's oldest male member (kāranavan) was its legal guardian and represented it in the caste assembly.

When spoken of in its own right the property group, like the lineage, was called a taravād. When spoken of as a segment of the lineage it was called a *tāvari* (literally, "mother's line"). Tāvari could also be used of any intermediate segment of the lineage or of a mini-

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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. [343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's 342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands 556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village [312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing [515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside 613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. [764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods [776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of [782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta- [825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might 592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the 427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya 613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as 433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade [439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle- [432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods [431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the 592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops [465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

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613 his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the prop-
592 erty group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor
681 on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new
[687] district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village
headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with
[703] property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

613 The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was con-
592 ferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority
681 of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior
692 members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

613 It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de*
592 *facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior
681 men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable
692 that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their prop-
703 erty groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[1] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[153] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[1] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [195] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both [858] sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, [863] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the man- [867] ners and morals of their caste.

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, col- [592]
lectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [564]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [623]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [578]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to •592 him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relation- [576] ships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility— 576 characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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613 riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did
592 not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

595 It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and
175 linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike
[671] service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her en-
[613] angar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

595 Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group mar-
175 riage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at
184 least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

2;Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made pos-
[566] sible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The
work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty
of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their
conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of
these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group
only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the
household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and
given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obliga-
tions to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women
should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as
the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom
in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from
forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and en-
couraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the
matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same
time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and
a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of
the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs
regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their
districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of
group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted
the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons)
[178] organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between
group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in
that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, al-
though matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group mar-
riage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous mar-
riage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally
polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fa-
thers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE
● 592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when
423 the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Corre-
spondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

ual process of fission. This state of affairs was in harmony with the small amounts of land controlled by retainer property groups and with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to their land. The conditions of kānam tenure not only allowed for changes in the tenures of plots of land within one village, but even permitted segments of an expanding taravād to change their feudal allegiances and if necessary to hive off from their natal village.

The situation was different in the aristocratic lineages of royalty and district chiefs. By jenmam right they owned large domains which could support greater numbers of members. Their members also had a stake in the political office which they were reluctant to surrender. On the whole these lineages tended to cohere for longer periods than did those of retainers. Some of them today number over three hundred members and trace their descent back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When segments of these lineages did move away from their ancestral lands it was usually because they had been conquered and forced to vacate their territories and offices.

In the beginning, when one of these aristocratic lineages rose to power, it did so as a small property group. It did so either (in the case of royals) through conquest or (in the case of chiefs) through being appointed to office by some royal power. When they acquired office these upstart property groups seem to have severed ties with their former lineages and clans and to have conferred on themselves a higher ritual rank as independent castes.

After a few generations such a property group might expand in numbers and separate out into segments. I lack data on the precise point at which aristocratic property groups segmented; it seems to have been always at a later point with them than with retainer Nayars. (Today, some royal and chiefly property groups have a time depth of eight or more generations and over a hundred members.) When fission did occur the segments moved into separate palaces, each taking a portion of the ancestral domain for its maintenance. The oldest man resident in each segment acted as kāranavan and managed its internal affairs. For a time at least, the political office remained vested in the oldest man of the lineage irrespective of branch. When he was able, he kept a tight hold over all the segments, deflecting part of their income to himself for the upkeep of his palace staff, private army, and the larger forces he mustered through his subordinate vassals in war. The office bearer also retained sole right to the customs dues on trade within his chiefdom or kingdom, and to the tribute from village headmen within his area of rule.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except
554 that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
554 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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613 564 422 423

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some [427] garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had dif- [901] ficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men and women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing
592 no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident
couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
428 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother, wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[161] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

3:Gough E-4,5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-
culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward ne-
olocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matrilocally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In
[593] such households there was a certain authority structure between the wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[578] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and
[607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

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Nayar

royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurisis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

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595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathá'yam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of [833] a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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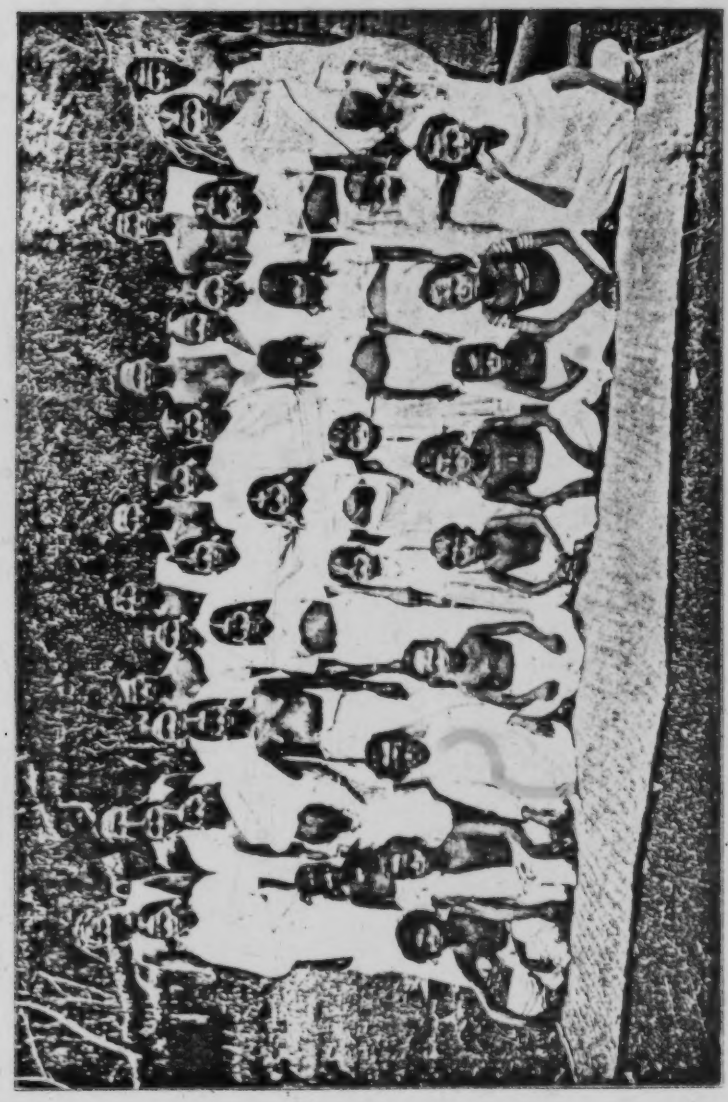

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY

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deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large number of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the breakfast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *káranavan*.

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawád* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawád*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *káranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawád* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The
[562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

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The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *káranavan* and the other members, the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawád* splits up into *távashis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

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It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

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of many joint members dependent on the *káranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *káranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *káranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable ; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *távashis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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CHAPTER III.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

592 The Nayars follow the *marumakkathâyam* law of succes-
613 Inheritance. sion, *i. e.*, the law which regulates succession
611 through the female line. The senior male member called the *kâranavan* is entitled to the full possession of the property, and is absolute in its management. The junior members, on the other hand, have a claim to residence and maintenance in the family house. They cannot call for an account except as an incident to a prayer for the removal of the manager for gross misconduct, nor claim any specific share of the income, nor even require that the maintenance provided for them should be in proportion to the income of the *tarawâd*. An absolute discretion in this direction is vested in the manager who is the legal guardian of every member of the family.[1] He is not accountable to any member in the *tarawâd* in respect of its income, nor can a suit be maintained for an account of the *tarawâd* property in the absence of fraud on his part. He is under no obligation to support any member of his *tarawâd* by his own labour or from his self-acquisitions. The only rest-
[425] raint on him in the management is, that he cannot alienate the lands of the family except with the consent of all the other members and without proper necessity.[2] If a family has so far increased in the number of its members that they cannot conveniently live under the same roof any longer, it divides itself with the consent of the senior member into *tâvazhis* to each of which is assigned a portion of the property for maintenance, and such *tâvazhis* may reside in separate houses or farm-houses belonging to the family and appropriating from the lands newly assigned to them an income sufficient to maintain themselves. In the partition of

1. Vide Mayne's Hindu Law, sec. 268.
2. I. L. R. II, Mad. 328.

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a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathíyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

Chapter 5

Fisheries

*433 226 KERALA IS THE leading fish producing State in India. Its present production of fish amounts to about 310,000 tons. Maharashtra comes next with an output of 210,000 tons. Over 80 per cent (260,000 tons) of the fish landings are obtained from the sea and the rest from inland sources. About 75,000 tons of fish (70,000 tons cured and 5,000 tons fresh) are at present annually exported to other parts of the country, and 2,000 tons (frozen and canned) are sent abroad. Allowing for a very negligible import, the net quantity available for local use comes to 235,000 tons per annum.

262 [171] 5.2 Fish eating is popular in this State. About four-fifths of the population are accustomed to taking fish regularly. At present the per capita consumption of fish in the State is 41.30 lbs. per year for the fish eating population and 33.00 lbs. per year for the total population, as against 9.50 lbs. and 6.10 lbs. respectively for India as a whole.

*433 226 [462] [511] [434] [592] 5.3 About 85,000 persons (1.60 % of total labour force) are directly engaged in fishing activities and they produce a net output of Rs. 5.60 crores (1.60 % of State income). The standard of living of an average fisherman in Kerala is very depressed. The average annual income of a fisherman's household in Kerala, consisting of 6.40 members, is estimated at Rs. 542, or only Rs. 85 per fisherman, that is, about one-third of the average per capita income in the State.

PRESENT STATUS OF FISHERIES

Marine Fisheries

5.4 *Coastal Fisheries*: Although Kerala has a comparatively short coastline (10% of all-India) Kerala ranks first in the production of marine fish (about 30% of all-India Production—Table 25). Large marine fish catch can probably be attributed to the much more intensive fishing effort made in Kerala. In 1957, the ratio of man-hours per mile of coastline came to about five times the average for other States. This heavy fishing pressure is paralleled by the high pressure of population on land, leading to an intensive use of the natural resources. Intensive fishing is not only confined to the number of hours of fishing put in, but it also includes the use of more efficient methods. It will be seen from Table 26 that the catch per man-hour of fishing in Kerala compares favourably with that in the other States.

[Tables 25 & 26, appearing on p. 288, have not been processed -- Ana]

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group -- Analyst]

513 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

592 of serfs. He could command all other members,
602 male or female, and children were trained to
868 obey him with reverence. He[1] had the rights of a pater over small children: till puberty he was responsible for having them educated in Malayalam reading and writing, must discipline them like a father in patriliny, and might beat them if they disobeyed. Even today in orthodox
[593] houses, the father of a child has no share at all in the karanavan's rights of pater: he may not interfere in education or discipline or question the karanavan's right to dispose of a child's career and services.

As their legal guardian, the karanavan must traditionally pass on to young men the martial traditions, swords and other weapons of the taravad. He must educate them also in the management of lands and serfs and the cultivation of gardens. Even today in villages, every Nayar has expert knowledge of paddy and garden cultivation and the planning of household architecture. Such information is learned with great care from the karanavan and younger brothers of the mother, all of whom play a part in the child's education after the age of four to five. In spite of interpersonal rivalry between men, Nayars show great loyalty to the group as a whole, pride in the military skill, dignity and financial integrity of their karanavans of past ages, and eagerness to identify with their mothers' brothers and eventually take their place as leaders of the property-group. This pride in the offices and public status of the group is of course most marked in royal lineages, [66] but

1/1 [the Karanavan --- Analyst]

592 from sight behind a pillar, holding his hand be-
602 fore his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. [69] With younger mother's brothers more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's etiquette is necessarily relaxed, but he observes the greatest possible formal respect before them. A similar etiquette is preserved before older brothers and classificatory brothers: after puberty these never joke, sit or chew betal and areca nuts together. A junior man never sits before his senior except at mealtimes when all men may sit in the dining hall in order of age, served by women of the group who eat later in company in the kitchen. In general, age overrides generation and also segment in the formal structuring of relationships between men of a property-group: mother's mother's brother is accorded the same etiquette as mother's brother, and classificatory older brother as older brother. Emotionally, however, there tends to be less acrimony and more tenderness, as might be expected, between alternate than between proximal generations; there is also a strong tendency for own siblings to support each other against classificatory sib-
613 lings. This is part of the process of clear-cut
593 segmentation in the lineage along lines descending through sisters: it culminates regularly in quarrels between classificatory brothers and division of property between the segments. This process of segmentation throughout the whole lineage derives from the paramount strength of the mother-child bond, the key-pin of the kinship system. For both men and women,

613 no other personal relationship can override this:
593 both sexes have their permanent home with the mother throughout her life and accord her unfailing [70] reverence and affection. From this bond issues the unity of the sibling group, (9) particularly the strong tie between brother and sister which emotionally reflects the dependence of men on their mothers. With the elder sister as with the mother a man has an intimate relationship of reverence mingled with easy familiarity: the two may sit together and discuss affairs of their kin-group, and the sister early accords her brother the right to discipline her children. With her elder brother, as with her maternal uncle, after her puberty, a woman must maintain a formal etiquette of partial avoidance: she may not sit before him speak to him unasked, or be alone in a room or a house with him. Only if she gravely offends against traditional morality, he may traditionally beat her even after puberty, for a Nayar woman owes the same obedience to all older matrilineal kinsmen as a collectivity as does a woman of the patrilineal castes to her father and later her
[684] husband. Incest with the younger sister or classificatory sister or sister's daughter is a most heinous crime, formerly punishable by death, and in modern times by total ostracism by the caste and lineage. It does however occasionally take place and is evidently recognized as a temptation under matrilocal residence, hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.
592 In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the

601 mothers" (ammaman), occasionally with prefixes "big" or "small" in the first ascending, according to age in relation to mother, and occasionally with prefixes "big oldest" and "small oldest" in the second [84] ascending, according to age in relation to grandmother. This equating of first and second generation males accords with the disciplinary powers of all older males, headed by the karanavan. Correspondingly, sister's children and sister's daughter's children are all marumakan (m.) or marumakal (f.). In ego's generation (m. and f. sp.) older brothers are addressed and referred to as jyeshtan (coll. etan); younger brothers are referred to as anujan. All men older than ego in the lineage may be referred to as karanavar (seniors); all younger as anandravar (juniors). These usages accord with the great importance of age-rank between men. For both sexes, all senior kin are addressed by terms, all juniors by name.

Women of the second ascending generation are called muthasshi ("oldest woman") with prefixes "big" or "small" according to age in relation to grandmother. In the first ascending, similarly, mother - amma, and other women are "big" or "small" mothers. In ego's generation older sisters are jyeshtathi (m. and f. sp.), younger sisters anujathi (m. and f. sp.). In addition, there are special cross-sex reference terms for "male sibling" (f. sp., age unspecified) - angala, and "female sibling" (m. sp., age unspecified) -pengal. These bring out the importance for Nayars of the complementary brother-sister tie,

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601 on which the unity of the sibling group and the
[593] collateral cohesion of the lineage is based.

Among female affines, the wives of men of the second and first ascending generations are ammayi (fem. of ammaman). Today, great respect is shown to these women, but they are also proverbially disliked since it is expected that they will try to obtain favours from the maternal uncles and draw away their allegiance from the Similar attitudes are shown to the EBW who has the respectful term jyeshtathi amma - "elder-sister-mother" or respected elder sister". [85] Only descriptive terms are used for the spouses of younger brothers and maternal nephews.

Among male affines, the father and step-father are called by the respectful term acchan (lit. -"lord"). Higher caste fathers are also called by their caste titles (e.g. "acchan Nambudiri"). The mother's father is muthacchan (oldest "lord"). The term acchan, like jyeshtan, anujan, jyeshtathi, anujathi, bharya=wife and barthavu=husband, are all Sanskrit terms,evidently at some time taken over from Nambudiris. The old Tamil word appan=father was reserved for the mother's tali-tier and is seldom heard today among Nayars, though it is the usual word for "father" among Nambudiris themselves and in the lower castes. Acchan was also a lineage-title accorded to some desavaris and military leaders in the traditional period; it has the connotation of high rank and political office rather than of begetting, and seems particularly appropriate for the Nayar practice of hypergamy and the fact that their lineages tended, at least in

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a
younger sister or classificatory sister, and may
see them only in the distance. Contact between
children and their Nambudiri fathers, as be-
tween princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-
law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live
and eat separately from the princes, served by
their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that
such restrictions on social relations within the
palace militate against affinal and intertavari
quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and
leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-
groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives
and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon sub-
caste; their forbears formed the private army
of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other some
what poorer households belong to the Agattu
Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and
women work in the place, since each adult mem-
ber living in it employs two Nayar servants of
his or her own sex to do housework and act as
messengers. The servants are still paid daily
in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distri-
butes the pensions of his group in amounts which
differ according to age-rank in the group. This

113 1921), p. 241.

(11) A. I. Richards, Some Types of Family Structure amongst the Central Bantu, in African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950).

582 (12) Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred to patrilateral, since it harmonizes the conjugal interests of a man and his sister's son, the most rivalrous relationship between men. It is also of course possible with hypergamous unions, whereas patrilateral cross cousins unions are not. In one Cochin village 7.2% of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; 1.6% had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. [103] Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 13.9% of marriages were to the father's nephew, 9.0% to the uncle's son. In Walluvanad division, South Malabar, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11.2% had married the father's nephew, 4.7% the uncle's son (own or classificatory).

613 (13) In Murdock's sense of a matrilineal, matri-
•543 local unit with the husbands of the women as permanent residents. However, in a true matriclan adult male members of the matrilineage or matrisib would be living away with their wives whereas in the royal lineages princes lived at home and merely visited their wives nearby. In most naduvari and all lower subcaste lineages, women were visited only occasionally by their Nambudiri lovers who lived in their own households.

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613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [175] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons. [858]

[853] [863] [867] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of [776]
impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [753]
impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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WOMAN-DAUGHTER

A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household responsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was expected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, however, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

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MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and [588] was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him. [586]

593 835 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law.

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships.

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized

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duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages. 593 578

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group. 593 561 578

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors. 593 [561]

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, collectively under the authority of the men of their household, represented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste assembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities. 593 562 [592] [564] [623] [578]

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal 593

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to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighboring groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obliga-
[431] tion. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[839] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

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In all Possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

595 613 577 [593] 595 764 613

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

595 754 613 593 [54] [586]

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but [564] without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except
554 that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with
554 her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
592 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of princesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

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tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own taravād.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's niece.

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000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, observed rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions —during their periods of co-residence.

Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

MARRIAGE

Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

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and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

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593 184 858 [613] will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may receive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 613 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could [764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu- [783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 613 184 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some resemblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate [783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 613 593 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them. A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād [867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The [868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks, 593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and 613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was [584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not [431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and
[607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[13] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604 Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562 between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593 almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562 one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684 might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562 participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613 The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593 mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769 Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184 Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562 almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613 rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593 of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591 commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604] circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613 both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593 Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184 clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159 relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593 This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely re-
776 sembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother
593 finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults
613 are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *ḳāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *ḳāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are
[782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are
less influenced by considerations of property than else- [421]
where. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 583
connected with the marital connexion will now be [121]
attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungádi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a [604] year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [30] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": 765 Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After 600 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Aṣān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the [842] arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a 184 clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some 178 Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and 776 themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, [613] he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on 613 ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony 564 with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before 184 puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. 833 The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Aṣān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The
[782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *Kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of
[787] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *Kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has
[582] already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a
582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while 98 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-
605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal
[593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyyar
[South Malabar and Cochin]

presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

Nayar
Tiyyar

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

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The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravāḍ*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

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The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

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Again, in all the groups studied the *taravāḍ* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravāḍ* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pēdhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *imar*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the

276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
782 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food
787 taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, more-
593 over, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
604 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

Nayar
Tiyyar

with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*predham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tāli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [183] [765] [769] [783]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

Nayar
Tiyyar

184 The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
182 the spirits of dead *kāranavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāranavans'* spirits,
593 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
775 however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is
595 male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
184 sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
182 the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
613 through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

593 Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties. The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
182 This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom, who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
184 married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed, however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother. He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are permitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
593 clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
182 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *cnāngan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nāḍuvari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is nor-
78 mally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted
182 in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
881 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted'
182 bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emotional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and
564 masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened
To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-05) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

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When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself ; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Talikettu kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

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why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

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Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

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All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavo* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammavo* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

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[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 56) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

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[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, i.e., elder mother, small mother, i.e., younger mother.

the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkenam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *cuangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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177 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97,
582 twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He
585 accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawadds*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

Polyandry.

[593] The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither
[604] regularly married, nor did they care much, when married,
[582] to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons
[585] of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of death.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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764 [804]s performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to 765
the *tarawad* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast 613
to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawad*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones [778] are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is [775] that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawad*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which 765
a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morn- 783
ing the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* 613
(washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Na- 793
yar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyâham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day [431] and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly [604] functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* [593] (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one 765
who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls 613
[782]

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[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

In this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 [591] [593] [429]

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 [564] [491]

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. [114] [122]

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Marabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. [113]

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a
173 temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of
193 the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death.
591 Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to
968 her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898,
175 the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see
591 Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen
593 out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations,
182 took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were
175 younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated
591 by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of
175 Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter
182

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's
182 matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
602 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
353

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. " A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his 593

843
593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife [602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. 843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in [574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring. [593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a [604] brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad*
613 like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 [591] patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[171] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access
585 to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
171 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

In view of the great number of communities that have remained untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman, where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in contrast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire complex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the children of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be separated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine creative principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy: male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.

Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated without religious rites) underlined the necessity to the lineage of marriage and procreation, and the exclusion of the individual husband and father from a legally and socially significant role in relation to it.

•594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them. This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in the world, was evidently made possible by their specialized role as one caste group in a larger society in which, in general, marriage and the elementary family were institutionalized. First, the Nayar system could probably not have come about in any but a leisure class supported by the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of this, young Nayar men need give economic [78] support neither to their wives nor to their sisters. Women were the people who sat at home on the land; their maintenance was assured by the payment of rents from low caste tenants and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
595 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied men for their occupation as a mobile militia. In explaining their peculiar marriage relationships, I am inclined to emphasize the military organization even more than the **status of Nayars**

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses.

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them.

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties.

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations.

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[161] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād property—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 In this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in
[782] government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *geniters*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

131 PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

133 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
175 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
423 Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdurari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
his *taravâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
684
851

addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
[656] the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad* occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

(434) This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad*; and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

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[Marayil Tarwad]

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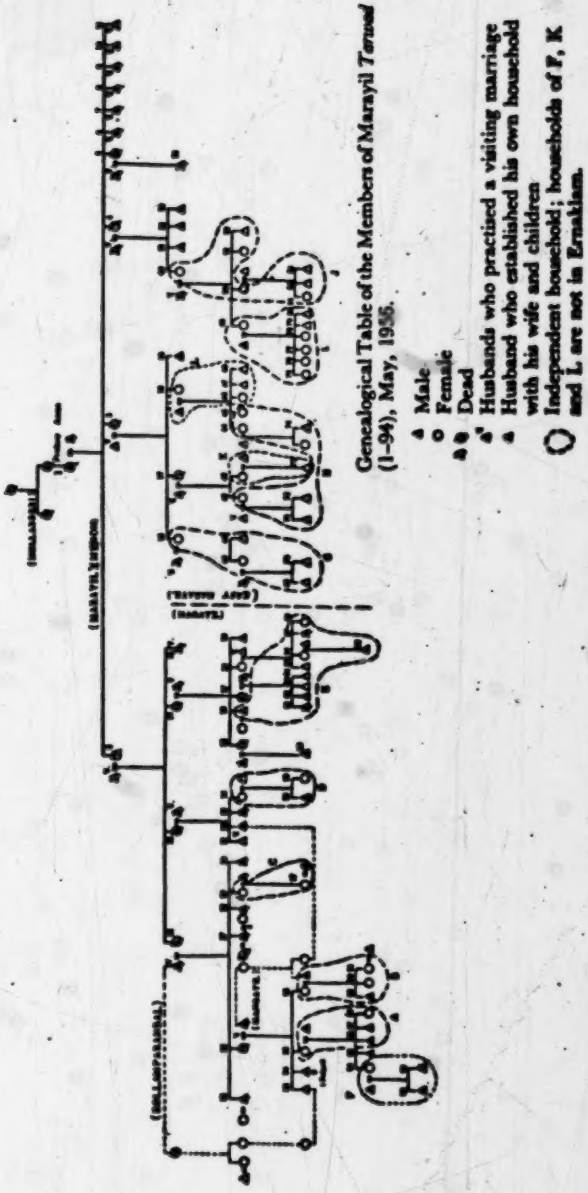

Genealogical Table of the Members of Marayil *Tarwad* (1–94), May, 1956.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*1*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

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Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name "Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one.

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12* and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband, Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their elementary families, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional visiting marriage; the second daughter *29* returned to this house after her husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children, occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional *tarwad*, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's
604 advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
182 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where
182 they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
591 the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
602 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
182 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
602 were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
353 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their

within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between members of the same caste or sub-caste, but at a higher caste feast members of lower castes might receive food from higher caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs, temple servants, retainers, middle-class and servant Nayars thus collectively formed the "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

Below all these castes, living in a separate part of the village, were the "low" or "polluting" castes. These included in order of rank, Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with 20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (astrologers) with one to three households per village; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one to three houses per village; low caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas, Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal extended families with fraternal polyandry, cross-cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal descent with patrilocal extended families and fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked for each other and for the "good" castes of the village. Iravas, the most numerous and influential, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

514 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
595 had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

596 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
[595] might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
[597] many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

613 In the royal lineages, since each lineage,
582 though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate
837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with [37] Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognize the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

595 Traditionally, the visiting lover placed his wea-
553 pons outside the door as a warning to other me
that he was within. My informants reported
that more recently, until the end of the nine-
teenth century in some villages, if two lovers
of a woman called on the same night the one wh
came last slept outside on the verandah. Usual
the regular lovers of a woman (who might not be
from the same lineage) knew each other and in-
formally agreed upon their turns.

595 It is difficult to decide from the evidence whe
ther this instution of combined polyandrous and
polygynous mating can strictly be regarded as
"marriage" in any usual sense of the term.
Personally, I prefer the word "marriage" for
the ritual marriage of talikettukalyanam (which
old English speaking Nayars even today state to
have been "the real marriage"), because it gave
ceremonial recognition, to a stable relationship
of perpetual hereditary affinal kinship between
lineages in the local,group. Moreover, althoug
exclusive sexual rights in the woman were giver
up at once at the "divorce", the observance of
death [74] pollution by the woman and her child-
ren indicates that in some sense the relation-
ship was thought to continue for life.

595 However, the evidence suggests that post-
684 puberty liaisons too were perhaps not entirely
551 promiscuous; moreover, the more permanent
of them at all events were attended by ceremon-
ial obligations. First, liaisons were strictly
limited to men of the appropriate "good" castes;
sex unions with men of lower caste were cate-
gorically forbidden and for women, punishable

595 by immediate death. For this reason it was
684 necessary, when a woman became pregnant, for
651 her to be able to name one or more lovers of appropriate subcaste who might have fathered the child. These men must then acknowledge their responsibility by paying the expenses of delivery (petta chilavu - clothing, rice and vegetables) to the barber-midwife who attended at births. If no appropriate lover came forward to do so, the woman was deemed to have cohabited with a low caste man and was excommunicated. Even today, a girl who becomes pregnant before the (modern) marriage ceremony is easily exculpated if she can name a Nayar or higher caste lover who will pay her deliver expenses. She is then by old custom tacitly regarded as having been married to him, and if he chooses not to visit her again, has little difficulty in finding a second husband. If however no expenses are paid, she is assumed to have had relations with a low caste man, a Christian or a Muslim, and though excommunication is not now effectual, she falls into social disgrace. She is unlikely henceforth to find a Nayar husband, and her household may find difficulty in marrying away other girls of her generation

595 In addition to the delivery expenses, a Nayar
586 of the local subcaste group who entered into a relationship with a girl was expected to present her with a loincloth on the first night of visiting her. Thereafter, if he continued to visit her, he must make customary gifts of clothing, [75] bathing- and hair-oil, and vegetables, at Onam, Vishu and Tiruvadhira, (10) the three main

595 festivals of the year. If he failed to do so on one
[586] of these occasions, it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. However, it seems clear from the literature that though a woman might have a small number of regular visitors of her local group - or even only one - these had no exclusive sexual rights, and that she might receive others at will if they were passing through her village. The evidence in uncertain, however, about the total number of men a woman might entertain concurrently. Nicolo di Conti (1444) writes that "The Nayar women are allowed to take several husbands, so that some have ten or more". Varthema (1510), writes that "One woman has five, six or seven husbands, or even eight. And one sleeps with her one night and one another night" (p. 146). These reports suggest that the number of lovers a woman might have was limited. Hamilton states that in the eighteenth century this was definitely so, and that a woman might have "twelve but no more at one time." (p. 310) Barbosa, however, writing in 1520, says that "in addition to the three or four lovers whom every woman has, they never refuse themselves to any Brahmene or Nayre who gives them money." His view is supported by Pietro della Valle (1624), who says "The Gentile Nairi have no peculiar wives, but all women are common amongst them" (II, p. 379). It seems probable, therefore, that each woman had a small number of fairly regular lovers who made ceremonial gifts to her at the festivals, but that a man might without difficulty gain access to a strange woman when he was

595 away from his village on military service. Buchanan, as late as 1807, reports that Nayar women vied with each other as to the number of lovers they could obtain. (p. 411).

595 [76] Until late in the nineteenth century, women
584 evidently had freedom to choose their own lovers.
644 This was until recently still the case in the royal lineages, where women selected their lovers from a small group of aristocratic Nambudiri families. Young men of these families were introduced into the palaces by older kinsmen already established there, and might become ensconced as regular occupants of the Nambudiri quarters until such time as they were dismissed by their royal mistresses. The princes of the lineage appear to have had little say in arranging these unions. I was told by one informant that the senior Raja periodically held an audience at which Nambudiris currently living in the palace were presented to him by his secretaries, but that otherwise he had little knowledge of
595 marital life within the palace. Today, as also
584 in commoner lineages, this is no longer the case: monogamy has been customary in all subcastes for the past forty to fifty years, and the prospective husband of a woman is selected by her karanavan or elder brother. In orthodox families of the retainer subcastes, at least for the past fifty years, the karanavan or the elder brother of a woman has had the right to dismiss a husband of whom he disapproved. Alternatively
[586] a woman may still, as of old, divorce her husband at will by refusing him admittance or causing her kinsmen to place his sleeping mat

541 outside on the verandah before he comes to visit
595 her.

These statements however again require some modification in the case of hypergamous unions. In recent years at all events, a powerful Nambudiri or royal landowner might occasionally force his attentions on a Nayar woman, whose family would be unlikely to oppose him. In two cases I even heard of Nambudiris who had succeeded in carrying on a liaison with a dead Nayar wife's younger sister, though this is contrary to Nayar rules of mating and led to unhappiness and strong covert [77] disapproval among the woman's kinsmen. In general, however, the traditional picture of Nayar marriage is one in which women voluntarily seek the favours of men: rape, for example, is a crime
[654] apparently unheard of among them. Certainly, cases are recorded of the dismissal of a higher caste man by a Nayar woman.

613 Combined polyandrous and polygynous mating
595 had a function in maintaining the unity of the
592 lineage. It seems that in every matrilineal system one basic conflict is inherent, namely the conflict between a man's ties to his natal kin on the one hand and to his kin by marriage and procreation on the other. In the Nayar system in this area, the conflict was resolved by almost completely eliminating the claims of the father and his kin. Polyandry and polygyny, combined, minimized the rights of the husband and father, and dispersed their roles between a number of men. This preserved the unity of the lineage, by preventing the close attachment of men to

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated without religious rites) underlined the necessity to the lineage of marriage and procreation, and the exclusion of the individual husband and father from a legally and socially significant role in relation to it.

594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them. This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in the world, was evidently made possible by their specialized role as one caste group in a larger society in which, in general, marriage and the elementary family were institutionalized. First, the Nayar system could probably not have come about in any but a leisure class supported by the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of this, young Nayar men need give economic [78] support neither to their wives nor to their sisters. Women were the people who sat at home on the land; their maintenance was assured by the payment of rents from low caste tenants and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
595 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied men for their occupation as a mobile militia. In explaining their peculiar marriage relationships, I am inclined to emphasize the military organization even more than the status of Nayars

as a leisure class, since leisure classes without polyandry are common all over India.

The Nayars themselves appear to have recognized a connection between their occupation as a militia and the custom of plural marriages by which men were prevented from forming permanent attachments to wife and children. Barbosa, writing of plural marriages, reports that "it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (p. 124). Similarly Joao de Barros, writing in the early sixteenth century, says: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain prince to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike service to which they are bound whensoever the king calls upon them." (12)

Nayar marriage may thus perhaps be seen as comparable to other military institutions, for example the age sets of bachelors among the Masai (Merker, 1904, pp. 82-3) or the age regiments of the Zulus (Bryant, 1929, pp. 124, 642-7) in the reign of Shaka. In both these societies those groups of the population organized for warfare were prevented from forming attachments to wives and children. Shaka achieved this among the Zulus by compelling men of the age regiments [79] under 35 to 40 to remain (at least in theory) celibate. Among the Masai, a soldier might form as many connections as he wished, and promiscuous intercourse was encouraged between men of the bachelor age sets

595 701 and girls of suitable age. But only older men were permitted to marry and form a household with their wives and children.

The similarity between systems like the Masai and the Nayar system is that in those groups of the population organized for warfare, male sexuality was divorced from the upbringing of children, which among Nayars took place within the lineage and concerned only lineage members. Among the Masai this freeing of a man's sexual life from the responsibilities of child-rearing concerned only certain age-groups of men, while in Calicut and Cochin it applied to the total male population of one caste.

595 701 526 184 The extent to which Nayar kinship was influenced by their relation to the land and by the military organization becomes clearer when we compare the kinship system in Calicut and Cochin with that of Nayars in the northern kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam and Kadattunad, north of the Kora River which formed the northern boundary of the Calicut kingdom at the height of the Zamorin's power.

Apart from the narrow coastal belt, the country in north Malabar was rocky and mountainous, and comprised much waste land and virgin forest. Perhaps because of this, the sparsely populated northern kingdom never achieved the degree of political centralization found in the central kingdom. Government was ostensibly by nadavaris owing a tenuous allegiance to their Rajas. In fact, however, in all these kingdoms chiefs perpetually rebelled against their Raja and shook off his power for long periods, while

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage: infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

582 Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well
as marriage to the dead spouse's sibling, were
●595 thus automatically forbidden. This rule appears
835 to relate to the paramount need to keep minimal
the potential rivalries between individuals of the
same sex within the group. It was also consis-
tent with the relationship of respect between
585 them. Even today, when ceremonies mark the
602 start of the post-puberty marriage, a man's
595 lineage elders may not attend his marriage cere-
monies and feast. He goes to the bride's house
with unrelated friends of his own age or with
affines, ideally, his sister's husbands. For
marriage is a jolly undertaking and only such
men may joke together about sexual scandals in
the village. But [81] reticence is required in
discussing their own marriage, and the respect
a woman owes her older kinswomen demands that
she interfere in no way in their marital life. To-
day, a woman treats her father or step-father
with affectionate respect of a less formal kind
than that accorded to the mother's brother, but
she should not touch him after puberty. With
her elder sister's husband she observes still
greater formality, based on the incest prohibi-
tion. The ban on sororal polygyny is particular-
ly comprehensible in view of the fact that Nayar
women were traditionally open rivals for the
attentions of men: many writers mention this
and it is still discernible in villages today. The
mutual respect and amity required of women of
the same property-group was incompatible with
such rivalry.

835 However, the ban on relations with two persons
582 of the same group was less stringent than the

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604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy rctained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers[8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād.

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological

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843 595 431 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 595 431 684 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however, their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 593 564 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this
[431] again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obligation. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 584 586 613 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or
[837] village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

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In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

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monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. However, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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613 riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did
592 not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

595 It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and
175 linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike
[671] service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her en-
[613] angar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

595 Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group mar-
175 riage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern
184 Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

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a favor"; and the Dutch Captain Nieuhoff observed in 1664 that "It is commonly reported in these parts, that the kings of Venmani made a law, by which a man was empowered to kill any woman that should refuse him a kindness" (quoted in K. P. P. Menon, 1908: vii–viii). These quotations are especially interesting because they suggest that, in Travancore as in Central Kerala, plural unions on the part of women were not merely permissible but, in theory at least, enforceable by law.

Similarly, Nayar informants of a village near Haripad in Central Travancore told me that they understood that "long ago" Nayars of Travancore had the institution of the visiting husband together with polygyny and non-fraternal polyandry, like Central Kerala Nayars. The same informants reported that during the nineteenth century, after the Nayar armies were disbanded, residence became avunculocal among Nayars in this area of Travancore, non-fraternal polyandry died out, and for a few decades some Nayars practised fraternal polyandry, with a group of brothers assuming collective responsibility for one or more co-resident wives and their young children. Other writers also mention relatively modern cases of fraternal polyandry among Travancore Nayars (Iyer, 1932; Fawcett, 1901: 241). Later in the nineteenth century and during this century, however, Travancore matrilineal property groups began to disintegrate, and fraternal polyandry gave place to monogamy. The Central Travancore sequence of duolocality with group marriage, to avunculocality with fraternal polyandry, to partial neolocality with monogamy, is an interesting one in view of the fact that fraternal polyandry has, as far as I am aware, always been strictly forbidden among both duolocal Nayars of Central Kerala and avunculocal Nayars of North Kerala throughout the historical period. I was able to spend only a fortnight in Travancore and could not pursue the comparison.

The marriage of a woman to more than one man concurrently is not confined to the Nayars in southwest India. The double unilineal Tiyyars and some other higher polluting castes of Central Kerala had fraternal polyandry, and both fraternal and non-fraternal polyandry were customary among the Toda tribe of the Nilgiri hills. The Coorgs to the east of North Kerala are also said to have had fraternal polyandry associated with patrilineal descent groups. The prevalence of various types of polyandry in southwest India generally suggests that *some* form of plural unions for women may have been very ancient among the Nayars, possibly predating their organization into kingdoms.

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595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
[566] adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made possible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons)
[178] organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

613 THE LINEAGE
592 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
423 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their
554 lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
554 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses.

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them.

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties.

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations.

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for [591] limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which [431] she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. [595] Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her [858] children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P. 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[751] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally, though not legally recognized rights in and

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, per- [787] formed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is [824] fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

175 564 613 631 [701] [566]

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

613 [601] [783] [791] [769] [592]

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

[591] [595] [178]

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

613 582 564

[1] Respectively called Vettukadi, Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin), Velutheddans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 [692] 613 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II: THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
175 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
423 Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
684
851

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13¼ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11¼ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of
585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

Nayar
Tiyyar

184 The unconscious
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
the spirits of dead *kāraṇavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavan*'-spirits,
593 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is
175 male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests
of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their
595 mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation
with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers
to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar
system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset
184 of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect
that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are
towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among
Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with
182 his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children
613 for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates
the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
182 who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
184 avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between
a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed,
however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother.
He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are per-
mitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister
is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal
kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the
spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar
mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there
is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear
that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under
the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a
woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
593 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond
182

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

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jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife."[1] 595 562

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs. 562

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry.* 12/ [114]

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time. 588

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale. [881] [558]

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the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day. 588

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families. 174 182 588

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous. [851] [595]

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to [765] [171]

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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. 585 [591] [198]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunderstanding or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly conducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its distinguished author. (184) [581] 586 [648] 581 [648]

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions. A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry anyone who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort. 582 [564]

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a specially aristocratic privilege. 591 [587] [178]

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for 595
The last fifty years.

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595 175 [609] [114] the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 174 538 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 174 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 613 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [564] [189] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few [593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "G" to "Y" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 699–70.

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Note 3.—McLennan and the Nāyar Type of Polyandry.

McLennan, in his well-known book, *Studies in Ancient History*, divides polyandry into two classes, and calls one the Nair type and the other the Tibetan type. "It is in the nature of the cases," says he, "that all the possible forms of polyandry must lie between the Nair and Tibetan forms." A good deal of what McLennan says about the Nāyar customs is vitiated by the unsatisfactory character of the information at his disposal. Buchanan, on whom he chiefly depends, made a journey through Malabar, and his account is wholly untrustworthy. The loose character of the sexual tie and the licentious habits of the richer Nampudiri landlords, as far as their immediate Nāyar tenants were concerned, were naturally enough interpreted as polyandry by foreign observers. As a matter of fact distinct polyandry of any type was very rare in Malabar except among the Kāniyāns (or the astrological caste) and among them it is of the Tibetan type. 595 114

If there existed any tendency towards polyandry among the Nāyars it was not certainly towards what McLennan calls the "Nair type." The wife of a brother is looked upon as a person to whom one could openly though not legitimately pay court; and any favour short of sexual relationship which she confers upon him is allowed by public opinion. A wife, for example, is the only woman who is allowed to smear oil on a man's back; and when a woman does it to a man it is considered to be a sort of semi-marital function. A man can always ask his brother's wife to do it for him, and it is done very often, even in the presence of the brother. Such customs are, however, open to two interpretations. As we have seen elsewhere, the *Machuna* marriage (or the marriage of cross-cousin) is the orthodox form of marriage among the Nāyars. To all the brothers alike the girl stands in the same relation before the marriage. *She could have been, in fact, the wife of any of them,* provided she was not older than her cousins. Even after her marriage with one of them this potential relationship continues to exist, and therefore all the brothers treat her "half as a sister and half as a wife."[1] [582]

Or, it may be explained, that such relationship is a survival of a Tibetan type of polyandry among the Nāyars. It may be argued that these semi-marital functions which all the brothers can claim from each others' wives, prove the prevalence in a former time of a community of marriage relationship among the brothers. This does not seem to me to be true. Nāyar tradition gives no support to this view. We have no Nāyar stories that speak of one woman who was the common wife of her cross-cousins. In fact we have no tradition of any polyandry at all. Nevertheless, we find McLennan giving the Nair name to a particular type of polyandry supposed by him to be practised universally among them.

[1] It has been argued by Spencer and Gillen that the system of supplementary spouses affords definite evidence of a system of group marriage in a previous age. Their inferences on this subject have now been subjected to very damaging criticism, especially by Mr. N. W. Thomas, *Kinship and Marriage in Australia*, pp. 111-141.

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177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawadds*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

Polyandry.

[593] [604] [582] [564] The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of death.

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sámanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkatháyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of [833] a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue,

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impossible to determine. It was under the influence of the tangible fact of maternity, that the notions of race, family and inheritance were elaborated and developed. Against this is the fact, that the jungle tribes and very low castes have a regular system of marriage and a kind of paternal inheritance.

Sir Henry Mayne maintains that the origin of society in patriarchal lines, is that polyandry and kinship through females are of temporary duration, liable to be brought about at any stage in the progress of society by peculiar circumstances under which it may be placed. If this were true, the popular belief that Nambuthiris brought it about to accommodate their domestic habits is easily proved.

Letourneau says that there is no warrant to consider this form of conjugal union as having been general, but that it is in exceptional form brought about by necessity in a good number of gross societies. This view to some extent is shared by Herbert Spencer who says that polyandry is one form of marital relations or arrangements independently originating in the earliest societies by successive limitations of promiscuity. Lastly, the opinion is unanimous that the Nayars and other *marumakkathâyis* are Dravidians and that polyandry and its accompanying incidents prevailed in Southern India among the non-Aryan tribes. There is strong reason to think, that the *tâli* tying ceremony, the prohibition of sexual union outside the caste, and the doctrine of *Anulomam* and *Pathilomam* were orginally introduced by Nambuthiri Brahmans as restrictions on promiscuities. Thus, so different are the views of anthropologists on this subject, that it still remains an unsettled problem in the ethnology of Kerala. As has been already said, the custom of polyandry is dead. The women of the upper and middle classes are monogamous, and marriage in practice amply satisfies the definition of Lord Penzance in Hyde v. Hyde, namely, "the voluntary union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all other".

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Polygamy.

There is nothing which prevents a man from entering into conjugal relations with more than one woman at a time; nevertheless, it is seldom practised. Indeed, when a man feels happy and contented with his own wife, very seldom has he any inclination to form *sambandham* with another for the sake of novelty unless forced by the

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595 [554] circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *kúranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kúranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kúranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruwithira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

[613] [184] 626 [584] [582]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1]

1. Vide pages [illegible].

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: ". . . and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

● 595

[For detailed information (including genealogies) on polyandrous families in the Walluvanad Taluk of South Malabar and in North Cochin see category 116, pp. 175-225.]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

The polyandry of the Kammalans, of the four sub-castes of goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters and bell-metal smiths, is in every way identical with that of the Thandans and Tiyas of the central area. This may be because they claim a common Sinhalese origin for it. The legend relates that one of the early Perumal kings of Kerala, having received some useful hints as to how to have his washing done by a *dhobi* (washerman) promised to give him a girl of the Asari (carpenter) caste in marriage. This revolted the Kammalans, and in order to avoid the degrading proposition, they emigrated in a body to Ceylon, leaving their king with none but a few workmen specialized in making roofs for the temples. The pre-historic boycott had its desired effect. The Perumal monarch, in dire distress, promised to give up the marriage he had had in mind and appealed to the king of Ceylon for the return of his indispensable artisans. These agreed to come back, but were given protection by the king of Sinhala in the form of an escort of his own subjects who brought the coconut with them, settled in Kerala and became the ancestors of the Tiyas. Presumably, the Kammalans learned the advantages of polyandry when they were in the kingdom of Kandy, and have never ceased to practise it since.

I found all the artisan families which I visited polyandrous, and I was told that the custom is still very vigorous, in spite of what outsiders have to say. The same applies to those associated craftsmen castes, the Kolla- and Vil-Kurups, the Tol-kollan, Kanisans, Mannans, Panans and Pulluvans, who do not seem either to have given up polyandry in any great numbers. Their form of the institution differs in no way from that of their fellows of the senior caste.

B. POLYANDRY IN THE WALLUVANAD TALUK OF SOUTH MALABAR AND IN NORTH COCHIN

Personal Observations

It was into this complex maze of Kerala society that I ventured, a few years ago now, to study the polyandry of some of its people. In the following pages, I give the results of this personal investigation. Thanks to my helpers and interpreters, I was able to find polyandrous households almost immediately. My first visit to the Palghat taluk and to Walluvanad allowed me to confirm that the Tiyas still practised what I was searching for, and that what I had heard about them was not incorrect. While in Tellicherry, I had the same experience, even though

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

865 told me that she had had no experience with girls as she had only had boys, but that friends of hers who had had them, said that they are quieter and easier to manage.

864 Boys were much worse when it came to early masturbation. This began at the age of two with them, and they seemed to delight in playing with themselves when sitting in the sand or dust. Nani told her [595] own children that they must not do this, because it would make them sick, and it was always her and not Panju or Narayana who dealt with this matter. She noticed too, that her little boys, when suckling, would sometimes get an erection, whereupon she would beat their fingers away from themselves with a small twig. She had threatened them with castration, too, but she complained that this did not seem to have the slightest effect on them.

155 595 I enquired if Nani had noticed any preference in her boys for herself and any marked animosity and fear for their fathers or one of the fathers, at an early age. I asked her too, if, in other families where there were girls, these did not show a partiality towards their male parents. She replied that it was quite apparent that girls as well as boys preferred the mother to the fathers. As far as she was concerned, she thought that both boys and girls were more drawn to the mother than to the fathers because it was the mother who looked after them from an early age. It was, of course, impossible for me to look more deeply than this into the question of Oedipean inclinations as I had neither the time nor the opportunity to make a proper research into the matter.

864 I was interested to learn that it was Nani who threatened her boys [595] with castration when they masturbated, and neither Panju nor Narayana. What happened in the case of girls in other families, then? Nani said that they were told that they would have their genital organs pinched, and this was sometimes actually done, hard, so as to hurt. Here, I insidiously asked whether the little girls ever felt that they were castrated by comparison to the little boys, but the only effect of my question was to make them all laugh heartily – Panju and Narayana, who were eavesdropping just beyond us in the courtyard, as well.

Upon another day, while persevering in my attempts to find out about the early development of Thandan children living in polyandry, I asked if Nani had noticed a period of calm in which the children ceased masturbating and seemed no longer to take any interest in sexual matters. She took this seriously and replied yes, that she had noticed such a lull. Between the ages of four and thirteen, they were very quiet, with only brief, temporary interruptions. At the end of this time, boys and girls

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

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members have been the ablest of all in adapting themselves and in taking advantage of the new opportunities which the Europeans brought. To them have gone the best and most rewarding jobs both in and out of the administration, positions of trust and responsibility to which their long training as soldiers and managers of the upper castes in Kerala had possibly prepared them. I was astonished to find how many well-known names in present-day India still have their homes and families in Ottappalam of the Walluvanad taluk.

It has already been said how very much the Tiyas, everywhere in Kerala, have progressed, and how they, too, have taken enormous advantage of changed circumstances, especially education, to become today one of the most progressive communities in the State. Aiyappan's book is witness to this. Perhaps only the lower castes, such as Kammalans, other artisans, Cherumas, Pulayas, aboriginals and the poorer section of the Mopla Islamic community, have remained as they always were, and have shown no signs of taking advantage of the benefits brought in by foreign rule. It is not to be excluded, however, that it may be precisely for them that the new Communist government will legislate, especially for the landless agricultural labourers – but it is too early to say anything about this yet.[1]

Following closely upon the replacement of the old order by a new one, polyandry, too, has crumbled in Kerala. The Nayars, whose non-fraternal polyandrous customs so forcibly struck the early Portuguese and other European travellers, have ceased to practise polyandry, at least in the pristine form in which it was described by the ancient writers. Since this polyandry appears to have been closely correlated with the military organization of the Sudra militiamen of the local rajas and chieftains, it was perhaps to be expected that, when the latter disappeared, the custom of non-fraternal polyandrous marriage went with it. Particularly as men living in a *marumakkathayam* system of inheritance seem to suffer greatly from the fact that they can leave nothing to their children, but only to those of their sisters. In a conversation that I had with His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin, at Ernakulam on the 18th of April, 1949, he told me that it was "un-natural" for a man not to be able to provide for his own children, and that, in his opinion, the custom could not survive much longer for this reason.

[1] A step has been taken in this direction with *The Kerala Agrarian Relations Bill 1957* which introduces comprehensive land reforms, including the right of "permanent tenants" to purchase land held by them, a ceiling on land holdings and fixation of fair rents.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

There appears to be no doubt that Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of the central area are gradually giving up polyandry. Others have reported on the speed with which it is disappearing, sometimes exaggerating the rapidity, it seems to me, but nevertheless correctly stating that not many more years will pass before the custom has become simply a memory, as it is with the Nayars. I think a distinction should be made, however, between the more wealthy, upper members of the caste and the lower, poorer ones. In fact, polyandry with the Thandans and Tiyas is being abandoned from the top, and this observation is valid not only for their community, but also for polyandry in general in Kerala.

It is the upper castes, who have had greater opportunity to educate themselves, adapt themselves to higher standards and lead a more modern, Europeanized type of life, who are giving it up as something primitive and unworthy of self-respecting citizens. Within the castes, however, it is not always the upper strata that has progressed in this way, as can be seen with the Nayars, where polyandry is reputed to be practised still in the conservative court circles of Cochin and Travancore. Among the Thandans and Tiyans it is the other way round, the upper class either professes not to follow the custom any longer or really abstains from doing so. The Kammalans and associated artisans nearly all continue to be polyandrous, and as they are without exception people of very slender means, a distinction such as the one made here does not apply.

Aiyappan, discussing new trends in the Irava community, has written: "Differences in occupations and income and the development of new sexual standards are two active forces that one sees in operation against polyandry." (*Iravas and Culture Change*, p. 103.) Iravas, according to him, had formerly very few avocations from which to choose. They pooled their resources and worked for the house, their common wife and their children, without making any individual reservations. Today, matters have changed and the men each want a different type of work, chosen from among the numerous new occupations which are open to them, and aspire to have their own family, wife and children. The old ways are no longer fashionable, and are even despised and considered to be primitive and barbarous. Jealousy thus reappears, and asserts itself in no uncertain way. The women, too, do not want to be shared any longer by a number of brothers, and prefer to return home or refuse polyandrous marriages rather than be joined in wedlock in the traditional manner. In North Cochin, however, it was the progress of the people in higher levels of the Thiyya caste that brought about a legal inter-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

177 diction of polyandry. (For a synopsis of the Act of 1940, see p. 238 ff.)
595 While travelling round with my guides and interpreters in 1949, I had ample opportunity to hear what the polyandrous families were thinking about the ancient form of matrimony which was beginning to be despised. Here are some of the remarks which were made to me in the course of my interviews:

177 Raman, the informant of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, said that
564 if only twenty five per cent of two hundred and fifty Thandan families
595 in the Walluvanad taluk still practised polyandry today, it was because the Moplas, Nayars and Brahmins ridiculed the practice as low-caste and primitive. The Thandans wanted to reform themselves and aspired to higher things, therefore they had to give up polyandry as representing something backward.

Velu, informant of the Kereghetil household of the Katukulangara *tarawad,* told me that as long as the property was undivided, they practised polyandry, as it kept them from having many wives in whose quarrels they might become involved and thus break with each other. But now, as each man wanted to go his way, things were different, and polyandry was no longer possible.

It will be remembered that, on the 2nd of November, 1949, I attempted to visit a rich Tiya household near Kunnamkulam in north Cochin, only to be put off by an old man, accompanied by a younger one, who assured me that no one was polyandrous in their family any more. When I went on to a poor labourer's house nearby, I was told that this was not true. There were three brothers in the older generation (one of whom was the elder of the two men to whom we had spoken) and they lived in polyandry, although, being wealthy, they did not like to admit it.

In the Kaladiwalapil household, that of the miserable Tiya labourers next door, in the village of Perumpillav, the informant, Raman, said that the ancient custom by which brothers shared a common wife, and thus avoided the quarrelling among sisters-in-law in which they feared to become embroiled, was changing now because the younger people found it "more convenient" to be monogamous. When I asked him what he meant exactly by this phrase, he replied that "times have changed" and that it is "easier" thus. Not yet satisfied, I insisted on more clarification, whereupon I heard that polyandry is "not done any longer", that it was "out of fashion", and not "modern". Raman was unable to express himself better, and seemed plainly puzzled and embarrassed by my request for a more precise explanation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

I obtained the same kind of answer from Panju of the Appayl Wattakkeh household, it will be recalled, when I asked him how it was that his maternal uncle consented to get a new wife for him and his brother, Narayana, when they refused to live any longer in polyandry with Raman and Kuniyama. He said that his mother's brother had certainly begun by resisting the request, but that, in the end, he had given in because "times have changed" and he could not very well force them to remain in their present marriage if they said that they were dissatisfied with it.

It was Panju, too, who gave me the unexpected information that it was "immorality" that was breaking up polyandrous households. Women were not at all chaste any longer, he said, and anybody could have them "for a song". So every man now wanted a wife of his own whom he could control, instead of submitting himself to the old discipline and consenting to remain without complaint in the old polyandrous type of union.

My experience with Kammalans and other artisan castes was different. Polyandry with them is also threatened, but it cannot be said that it has deteriorated to the same extent with them as it has with the higher castes. Jealousy, however, seems to be coming very much to the surface, and I heard many tales of serious quarrelling among the men, leading to separation and to division into splinter households.

Raman, the *Asari* informant of the Perinkulam household, interviewed at Palappuram, said that polyandry was dying out because "Civilization is spreading". When I asked him what he meant by "civilization", he answered, rather simply, that people did not tie up their hair any longer in the typical Malayalam way, a top knot in front over the forehead, and that many had taken to growing moustaches. He added, however, to these very personal criteria of his, that women refused now to be wedded to many men; some wealthier people, he revealed, even go so far as to insert a clause into the marriage contract by which it is stipulated that their daughter will not be given in marriage to more than one man. He concluded by sighing, shrugging his shoulders and exclaiming that it was not right, but what could be done about it?

Kunji, the daughter of old Kurumba of the *Tolkolan* Palakaparampil household near Meitenadeshan, also complained of too much quarrelling among the men of a polyandrous family, and said that because of this, the women did not want to be married in this way any longer. She attributed to these reasons the fact that her household had already given up polyandry in the previous generation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

e) by mutual consent evidenced by a registered instrument attested by not less than two witnesses." 671 [585]

Art. 12: "A polyandrous marriage performed after this Act shall be void." [595]

Chapter III. Maintenance and Guardianship. Three articles.

Chapter IV. Succession.

Five articles on testamentary succession.

Art. 26: "For the purpose of succession there is no distinction between the self-acquired property and the ancestral property or between the property of a male and that of a female except as otherwise provided by this Act." 671 428

Eight articles on Intestate succession.

Art. 28: "Property in respect of which a Thiyya has died intestate devolves upon the wife or husband or upon those who are of the kindred of the deceased in this order and according to the rules herein prescribed."

Art. 29: "When the intestate had left more than one widow, the distribution of inheritance referred to in sections 30, 31, 32 and 33 shall be made as if there is only one widow, all the widows together taking equally one widow's share."

Art. 30. "When the intestate has left a widow, if he has also left a son, or lineal descendant of a son, a share equal to that of a son shall belong to the widow."

Eleven articles on distribution of intestate's property.

Art. 39, (b): "If some of them (lineal descendants) are his (the intestate) sons and others are his daughters, each daughter shall take a half of the share of a son if the intestate is a male, and if the intestate is a female all children shall take equally."

It should be remembered that this legislation is that of a former princely state which has ceased to exist as a separate unit. Today, since the coming into being of the State of Kerala, made up of Malabar, Mahe, Cochin and Travancore, this Act has been superseded by the provisions of the India Code in force now in the whole of the Indian Republic. In accordance with the stipulations of the Code, a larger share of inheritance is granted to daughters and widow than was formerly allowed by the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act. [648]

[pp 240-594 not processed]

principal oil-man ; and it is the duty of this caste to present the Kurumbranād Rāja with oil on the occasion of his formal installation. The fifth group consists of the three kulams, Mannangazhi, Parāmchela, and Pallikara Nāyars, all observing fifteen days' pollution. A member of the first-named class has to place an āmanapalaga (the traditional seat of Nambūdiris and other high castes) for the Kurumbranād Rāja to sit on at the time of his installation, while a member of the second has to present him with a cloth on the same occasion. The sixth group consists of four kiriyams named Patam, Tulu, Manan, and Ottu respectively, and has the collective name of Rāvāri. The seventh group consists of six kulams, Kandōn, Kannankōdan, Kotta, Karumba, Kundakollavan, and Panakādan Nāyars. All observe fifteen days' pollution, and the women of these six kulams have certain duties to perform in connection with the purification of women of the Vengalat, Pattillat, and Orakatteri kulams. Besides these seven groups, there are a few other classes without internal sub-divisions. One such class is known as Pāppini Nāyar. A woman of this class takes the part of the Brāhmini woman (Nambissan) at the tāli-kettu kalyanam of girls belonging to the kulams included in the third group. Another class called Pālattavan takes the place of the Attikurissi Nāyar at the funeral ceremonies of the same three kulams."

In illustration of the custom of polyandry among the Nāyars of Malabar in by-gone days, the following extracts may be quoted. "On the continent of India," it is recorded in Ellis' edition of the Kural, "polyandry is still said to be practiced in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayālam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely

595 [585] realised, the women among the Nāyars not being restricted to family or number, but, after she has been consecrated by the usual rites before the nuptial fire, in which ceremony any indifferent person may officiate as the representative of her husband, being in her intercourse with the other sex only restrained by her inclinations; provided that the male with whom she associates be of an equal or superior tribe. But it must be stated, for the glory of the female character, that, notwithstanding the latitude thus given to the Nāyattis, and that they are thus left to the guidance of their own free will and the play of their own fancy (which in other countries has not always been found the most efficient check on the conduct of either sex), it rarely happens that they cohabit with more than one person at the same 586 time. Whenever the existing connexion is broken, whether from incompatibility of temper, disgust, caprice, or any of the thousand vexations by which from the frailty of nature domestic happiness is liable to be disturbed, the woman seeks another lover, the man 587 another mistress. But it mostly happens that the bond of paternity is here, as elsewhere, too strong to be shaken off, and that the uninfluenced and uninterested union of love, when formed in youth, continues even in the decline of age."

595 [20] In a note on the Nāyars in the sixteenth century, Cæsar Fredericke writes as follows.* "These Nairi having their wives common amongst themselves, and when any of them goe into the house of any of these women, he leaveth his sworde and target at the door, and the time that he is there, there dare not be any so

* The Voyage and Travell of M. Cæsar Fredericke, Merchant of Venice, into the East Indies and beyond the Indies (1563). Translation. Hakluyt Voyages, V, 394.

hardie as to come into that house. The king's children 595
shall not inherite the kingdom after their father, because [201]
they hold this opinion, that perchance they were not begotten of the king their father, but of some other man, therefore they accept for their king one of the sonnes of the king's sisters, or of some other woman of the blood roiall, for that they be sure that they are of the blood roiall."

In his "New Account of the East Indies, (1727)" 595
Hamilton wrote: "The husbands," of whom, he said, 833
there might be twelve, but no more at one time, "agree very well, for they cohabit with her in their turns, according to their priority of marriage, ten days more or less according as they can fix a term among themselves, and he that cohabits with her maintains her in all things necessary for his time, so that she is plentifully provided for by a constant circulation. When the man that cohabits with her goes into her house he leaves his arms at the door, and none dare remove them or enter the house on pain of death. When she [428]
proves with child, she nominates its father, who takes care of his education after she has suckled it, and brought it to walk or speak, but the children are never heirs to their father's estate, but the father's sister's children are."

Writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, 595
Grose says * that "it is among the Nairs that principally prevails the strange custom of one wife being common to a number; in which point the great power of custom [152]
is seen from its rarely or never producing any jealousies or quarrels among the co-tenants of the same woman. Their number is not so much limited by any specific

* Travels to the East Indies.

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brāhmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. A woman without [851] shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595 without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564 maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nāyres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851] ing that there are always several men attached to one [604] woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578] term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tīpū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648] since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind."†

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

•595 As to the present existence or non-existence of polyandry I must call recent writers into the witness-box. The Rev. S. Mateer, Mr. Fawcett writes,* "informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry among the Nāyars of Travancore—that he had 'known an instance of six brothers keeping two women, four husbands to one, and two to the other. In a case where two brothers [797] cohabited with one woman, and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the [177] Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition.' I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nāyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that, if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), it certainly did not long [564] ago." Mr. Gopal Panikkar says † that "to enforce this social edict upon the Nairs, the Brāhmans made use of the powerful weapon of their aristocratic ascendancy in the country, and the Nairs readily submitted to the Brāhman supremacy. Thus it came about that the custom of concubinage, so freely indulged in by the Brāhmans with Nair women, obtained such firm hold upon the country that it has only been strengthened by the lapse of time. At the present day there are families, especially in the interior of the district, who look upon it as an honour to be thus united with Brāhmans. But a [178] reaction has begun to take place against this feeling, and Brāhman alliances are invariably looked down upon in respectable Nair tarwads. This reactionary feeling took shape in the Malabar Marriage Act." Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar says: "There is nothing strange or to be ashamed of in the fact that the Nāyars were originally of a stock that practiced polyandry, nor if the

* *Op cit.*

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

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practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli-tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

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K 131 595 596 428 591

Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas, living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

Ti 123 To 123 K 123

General Conclusions. I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

Ti 155 To 155 K 155

As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 182 To 595 182 Ti 595 182

As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

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stinct and for the orderly social procreation of offspring. Formally, it is more difficult to say why this institution has taken on this curious appearance. As far as I know, authors so far have been rather at a loss to furnish a satisfactory explanation. Many, of course, have been given, with a great amount of variety in their choice.

For instance, we are given historical explanations. In India they say people have been polyandrous for many centuries; that there are indications, such as archaeological (about the Heftalite Huns, 6th c. A.D.) and literary (the Indian epic poem, the Mahabarata), that the people in this area, both Aryan and non-Aryan, were polyandrous in antiquity. Economic reasons for this have been given; *i.e.*, that the country is poor, that nomadism among Todas or Tibetans, in earlier times, perhaps led to a polyandrous society in order to limit the number of children. Then, demographical explanations have been given, that there is an excess of males over females in this society, and that they have to be polyandrous for that reason. For instance, the Todas practise female infanticide and this is given as a reason for their polyandry. Their men drink a lot of milk, and some people say that the fact that they have more proteins in their diet in this fashion produces more male offspring than female. I do not pretend to know how far this biological explanation is true. Sociological reasons have also been given, namely, that the men travel and have to leave one brother at home with the wife (a reason which I hinted at earlier). In east and south India, the people known as the Nayars, who once could also be called polyandrous, had a very definite military organization (somewhat like that of the Sikhs in the north), and that has been given as a reason why a people is polyandrous: one brother can always remain at home with the wife while the other is away serving with the colors.

It seems to me that these explanations are not sufficient. As far as the historical

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To 14 reasons are concerned, the Mahabarata epic is the only case of its kind in the whole of India. The Todas, when you ask why they are polyandrous, always say "Because we are the same people as those of the Mahabarata", but I am convinced that they have got this explanation from the anthropologists and not the other way around! As far as the economic reasons are concerned, these also seem to me insufficient, because there are people living in the same area, in the same physical environment, who are not polyandrous. Even the Tibetans, when they become Moslems, though their environment does not change, suddenly cease being polyandrous and live in the Islamic fashion. The rich Tibetans in central Tibet are also polyandrous, and obviously not for economic reasons.

As regards the demographic reasons, the following statistics will show that there is not always an excess of males over females. In the Leh *tehsil* in Ladak, where I was, there are 14,760 men to 14,650 women, which is approximately equal. The excess of single women among the Tibetans (there are some left over, naturally, considering the number of brothers who have one wife) usually go into a monastery and become nuns. That is the way they solve their problem. The Todas, on the other hand, practise female infanticide, so that there are less women than men. However, back in Tibet, in the same town of Leh, one finds that the Hindus who live there number 36 men and 13 women, and yet they are monogamous. In southern India, there is a Moslem community known as the Moplahs, in which there are five men to one woman, and they are polygynous rather than polyandrous. Even in Europe, the Bulgars have 35,000 more men than women and yet, though they may have many faults, they certainly are not polyandrous.

As far as the Todas are concerned, out of the 600-odd that exist, there are 340 men and 237 women, so that it really looks as if the reason given might be true in

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

296 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to [791] house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The 837 Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female. [586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make [585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children [428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre- [587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is [595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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There is no infant marriage except perhaps among the Brahmans. 582
Our girls are given away in marriage between the age of 10 and 12. Formerly it used to be younger. But strictly speaking this is only betrothal, the actual consummation of the marriage taking place only after the girl has attained womanhood at about 16 years of age. Our girls are very healthy and well developed so long as they remain at home. But their husbands take them away with them when they are old enough to the places where they are employed, e.g., there are three of them in Madras, and others nearer home. Boys are seldom married before 20 or 21 and the age is rising. Having to live away from home for their education their health is often impaired and they are less healthy and have less vitality and power of resistance than the girls, and are, in the writer's opinion, more subject to illness when away from home. Brahmans have to pay large dowries, whether they are able or no: the least sum being Rs. 1,000 for a bridegroom whose educational qualifications are measured by the Matriculation examination. Even 'ne'er-do-weels' get a high dowry owing to the unsatisfied demand for bridegrooms. We are groaning under the tyranny of an effete social system which is ruining us. Yet our elders protest against any change in our social system, such as post-puberty marriage. Something is sure to be done to remedy this state of things before long: the social conscience cannot long stand it.

Among other castes there is no infant-marriage, nor the system of dowries as it exists with us.

Among the Nayars there is a curious marriage ceremony 585
performed when a female child is only a few days or months old. Some male person, not necessarily or ordinarily the future husband, ties the sacred marriage thread around the baby's neck. This ceremony is purely formal. Real marriages take place after puberty, and the girl may choose any man she pleases as her husband, this marriage being not at all formal, and great freedom, comparatively, is allowed to the wife. Polyandry, which once [595]
prevailed, has now disappeared.

The purdah system does not exist except among the Nambudri 582
community of Brahmans. There are two families of Nambudri [612]
Brahmans in our village. Their females can never see the faces of any males except their husbands and near relations. They seldom go out to any distance, except to the temple, never travel by railway, and hide themselves, when going about, with huge umbrellas made of palm leaves and bamboo sticks. There is post-puberty marriage among them, and only the eldest son of the family marries. Marriages are often exchanges of bride and bridegroom (i.e., a brother and sister marry the sister and the brother of another family), and in that case dowries need not be paid. Otherwise heavy sums are paid. The Numbudri Brahmans are noted for their simple lives, their Vedic learning, and their intense conservatism, though one very enlightened and aristocratic family near my village owns a tile factory at Shoranur and a large
part of a spinning mill at Calicut. They lack western education. 556
This year one Nambudripad (i.e., a member of the Nambudri aristocracy) has joined the Presidency College in Madras as an extraordinary student, to get the benefit of the lectures and the college life. He belongs to the family mentioned above, who also

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

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/Information on the tarawad as a matrilineal joint family will be found in category 613./

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[524] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
595 had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters, of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

In the royal lineages, since each lineage, though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with [37] Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 Powerful emotional ties bind a Nayar to his ancestral
[342] land and to his house, which is large and beautifully constructed of whitewashed laterite, carved wooden pillars and a tiled roof. The lineage-names of retainer-Nayars are the names of original ancestral sites in the village, e.g., Kirakkutt Velappil ("Eastern Garden"). Desavari lineages take the name of their desam, chiefly lineages of their nad, and royal lineages of their kingdom. The knowledge that their matrilineal forbears once jointly owned a house and land holds lineage-members together.

[361] Except in unusual circumstances (i.e., if it is dying out) a lineage comprises several households, traditionally congregated in separate gardens some distance apart on a stretch of dry land
613 in the village. Today with the vast increase in
596 population during British rule, a lineage may comprise up to 20 or more households; traditionally, it seems usually to have contained about four to ten. Each of these households comprised a segment of the lineage, [41] usually, a group of siblings together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. The household was also the unit whose members jointly owned ancestral garden land, kanam rice lands and movable property: I call it a property-group. The lineage as a whole (unless it were dying out and comprised only one property-group) owned no property in common and its members had no economic cooperation as a group.

613 The lineage was exogamous, and matrilineal kinship terms were extended throughout its

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

613 564 422 423

THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some [427] garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal [901] residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 596

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Nambūdiri Brahm
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahmans

father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil-Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

8: Panikkar

AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

● 596

/Information on what the author calls the "Nayar family," consisting of all the descendants from the same ancestress, will be found in category 613./

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787]
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

APPENDIX.

I. A Possible Improvement.

By deepening the stream that flows in rainy season along the northern boundary of this desam, the lands that lie along them which now yield only a single crop can be made double crop lands. 000

II. Emigration.

There are five men in Ceylon working as labourers and sending small sums to their aged parents. These return at intervals of two or three years. There is also the annual emigration of the carpenters to Calicut. 167

III. A Typical Family.

The family is not composed of a husband, wife and children. The people follow the 'Marumakkattayam' form of inheritance, i.e., inheritance along the line of the nephew. Thus the family consists of an aged mother or grandmother and her sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters of these sisters and their progeny, and so on. The eldest male member is the 'Karnavan,' the guardian and manager of the family, all the rest are 'Anandravans' who pay allegiance to the head. The male members of one family marry the females of another and vice versa, but each lives apart and they only join occasionally. The system, however, is rudely breaking up under modern conditions. 596 [428]

Tiya Polyandry. The Tiyas living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

General Conclusions. I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

596 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
[595] might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
[599] many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

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837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with [37] Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 become so large that over many generations
608 members of distant segments forgot that they
621 were matrilineal kin, ceased to observe joint pollution, and finally broke the rule of exogamy. One case of this came to my notice in the Cochin village I studied. A man and woman of two lineages which were not enangar, and for some reason unknown to my informants, had never been known to intermarry, entered into a liaison. Certain elders of the village then began to look into the history of the two lineages and to wonder whether long ago, they might have been matrilineal kin or putative matrilineal kin by joint performance of the [50] tali-rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to younger members of the village, however, the liaison continued and thus what was probably an ancient tie of lineage exogamy was tacitly broken.

[597] Cases of extinction of a lineage were rare, since if one property group were without women in any generation it was customary to adopt one or more girls from collateral property groups of the same lineage and thus continue to perpetuate all the property-groups. In rare cases of the extinction of a lineage, its jenmam lands eschested to the king for reallocation to another lineage, and its kanam lands to the janmi. Today, the property of a group with no women is divided equally between surviving male members and inherited after their deaths by their wives and children.

613 (4) Succession and Segmentation in the Lineage
587 Among retainer Nayars whose lineages owned

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except
554 that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with
554 her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
592 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of princesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyána* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulles Marco Polo, page 374.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Thandans

*595 85 late the time back from the moment of birth; but they only laughed at my insistance and said that they could not. Obviously, the right thing to do was not to make any distinction, to accept the children as collectively theirs, without individual claims on them.

This is the public attitude which self-respecting polyandrous people must apparently take. Privately, things can be quite different, and from the information which I gathered from Panju and Nani, it is obvious that human nature reasserts itself even in this situation, in spite of cultural interdictions. Asked confidentially if he had any preference for one of his four boys, Panju replied that he believed that the two elder ones, Kumaran and Madhavan, were his because they were "more fond" of him than of Narayana. To emphasize this belief, he added that outside people thought that Sridaran and Raghavan resembled their younger father, while the other two were physically more like him. I heard, later, that Nani, in private, never in front of her husbands or even before the other children, would say to Kumaran: "Go on, be a man like your *achan* (father, the name given to Panju). He is a fine fellow whom you should take after!" There seemed to be no doubt that, behind the scenes and the facade which had to be maintained socially in this polyandrous society, a great amount of preference and distinction was shown for the individual, would-be, "real" father.

*595 601 Panju claimed that he looked after the children more than his brother because he had more affection for them than Narayana. Here again, he seemed to be claiming a preferred position that could not fail to strike me. I asked him what names the children used for their fathers, and he gave me not only those for himself and his co-husband, but also (without my asking) for Raman and Sankara, who were considered to be uncles (fathers' brothers) because they were not part of the polyandrous household. Raman was called *wariachan*, "big father"; Sankara, *wawuachan*, "sickly father", because he had some kind of chronic stomach ailment (this reminded me of the "opium-eating father" in Ceylon, see p. 149); Panju, *achan*, "father"; and Narayana, *kutiachan* or "small father". In other words, even those brothers of the fathers who were no longer fathers in parental status were called "father", a classificatory term which obviously had no other reality after the break-up of the old association of all the brothers married to a common wife.

● 597 [928] If a family has no issue, adoption of a child is possible, the latter then having exactly the same status as if it were one's own. The child has, however, to be legally registered with the authorities if it is to be an heir. Cases of such adoptions are extremely rare; my informants

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

told me that they knew of no instances. They nevertheless seemed alive to such a possibility and readily gave me the above information as theoretically feasible. 597

Divorce was a stumbling block to my questioning, and I found it difficult to get a clear picture of it from the informants. That divorce does exist, there seemed to be no doubt in their minds. The woman was returned to her parents' house with what remained of her dowry, and a piece of cloth which was handed to her father and mother, if they were alive, or to her brothers if the former were dead. The intention of divorce had to be declared publicly before representatives of both the wife's and the husbands' families. The bride-price could be claimed, but this is not often done any longer. What happened if a woman wished to divorce rather than the men, was a possibility which they did not seem to be able to visualize. When I asked about it, Panju said it did not happen, and women did not take this initiative. I mentioned the case of the Pulluvan family which I had visited on the 21st of November, and in which Kalyany had not accepted the polyandrous marriage with two brothers and had eventually left them to go back home to her parents (see p. 214). But both Panju and his brother said that this was another caste, and that such things "did not happen with Thandans". 586 586 564

Panju was surprised at the idea which I put to him that, if one of the husbands in a polyandrous household wished to break away and set up another home for himself with a woman of his choice, divorce from the common wife might be necessary. He insisted that all he had to do was to obtain the consent of his brothers, or, if he needed the help of his mother's brother to get new wife for him, this uncle's approval of his plan. This was not "divorce", he insisted, since the common wife remained in the family with the elder brother or brothers. His outlook appeared to stem, it seemed to me, from the polyandrous concept of the household constituted as such. The common wife was married to the household rather than to the individual men, and even if one of them broke away, the union between the principal and herself was not affected. There could thus be no "divorce", the term being reserved for the break-up of the latter marriage, which would be a much more serious occurrence. 595* 586

But what then of the property? If the deserting husband took a portion of it away for himself, did that not make it look more like a divorce from the wife shared in common? And what about the children? With whom did they remain in the case of a real divorce, such as we had first spoken about?

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Navar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

Kerala AW 11

- 601, 113, 59, 58, 611, 428

[For information pertaining to the above categories, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 252-270.]

1: Gough AW11 Kerala AW11

● 601

[This entire source presents a historical and functional interpretation of Nayar kinship structure, and the reader is referred to category 116. Only sections dealing specifically with kinship nomenclature have been marked for category 601.]

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former king-
doms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and
part of Kurumbranad. The central area compri-
ses the modern South Malabar District and Co-
chin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut,
Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall
differences of custom and social structure were
connected with major political boundaries in the
period of native rule. Though divisible into
separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the
whole of North Malabar District was temporarily
overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and
17th centuries. The central area at one period
or another was all conquered by the Zamorins
and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while
the whole southern area eventually became sub-
ject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these
three major areas, a somewhat different politi-
cal system operated, [10] and in accordance with
this the higher castes, especially the Nayars,
were differently divided into subcastes with sep-
arate administrative functions: each of these
subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced
by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship
because of failure to differentiate between the
three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had
one kinship system, whereas they in fact had
three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

592 between the karanavan and the oldest woman.
602 The former carries out all economic transactions outside the group and controls the total income; he also keeps the key of the outer granary in the courtyard. The latter plans cookery, keeps the keys of paddy chests within the house, organized the work of women and presents to the karanavan her requirements for day-to-day expenditures. (8) Particularly when the karanavan is the son or own younger brother of the oldest woman, management runs smoothly and the oldest woman may be de facto head of the group. If she is a younger sister or classificatory sister a more formal division of roles is common.

[601] Under the karanavan, men of the group are ranked by seniority. All those older than ego are sometimes collectively called karanavar and are accorded respect and obedience (within the limits set by overall obedience to the head) all younger, whether they be mother's brothers, younger brothers, maternal nephews or great nephews, may be commanded and disciplined. The social distance between men of a property-group is great, far greater than between father and son, or between brothers, in any patrilineal South Indian group. Indeed, though learning and skills are passed on between them, the relationships between men are, when possible, formalized to the point of avoidance. By traditional etiquette, a man may not touch his karanavan or any maternal uncle; before approaching him he must remove his upper cloth. To speak to the karanavan he stands respectfully half hidden

582 ties, and these were traditionally the common
602 solution in this area. But even in a promiscuous community, it seems likely that the effective relationship between a man and children he believes to be his cannot always be altogether overridden and may assert itself in face of matrilineal ties. When this happens some other solution to the conflict is required. Cross cousin marriage, particularly matrilateral, (14) is one such partial solution, since it harmonizes for two members and for two generations of a lineage conjugal interests which would otherwise be opposed.

601 (4) Kinship Terms

As might be expected, the traditional Nayar terminology of this area includes terms only for matrilineal kin, their spouse, and the children of ego's wife. Today, terms are sometimes used to address cognates, but they are very seldom used in reference; descriptive terms like "my father's nephew" and my mother's father" are used instead. Contrary to the view of Murdock and Emeneau, (15) the Nayars of this area do not have a bifurcate merging system with Iroquois cousin terms: indeed none of the matrilineal groups of Kerala (North Malabar Nayars, Tiyyars and Muslims, South Malabar and Cochin Nayars, or Travancore Iravas and Nayars) have such a system, which in this region is confined to the patrilineal and double unilineal castes below Nayars.

Within the lineage, men of the first and second ascending generations are equated as "male

601 mothers" (ammaman), occasionally with prefixes "big" or "small" in the first ascending, according to age in relation to mother, and occasionally with prefixes "big oldest" and "small oldest" in the second [84] ascending, according to age in relation to grandmother. This equating of first and second generation males accords with the disciplinary powers of all older males, headed by the karanavan. Correspondingly, sister's children and sister's daughter's children are all marumakan (m.) or marumakal (f.). In ego's generation (m. and f. sp.) older brothers are addressed and referred to as jyeshtan (coll. etan); younger brothers are referred to as anujan. All men older than ego in the lineage may be referred to as karanavar (seniors); all younger as anandravar (juniors). These usages accord with the great importance of age-rank between men. For both sexes, all senior kin are addressed by terms, all juniors by name.

Women of the second ascending generation are called muthasshi ("oldest woman") with prefixes "big" or "small" according to age in relation to grandmother. In the first ascending, similarly, mother - amma, and other women are "big" or "small" mothers. In ego's generation older sisters are jyeshtathi (m. and f. sp.), younger
601 sisters anujathi (m. and f. sp.). In addition,
593 there are special cross-sex reference terms for "male sibling" (f. sp., age unspecified) - angala, and "female sibling" (m. sp., age unspecified) -pengal. These bring out the importance for Nayars of the complementary brother-sister tie,

601 on which the unity of the sibling group and the [593] collateral cohesion of the lineage is based.

Among female affines, the wives of men of the second and first ascending generations are ammayi (fem. of ammaman). Today, great respect is shown to these women, but they are also proverbially disliked since it is expected that they will try to obtain favours from the maternal uncles and draw away their allegiance from the Similar attitudes are shown to the EBW who has the respectful term jyeshtathi amma - "elder-sister-mother" or respected elder sister". [85] Only descriptive terms are used for the spouses of younger brothers and maternal nephews.

Among male affines, the father and step-father are called by the respectful term acchan (lit. -"lord"). Higher caste fathers are also called by their caste titles (e.g. "acchan Nambudiri"). The mother's father is muthacchan (oldest "lord"). The term acchan, like jyeshtan, anujan, jyeshtathi, anujathi, bharya=wife and barthavu=husband, are all Sanskrit terms,evidently at some time taken over from Nambudiris. The old Tamil word appan=father was reserved for the mother's tali-tier and is seldom heard today among Nayars, though it is the usual word for "father" among Nambudiris themselves and in the lower castes. Acchan was also a lineage-title accorded to some desavaris and military leaders in the traditional period; it has the connotation of high rank and political office rather than of begetting, and seems particularly appropriate for the Nayar practice of hypergamy and the fact that their lineages tended, at least in

601 part, to be (literally) "fathered" by their feudal lords. All current lovers of the mother were traditionally called acchan, and the word is sometimes extended as an address-term to husbands of the mother's sisters (with age-prefixes) though these are usually referred to descriptively. In ego's generation, women have no reference-terms for the sisters' husbands: the older sister's husband is called jyeshtan or etan - "elder brother"; the younger sister's husband by his name and caste-title if older than ego, by name alone if younger. A man addresses his sister's husbands in the same way, but brothers-in-law also have a reciprocal reference-term, aliyan, which, like the cross-sex sibling terms, is usually restricted to men married into the property-group and not to the lineage as a whole. Its existence as a special term again points up the unique tie between brother and sister and the fact that brother and (traditionally visiting) [86] husband are brought into a special relationship through their claims on the same woman. Their etiquette, in contrast to that between lineage men, is one of easy familiarity, though covert jealousy between them is often intense.

Women address lineage kinsfolk older than themselves as do men. Their children they call makan (m.) and makal (f.), their daughters' children, irrespective of sex perakutti="name-child". This is appropriate for the daughter's daughter who is often called after a woman, but less so for the grandson who is usually named after some male forbear of his property-group, living or dead. These terms for descending

601 generations are extended throughout the lineage. Today men also use the same term for their own and step-children and own and step-grandchildren but do not extend them to other descendants of the wife's lineage or to the brothers' descendants. The words makan and makal are so regularly used by men today both for their own and step-children and in descriptive compound terms (e.g. "my uncle's son" - ende ammamande makan) that I think they were even traditionally used by men for children of their mistresses. Nambudiris, however, should properly use the terms only for their own or their elder brother's Nambudiri children.

Today in the modern bilateral kinship system which is gradually coming about, terms formerly restricted to matrilineal kin are sometimes used to address the father's matrilineal kin, though this usage is not yet standardized. Such terms now reflect the equivalence (rather than the opposition) of the sexes in marriage and of their groups, as would be expected in a bilateral system. Those in fairly current use are FF (=MF), FM (=MM), FMB (=MMB), FMBW (=MMBW, FB (=MB), FBW (=MBW), and FSi (=MSi). Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins [87] have no reference-terms, but if older are addressed as siblings. A woman addresses her husband's kin by the same terms as the husband, unless she has married her maternal uncle's son, when she still calls her parents-in-law "MB" and "MBW". Both sexes however refer to their spouses' kin by descriptive compound terms, except for "brother-in-law"

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that they were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages
644 We saw that the traditional property-group of
423 retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every
[427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable
613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters.

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister.

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling.

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [601] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but [564] without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

Kinship Terms

As might be expected, kinship terms were used only between matrilineal kin and between ego and the spouses of members of his lineage. The terms were as follows.

A. MATRILINEAL KIN (extended throughout the lineage)

(1) *Mūttassi* ("Oldest woman"). M. and F. speaking. Woman of the second ascending generation, primarily MoMo. May be prefaced by *valiya* ("big") or *cheriya* ("small") for women respectively older or younger than MoMo.

(2) *Ammāman* ("Male mother"). M. and F. speaking. Men of first and second ascending generations, primarily mother's own brother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya for men of first ascending generation respectively older or younger than Mo. May be prefaced by *mūtta* ("oldest") for men of second ascending generation.

(3) *Amma*. M. and F. speaking. Women of first ascending generation, primarily own mother. Prefaced by valiya or cheriya for women respectively older or younger than Mo.

(4) *Jyēshtan*. M. and F. speaking. Men of own generation older than ego, primarily own elder brother. Sometimes corrupted to *ētan*.

(5) *Anujan*. M. and F. speaking. Men of own generation younger than ego, primarily own younger brother. Reference only.

(6) *Jyēshtatti*. M. and F. speaking. Women of own generation older than ego, primarily own elder sister. May be corrupted to *eraṭṭi* (South Malabar) or *chēchi* (Cochin).

(7) *Anujatti*. M. and F. speaking. Women of own generation younger than ego, primarily own younger sister. Reference only.

(8) *Ängala*. F. speaking. Own brother by same mother. Reference only.

(9) *Pengal*. M. speaking. Own sister by same mother. Reference only.

(10) *Marumakan*. M. speaking. Male of first or second descending generations, primarily own sister's son. Reference only.

(11) *Marumakal*. M. speaking. Female of first or second descending generation, primarily own sister's daughter. Reference only.

(12) *Makan*. F. speaking. Male of first descending generation, primarily own son. Reference only.

(13) *Makal*. F. speaking. Female of first descending generation, primarily own daughter. Reference only.

(14) *Pērakutti* ("Name child"). F. speaking. Male or female child

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of second descending generation, primarily own daughter's child. Reference only. 601 613

(15) *Kāranavar* (singular, *kāranavan*). M. and F. speaking. All males of the lineage older than ego, living or dead. Primarily, the eldest living man of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

(16) *Anandravar* (singular, *anandravan*). M. speaking. All males of the lineage younger than ego. Primarily, junior males of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

Comment: Older relatives are addressed by terms; younger, by name.

The overriding of generations which appears in terms 2, 10, and 11 is suitable because the men under 2 are not in the direct line of ascent and their authoritative roles are similar. Terms 15 and 16 further emphasize the age rank of lineage males regardless of segment or generation. [561]

The separation of terms 1 and 3 may be related to the fact that women are in a direct line of descent. Moreover, 1's role is more authoritative than that of 3.

The existence of special terms 8 and 9 points up the interdependence of own brother and sister on which the unity of the sibling group and the cohesion of the property group are based.

The merging of lineals and collaterals within each generation points up the lack of institutional segregation of one woman and her children.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES 601

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Mūttacchan* ("Oldest father"). M. and F. speaking. Hu of A1.

(5) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Hu of A3, especially of own mother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya according to age of the man's wife in relation to ego's mother. Followed by the caste title (e.g., Nambudiri) if he is of higher caste.

(6) *Ammāyi*. M. and F. speaking. Wife of A2.

(7) *Aliyan*. M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and his wife's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(8) *Jyēshtatti Amma*. Wife of A4. M. and F. speaking. Sometimes

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corrupted to *chēdatti amma* (Cochin) or *eratti amma* (S. Malabar).

(9) *Chētan.* M. and F. speaking, reference; M. speaking only, address. A particular shortened form of *jyēshtan* (ElBr), reserved for the husband of A6.

(10) *Makan.* M. speaking. Son of ego's wife. Reference only.

(11) *Makal.* M. speaking. Daughter of ego's wife. Reference only.

(12) *Pērakutti.* M. speaking. Child of ego's wife's daughter. Reference only. Not always used.

(13) *Appan.* M. and F. speaking. Ritual husband (*tāli* tier) of ego's mother.

(14) *Manavalan.* F. speaking. Ritual husband. Reference only.

All other affines and cognates were referred to by descriptive compound terms (e.g., *ende acchande marumakan*, "my father's nephew"; *ende anujande bhārya*, "my younger brother's wife"). Persons of 8 and 9 were also often referred to by descriptive compound terms.

A man might *address* his wife's matrilineal kin older than himself by the same terms as she did but he was not obliged to do so. He might also address them by their names and caste titles. They addressed him by his personal name, adding the caste title if he were of higher caste.

A man addressed his wife's younger matrilineal kinsmen by name. Because of the avoidance relationship he and his wife's younger sisters used no terms or names to address each other.

If she knew them and was of the same caste as they were, a woman addressed her husband's older matrilineal relatives by the same terms as he did. She addressed by name those younger than herself. She called her husband's younger sister who was older than herself *jyēshtatti*, (elder sister). Because of the avoidance relationship no terms or names were used between a woman and her husband's brothers who were older than she.

In hypergamous marriages a woman and her husband's natal kin used no terms to address each other.

An individual used no terms, but only names, to address his father's matrilineal kin.

Comment: In general, the restricted use of reference terms for affines and the lack of terms for patrilateral kin other than the father reflect the slenderness of the marriage tie and the lack of obligations to these kin.

Affinal terms were mainly restricted to the spouses of ego's older matrilineal kin, persons with whom he had fairly regular contact. Even these, however, might be *referred* to by descriptive compound

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terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses.

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them.

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties.

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations.

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

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arate terms, we have a "lineal" classification for the women of this generation. Men of the first ascending generation are classified in a "lineal" manner, with FaBr = MoBr, both separated from Fa. Female affines of the first ascending generation are "lineal," with FaBrWi = MoBrWi, both separated from Mo. Male affines of the first ascending generation are "generational," with Fa = MoSiHu = FaSiHu. The terms faithfully reflect an extreme matrilineal system which is in process of breaking down in favor of bilateral kindreds.

[pp. 385-741 not processed]

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The wives of her elder matrilineal kinsmen figured prominently in the life-crisis rites of a girl, performing the ritual acts done by enangar women in Central Kerala. 602 613 796

Because of residence patterns men had less contact than did women with the property groups of their spouses. They must be invited to all ceremonies and had ritual duties in those connected with their own children. As sambandhakkar of a property group, the husbands of its female members were usually consulted formally by its kāranavan before he undertook important matters such as building houses or dividing property. He was not, however, obliged to follow their advice. 613 602

Kinship Terms

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A. MATRILINEAL KIN

The pattern of terms was the same as in Central Kerala. Lexically, the only difference was that MoMo and her sisters (A1) were called *acchamma* (literally, "father's mother"), a term extended to them from FaMo. This usage probably resulted from the fact that a child normally recognized FaMo earlier than MoMo and had more contact with her.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES

In North Kerala, as might be expected, there were customary kinship terms for the patrilateral kin. The terms for affines and non-matrilineal cognates were as follows.

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Acchappan* ("Father's father"). M. and F. speaking. FaFa and FaFaBr. FaFaSiHu, FaMoBr, FaMoSiHu. MoFa and MoFaBr. MoFaSiHu, MoMoSiHu.

(5) *Acchamma* ("Father's mother"). FaMo and FaMoSi. FaFaBr-Wi, FaFaSi and FaMoBrWi. MoFaSi, MoMo, MoMoSi, MoFaBrWi.

(6) *Amma* ("Mother"). M. and F. speaking. Extended from Mo and MoSi to FaSi and FaBrWi. FaSi is called *valiya* ("big") mother or *elaya* ("younger") mother according to her age in relation to the father. FaBrWi is so designated according to FaBr's age in relation to Fa.

(7) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Fa, mother's current husband,

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601 184 FaBr, FaSiHu, MoSiHu. The last three are designated "older" or "younger" in the same manner as above.

(8) *Ammdyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of any male of first or second ascending generations within ego's lineage, especially within his property group.

(9) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and Wi's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(10) *Jyēshtatti amma.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of older male of ego's generation within his lineage, primarily within his property group.

(11) *Machunian.* M. and F. speaking. Male cross cousin, i.e., male of ego's father's lineage in ego's generation, or So of ego's own, or classificatory MoBr within his lineage. Extended to male cross cousins of either parent.

(12) *Machunichi.* M. and F. speaking. The female equivalent of B11.

(13) *Makan.* M. speaking. WiSo. Reference only.

(14) *Makal.* M. speaking. WiDa. Reference only.

(15) *Pērakutti.* M. and F. speaking. Reciprocal of B4 and B5. Used primarily of own grandchild through either So or Da. Reference only.

[602] A man or woman used the same terms to address the spouse's natal kin as the own natal kin except in case of an avoidance relationship.

[605] An individual *addressed* all cross-cousins in the same manner as siblings, reserving terms B11 and B12 for reference. He addressed and referred to paternal parallel cousins as siblings.

[564] Kinship terms were used in relationships with affines or cognates of higher or lower matrilineal caste but not in relationships with Nambudiri Brahman relatives.

601 602 *Comment:* Males and females of the second ascending generation were equated with grandparents, except for the maternal great-uncle and his wife. This fits the fact that relationships with the maternal great-uncle and his wife were distant and authoritative while those with other kin of this generation were non-authoritative and informal. Similarly, in the first ascending generation the mother's brother and his wife are singled out as distant and authoritative figures. All others of this generation are classed with the parents as non-authoritative figures.

The existence of Iroquois cousin terms for reference fits the special joking relationship and preferential marriage between cross cousins as contrasted with the prohibition of marriage between parallel cousins of both sides.

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurisis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. [692] 613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished
595 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of
585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each [606] husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship [184] at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from [586] the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your [613] sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

184 This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's 588 wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though [589] preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, father-hood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's [765] children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars [60] and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the [613] legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

184 The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The 588 rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. 831 This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Taliketu kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammava* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammava* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 56) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, *i.e.*, elder mother, small mother, *i.e.*, younger mother.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

606 as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar.*—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed a *social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[264] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

613 The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
621 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions.*—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[191] [1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[Marayil Tarwad]

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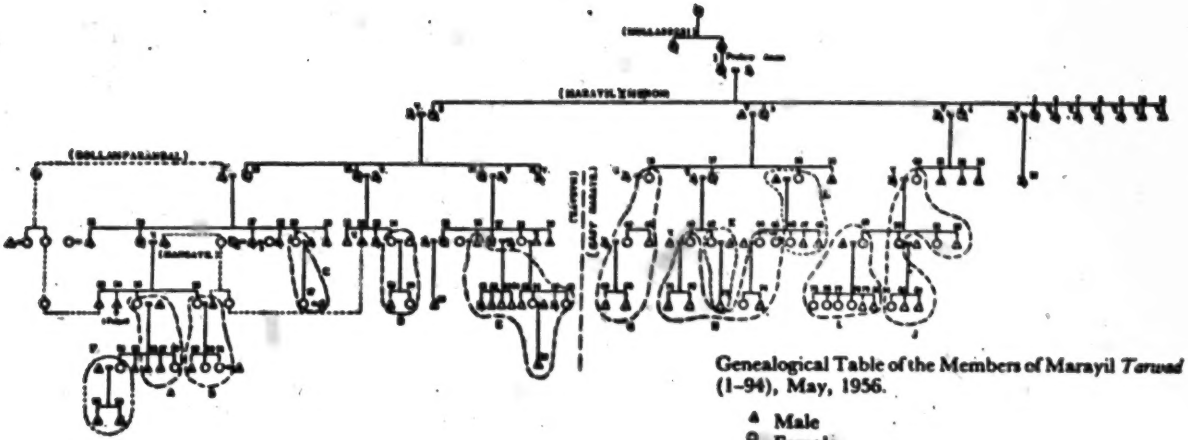

Genealogical Table of the Members of Marayil *Tarwad* (1–94), May, 1956.

- ▲ Male
- ○ Female
- ▲● Dead
- ▲' Husbands who practised a visiting marriage
- ▲ Husband who established his own household with his wife and children
- ⬯ Independent household; households of F, K and L are not in Ernakulam.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

community. It was confirmed that this name, meaning "headman", is really a title (like so many others in Kerala – Nayar, Panikkar, Kurup, Menon, etc.) by which the Tiyas of south Malabar are known. He also answered questions about *tarawad* and *kiriyam*, marriage rites and cross-cousin preference, the prevalence of polyandry in the community and the changing times, points which have all been accounted for in the first part of this chapter. 595* 551 115 124

On the second day, I made out the family's genealogy, which is given in the accompanying Table 3. A few words of comment are no doubt needed here. I had three informants in all, since two others were added, later, to the first. I have marked them as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The generation to which the first informant belonged had originally consisted of nine children, from Kunji, the eldest, to Narayana, the youngest. Their *tarawad* was patrilineal and exogamous, as was also their matrilineal *kiriyam* in principle, but the rules of the latter were not observed very much any more beyond their immediate acquaintances. Kunji, now sixty two, was married at twenty; Kali, married when she was sixteen, divorced a year later and lived with her brothers; she was now sixty. All five brothers, when they were young, had been married polyandrously to Devaki, the eldest, Mayadi, now deceased, being sixteen at the time. Nani and Raman were issued from that marriage, and the young Raman and his family lived here, with his elder namesake in the same house. Devaki died when she was twenty nine, and the brothers were then all remarried, again polyandrously by their parents, to Kuniyama. Mayadi, then aged thirty, died the following year, and Raman senior became the *karanavan*. 595* 601● 614

Sankara then suddenly said that he was displeased with the common wife. He expressed a desire to break away, and asked his father and maternal uncle to find him another wife. There was considerable opposition to begin with, but, eventually, they gave in, and Kodamah was found for Sankara, who, however, did not move out and put up another household, but stayed in the family mansion with Raman. The latter retained Kuniyama as his wife and had four children by her – Krishna, Janeki, Kerthiyani, and Madivi. Sankara and Kodamah, now forty five and thirty five respectively, had one daughter, Devaki, whom they married off three years ago when she was sixteen.

The breaking away of their elder brother, Sankara, seems to have given Panju and Narayana ideas of liberty as well. Kuniyama was apparently not a very popular common spouse, or else Raman monopolized her too much – it was difficult to find out which, for all that I

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could get Panju to say at first was that she "did not look after us enough". However, when I insisted, I heard that she did not satisfy them sexually, which again might be either that Ramon got the lion's share of the marriage or that the two younger men did not find their elder brother's wife very attractive. Anyhow, they asked their maternal uncle (their father had died in the meantime) to find them another wife. After a show of resistance in which he said that it was not right and that they should remain with Kuniyama as tradition dictated, their mother's brother again gave in and got Nani for them; they married her when they were twenty and fifteen respectively. They were now forty and thirty five, and their common wife was thirty five. They had put up a separate household, to leave Raman and Sankara in the main building, and theirs was the smaller house on the other side of the yard, wholly within the same compound, however, so that the *tarawad* property was not completely torn asunder.

The land upon which the family lived was theirs, and not rented. After the death of their father, their mother inherited it, and when she died, it was divided up between the sons. Mayadi was also gone, but Raman junior, his son, and the four surviving brothers, Raman senior, Sankara, Panju and Narayana, each received one fifth of the whole. There was a meeting in the big house, they told me, about a year after the death of their mother (they presumably inherited the property undivided until then), and it took them three days to come to an agreement. Influential neighbours, the elders of the *tarawad* and the two brothers-in-law, Kunyadi and Maniken, also attended. The whole property, paddy fields, cattle, grain and seeds, agricultural tools, implements, the house and the household requisites and furniture, was evaluated in money and divided into five equal shares. Panju and Narayana did not split their shares; they kept the two fifths they received undivided, as they constituted a polyandrous household. The women did not inherit anything because they had been married off to others. Women among the Thandans can inherit from their parents, I heard, if there are no male heirs.

On the 27th of October 1949, I visited a Tiya (Thiyya) polyandrous family at Kadevelur in Tallapilli taluk of north Cochin. These people were *kanam* tenants of a Nambudri Brahmin, to whom they paid thirty rupees a year in rent, plus eight hundred measures of rice per crop.[1]

[1] I was told eight hundred *parahs*, but this is hardly possible as: 1 Cochin *parah* = 10 *edangalis* = 40 *nalis* = 1,720 *tolas*; as 42½ Cochin *tolas* = 1 lb., 1 Cochin *parah* = c. 40½ lbs. Eight hundred *parahs* would then = 40½ × 800 = 32,400 lbs. The measure may have been a smaller one, an *edangali* or even a *nali*.

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TABLE 3. GENEALOGY OF APPAYL *Tarawad*. APPAYL WATTAKKEH I

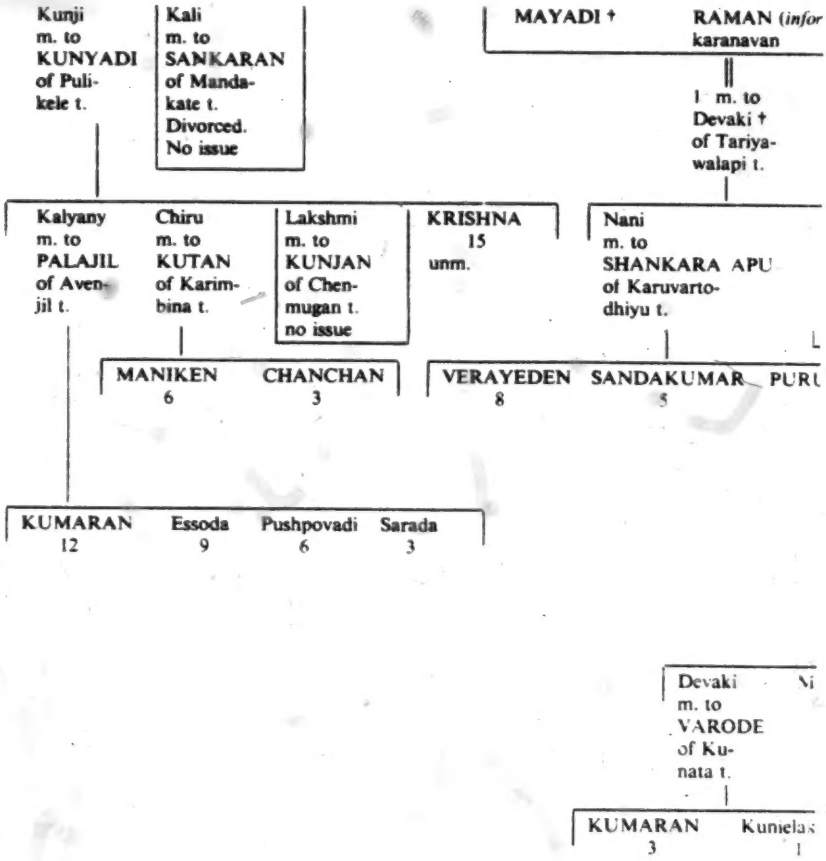

[1] Sankara and his family live in the same house as Raman.
[2] Panju and Narayana with their common wife live in a smaller house in the same compoun.
Capital letters denote males.
Small characters are women
† = dead
m. = married
t. = *tarawad*
The age of small children or unmarried ones is shown below their names.

[facing P. 180-A]

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Thandans

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ATTAKKEH HOUSEHOLD.

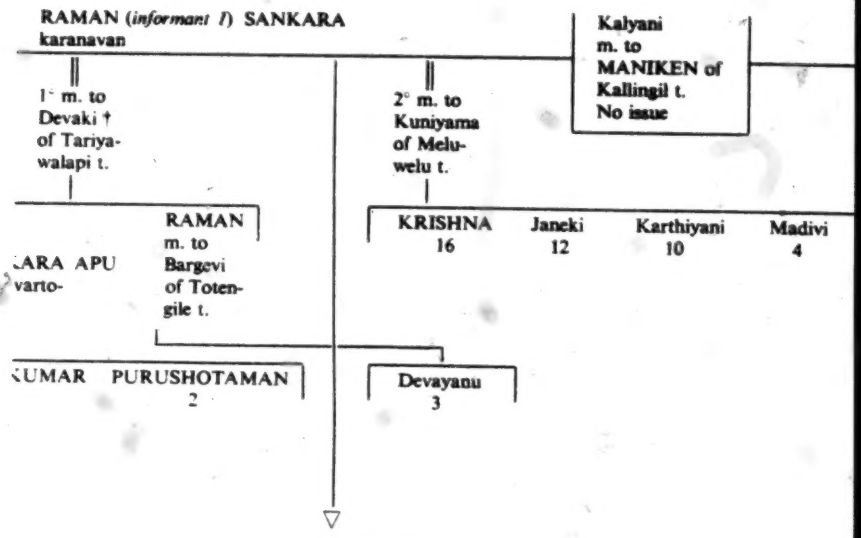

: same compound.

[facing p. 180-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

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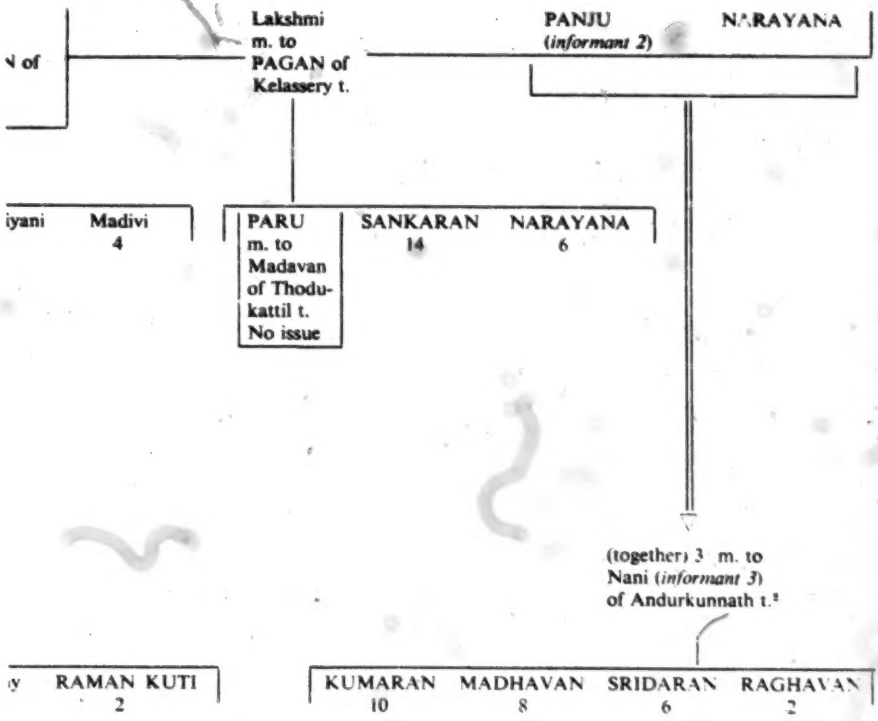

[facing P. 180-C]

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Tiyas

The informant, Velu, with whom we spoke, kept us outside the house on some chairs in the drive leading up to the property. He did not seem inclined to let us come in. 595* [123]

I made the accompanying genealogy with Velu. It is rather an extensive one since the family was large, and therefore I have laid it out in two Tables (4 & 5), separating the two lots of polyandrous families in which the older generation was divided. As regards the name, the informant told me that the *tarawad* contained five households, of which this was one; they had appellations principally of the four cardinal points, the name of his household meaning "eastern". 595* 601

Velu and his two younger brothers were married polyandrously to Kalyany, who had become their wife after her elder sister, Amalu, had died. This appeared to be somewhat reminiscent of sororate, but I understand that it was not so, the brothers simply having taken their sister-in-law in marriage because they liked her and thought it a good idea. The two elder brothers who were now dead, Pangan and Karapan, had also been married polyandrously to Mogami, who was still alive; she was sixty five at the time of my research work. They had had her all to themselves, because the three younger men had not wanted her. although for what reason it was impossible to make Velu say. All that he would impart to us was that they did not want her, and brought in Amalu as their wife, and kept her in the same house with the others. Even today, he said, they all lived together, without the property having been divided up between them.

Mogami had had eighteen children of whom thirteen were still alive. 595* I had an opportunity to meet this remarkable woman some weeks later, and I found her a lively and intelligent person, who did not appear to be the slightest bit worn out by her two husbands and many children. She was thin and rather small with flashing eyes and a very sharp brain. She told me many anecdotes of her former married life, with great relish and obvious pleasure, as if she had been extremely happy in it. She was quite unashamedly proud of her achievements and her present widowed life was kept interesting by the memories for which she lived.

Two of her eldest daughters, Lakshmi and Kuniyukuti, had been married polyandrously, and still lived under that arrangement, although Chankuni, the elder husband of Kuniyukuti, was rarely at home; he was employed as a peon in Ceylon, and only paid brief visits to Kerala. This brought the total number of polyandrous families in the Kereghetil household to four. [469] [167]

It should be noted, however, that only the men and their families as [591]

[Text continues on p. 183]

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Tiyas

TABLE 4. GENEALOGY OF KUTUKULANGARA *Tarawad*, KEREGHETIL E

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Kuttuma †
m. to ?
of Totupadam t.
one girl (name unknown)

Kandu †
died unmarried

Lakshmi m. to KOPAN & KUNYUNI of Peran-kalangara t.

Kurumba m. to GOPALAN of Pularu-kotil t.

Kuniyukuti m. to CHANKUNI & VELUKUTI of Padigna-kara t.

KANDAPAN m. to Kuniama of Chateil t. n. issue

Menakshi[1] m. to TUPERAN of Vela-kara t.

Madu m. to KUM of Ali-kute t

(A)

Amalu m. to GOVINDAN of Kutat t.

BALAN unmarried

BHARATAN 7 | SINDARAN 6 | Savitri[3] 5 | boy (no name) 6 m.

(B)

Tangama m. to MATHAMAN of Pamin-guel t.

BALAN 15

(C)

Tankamani 13

Kan

all three unmarried

(A)

Panjali m. to ACHUDAN of ? t.

NANU m. to Kalyany of Mute-rat t.

KARUNAKARAN m. to Devaki of ? t. no issue

BASHKARAN 17

PADMANAVAN 16

all three unmarried

Savitri 14 | YESODA 13 | JENARDHANAN 12 | RAJAN[5] 11

Tangama 4 | RAJAN 2 | Su 3

(B)

SANKARAN 18 | SEKARAN 16 | KESSAVAN 15 | Tanjorma 13 | Umukuti 9

all of them unmarried

(C)

Sarojini m. to KUNIMAN of Kalail t.

Srimadi m. to RAMANKUTI of Machera t.

Janegi 14 | Kanulach 13 | PRABHA 12 | KANU 11 | Savitu 9

all of them unmarried

a boy 3 | a girl 1

RAMAN 6 months

[Facing P. 181-A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A Wll Kerala A Wll

Tiyas

EREGHETIL HOUSEHOLD. PART 1.

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PANGAN

enakshi[1] to JPERAN Vela-ra t.

Madu[2] m. to KUMARAN of Ali-kute t

Janeki m to KITTPA of Chara-watil t.

Kalyany m. to KRISHNA of Tara-yil t.

KESHEVAN m. to Amalu of Tondi-lil t.

ACHU 2

(C)

Tankamani 13

Kamelakshmi[4] 12

Devaki 5

Banu 2

PRABHAKARAN 7

RAJAN 5

hree unmarried

PADMANAVAN 16

SRIDARAN 15

all three unmarried

na

RAJAN 2

Suchilla 3 m.

ANU 11

Savitu 9

ASOKA 6

arried

[1] Followed by a girl who die
[2] Followed by two girls, a bo
[3] Followed by a girl who die
[4] Followed by two girls aged
[5] Followed by a girl who die
[6] Followed by a girl aged six
Conventional signs as in Table

[facing p. 181-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

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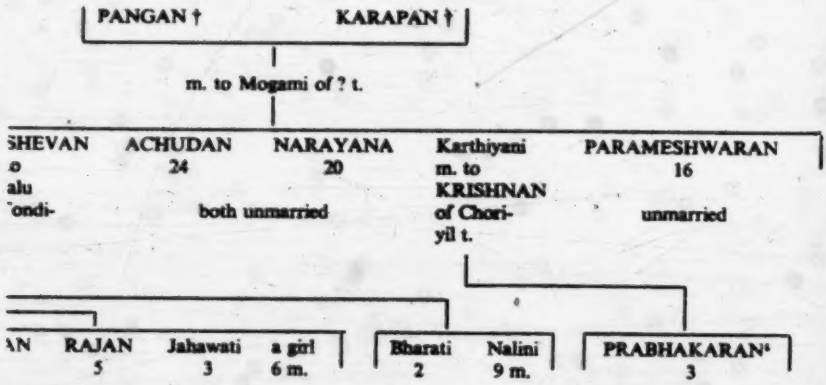

ved by a girl who died in infancy.
ved by two girls, a boy and two other girls who all died in infancy.
ved by a girl who died in infancy and another girl now aged three months.
ved by two girls aged eight and ten months respectively.
ved by a girl who died in infancy.
ved by a girl aged six months, yet unnamed.
onal signs as in Table 3.

[Facing P. 181-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII

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TABLE 5. GENEALOGY OF KATUKULANGARA *Tarawad*, KEREGETHIL HOUSEHOLD. PART 2.

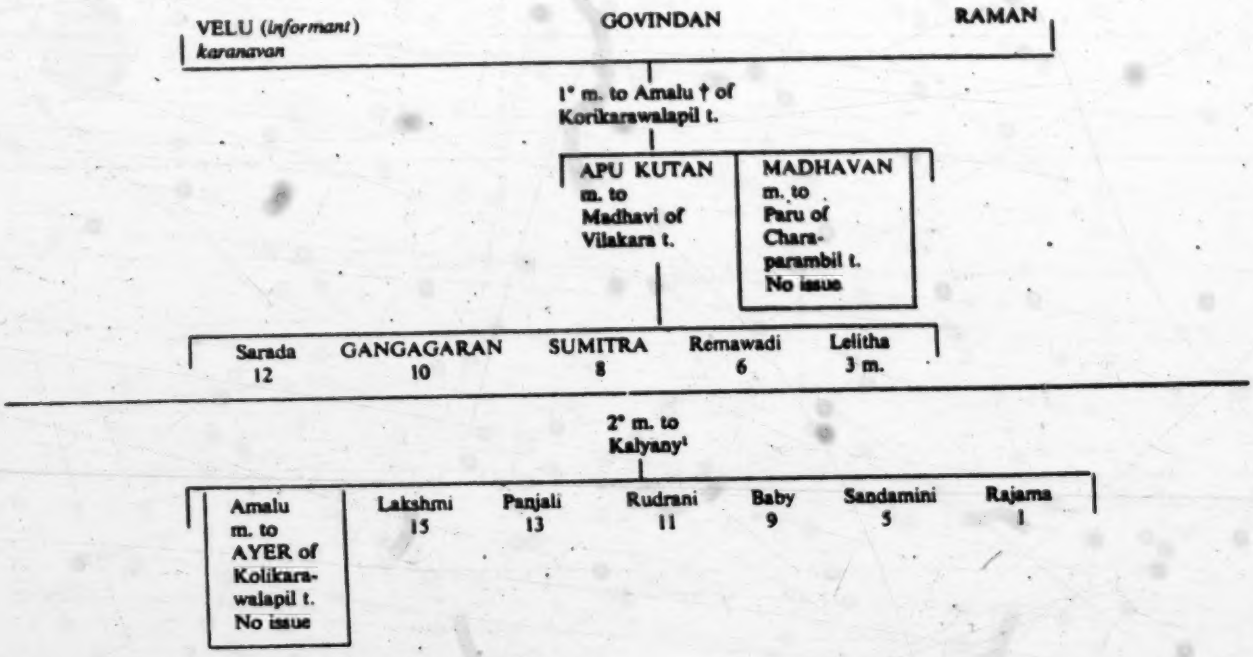

[1] Sister of first, deceased wife, therefore of same *tarawad*.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

*595 We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very [574] hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

*595 He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, ●601 had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

427 This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called 273 Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the [463] introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of [656] their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this regulation.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

regulation. They said that they were starving and that they had had nothing to eat that morning. When I asked them how they would solve their problem, they replied that it was better that I "did not ask". Evil times had befallen them in their old age, and they really did not know what they could do about it; they might hire themselves out as labourers, if they were not so old and feeble. They agreed with me that the increase in population in Kerala over the years had made the difficulty of feeding so many people increasingly great.

Their two elder sons, called Ayapakuti and Pangha, lived polyandrously, I heard, some few miles away, on a bit of land which their fathers had given them fourteen years ago, in the fifth year of their marriage and after the birth of their fourth child. The common wife, Paru, was now alone with the thirty five year old second son, as the elder had died two years ago, also at the age of thirty five. It seemed that Kandapan had originally been part of the polyandrous household but that, tiring of living in this way, he had found a wife for himself, Lakshmi, with whom he had returned to the parental house to live, after the last renewal of the lease, four years ago.

With the old folk and Kandapan's family, was also Kunyu, a daughter, twenty five years old and divorced ten years ago. She had been married at the age of fourteen to Velahu, a man eighteen years her senior. She was childless and had not remarried. She lived in the larger house with her parents.

I took photographs of the family and a group picture of them can be seen in Fig. 10. I also made their genealogy, which is attached herewith in Table 6. I stayed on and discussed various problems with these people for part of the afternoon (having provided for them to have lunch in the meantime, which was most welcome to them in their starved condition). They told me that even if polyandry was now prohibited since the Act passed in 1940, it had been dying out for some years in any case. The legislation – of which they really had no idea at all – was only the confirmation and the consecration of a *de facto* state of affairs. Concerning the inheritance of girls in Tiya families, I may mention that, since the passing of the Act, property would have to be divided. Girls would also get their share which would be half that of the boys; they would pass it on to their own children and, since they were *makkathayam*, it would become merged with that of the latter's fathers. If there were no boys and only girls in the household, its property would cease to exist after the girls had been married off, for each of them would take her part away in accordance with the above.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
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TABLE 6. GENEALOGY OF KALADIWALAPIL HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*.

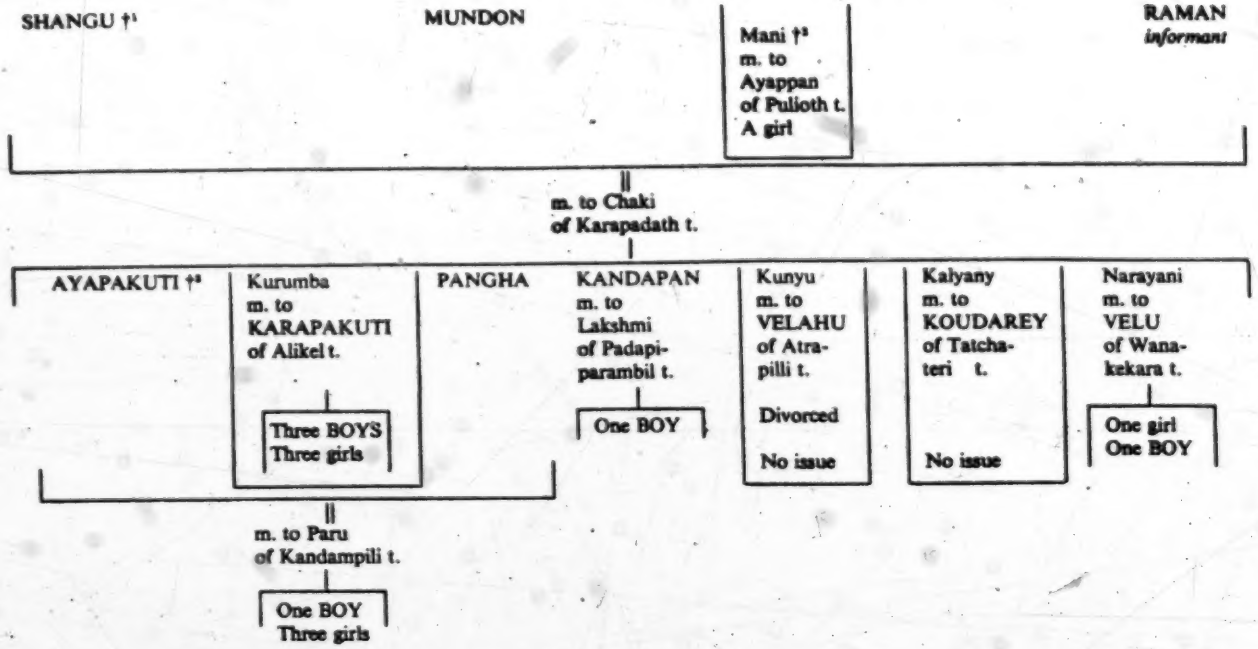

[1] Died three years ago, aged 71
[2] Died at the age of thirty, would be sixty-seven today.
[3] Died aged thirty-five, two years ago.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyas

We still had time that afternoon, to drive back into the village of Perumpillav and to interview some more polyandrous Tiyas. We drove to a Tiya house to have a talk with a man, a woman and a boy who confirmed to us that they belonged to families practising polyandry. 595*

The man was called Tami; he was fifty six years old and worked as a coolie. He had the *Kudiyiruppu* lease of a house for which he paid three rupees a year to a Mopla, Melethil Kunyuni Haidaros. The latter was himself the *verumpattamdar* of a *janmi* called Cheralayam Nambidi. (I was unable to find out if he was a Brahmin, an Ambalavasi or a Samantan; with the title *Nambidi* which he bore, he could have been any one of the three, but I suspect that he was a Brahmin, as this is the caste which owns the land in north Cochin.) [115] [427] [423]

Tami's household name was Kanadiwalapil, which was also that of his *tarawad*. He and his brother, Narayan, were married to Chidu, alias Sri Devi, a woman now aged fifty. The younger brother was his junior by twenty one years and had been married as second husband to their common wife when he was only five years old. There were five children, of whom the two eldest were girls, now married off elsewhere. All the boys were unmarried, and worked with their fathers as coolies. 595* 601

I found the informant extremely difficult to question. He was continually contradicting himself, and pretended that he knew no names nor ages. Thus I was unable to discover the name of his wife's *tarawad*, how many children his second daughter had had, and the ages of his two eldest sons, Velu and Kutan. I give the genealogy as I struggled to make it, in Table 7, but I fear that it is sadly incomplete and perhaps not even reliable. It was nevertheless of interest to find out something, however little, from a Tiya polyandrous labourer. [115]

We next turned to the woman. She was accompanied by her twelve year old son, Balakrishnan, and at once showed herself, in striking contrast to her predecessor, to be bright and helpful. This was a great relief after the previous painful session. I was able to record the name of her *tarawad*, but did not manage to ascertain that of the household into which she had married.

She told me that she had had five husbands, all of them paid (free) agricultural labourers, living as *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the same Cheralayam Nambidi *janmi*. She did not know the amount of rent paid yearly, but told me that her husbands' family had been settled here for a very long time – for eighty or a hundred years, as she put it. They had little work to do, not enough in fact to keep such a large family alive. They had been toddy tappers once. Kalyany had been married publicly

[Text continues on p. 189]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
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TABLE 7. GENEALOGY OF KANADIWALAPIL HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*.

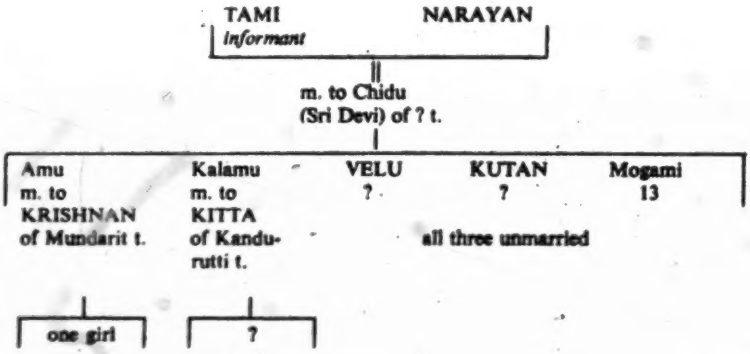

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

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to the four eldest boys to begin with. That was twenty seven years ago, and she was forty six now. Innayakkan, the last husband, had joined his brothers later, when he was twelve and with their consent, but there had been no ceremony. 595 * 601 ●

Very soon after this, Iyyer, the third husband, finding conditions too difficult in Kerala, did what many Tiyas had done since time immemorial; he emigrated to Ceylon, where he worked as a railway coolie. Kalyany had remained with Koppan, Pangoda, Ponan and Innayakkan, and she had had five children by them. Then Ponan died of tuberculosis, ten years after the wedding, aged twenty five. Fifteen years ago, the two eldest men had also left for Ceylon and sent Iyyer back to look after their wife. He had returned, had taken up his former profession of toddy tapping, and was her only real husband now. She had had three more children by him, Balakrishnan was the second and the only boy. There had been no news at all of Koppan and Pangoda, and she presumed that they were dead. Inayakkan had run away from home some time back and had never been heard of again; he was also presumed dead. With Iyyer and herself lived Kesheran, her second son, two unmarried girls and the three last children. Work was still scarce, and pay meagre, so that Aiyappan, the eldest, had gone to Kozhikode (Calicut) in order to try and gain employment. His brother, Padmanapan, had done the same, but he had gone to Madras, on the east coast. She had been trying to help Balakrishnan find work all day: yesterday he had been given a job as a coolie, but today, he was unemployed. [464] [167] [464] [166]

Kalyany told me that she was related to the brothers of the Katukulangara *tarawad* whom I had interviewed at Kadavelur on the 27th of October. She was a half sister of Velu by another mother. I found this family particularly interesting, because it illustrated, more than any other Tiya one encountered so far, the ancient and persistant connection which the caste has with Ceylon. Their genealogy is given in Table 8.

Before going on to an account of my visits to Kammalans and other artisan families practising polyandry in Kerala, I would like to give here, together with the material that I collected about Tiyas, the description of a Thandan family that I went to see on the 25th of November 1949. 595*

They lived in a large house, standing in a big garden of coconut trees, arecanut palms, plantains and jacks. It was situated at the cross-roads of the Nilambur valley track and the highway to Pattambi, quite close to Shoranur. [351] [361]

I began by interviewing the matriarch of the household, an old lady of eighty, called Kali, the widow of five husbands. The household and [601]

[Text Continues on P. 191]

TABLE 8. GENEALOGY OF A TIYA LABOURER'S FAMILY

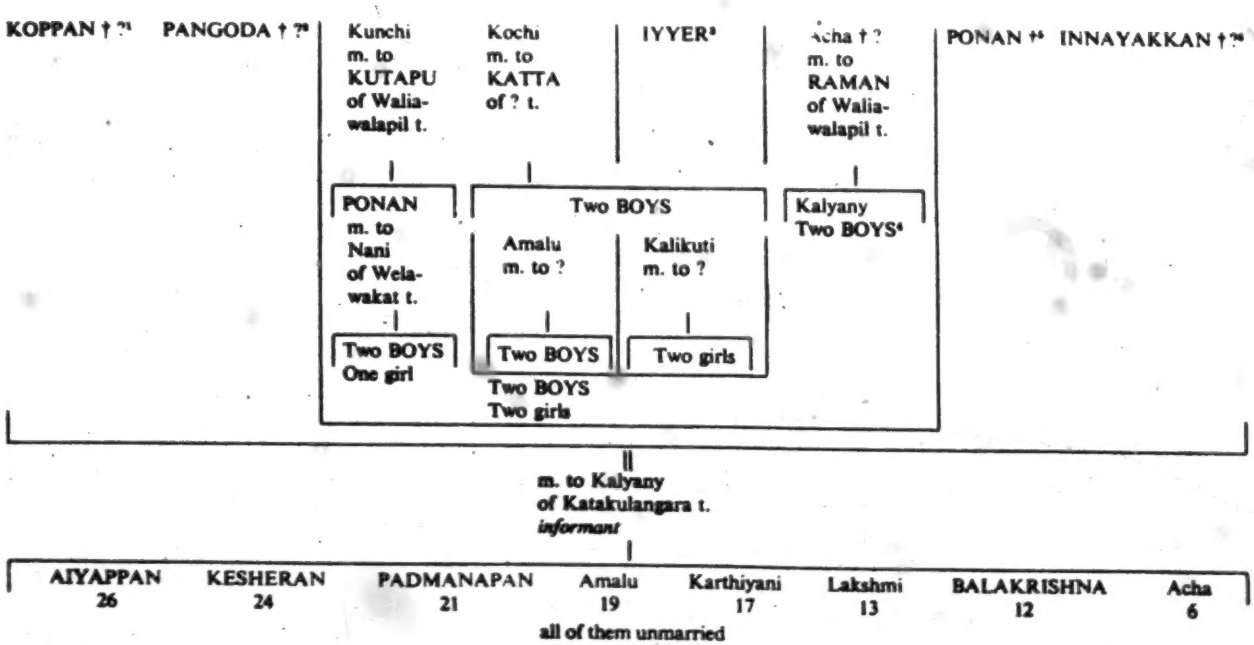

[1] Left fifteen years ago for Colombo, Ceylon; whereabouts unknown, presumed dead, aged forty five.
[2] Also emigrated to Ceylon where also presumed dead, aged thirty two.
[3] After many years in Ceylon, returned home fourteen years ago.
[4] This whole family has emigrated to Trichynopoly in Madras state. Acha is possibly dead.
[5] Died of tuberculosis, aged twenty five.
[6] Has run away from home, whereabouts unknown, possibly dead.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949) 1963 AWI1 Kerala AWI1 Tiyas
595* 601

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

tarawad name was Neripatta, and the property now belonged to the old woman and her sons. They were *verumpattam* cultivators for a Nayar *kanamdar*, the Shoranur *desammangalam* (village headman) whom I had met. They paid a rent of five rupees. 595* 601 [427]

I heard that of the old generation, the four brothers, Paini, Krishna, Raman, Aiyappan and Narayan, were dead – although there was some doubt about Narayan, the last one. As he had emigrated to Singapore and had never come back, they presumed that he had died there. They had all been wed polyandrously to Kali when she was seventeen, and she was now left with her four sons, who had begun by being polyandrous, but who had eventually taken wives of their own, the common wife, Paru, having stayed with the eldest, Velandi. The property had, however, not been split up, and they lived in the mansion-sized house, which was happily large enough to contain them all. Presumably it was also sufficiently big to keep the women from quarrelling and dragging the men into their squabbles – something which people who live in polyandry seem particularly to fear. Of the third generation, the two grandsons, Velu and Krishna, had also lived polyandrously, having taken one Kalyany as a common wife. Like their two sisters they had, however, died, aged thirty and twenty respectively, leaving a couple of boys with their widow to look after. There had thus been three generations of polyandrous marriages in this family. [167]

Another point of interest was the fact that two of Kali's sons, Paragnoden and Krishna had broken away, the former after having first been married with his elder brothers to Paru. They had married their fathers' sisters' daughters, Vali in the first case, and Janeki in the second. When I enquired why this was so, I found it difficult to get a precise answer. I was told that was because this was a "right" marriage, and that if possible, marriage with a *machchunan* is "best". But I evoked only silence and some quizzical looks when I asked why then Paragnoden was first married polyandrously to Paru. It seemed to me – although this is only my personal impression and I was not told so – that the polyandrous marriage was gone through with because it was customary in those days, when the elder brother got married, for the younger ones to join in. Later, when Paragnoden, for reasons which he did not impart to me, felt like putting up a household of his own, he naturally turned to his cross-cousin, on his fathers' side. He was eighteen when he married Paru, with his brothers, and twenty two when he left her and took Vali to wife. This would not account, however, for Krishna, the youngest, not having also been married to Paru. It may be, of course that he was 595* 582 601

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so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.

I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the information that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location. It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age are some of the unmarried young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry, however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths, living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

[i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]

[Text Continues on p. 194]

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TABLE 9. GENEALOGY OF NERIPATTA HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*. PAR

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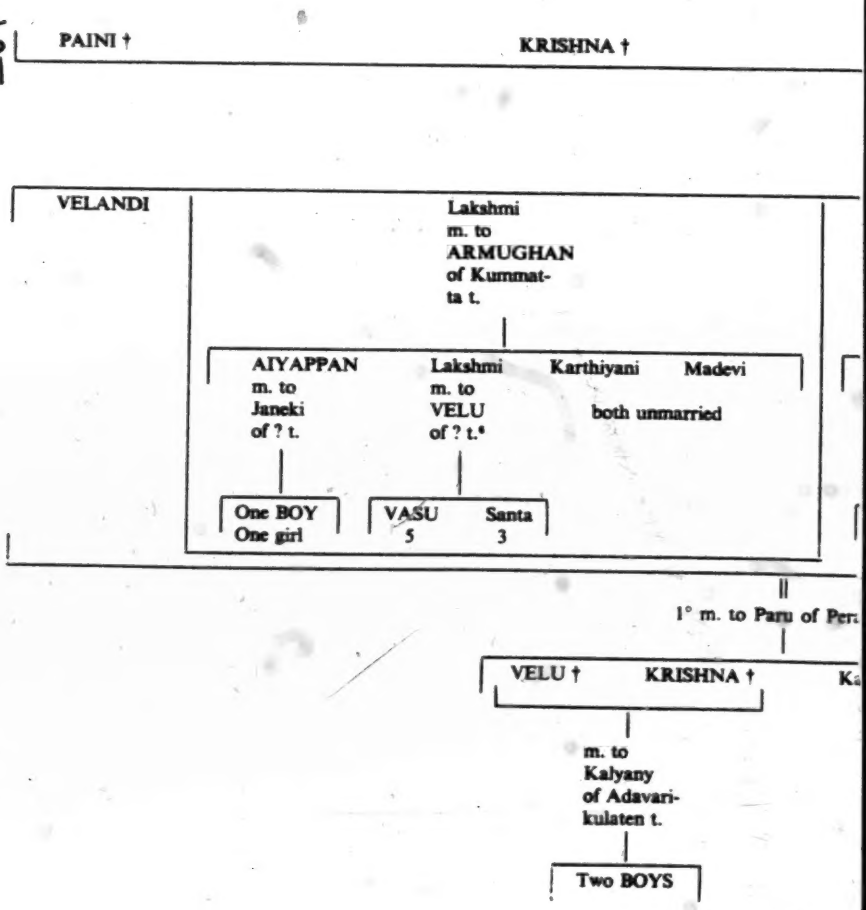

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

[facing p. 192-A]

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D *Tarawad.* PART 1.

*595
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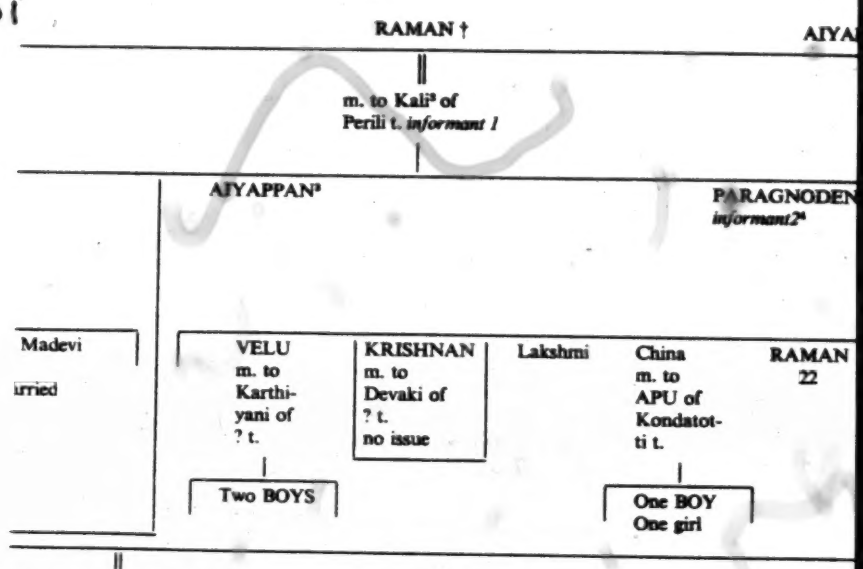

[1] Emigrat
[2] Now ei
[3] 2° m. (a
Tina
of Perak
KE
[4] 2° m. (a
Vali, his
[5] His fath
[6] At Man
very sma
[7] Velu die
died of

[Facing P. 192-B]

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*595
601

AIYAPPAN †

NARAYAN † ?[1]

PARAGNODEN
informant2[2]

KRISHNA
m. to
Janeki
of Odevan-
gatil t.[3]

Paru
m. to
ARMUGHAN
of Kanga-
lata t.

RAMAN
22

Devaki
20

Madevi
12

NARAYAN
10

of
atot-

all of them unmarried

BOY
irl

[1] Emigrated to Singapore, fate unknown, presumed dead.
[2] Now eighty years old
[3] 2° m. (at 43, now 55, after 15 years of first marriage) to:
Tina
of Peralli t.

KESEVAN
11

Lakshmi
9

[4] 2° m. (at 22, now 45, after 4 years of first marriage) to:
Vali, his fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[5] His fathers' sister's daughter (see Part 2).
[586] [6] At Manjara. Now divorced; the children are with the mother because they are still very small.
[165] [7] Velu died of "fever"; Krishna of a "stomach ache"; Kali fell into a well; Devaki died of dysentry.

[facing p. 192-C]

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TABLE 10. GENEALOGY OF NERIPATTA HOUSEHOLD AND *Tarawad*. PART 2.

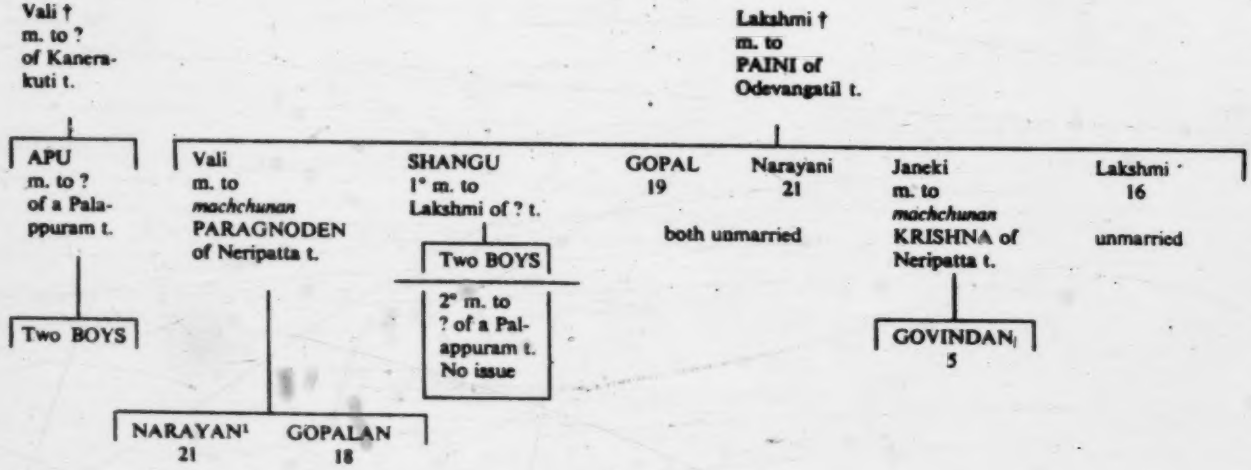

[1] A congenital idiot.
Conventional signs as in Table 3

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

*595 the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to
564 Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In con-
[361] trast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the
Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather
[342] miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite
loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs
[241] about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now
[231] also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps
in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

*595 We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged
[601] fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their
wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by
us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of
[574] hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to
drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the
[611] Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected,
[614] and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom
*595 they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple
427 *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-
293 mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866½) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work"
[464] (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and
*595 they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of
[326] goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given
[436] this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

[601] Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) =
[804] 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

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union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11. 595* 601 ● [582]

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there. 595* 564 326 [351]

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan. 595* 601 [853]

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-* [614]

[Text Continues on P. 197]

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TABLE 11. GENEALOGY OF UZHUGAPAREKIL *Tarawad*, PADIJAREHIL HOUSEHOLD.

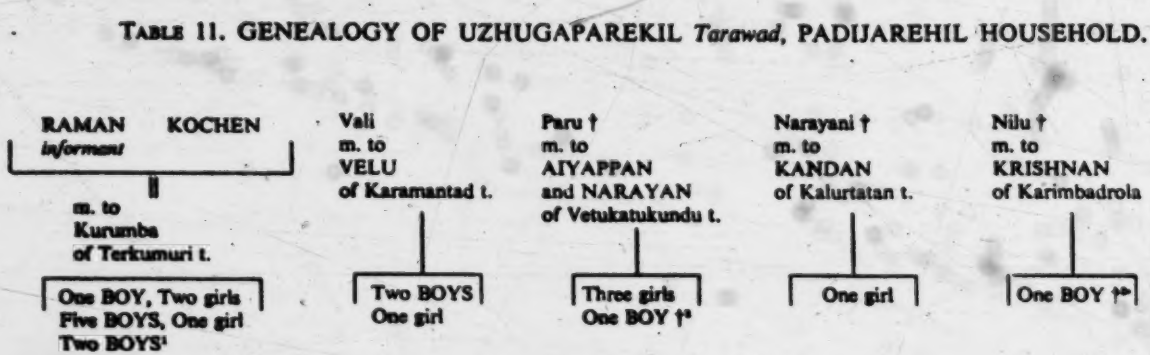

[1] KUNJU, m. to Narayani of Putanparekil t., two girls.
Kunji, m. to KRISHNAN of Tarayil t., one BOY, one girl.
Lakshmi, m. to KARAPAN of Putanparekil t. (brother's wife's brother), one BOY.
VELAIDEN, 19, unmarried.
NARAYAN, 15, unmarried.
KUNYAN, 12, unmarried.
RAMAN, 10, unmarried.
KRISHNAN, 8.
Narayani or Ameni, 5.
Nameless BOY, dead.
NAMBAN, 1½.

[2] Died at birth, killing his mother.

[3] ditto.

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

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thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, although the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p.199]

12;Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 A W11 Kerala A W11 Kammalans
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TABLE 12. GENEALOGY OF MUDRIKKELPARAMPIL HOUSEHOLD.

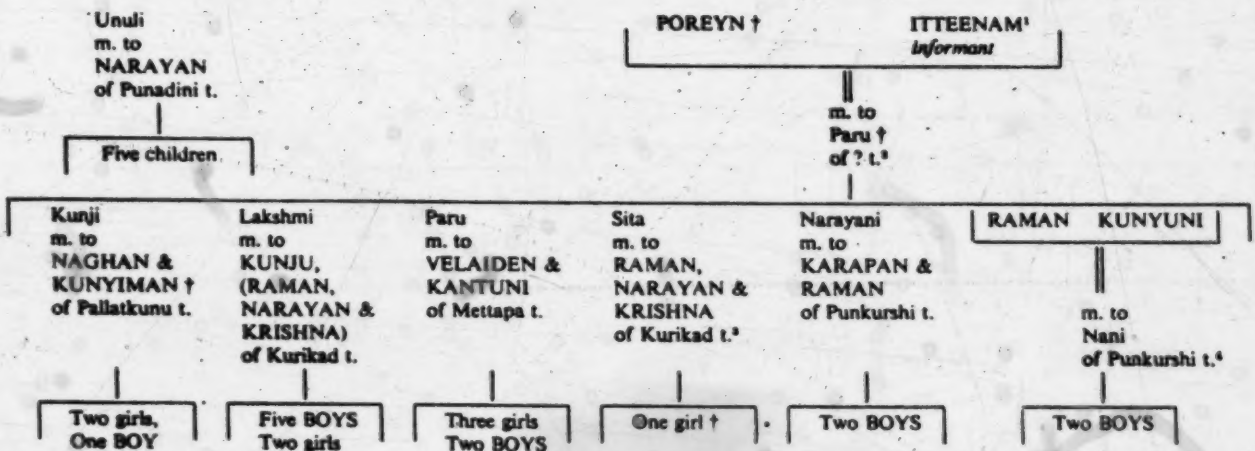

[1] Also called APPER.
[2] *Tarawad* not known.
[3] Lakshmi remained with KUNJU only, after seventeen years of marriage.
[4] Nani is the sister of her husbands' sister's husbands.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

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construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 ● [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

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TABLE 13. GENEALOGY OF PERINKULAM HOUSE AND *Tarawad*.

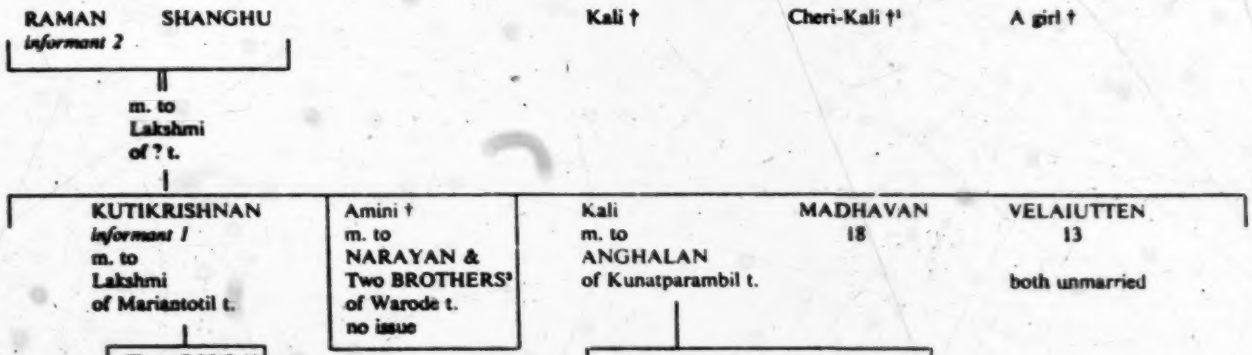

[1] All three died early, at 3, 2 and at birth, respectively.
[2] Deaths due to "convulsions".
[3] Names of brothers unknown.
[4] With no name yet.
Conventional signs as in Table 3.

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kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally,[1] boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [582] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[1] [i.e. in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

*595 601 lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names, and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave [614] village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.

[564] After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan [584] would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

614 564 I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad* names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they [582] observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed [582] exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for 419 those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*, 664

[TEXT Continues on P. 204]

TABLE 14. GENEALOGY OF PUAWUTTERPARAMBA HOUSEHOLD, CHELAMANAPARAMBA *Tarawad*.

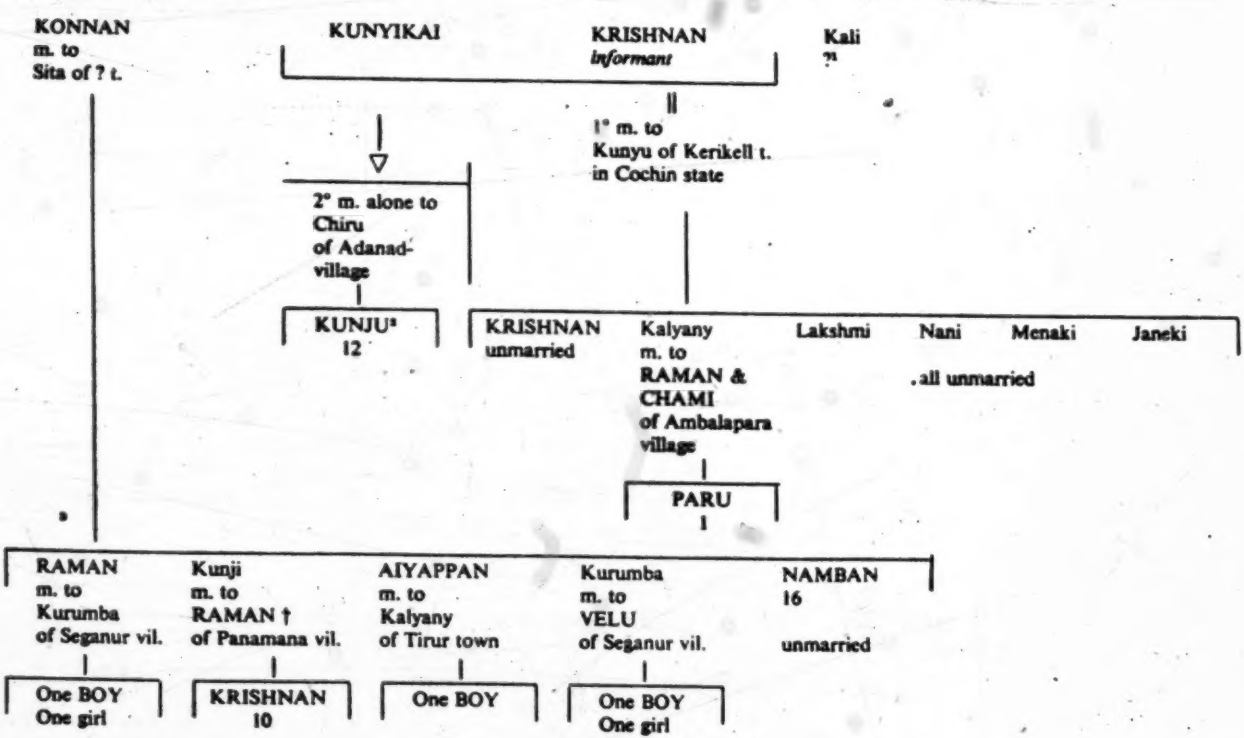

[1] The informant said he knew nothing about her.
[2] This family had remained at the original home of the family at Nedungothari near Palappuram.
[3] After marrying, this man and his family moved to Wallancheri near Kutipuram, Pattambi, for business reasons.
Conventional signs as in Table 3; vil. = village.

12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11 Kammalans
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12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11

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TABLE 15. GENEALOGY OF KALAPPURAM *Kalarikel*.

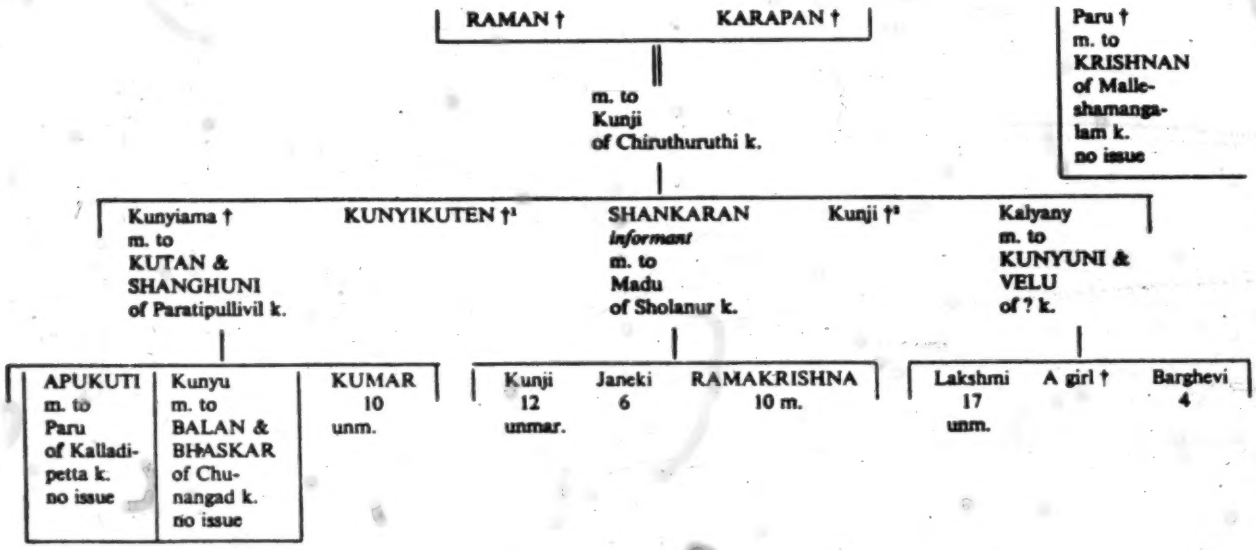

[1] Died eight years old.
[2] Died unmarried, aged thirteen.
Conventional signs as in Table 3; k. = *Kalarikel*.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kolla-Kurups

The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 A W11 Kerala A W11
Kanisans

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TABLE 16. GENEALOGY OF PELLARMANGALAM *Kalarikel.*

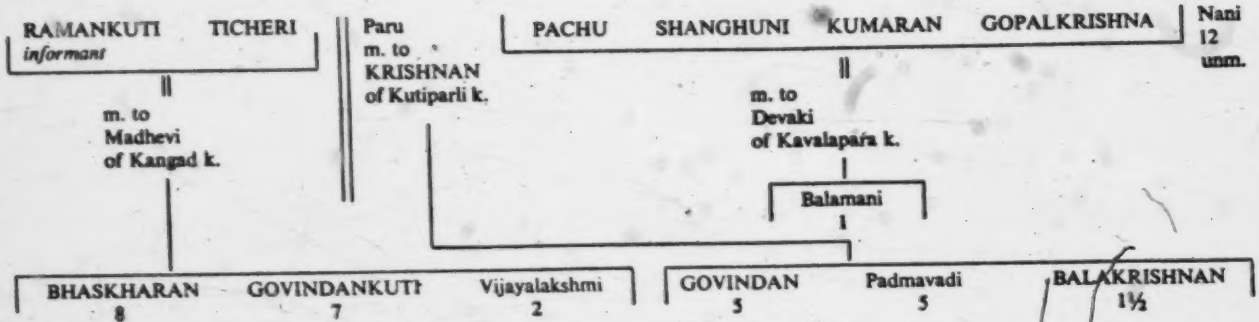

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

*595 It was called Onadi Paramben house, and our informant turned out to
● 601 be an old lady called Kunji, now married to only one husband, Shangh-
[115] uni, seventy two, but of whose three other brothers she had once upon a time been the wife also. The genealogy which I made out from what she told me, was an intricate one, and it took a lot of questioning and counterchecking to do. The genealogy is given in Table 17.

From a single, monogamous father were issued four boys and one girl. The latter, Kunji, was today sixty years old and lived, childless, with her husband, Viran, at Mangod village where he came from. The four men, Shanghuni, seventy two, Erechen, sixty five, Raman, sixty and Krishnan who had died at the age of forty five, had all been married, when young, by their father and maternal uncle to the informant, Kunji, when she was twenty five. Three daughters were born from the marriage, of which the second, Lakshmi, only lived three years.

[578] Then Krishnan, the youngest husband, who never took to the marriage properly and was always quarrelling with his brothers, got himself another wife, also called Kunji, today aged fifty three, and with the permission of his former co-husbands, brought her home to live with them all. He was still resident there at the time of his death. He had had four children, of whom two were sons, and who were still in the house with their families. One daughter was married out, and the other, aged twenty and unmarried, lived with her brothers. The informant said that after Krishnan had left the polyandrous marriage, the first Kunji had given birth to another girl called Paru, twenty years old now and unmarried.

Ten years after they had all been married to Kunji, and therefore five years after Krishnan's defection, Erechen and Raman decided also to secede. Their reason for leaving was the same: there was too much quarrelling in the family. Together, they took Kali of Mangode village, to wife, and brought her home to live with them. Kunyimalu, a girl, was born from this new polyandrous arrangement, and she was now thirty and happily married off to Krishnan of Kutil *tarawad*.

A further split took place just a year later. Erechen and Raman could not agree in the new set-up, and Raman ran away. He took Chiru of Kalapara *tarawad* to wife and went on to live at Karimpuzha as the local washerman. He had a boy and a girl, and was doing well. His wife was still alive, and he was a grandfather five times over. After his departure from the house, Erechen and Kali had further offspring; a son, now aged twenty five and married, and a daughter now aged twenty, still unmarried. They had not stayed in the family house, but had

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

TABLE 17. GENEALOGY OF ONADI PARAMBEN

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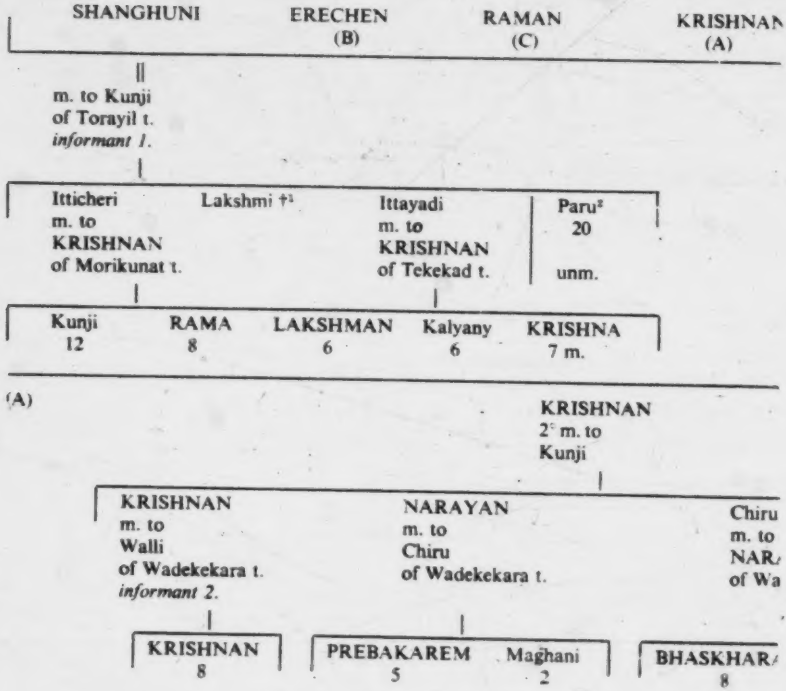

[Facing P. 210 – A]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

*595
●601

EALOGY OF ONADI PARAMBEN HOUSEHOLD.

RAMAN (C) — KRISHNAN † (A)

Kunji m. to VIRAN of Mangod village no issue

yadi .o ISHNAN 'ekekad t. — Paru[2] 20 unm.

Kalyany 6 — KRISHNA 7 m.

KRISHNAN 2° m. to Kunji

NARAYAN n. to Chiru of Wadekekara t. — Chiru m. to NARAYANAN of Wadekekara t.[3] — Ittiyadi 20 unmarried

AREM — Maghani 2

BHASKHARAN 8 — Paru 2

RAMAN

i of Man-

ION — Lakshmi[5] 20

[facing p. 210-B]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans

* 595
● 601

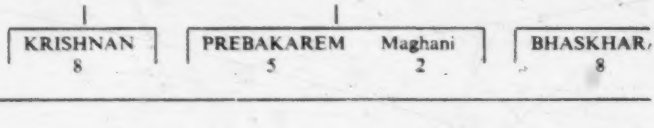

(B)

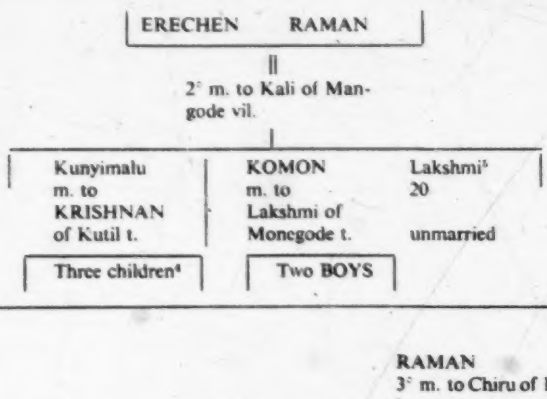

(C)

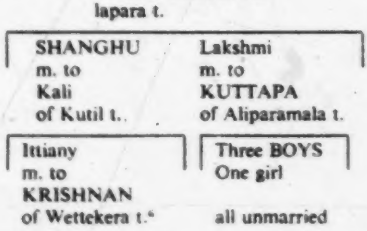

[1] Died aged 3.
[2] Born after Shanghuni and the common wife were left alone.
[3] All brothers and sisters who married brothers and sisters.
[4] Boys or girls not specified.
[5] Komon and Lakshmi born after the departure of Raman.
[6] Divorced the following year.

Conventional signs as in Tables 3, 14 & 15.

[facing p. 210-C]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Manans

*595
601

.AREM Maghani 2

BHASKHARAN 8 Paru 2

RAMAN

i of Man-

ION Lakshmi[5] 20

ımi of
:gode t. unmarried

wo BOYS

RAMAN
3° m. to Chiru of Ka-
lapara t.

SHANGHU m. to Kali of Kutil t.

Lakshmi m. to KUTTAPA of Aliparamala t.

Ittiany m. to KRISHNAN of Wettekera t.[6]

Three BOYS One girl all unmarried

were left alone.
s and sisters.

e of Raman.

[facing P. 210-D]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595*
Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601
to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [115] [55] helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well [582] known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 420 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his employees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers. 465

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 091 went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [243] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast- feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 [868] [126] Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 614 [928] Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house

*595 [929] was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our

564 750 971 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

[Text continues on P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Pancins

595*
601 ●

TABLE 18. GENEALOGY OF VELLARKADEN HOUSEHOLD, KUNDILPADAM *Tarawad.*

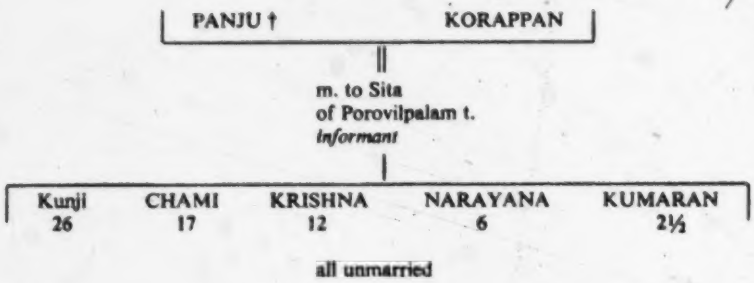

TABLE 19. GENEALOGY OF KUNDILPADAM *Tarawad* AND HOUSEHOLD.

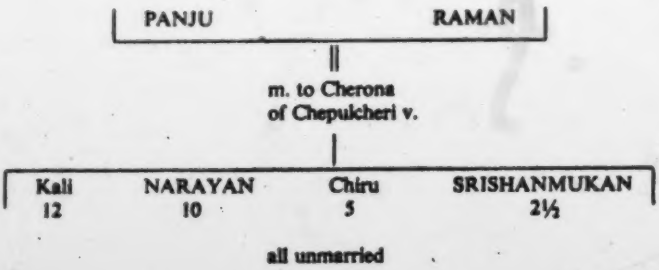

Conventional signs as in Table 3.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked Komon about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insufficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text Continues on P. 216]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Pulluvans

TABLE 20. GENEALOGY OF PUTANPUNAKKIL HOUSEHOLD.

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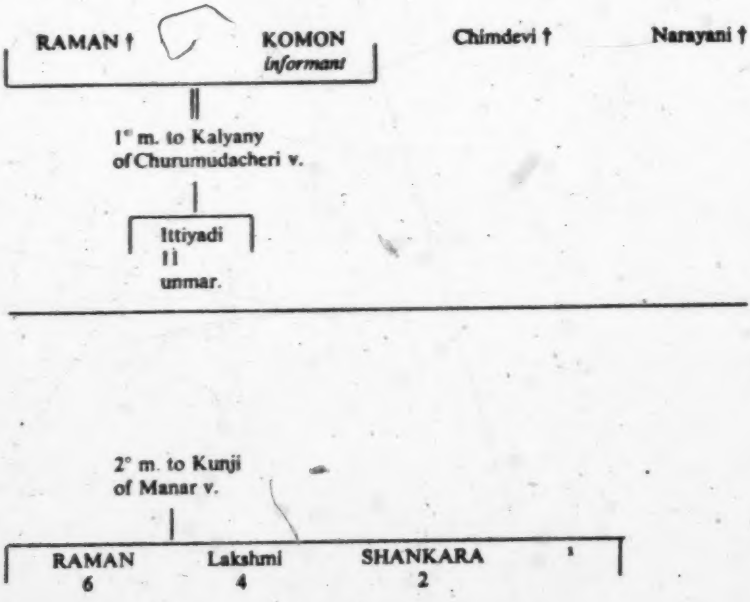

[1] Kunji was expecting seven months at the time of the visit.
Conventional signs as in Tables 3 & 14.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

*595 851 late the time back from the moment of birth; but they only laughed at my insistance and said that they could not. Obviously, the right thing to do was not to make any distinction, to accept the children as collectively theirs, without individual claims on them.

This is the public attitude which self-respecting polyandrous people must apparently take. Privately, things can be quite different, and from the information which I gathered from Panju and Nani, it is obvious that human nature reasserts itself even in this situation, in spite of cultural interdictions. Asked confidentially if he had any preference for one of his four boys, Panju replied that he believed that the two elder ones, Kumaran and Madhavan, were his because they were "more fond" of him than of Narayana. To emphasize this belief, he added that outside people thought that Sridaran and Raghavan resembled their younger father, while the other two were physically more like him. I heard, later, that Nani, in private, never in front of her husbands or even before the other children, would say to Kumaran: "Go on, be a man like your *achan* (father, the name given to Panju). He is a fine fellow whom you should take after!" There seemed to be no doubt that, behind the scenes and the facade which had to be maintained socially in this polyandrous society, a great amount of preference and distinction was shown for the individual, would-be, "real" father.

*595 ● 601 Panju claimed that he looked after the children more than his brother because he had more affection for them than Narayana. Here again, he seemed to be claiming a preferred position that could not fail to strike me. I asked him what names the children used for their fathers, and he gave me not only those for himself and his co-husband, but also (without my asking) for Raman and Sankara, who were considered to be uncles (fathers' brothers) because they were not part of the polyandrous household. Raman was called *wariachan*, "big father"; Sankara, *wawuachan*, "sickly father", because he had some kind of chronic stomach ailment (this reminded me of the "opium-eating father" in Ceylon, see p. 149); Panju, *achan*, "father"; and Narayana, *kutiachan* or "small father". In other words, even those brothers of the fathers who were no longer fathers in parental status were called "father", a classificatory term which obviously had no other reality after the break-up of the old association of all the brothers married to a common wife.

597 [428] If a family has no issue, adoption of a child is possible, the latter then having exactly the same status as if it were one's own. The child has, however, to be legally registered with the authorities if it is to be an heir. Cases of such adoptions are extremely rare; my informants

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight 613
to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of 114
Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape.

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice 613
among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to 114
the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also 184
within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve [554]
(1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles.

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In 613
North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region [184]
around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group [614]
in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan.

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but 591
she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children [844]
(a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when 171
grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of 851
matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. 601
I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are [602]
to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sin-
[171] halese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other"
[611] (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely dimi-
[613] nution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general structures as elsewhere.

We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary relations between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

I have no information about the terminology of reference or address, though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

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121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
11 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

121 We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
114 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
613 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
184 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
[605] opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

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are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

In view of the great number of communities that have remained untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman, where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in contrast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire complex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the children of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be separated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine creative principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy: male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.

Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

613 Even in the last 50 years, quarrels between men
628 of different lineages, usually over field-boundaries or women, have resulted in prolonged hostility, sometimes with fighting, between their lineages. In South Malabar and Cochin, such hostility between individual lineages could not take the form of actual blood-feuds (kudipaga) such as were known in the politically less centralized area of North Malabar. These were prevented by the strong organization of the village assembly, the power of desavari and naduvari, and the existence of the royal court. Fighting between groups of men of different lineages, as between groups of men of adjacent villages owing allegiance to different and sometimes mutually hostile desavaris, was soon stopped by the appropriate local authority - the desavari in the first case and the naduvari in the second. If however a Nayar were slain by a man of another lineage, his matrilineal kinsmen had the right sanctioned by the king to place his body in the [43] house or the outhouse of his slayer and burn house and coprse together. His lineage might then, after paying a fee to the naduvari, select one of their number to fight a duel to the death with a chosen man of the slayer's lineage in order to avenge the murder. The lineage was thus a corporate group in contexts involving murder and offences against the religious laws of the caste, though the property-group was the corporate group in contexts involving disputes over property.

613 The individual lineage was linked to its local
602 subcastes assembly by the institution of enangar.
621

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
●602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

592 difference in the character of ancestral spirits
769 probably relates to the fact that among Nayars,
152 hostility to the mother's brother, the karanavan and all older men, though curbed by strict rules of etiquette and [61] social distance, is often either fully conscious or dealt with by projection: the mother's brother may be thought of as persecuting and his discipline strongly resented, though loyalty to the mother and the group prevents a man from openly venting his aggression. Among Brahmans, aggressive impulses against the father, elder brothers and other older men are deeply repressed; such older male figures are thought of a protective and nurturant, and inner opposition to them arouses much guilt. Perhaps because of this, their spirits are also harmless, and what is projected in beliefs about them is rather the individual's own oral dependency longings.

592 The propitiation only of heads of the property-
769 groups, by the living head on behalf of all members, underlines the corporate character of the group. Brahmans instead propitiate each man his own line of recent patrilineal forbears - father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather and their wives - thus emphasizing the strength of the asymmetrical interpersonal tie between father and son, at the expense of the
592 solidarity of the patrilineal group. Among Na-
602 yars, interpersonal relations between men of the matrilineal group are neither structurally strong nor emotionally intense: men are bound to the group and incidentally to each other by their primary ties to women (mother and sisters); rivalry between them is acute and they are kept

592 together only by loyalty to the group as a whole
602 and a sense of pride in being able to submit to discipline from male elders for the sake of their natal kinswomen. A man may be extremely proud of his taravad and of his karanavan as a good manager and spokesman, but he has a less intimate personal relationship with him than does a patrilineal man with his father. In the Brahman patrilineal extended family, by contrast, individual interpersonal ties between father and son and between brothers, who form the core of the group, may be marked by deep devotion, while loyalty to the patrilineal lineage as a corporate unit, and its overall solidarity, are much weaker.

592 (c) The Splitting of Property-Groups
571 The property-groups of retainer Nayars divide at a particular point in their development. The Nayars themselves do not know this. They regard partition of the property-group as an unfortunate occurrence which takes place because of the greed or envy of individual men, or because of unwonted increase in the membership of the group. It is true that before the increase in population of the hundred years, individual property-groups must often have remained intact over many generations, simply reproducing their numbers. However, genealogies from the histories I collected of over thirty taravads show that retainer property-groups in fact partition with unfailing regularity at a particular point in their development. This occurs when the group contains two or more segments descended

592 [64] Every woman is thus the potential founder
571 of a property-group, and often, after her brothers have in turn been karanavans and are dead, she lives to see her segment's property divided from that of her sisters, and her son or even daughter's son established as head of her group. However, some women do not of course become founders of groups, either because they have no children or because they have only daughters who themselves become founders in their own right when their sons are old enough. Again, a group of brothers with no sisters was traditionally unlikely to form a separate group, since they would have no women to perpetuate their group(or for that matter, to cook for them). They would be likely to remain volunatrily attached to a parallel segment, succeeding, along with their classificatory brothers, to karanavanship as they became in turn oldest member of the group. Alternatively they might split away and adopt one or more girls from collateral segments to perpetuate their separate group.

In all cases of partition, division of the property was stirpital: equal shares accrued to segments of the same order which were descended from sisters. The segment which contained the old karanavan at the time of partition usually retained the ancestral house.

592(d) Kinship Relations within the Group

•602 The karanavan was traditionally unequivocal
868 head of the group. He managed the property, built new houses, repaired the old, leased land from the janmi, and controlled [65] the labour

592 of serfs. He could command all other members,
602 male or female, and children were trained to
868 obey him with reverence. He[1] had the rights of a pater over small children: till puberty he was responsible for having them educated in Malayalam reading and writing, must discipline them like a father in patriliny, and might beat them if they disobeyed. Even today in orthodox
[593] houses, the father of a child has no share at all in the karanavan's rights of pater: he may not interfere in education or discipline or question the karanavan's right to dispose of a child's career and services.

As their legal guardian, the karanavan must traditionally pass on to young men the martial traditions, swords and other weapons of the taravad. He must educate them also in the management of lands and serfs and the cultivation of gardens. Even today in villages, every Nayar has expert knowledge of paddy and garden cultivation and the planning of household architecture. Such information is learned with great care from the karanavan and younger brothers of the mother, all of whom play a part in the child's education after the age of four to five. In spite of interpersonal rivalry between men, Nayars show great loyalty to the group as a whole, pride in the military skill, dignity and financial integrity of their karanavans of past ages, and eagerness to identify with their mothers' brothers and eventually take their place as leaders of the property-group. This pride in the offices and public status of the group is of course most marked in royal lineages, [66] but

1 [the Karanavan --- Analyst]

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men;
[827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

592 few juniors avail themselves of this right, which
602 is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals
671 of obedience and trust towards elders of the taravad.

592 Even traditionally, however, both junior men
602 and women were often consulted in the manage-
695 ment of property. If a dispute arose between
421 segments within the group, it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator outside the lineage, and a settlement reached and embodied in a document called a karar, which legally bound all adult members. Such a settlement was likely in the case of a very old karanavan who decided to retire in favour of the second man. In a wealthy taravad he might then by common consent be allotted a small house and pension for the duration of his life. In desavari and naduvari taravads, karars were sometimes made to allot separate houses with lands for the maintenance of each of the old women of the group (often the karanavan's own sisters) to live on with their children and grandchildren. All lands continued to be managed by the karanavan, but he paid a sum of paddy from her allotted lands each year to the senior woman of each segment. If one sibling group in a taravad contained only brothers, a karar was sometimes made to allot to them a separate house with lands for the duration of their lives; this then reverted to the group as a whole after their deaths. Karars are however common only in village headmen's, chiefly or royal taravads: too little property is usually
592 involved in the taravads of retainer Nayars.
602 Here effective management is commonly divided

592 between the karanavan and the oldest woman.
602 The former carries out all economic transactions outside the group and controls the total income; he also keeps the key of the outer granary in the courtyard. The latter plans cookery, keeps the keys of paddy chests within the house, organized the work of women and presents to the karanavan her requirements for day-to-day expenditures. (8) Particularly when the karanavan is the son or own younger brother of the oldest woman, management runs smoothly and the oldest woman may be de facto head of the group. If she is a younger sister or classificatory sister a more formal division of roles is common.

[601] Under the karanavan, men of the group are ranked by seniority. All those older than ego are sometimes collectively called karanavar and are accorded respect and obedience (within the limits set by overall obedience to the head) all younger, whether they be mother's brothers, younger brothers, maternal nephews or great nephews, may be commanded and disciplined. The social distance between men of a property-group is great, far greater than between father and son, or between brothers, in any patrilineal South Indian group. Indeed, though learning and skills are passed on between them, the relationships between men are, when possible, formalized to the point of avoidance. By traditional etiquette, a man may not touch his karanavan or any maternal uncle; before approaching him he must remove his upper cloth. To speak to the karanavan he stands respectfully half hidden

592 from sight behind a pillar, holding his hand be-
602 fore his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. [69] With younger mother's brothers more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's etiquette is necessarily relaxed, but he observes the greatest possible formal respect before them. A similar etiquette is preserved before older brothers and classificatory brothers: after puberty these never joke, sit or chew betal and areca nuts together. A junior man never sits before his senior except at mealtimes when all men may sit in the dining hall in order of age, served by women of the group who eat later in company in the kitchen. In general, age overrides generation and also segment in the formal structuring of relationships between men of a property-group: mother's mother's brother is accorded the same etiquette as mother's brother, and classificatory older brother as older brother. Emotionally, however, there tends to be less acrimony and more tenderness, as might be expected, between alternate than between proximal generations; there is also a strong tendency for own siblings to support each other against classificatory sib-
613 lings. This is part of the process of clear-cut
593 segmentation in the lineage along lines descending through sisters: it culminates regularly in quarrels between classificatory brothers and division of property between the segments. This process of segmentation throughout the whole lineage derives from the paramount strength of the mother-child bond, the key-pin of the kinship system. For both men and women,

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognized the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

582 Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well
595 as marriage to the dead spouse's sibling, were
835 thus automatically forbidden. This rule appears to relate to the paramount need to keep minimal the potential rivalries between individuals of the same sex within the group. It was also consistent with the relationship of respect between
585 them. Even today, when ceremonies mark the
602 start of the post-puberty marriage, a man's
595 lineage elders may not attend his marriage ceremonies and feast. He goes to the bride's house with unrelated friends of his own age or with affines, ideally, his sister's husbands. For marriage is a jolly undertaking and only such men may joke together about sexual scandals in the village. But [81] reticence is required in discussing their own marriage, and the respect a woman owes her older kinswomen demands that she interfere in no way in their marital life. Today, a woman treats her father or step-father with affectionate respect of a less formal kind than that accorded to the mother's brother, but she should not touch him after puberty. With her elder sister's husband she observes still greater formality, based on the incest prohibition. The ban on sororal polygyny is particularly comprehensible in view of the fact that Nayar women were traditionally open rivals for the attentions of men: many writers mention this and it is still discernible in villages today. The mutual respect and amity required of women of the same property-group was incompatible with such rivalry.

835 However, the ban on relations with two persons
582 of the same group was less stringent than the

582 specialized in wealth and power. This is the only case I know of in South India of preferential marriage to the paternal parallel cousin: it is a function of the unique hypergamous relationship between patrilineal and matrilineal castes.

Incest prohibitions were therefore in full harmony with the Nayar emphasis on the unity and exclusiveness of the matrilineage and their minimal recognition of marital and patrilineal ties.

582 602 Today, cross cousin marriage is much favored and serves to harmonize the modern conflicting claims of a man's natal and his conjugal kin. It has been common for at least a hundred years since polyandry began to die out. It was certainly of course permissible in the traditional system and must often have occurred, since enangar are often cross cousins and unions between enangar of the local group were presumably the most numerous and most stable. A likely guess is that a preference for unions between cross cousins, when these were known, traditionally existed alongside plural marriages, though the two seem at first sight mutually opposed. For these institutions (cross cousin marriage and very weak plural marriages) are both functions of the unity of the lineage. They are opposite, but alternative, methods of dealing with the "matrilineal puzzle". (13) When matrilineal bonds are of para-[83]mount strength as they were among the Nayars, a weak and transient conjugal tie is likely, because natal and conjugal ties inevitably oppose each other. Plural liaisons with frequent separation cater for matrilineal bonds by minimizing conjugal

582 ties, and these were traditionally the common
602 solution in this area. But even in a promiscuous community, it seems likely that the effective relationship between a man and children he believes to be his cannot always be altogether overridden and may assert itself in face of matrilineal ties. When this happens some other solution to the conflict is required. Cross cousin marriage, particularly matrilateral, (14) is one such partial solution, since it harmonizes for two members and for two generations of a lineage conjugal interests which would otherwise be opposed.

601 (4) Kinship Terms

As might be expected, the traditional Nayar terminology of this area includes terms only for matrilineal kin, their spouse, and the children of ego's wife. Today, terms are sometimes used to address cognates, but they are very seldom used in reference; descriptive terms like "my father's nephew" and my mother's father" are used instead. Contrary to the view of Murdock and Emeneau, (15) the Nayars of this area do not have a bifurcate merging system with Iroquois cousin terms: indeed none of the matrilineal groups of Kerala (North Malabar Nayars, Tiyyars and Muslims, South Malabar and Cochin Nayars, or Travancore Iravas and Nayars) have such a system, which in this region is confined to the patrilineal and double unilineal castes below Nayars.

Within the lineage, men of the first and second ascending generations are equated as "male

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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other 604
so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters.

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were dif- [601]
ferentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger [551]
sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister.

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be ex- [601]
tended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Ac- [602]
tually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of [613]
ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was [614]
axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of [578]
senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling.

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her au- 603
thority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and

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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [564] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

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opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age.

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose.

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly

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582 favored wife, and that such a man might well arrange for a nephew's first sambandham relationship to be with a daughter of this wife. It seems probable also that such deliberately arranged matrilateral cross-cousin marriages increased in popularity in the nineteenth century, as plural marriages gradually gave place to monogamy. My [178] data suggest also that deliberately arranged patrilateral cross-cousin marriages may have become more popular in the late nineteenth century, as fathers became instrumental in maintaining and educating their sons.[10]

AFFINITY

602 592 The members of ego's father's household had less significance to him in their interpersonal relationships than as affines or *bandhukkar* (singular, *bandhu*) of his household as a whole. The bandhus or "joined ones" of a household were acquired through the sambandham relationship. They comprised the current spouses of the property group's members, together with the households from which these people came. *Bandham* (affinity) had no practical significance beyond this range.

602 [576] Because of the transience of particular marriages, affinal relationships, like those with patrilateral kin, were a matter of etiquette rather than of rights and obligations. Affines of the same caste might visit [574] each other informally and must be received with hospitality. It was also common to invite to the feasts of life-crisis rites the actual spouses of the dwelling group and any close matrilineal kin they might wish to bring with them. Affines, however, had no ceremonial obligations on these occasions and were not under the same categorical obligation to attend as were the representatives of enangar households.

602 576 Politeness—masking a greater or lesser degree of covert hostility—characterized affinal relationships in general. A man treated his wife's male elders of senior generations with respect, and stood in their presence unless invited to eat with them. They welcomed him with cordial gravity and with the respect due to his caste status if he were a man of higher caste.

[10] Both types of cross-cousin marriage have however decreased in frequency as a result of the urbanization and mobility of the past thirty years. In one Cochin village in 1949, 7 per cent of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; less than 2 per cent had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 14 per cent of marriages were to the father's own or classificatory nephew; 9 per cent to the own or classificatory uncle's son. In Walluvanad, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11 per cent had married the father's own or classificatory nephew; about 5 per cent, the own or classificatory uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is of course impossible in hypergamous unions.

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A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [885] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

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601 corrupted to *chēdatti amma* (Cochin) or *eratti amma* (S. Malabar).

(9) *Chētan.* M. and F. speaking, reference; M. speaking only, address. A particular shortened form of *jyēshtan* (ElBr), reserved for the husband of A6.

(10) *Makan.* M. speaking. Son of ego's wife. Reference only.

(11) *Makal.* M. speaking. Daughter of ego's wife. Reference only.

(12) *Pērakutti.* M. speaking. Child of ego's wife's daughter. Reference only. Not always used.

(13) *Appan.* M. and F. speaking. Ritual husband (*tāli* tier) of ego's mother.

(14) *Manavalan.* F. speaking. Ritual husband. Reference only.

All other affines and cognates were referred to by descriptive compound terms (e.g., *ende acchande marumakan*, "my father's nephew"; *ende anujande bhārya*, "my younger brother's wife"). Persons of 8 and 9 were also often referred to by descriptive compound terms.

601 A man might *address* his wife's matrilineal kin older than himself
602 by the same terms as she did but he was not obliged to do so. He
[557] might also address them by their names and caste titles. They ad-
[564] dressed him by his personal name, adding the caste title if he were of higher caste.

A man addressed his wife's younger matrilineal kinsmen by name. Because of the avoidance relationship he and his wife's younger sisters used no terms or names to address each other.

If she knew them and was of the same caste as they were, a woman addressed her husband's older matrilineal relatives by the same terms as he did. She addressed by name those younger than herself. She called her husband's younger sister who was older than herself *jyēshtatti*, (elder sister). Because of the avoidance relationship no terms or names were used between a woman and her husband's brothers who were older than she.

In hypergamous marriages a woman and her husband's natal kin used no terms to address each other.

An individual used no terms, but only names, to address his father's matrilineal kin.

601 *Comment:* In general, the restricted use of reference terms for
[581] affines and the lack of terms for patrilateral kin other than the father reflect the slenderness of the marriage tie and the lack of obligations to these kin.

Affinal terms were mainly restricted to the spouses of ego's older matrilineal kin, persons with whom he had fairly regular contact. Even these, however, might be *referred* to by descriptive compound

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal [769]
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

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605 836 837 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take vengeance.

AFFINES

●602 576 184 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her 602 592 613 [593] husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as [598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and [607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman [604] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 613 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and [604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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The wives of her elder matrilineal kinsmen figured prominently in the life-crisis rites of a girl, performing the ritual acts done by enangar women in Central Kerala.

Because of residence patterns men had less contact than did women with the property groups of their spouses. They must be invited to all ceremonies and had ritual duties in those connected with their own children. As sambandhakkar of a property group, the husbands of its female members were usually consulted formally by its kāranavan before he undertook important matters such as building houses or dividing property. He was not, however, obliged to follow their advice.

Kinship Terms

A. MATRILINEAL KIN

The pattern of terms was the same as in Central Kerala. Lexically, the only difference was that MoMo and her sisters (A1) were called *acchamma* (literally, "father's mother"), a term extended to them from FaMo. This usage probably resulted from the fact that a child normally recognized FaMo earlier than MoMo and had more contact with her.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES

In North Kerala, as might be expected, there were customary kinship terms for the patrilateral kin. The terms for affines and non-matrilineal cognates were as follows.

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Acchappan* ("Father's father"). M. and F. speaking. FaFa and FaFaBr. FaFaSiHu, FaMoBr, FaMoSiHu. MoFa and MoFaBr. MoFaSiHu, MoMoSiHu.

(5) *Acchamma* ("Father's mother"). FaMo and FaMoSi. FaFaBrWi, FaFaSi and FaMoBrWi. MoFaSi, MoMo, MoMoSi, MoFaBrWi.

(6) *Amma* ("Mother"). M. and F. speaking. Extended from Mo and MoSi to FaSi and FaBrWi. FaSi is called *valiya* ("big") mother or *elaya* ("younger") mother according to her age in relation to the father. FaBrWi is so designated according to FaBr's age in relation to Fa.

(7) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Fa, mother's current husband,

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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601 184 FaBr, FaSiHu, MoSiHu. The last three are designated "older" or "younger" in the same manner as above.

(8) *Ammāyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of any male of first or second ascending generations within ego's lineage, especially within his property group.

(9) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and Wi's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(10) *Jyēshtatti amma.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of older male of ego's generation within his lineage, primarily within his property group.

(11) *Machunian.* M. and F. speaking. Male cross cousin, i.e., male of ego's father's lineage in ego's generation, or So of ego's own, or classificatory MoBr within his lineage. Extended to male cross cousins of either parent.

(12) *Machunichi.* M. and F. speaking. The female equivalent of B11.

(13) *Makan.* M. speaking. WiSo. Reference only.

(14) *Makal.* M. speaking. WiDa. Reference only.

(15) *Pērakutti.* M. and F. speaking. Reciprocal of B4 and B5. Used primarily of own grandchild through either So or Da. Reference only.

[602] A man or woman used the same terms to address the spouse's natal kin as the own natal kin except in case of an avoidance relationship.

[605] An individual *addressed* all cross-cousins in the same manner as siblings, reserving terms B11 and B12 for reference. He addressed and referred to paternal parallel cousins as siblings.

[564] Kinship terms were used in relationships with affines or cognates of higher or lower matrilineal caste but not in relationships with Nambudiri Brahman relatives.

601 602 *Comment:* Males and females of the second ascending generation were equated with grandparents, except for the maternal great-uncle and his wife. This fits the fact that relationships with the maternal great-uncle and his wife were distant and authoritative while those with other kin of this generation were non-authoritative and informal. Similarly, in the first ascending generation the mother's brother and his wife are singled out as distant and authoritative figures. All others of this generation are classed with the parents as non-authoritative figures.

The existence of Iroquois cousin terms for reference fits the special joking relationship and preferential marriage between cross cousins as contrasted with the prohibition of marriage between parallel cousins of both sides.

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4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

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The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the
[574] men and women are separate; at different ends of the house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior
613 woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathira she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhurâm Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

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Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *kāranavan*. This man is usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but particularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravāḍ*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravāḍ* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravāḍ* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *peedham*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *ooor*.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[324] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
267 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvathira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by [564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannóthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 852 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of
[429] the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and ~~*14*~~ (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside
[844] Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
613 the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
602 were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma, the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
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10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through 613
their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of 602
their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are 182
conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the [353]
case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal 613
group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the 551
surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivan- 182
drum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group 613
seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal 554
group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his dis- 182
tinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration 613
of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal 554
group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the 593
two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he 182
is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up [586] daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

843
593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife [602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. 843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in [574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring. [593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a [604] brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight 613
to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of 114
Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape.

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice 613
among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to 114
the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also 184
within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve [554]
(1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles.

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In 613
North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region [184]
around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group [614]
in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan.

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but 591
she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children [844]
(a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when [171]
grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of [851]
matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. 601
I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are [602]
to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere
[613] also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access
585 to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
171 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[183] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61).

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough.

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin."

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific.

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy.

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

In view of the great number of communities that have remained untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman, where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in contrast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire complex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the children of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be separated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine creative principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy: male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.

Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters. 604

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister. [601] [551]

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling. [601] [602] [613] [614] [578]

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and 603

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took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' children, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was responsible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste, in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural matters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

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North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

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Central Kerala Nayar

ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his correction. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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Central Kerala Nayar

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The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

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was formalized to the point of avoidance. A boy or man might not touch his mother's brother. Before entering the uncle's presence he removed his upper clothing as a mark of respect. He might not speak first to the uncle but stood with arms folded and head bowed, attentively awaiting commands. He might not sit before his uncle except at mealtimes; he then sat down last and rose as soon as the uncle's meal was finished. When summoned for a lengthy interview he stood half hidden behind a pillar, holding his hand before his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. He might not chew betel leaves, smoke, spit, or use any but the most serious and respectful language in the presence of his senior. These rules of intercourse were most strict in the relationship with the kāranavan. For this reason a kāranavan absented himself as much as possible from family gatherings, living on the upper floor of the granary among his age mates of other lineages who came to visit him. With junior mother's brothers, who were more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's behavior was necessarily more relaxed. Even so, he observed the greatest possible formality, walked several feet behind them, and avoided them when he could.

A man should show loyalty to his mother's brothers in relations with outsiders, if necessary defending them with his life. He was expected to identify with them, receiving and perpetuating the noble traditions of his taravād. In fact Nayars did show great pride in the elders of their taravād as a group, exhibiting their virtues and hiding their weaknesses in the presence of strangers. There was regularly, however, deep hostility in their interpersonal relationships. The Nayars of today are well aware of this and expect acrimonious rivalry between the men of a taravād; hence, they say, the need for formal etiquette and strict ranking on the basis of age. A Nayar will speak of himself as bound to his taravād through natural love for his mother and sisters, and obliged for their sakes to maintain outward decorum in his relations with matrilineal kinsmen. In a modified form this suppressed hostility traditionally extended to all the men of the own, first ascending and second ascending generations. All male elders in the taravād might be collectively called *kāranavar* (singular, kāranavan). Within the property group they were numbered in order of age (irrespective of generation) as first, second, and third men. All owed loyalty and obedience to those above them and protection to those below them, but all envied their seniors and feared the rivalry of juniors. The mother's own brothers were, however, the prototypes for this generalized rivalry. Whether or not Nayars experienced Oedipal hostility

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604 613 561 578 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 561 578 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy retained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work. [429] [684] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 584 595 178 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became customary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter. In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities. [861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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MAN-SISTER

593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger 561 sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

[588] Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger 835 sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law.

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships.

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized

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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [885] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. 574 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob- [593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions [604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two 582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often [593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and [764] sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his [848] wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman
[607] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a
[604] younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184
clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationship between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father. Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspondingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tendency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out. This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:——"When the 581
man, visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on
terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an
uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system.
Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to
each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in
fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn
towards other partners. It may be thought that this
liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state
here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary
divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and 421
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male
member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of
every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd
property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one [184]
house, while his wife and family live in another. That
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live
together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd
can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of
course extend to the children of a brother and a sister,
who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the
principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [587]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or hus-
band is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for
a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's
Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with
social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the
forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife
dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another
wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the
children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

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588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The [782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of [789] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the [582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a 582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while 58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal [593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

613 Again in all the groups studied the

276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one
782 or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes
787 then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to
182 these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*predham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tāli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [183] [165] [169] [183]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambūdiri landlords, the *nāduvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tāli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tāli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kāranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kāranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tāli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

613 [421] [584] Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāri* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

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Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

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[613]

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavo* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammavo* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

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[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 56) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side. [114]

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, i.e., elder mother, small mother, i.e., younger mother.

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606 as *Ammavi Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar.*—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[264] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
613 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent
621 opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions.*—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his cross-cousins.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[171] [1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

595 175 [609] [114] the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 174 538 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthareru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 174 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 613 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the [789] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few [593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi*?" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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177 582 585 intentions to register *sambandhams* was thirty-six in 1896—97, twenty-four in 1897—98 and only fourteen in 1898—99." He accounts for the falling off as follows:—

The mass of the people continues to regard the marriage law with aversion and suspicion, and even the educated members of the community who are in favour of the measure, shrink from taking advantage of it from fear of offending the elderly members of their *tarawads*, and all the powerful Nambuthiris and other great landlords. The Registrar of Calicut also points out, that the power conferred by the marriage law, to make provision for one's own wife and children, has hitherto acted as some inducement to persons to register their *sambandhams*, but as Act V of 1898 (Madras) which came into force from 2nd September 1898, enables the followers of the *marumakkathâyam* law to attain this object without registering their *sambandhams*, and "unnecessarily curtailing their liberty of action, and risking the chances of divorce proceedings," he thinks it unlikely that registration under the marriage law would increase in future.

595 Polyandry.

Among the Nayars of ancient times in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, there was polyandry. In the report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, it is said, that there is evidence to show that it still lingers in Ponnani and Walluvanad Taluks, especially on the Cochin border of the former Taluk.[1] Apart from its existence in former times, it may be said that nowhere in these States is the custom still found to linger, no admitted instance of it has come to my notice in the course of my investigations into the customs and manners of the castes in the various parts of the State. An account of these customs as it existed in ancient times, and the theories that have been advanced in respect of it are of some ethnographical importance, and it may not be out of place here.

[593] [604] [582] [564] The Nayars of ancient times were, in most cases, neither regularly married, nor did they care much, when married, to support their wives and children; but their nephews (sons of sisters), who were their legitimate heirs, were properly looked after. Nayar women generally mated with Brahmans or Nayars, but never with people of lower caste under pain of

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 83.

death.

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

595 [588] [604] [175]

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sámanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

595 773 595 [564]

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pinánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawad* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawad*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawad*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
602 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
353

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brāhmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. A woman without [851] shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595
without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564
maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nayres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851]
ing that there are always several men attached to one [604]
woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578]
term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tīpū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648]
since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind." †

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is neces- 593
sary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his

843
593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife
[602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates.
843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in
[574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring.
[593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a
[604] brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general structures as elsewhere.

We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary relations between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

I have no information about the terminology of reference or address, though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with
551 the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 In view of the great number of communities that have remained
171 untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman,
121 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and
593 inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated
[604] at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's
[764] funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con-
121 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the
593 rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com-
764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar
[604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan
[171] Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil-
121 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa-
593 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the
605 double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the
121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of
602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea-
171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy:
812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort,
771 Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.
[601] Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. However, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age. 602 [605] [588]

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose. 582 [535]

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today, the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly [586]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[578] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and
[607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

601 184 FaBr, FaSiHu, MoSiHu. The last three are designated "older" or "younger" in the same manner as above.

(8) *Ammāyi.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of any male of first or second ascending generations within ego's lineage, especially within his property group.

(9) *Aliyan.* M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and Wi's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(10) *Jyēshtatti amma.* M. and F. speaking. Wi of older male of ego's generation within his lineage, primarily within his property group.

(11) *Machunian.* M. and F. speaking. Male cross cousin, i.e., male of ego's father's lineage in ego's generation, or So of ego's own, or classificatory MoBr within his lineage. Extended to male cross cousins of either parent.

(12) *Machunichi.* M. and F. speaking. The female equivalent of B11.

(13) *Makan.* M. speaking. WiSo. Reference only.

(14) *Makal.* M. speaking. WiDa. Reference only.

(15) *Pērakutti.* M. and F. speaking. Reciprocal of B4 and B5. Used primarily of own grandchild through either So or Da. Reference only.

[602] A man or woman used the same terms to address the spouse's natal kin as the own natal kin except in case of an avoidance relationship.

[605] An individual *addressed* all cross-cousins in the same manner as siblings, reserving terms B11 and B12 for reference. He addressed and referred to paternal parallel cousins as siblings.

[564] Kinship terms were used in relationships with affines or cognates of higher or lower matrilineal caste but not in relationships with Nambudiri Brahman relatives.

601 602 *Comment:* Males and females of the second ascending generation were equated with grandparents, except for the maternal great-uncle and his wife. This fits the fact that relationships with the maternal great-uncle and his wife were distant and authoritative while those with other kin of this generation were non-authoritative and informal. Similarly, in the first ascending generation the mother's brother and his wife are singled out as distant and authoritative figures. All others of this generation are classed with the parents as non-authoritative figures.

The existence of Iroquois cousin terms for reference fits the special joking relationship and preferential marriage between cross cousins as contrasted with the prohibition of marriage between parallel cousins of both sides.

[pp. 405-745 not Processed]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife [782] and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of [787] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has [582] already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law 582 if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while 58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal [593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin 564

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*. 613

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

588 to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets
[114] to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent
[613] people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the
[787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the
[791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar*
[301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the
[576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The
[605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (i.e., her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely dimi-
[613] nution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well.

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom.

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58).

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on.

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage.

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184 of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588 unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

121 We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
114 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
613 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
184 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
[605 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with
551 the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 In view of the great number of communities that have remained
171 untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman,
121 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and
593 inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated
[604] at all *rites de passage,* and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's
[764] funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con-
121 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the
593 rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com-
764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar
[604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan
[171] Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil-
121 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa-
593 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the
605 double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the
121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of
602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea-
171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy:
812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort,
77 Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.
[601] Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

WOMAN-DAUGHTER

A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household responsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was expected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, however, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-Rite. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the North Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyyar

likellest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likellest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *tarawād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

564 613

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *tarawād*.

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of
585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

Nayar
Tiyyar

184 68 The unconscious
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
593 the spirits of dead *kāranavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāranavans'* spirits,
775 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
595 however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
184 sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
182 the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
613 through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
182 This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom, who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
184 married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed, however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother. He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are permitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
182 a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
593 taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
593 clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
182 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavo* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavos* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammavo* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 58) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, i.e., elder mother, small mother, i.e., younger mother.

606 as *Ammavi Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar.*—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[244] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
613 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent
621 opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions.*—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[191] [1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machwa*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their [885] "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In
such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[578] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman
[607] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who âre junior to the deceased. They

Nayar
Tiyyar

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

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The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *tarawād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

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The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

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Again, in all the groups studied the *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *tarawād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pēdham*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *emar*.

613 794 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a pre-puberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage

808 621 Since lineages were usually groups of actual and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own subcaste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

1 [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess --- Analyst]

613 by the local janmi, was formally accepted into
608 the Nayar assembly of its new area, and was
621 accorded enangar relations with some of the lineages already present. If the incoming segment was small, it was customary for it to ally itself with one or other established lineages for the performance of the first tali-rite. This set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the new segment and the old lineage, which must henceforth observe exogamy. Such fictitious matrilineal kinship, while serving to keep stable the size and number of exogamous groups in the village, was relevant only to intergroup relations in the microcosmic political life of [49] the village and not to matters which concerned only lineage members and had to do with their interpersonal family life. Thus, death and birth pollutions were not extended to include the incoming segment, which for several generations observed these in common with other segments of its parent-lineage, and with them also continued to worship the lineage goddess in their ancestral village. After some generations, however, the old matrilineal ties were forgotten or (if distance from the parent lineage was great) deliberately sundered, until in time even the rule of exogamy might unwittingly be broken and a division of the original lineage finally completed. If it had increased in numbers the new segment became a complete lineage in its own right; if not, it might gradually come to be regarded as a "real" genealogical branch of its host lineage in the new village.

Even within one village, a lineage might

613 become so large that over many generations
608 members of distant segments forgot that they
621 were matrilineal kin, ceased to observe joint pollution, and finally broke the rule of exogamy. One case of this came to my notice in the Cochin village I studied. A man and woman of two lineages which were not enangar, and for some reason unknown to my informants, had never been known to intermarry, entered into a liaison. Certain elders of the village then began to look into the history of the two lineages and to wonder whether long ago, they might have been matrilineal kin or putative matrilineal kin by joint performance of the [50] tali-rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to younger members of the village, however, the liaison continued and thus what was probably an ancient tie of lineage exogamy was tacitly broken.

[597] Cases of extinction of a lineage were rare, since if one property group were without women in any generation it was customary to adopt one or more girls from collateral property groups of the same lineage and thus continue to perpetuate all the property-groups. In rare cases of the extinction of a lineage, its jenmam lands eschested to the king for reallocation to another lineage, and its kanam lands to the janmi. Today, the property of a group with no women is divided equally between surviving male members and inherited after their deaths by their wives and children.

613 (4) Succession and Segmentation in the Lineage
187 Among retainer Nayars whose lineages owned

592 with their parents into any convenient vacant
[582] room. At the same time, the separate, unique role of each woman as potential founder of a new taravad is recognized in certain rules: both sororate and sororal polygymy are traditionally forbidden, for example, since the inter-personal unity between sisters, as well as their separate positions each at the head of a line of matrilineal descendants, must not be endangered or distorted by their extra-lineage ties.

592 [72] (2) The Traditional Institution of Marriage.
581 Consistent with the unity and multiplex economic, legal and ceremonial functions of the taravad as a corporate group, marriage was traditionally the slenderest of ties, while as a
592 social concept fatherhood scarcely existed. We
582 have mentioned already that at the tali-rite of
608 retainer, middle class and servant Nayars and of temple servants, the immature girls of a lineage were collectively "married" and divorced before puberty by their local caste group as a whole, represented by their individual enangar. In desavari, chiefly and royal lineages the tali was usually tied by a man of a higher subcaste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers for its women in hypergamous liaisons. The women of desavari lineages were thus usually "married" by naduvari men, naduvari and royal women either by Nambudiri men or by men of some higher-ranking royal lineage more ancient than their own. In all castes, the talitier had no subsequent responsibilities and if he wished need never visit the woman again.

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognized the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

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627 Murder among the Nayars
613 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
628 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

614 THE CLAN
564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangar* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Anamāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—Birth and Funeral Ceremonies.

Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāri* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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601, 113, 59, 58, 611, 428

[For information pertaining to the above categories, see 5: Karve AW1 India, category 116, pp. 252-270.]

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

564 servants, nowadays [20] collectively called Amba-
794 lavasis. The highest of these were the Chakk-
yars or reciters of Puranic stories, and the
Pushpagans or flower-gatherers for temples.
611 These two castes had a patrilineal descent-sys-
tem of the same type as Nambudiris, and are
said to have once been Nambudiris who were
degraded for ritual offences. They ranked be-
low Nambudiris and above Nayars and the matri-
lineal temple servant castes. These latter in-
533 cluded Nambyars, a small caste whose work was
to accompany Chakkyar recitations on a metal
drum; Psharodis and Variyars, both of whom
traditionally sweep the temple, clean temple
vessels and make garlands for the idols; Pudu-
vals or drummers on a drum called maddalam;
and Marars or regular drummers on another
drum called chenda.

The temple-servant castes were small and
were chiefly congregated in villages owned by
Nambudiri landlords or by large temples. Four
main types of temple were owned by the higher
castes of Malabar. First came large and weal-
thy temples owned and managed entirely by
groups of Nambudiri landlords and dedicated to
one of the orthodox Brahmanical male deities of
India, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second came the
private temple of each individual Nambudiri fam-
ily in villages owned by Nambudiris; these were
small replicas of the first type, dedicated to the
same types of deities. Third came the large
temples, one of which was associated with each
776 royal and chiefly matrilineage. These were
usually dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali,
the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the soil.

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[264] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
"good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
[611] two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
[783] part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandrv, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[437] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
564 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

564 ritual pollution decreed that the several lower
783 castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

564 Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a
[361] separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas
437 and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. The Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas
[783] and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not
[611] interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes
361 there were and are in Kerala large groups of
563 Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

564 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
[595] had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

596 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
[595] might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
[597] many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

613 In the royal lineages, since each lineage,
582 though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate
837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with [37] Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

835 rule of lineage exogamy. Even today, cases
582 occur very occasionally in which a man cohabits both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage, or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies. This appears to be because
[611] traditionally, only matrilineal kinsfolk are regarded as kin in the true sense of the word: incest prohibitions outside this range are a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

582 No other unions outside the lineage and within the appropriate caste appear traditionally to have been prohibited. Relations with the father's sister (or rather with the sister of the mother's lover, since paternity was often uncertain) were disfavoured because of generation difference but even today they are not prohibited. Unions were definitely permissible between the Nambudiri son and the Nayar daughter of a Nambudiri eldest son (i.e., between paternal step-siblings); it is [82] not certain whether they were ever permitted between two Nayars known to be paternal step-siblings, but they are not permitted today. Marriage to the brother's daughter and the paternal parallel cousin are still permitted, though they are not preferential marriages between Nayars. Marriage is however preferential between a Nambudiri and his paternal parallel cousin of a matrilineal caste. This is particularly true of unions between aristocratic Nambudiris and royal women, since it perpetuates a bond between two groups both of which are small and highly

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food.[101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Nayar: Central Kerala

The Nayars, unlike the groups so far described, form only a part-society—a named category of castes within the social system of southwest India. An account of their kinship system therefore requires a sketch of the political and economic system in which they were embedded. It seems to have been the Nayars' role as a specialized occupational group within a complex society which accounted for the most unusual features of their kinship institutions.

The Nayars differ also from the other groups considered with regard to their relatively high level of technological development. At least from the first century A.D., Kerala's social structure was based upon plough agriculture with irrigation, specialized crafts, and overseas trade (K. M. Panikkar, 1945: 36). Productivity was sufficiently high so that more than one-quarter of the population could be exempted from manual labor and set apart as specialist, literate groups engaged in religion, government, warfare, and wholesale trade. The Nayars, as the ruling and military castes, formed the core of this aristocracy and probably comprised between one-quarter and one-fifth of the total population.[1]

Partly as a result of direct legal changes brought about since the British conquest of 1792, and, more deeply, as a result of the change to an industrial fuel technology, the Nayar system of matrilineal groups has been gradually disintegrating over the past hundred years. Some of the traditional functions of these matrilineal units are being taken over by the elementary family and by the wider, personal, bilateral kindred of each individual. Other former functions of matrilineal groups have passed to such modern bureaucratic institutions as government, army, law court, and school. Because this book is a comparative study of matrilineal systems, I shall concentrate on Nayar lineages and kinship in the "traditional" period before the British

[1] Buchanan estimated the population density of Central Kerala at 100 per square mile in 1800 (1807, II: 501). The density for Cochin State was 814 per square mile in 1931 (Census of India, Cochin State, 1931).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

conquests; that is, from 1342, the date of the first useful Arabic account (Gibb, 1929) to the end of the eighteenth century. My sources include English translations of the writings of Arab, Italian, Portuguese, Dutch, and French visitors to Kerala, works by English travelers, government servants, historians, and anthropologists, and a few historical works by Indian scholars who make use of indigenous Malayalam and Sanskrit documents.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some of the traditional institutions and relationships persist, especially in villages most remote from the seats of government and from modern market centers. Many other traditional usages are remembered by older people. Because of this, my own field work in three villages of Kerala—between November, 1947 and July, 1949—was able to provide me with the organizational framework into which to fit the literary material, and supplied me with many details on the traditional system not hitherto published.[2] Some information was also gleaned from genealogies, manuscript histories of particular lineages, and translations of Malayalam documents relating to land tenure, property transactions, and religious rites.

Modern changes in Nayar kinship comprise a large subject, which I have already briefly treated elsewhere (Gough, 1952*a*; see also Rao, 1957: 74–142). A full account will appear in a forthcoming book.

Ecology

Kerala, or the Malabar Coast, lies in the extreme southwest of India beside the Arabian Sea. The coastline is some 360 miles long, the area about 14,908 square miles. It is divided from the rest of South India by the Western Ghats, a mountain wall broken only in the center by the Palghat Gap. From prehistoric to modern times, migrations took place from the eastern plateau of peninsular India into the coastal region, but until the coming of modern transport the mountains prevented continuous contacts between the people who became established there and their neighbors to the east. On the other hand, its position laid Kerala open to contacts by sea with many peoples, including Jews and Arabs (from perhaps 800 B.C.), Egyptians and Phoenicians (ca. fifth century B.C.), Romans (first century A.D.), Chi-

[2] My field work in three villages of Central and North Kerala was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge. The preparation and writing of these chapters have been carried out with the aid of two grants from the Social Science Research Council, in 1954 and 1958.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic lead-
[162] ers. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit lan-
[174] guage and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera
564 kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nambudiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of
463 ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a
[611] role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual
613 rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in
635 Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

162 According to the Census Report, 1891, they numbered
564 377,828 in Malabar. The figures found in this useful document offer an instance of the unreliability of casual observation. The author of "A Manual of Malabar Law" describes the peoples of Malabar to some extent, and in his Introduction says: "The Nâyars constitute the major portion of the Malabar population." One hears of Malabar as the land of the Nâyars, as if its inhabitants were all Nâyars. Certainly they may be said to form the most distinguishing feature of the district; but, when we seek in the spirit of accuracy, we find the surprising fact that they number but 14·2 per cent. of its population.

611 The chief immediate interest attached to them lies in
564 the fact of their being the best, that is the fullest, the most complete existing example of matriarchy, or, to be more strictly accurate, of inheritance through females.
[171] This system, obtaining at one time amongst the Celts and other races of Europe, was probably universal in the sense that it existed at some period in the life history of every race of mankind, and is now to be found here and there in the world.

611 That inheritance through females was once the rule
171 in Southern India is fairly obvious. Amongst others the Maravars, who are, so far as we can surmise at present, aborigines in the sense that we know of no earlier inhabitants in the part of the peninsula occupied by them, to this day offer strong proof of this. I refer to the genuine Maravars—the Kondayan Kottai Maravars of Tinnevelly—and not to the offshoots settled in Trichinopoly and elsewhere, who have almost entirely forsaken all the customs of their fathers.* Amongst the Maravars the girl on marriage joins the sept of her husband, but she retains her own sept name, and her children are of *her* sept; not of their father's. Marriage between persons of the same sept name is prohibited; and this is regulated solely through the mothers. The tribe is endogamous; but the septs within it are exogamous. Thus, a man or a girl cannot marry any one of the same sept, having the same sept name (which is inherited through their mother), and *must* marry some one within the tribe but of a different sept to his or her own—of his father's sept or any other. Though property

* Most of the cigar makers of Trichinopoly are Maravars in origin. Their names — ———Naidu,———Pillay, and so on are borrowed from people of higher castes.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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devolves through the men, the degrees between which marriage is prohibitive are inherited through the women.*

But the circumstance that inheritance through women was once, perhaps, the rule in Southern India cannot be accepted as of itself proof that the Nâyars are identical with the Dravidians, as the people of Southern India are commonly called. It is not yet time to say whether they are or are not. To the ordinary visitor their outward appearance, customs, habitations, mode of life generally, are very different from what he sees in the Telugu or Tamil countries; for Malabar, "the west coast," is as unlike the rest of the Presidency as Burma. The only other district of the Madras Presidency which resembles Malabar, is Ganjám, more particularly the northern part of it, where the people are almost entirely Aryan. The resemblance between these, the Uriyas of Gumsoor and thereabouts, a fine fighting stock, and the Nâyars of Malabar is very striking. It is not, perhaps, a mere coincidence that in these two furthest remote corners of the Presidency alone, the people at large are to be seen wearing umbrella hats to protect them from the sun.

The Nâyars are divided into clans, (we will call them clans for want of a better term), many of which intermingle through marriage, but some of them are endogamous. The precise number of these clans cannot be given, as it is disputed whether certain of them have a right to belong to the cognate Nâyar body. The names of the clans which have come directly under my measuring instruments are these:—

Kiriyattil.	Kitâvu.
Sûdra.	Pallichan.
Kurup.	Muppathinâyiran.
Nambiyâr.	Vlyâpâri or Râvâri.
Úrâli.	Attikkurissi.
Nalliôden.	Mânavallan.
Viyyûr.	Vengôlan.
Akattu Chârna.	Adungâdi.
Purattu Chârna.	Adiôdi.
Vattakkâd.	Âmayengolam.
Vangilôth.	

This list is not in order of priority.

* An example of this custom existing in another land may be quoted here from a modern book—'The Caroline Islands,' by F. W. Christian, 1899: "Descent is traced through the mother—a custom tolerably common amongst the Oceanic races in general. Members of the same tipu or clan cannot marry." (Page 74.)

595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely ● 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in [787] the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is [824] fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, [613] the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 562 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

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* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person *is* and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road as Zamorin, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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[P.45]

Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast

*Curl Bequest Prize Essay, 1953**

E. KATHLEEN GOUGH

INTRODUCTION

UNTIL TWENTY YEARS AGO, the *tālikettukalyāṇam* (*tāli*-tying marriage) was performed by almost all the castes of Malabar below Brahmans and above the lowest 'exterior' castes.[1] I confine this discussion to four groups with different kinship systems: the matrilineal, uxorilocal Nāyars of South Malabar District and Cochin; the matrilineal, virilocal Nayars of North Malabar District; the matrilineal, virilocal Tiyyars of North Malabar District; and the double unilineal, patrilocal Tiyyars of South Malabar and Cochin.[2]

This girls' initiation ceremony was apparently first described in 1510 by Duarte Barbosa, a Portuguese traveller. Since that date, there have been descriptions of the ceremony by other Portuguese, Dutch, and East India Company writers, and in the past sixty years much controversy between Indian and British anthropologists about its origin and meaning. Yet no one, as far as I know, has recognized its significance in terms of the total kinship systems of the castes who performed it.[3] My first task has therefore been to describe the *tāli*-rite in each caste and to discuss its social function in the kinship system; I do so in Parts I to IV of the essay. In these, I have used the reports of previous writers which, since the rite died out about twenty years ago, are in many cases better than those I collected from informants. At the same time, for a full interpretation of the rite, I found it necessary to incorporate some of my own general field data on Nayar and Tiyyar kinship, collected in 1947-9. My field work was carried out in a South Malabar village (Walluvanād subdivision) for six months, in a Cochin village for eight months, and in a North Malabar village (Kottayam subdivision) for eight months.[4]

Having analyzed, as far as I was able, the social function of the ceremony, I found that, as perhaps with all rites, many of its features were not explicable in terms of social function and of conscious motivations. While it was possible to show, in a general way, how in each case the ceremony was in harmony with the pattern of kinship relations in these groups, it was not possible to explain sociologically why certain persons should take part in the rites, rather than other persons, why certain material objects should be used, and indeed, why it should be necessary to perform this ceremony at all. It seemed to me that the answer to these problems lay in unconscious motivations common to the members of these castes, and could

*[Two Curl Bequest Prizes were awarded for the year 1953, one to the writer of the present essay and the other to Mr H. N. C. Stevenson, O.B.E., for his essay 'Status Evaluation in the Hindu Caste System', which appeared in the last volume of the JOURNAL. – ED.]

[1] For a brief analysis of modern changes in Nayar kinship see Gough (1952). For a fuller analysis of modern changes in the Tiyyar systems see Aiyappan (1944).

[2] The Tiyyars are called Iravas or Chovans in some parts of South Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore. For convenience, I use 'Tiyyars' throughout.

[3] Dr Aiyappan (1942; 1944, pp. 159-62) has made the most comprehensive study of Malabar *tāli*-rites. He concludes that in most of the castes the *tāli*-rite is 'nothing more than an initiatory rite, preliminary to attaining marriageable status'. While I agree with him, I think that this conclusion begs the question and does not explain the function or motivations of the rite.

[4] My field work was made possible by the grant of a William Wyse Studentship from Trinity College, Cambridge, and of an Anthony Wilkin Studentship from the Faculty of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Cambridge.

588 564 121 611 591 121 588 [175] [127] [143] [101] [114] [122]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister.

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names.

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammava* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammava* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 56) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side.

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, *i.e.*, elder mother, small mother, *i.e.*, younger mother.

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291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 611 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharavad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intelligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following:

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patrilocal* system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars."

There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

[P. 52]

CHAPTER III.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

592 The Nayars follow the *marumakkathâyam* law of succes-
613 Inheritance. sion, *i. e.*, the law which regulates succession
[611] through the female line. The senior male member called the *kâranavan* is entitled to the full possession of the property, and is absolute in its management. The junior members, on the other hand, have a claim to residence and maintenance in the family house. They cannot call for an account except as an incident to a prayer for the removal of the manager for gross misconduct, nor claim any specific share of the income, nor even require that the maintenance provided for them should be in proportion to the income of the *tarawâd*. An absolute discretion in this direction is vested in the manager who is the legal guardian of every member of the family.[1] He is not accountable to any member in the *tarawâd* in respect of its income, nor can a suit be maintained for an account of the *tarawâd* property in the absence of fraud on his part. He is under no obligation to support any member of his *tarawâd* by his own labour or from his self-acquisitions. The only rest-
[425] raint on him in the management is, that he cannot alienate the lands of the family except with the consent of all the other members and without proper necessity.[2] If a family has so far increased in the number of its members that they cannot conveniently live under the same roof any longer, it divides itself with the consent of the senior member into *tâvazhis* to each of which is assigned a portion of the property for maintenance, and such *tâvazhis* may reside in separate houses or farm-houses belonging to the family and appropriating from the lands newly assigned to them an income sufficient to maintain themselves. In the partition of

1. Vide Mayne's Hindu Law, sec. 268,
2. I. L. R. II, Mad. 328.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathâyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records
182 and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and
[127] *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of
656 the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad* occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is
[121] concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

613 In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually.
182 The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the
591 limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

613 At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give
182 chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The
[611] cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan*
[578] becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

[434] This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have
[594] an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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[113] 1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

173 sage of Malabar, gave it to the priestly caste of Brahmins in perpetual holding.

These Brahmins now declared themselves satisfied and moved to take it over, but were at first frightened away by the aboriginal *Naga* (serpent) worshippers. Other Brahmins were then brought in from the north and instructed by Parasu Raman to propitiate the serpents by installing them as their household gods. He also organized the priestly settlers into sixty four villages (*gramams*) and directed them to adopt succession through the mother (*marumakkathayam*), which last injunction they disobeyed, with the single exception of Payyanur in Chirakkal, where Brahmins observe matrilineal descent to this day. He then brought in Sudras (Nayars) from the country east of the Ghats (that is from the Tamil country) and entrusted them with the protection of the Brahmins; they were organized into *taras* and to them were given the duties of supervising, executing and issuing orders, so that rights in Kerala should not be curtailed or suffered to fall into disuse.

[611]

173 175 From this nebulous, mythical past, history later slowly emerges. Already, one thousand years B.C., Solomon is reputed to have traded with the south-west coast of India. Commercial contacts with the Near East did actually exist in this part of the sub-continent much earlier than anywhere else in India, the sea acting as a medium of communication. With the discovery of the south-west trade winds by Hippalus in the 1st century A.D., the Romans carried on the profitable relation, and they are reputed to have even had a settlement at Cranganore in Travancore. In 52 A.D., St Thomas landed there, according to local tradition, and converted some Brahmin families to Christianity, thus laying the foundation of the present-day Malabar Christian communities. During the following decades, as a result of the destruction of the Temple at Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus in 70 A.D., the first Jews are reputed to have arrived in Kerala to settle at Mattancheri in Cochin.

175 In the 3rd century A.D., the Brahmins called in a king to rule them, and the Perumal dynasty started with Keya Perumal, who came from Keyapuram, east of the Ghats. Trade with other parts of the world continued during this period, the Arabs arriving from the Hadramaut and the Persian Gulf in the 9th century. The Chinese, however, are said by Marco Polo to have been in full control of the Malabar marts when that great traveller visited the area in the 13th century. Shortly afterwards, the last of the Perumals, Cheruman Perumal, was converted to Islam and departed to Mecca never to return.

Before leaving, Cheruman Perumal put his kingdom in order, it is

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not 105
wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. 564
Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always 576
praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya 291
factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of 104
the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and 105
of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their 564
mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. 614
Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and [611]
through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in [428]
matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in [613]
principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, mar- [588]
riage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in [591]
the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. [611]
They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and [613]
patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden [582]
days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his
caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons 105
were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devo- 564
tees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as [588]
sambandham to which we shall revert in a moment. They were main- [463]
tained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a [582]
meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by [428]

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 564 581 428 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam* property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger sons.

105 564 ●611 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are [992] passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 564 [58] Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 564 588 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: ". . . and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas
Thandans

*595 [114] With the Thandans and the Tiyas (Tiyyas) of north Cochin, there were happily none of these difficulties, and I was able to study them at my ease. On the 23rd of July, 1939, I paid my first visit to Kerala when I drove to Palghat from Ootacamund in the Nilgiris and went to a Tiya house in Lakkidi in Walluvanad with an interpreter. The Tiyas we met that day were two men, brothers, who shared a wife. When we entered the yard of their broken-down palm leaf house, she was sitting bare-breasted, suckling a little boy whom she told us was hers. The two men, whose names I did not ascertain, told us that they followed [611] *marumakkathayam*, which was surprising. In those days, I knew too little about Kerala to ask them if they came from north Malabar, as they probably did. But I have since heard from a blacksmith family which I visited at the same place on the 12th of November 1949, that they had indeed come from north Malabar, and that this was the reason why they were matrilineal. Their polyandry, on the other hand, was correlated with the economic plight in which they found themselves, and they had taken to it because it was the customary way to solve such difficulties with their fellows of the same caste in the south. They had no property and told us that they worked as paid labourers. For the house, they [420] paid four annas a year to a local Brahmin landlord. They said, nevertheless, that polyandry was dying out and that the Nayars, for instance, did not practise it any longer. Theirs was obviously a sporadic instance of a matrilineal Tiya family from north Malabar in which the wife was being shared by two brothers in a south Malabar taluk, where fraternal polyandry prevails. It would be unwise to make any generalizations from this as it was, I think, quite an exceptional and probably isolated case.

On the 25th and 26th of October 1949, together with my interpreters, I visited a large Thandan household, about two miles east of Ottappalam. The family living there were called Appayl Watakkeh, and they [351] belonged to the Appayl *tarawad*. The buildings in the compound consisted of one large mansion with a courtyard in front, at the end of which was a smaller house. Cattle and some dogs roamed about in the courtyard, where paddy was also drying. In the background, the green [342] plantain, papaya and areca nut palms, contrasted sharply with the red soil and the laterite stones from which the houses were built, and the soaring trunks of tall coconut trees stood out, here and there.

*595 [115] We met the *karanavan*, called Raman, a man of forty eight, wearing only a piece of cotton from the waist down. He was wrinkled and partly bald, but very amiable and helpful when it came to questioning him. [551] On the first day, we spoke in general terms to him about the Thandan

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

*595 the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to
564 Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In con-
[361] trast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather
[342] miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs
[241] about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now
[231] also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

*595 We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged
[601] fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by
[574] us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the
[611] Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected,
[614] and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom
*595 they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple
427 *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-
293 mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work"
[464] (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and
*595 they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of
[326] goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given
[436] this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached Rs. 77?

[601] Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅛ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) =
[804] 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅛ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

of the group with B; they are the claims A has upon *a* and her children being expressed by A's children. It is these claims of the brothers and sisters upon each other which are the fundamental principle Dumont has detected as the common background in South Indian kinship. I am concerned neither with debunking the role of the "alliance" nor with defending the "principle of the unity of siblings," but merely with examining this idea of the "transfer of affinity" from generation to generation. Notice, however, that this formulation permits us to understand the formal customary background of a sister's daughter marriage mentioned in connection with the Brahman. That type of marriage is simply a tightening of the claims in accordance with the emphasis on endogamy and hypergamy in the Brahman caste. A description of the claims between brothers and sisters explains what appears to be a curious phenomenon much more adequately than Dumont's recourse to the "inheritance" of affinity.

To return to general issues: Dumont must be given credit for having detected the uniformity in some fundamental features of South Indian kinship systems, but he has expressed the matter still in lineal terms as an opposition between "kin" and "affines." I suggest that uniformity is better explained in terms of kin categories and the fundamental claims of the brothers and sisters upon each other. This is the reason why we find a centripetal tendency so clearly at work in South India. Smaller and smaller circles of endogamy form purer and purer circles of kin who may be permitted to claim—at least in their own minds—higher ritual status. This also explains the curious aversion, even among the humblest caste, against "mixtures" in their pedigrees.

Our formulation of South Indian kinship draws attention to the shifting character of descent. On the basis of a very similar kin structure, different groups operate various descent preferences: even within the same caste we find some who choose patrilineal descent and some who choose matrilineal descent as distinctive characteristics. It should be clear that the important kin groups are the circles—*curru*—noted by Karve, Banks ("sondakara castes"), and others. Descent is sometimes so secondary that, as Dumont observes, succession and inheritance run counter to descent ideas in numerous castes (1957*b*, p. 20). I would suggest that we have in these low castes a Kandyan preference based on endogamy and bilateral kinship. We shall see, when we turn toward the Malabar coast, that with the development of matrilineal descent, hypergamy again makes its unmistakable appearance.

THE MALABAR COAST

In our consideration of South Indian kinship systems we have been concerned, first, to detect an underlying pattern for the bewilderingly

K 121 564 611

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many authors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hypergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by contrast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy. Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region exhibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from structural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people. Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad,* used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan.*[7]

[7] "One who 'acts' ": comp. *Karanava,* "to do" in Sinhalese.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other"
[611] (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely diminution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere
[613] also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH TIYYAR

The organization of kinship among the Tiyyar is so similar to the Nayar castes that an extended discussion is unnecessary. Gough observes a difference of degree in the question of the locality of marriage: whereas Nayar men may return to the lands of their MB and marry there, the Tiyyar tend to be grouped together in patrilocal clusters, except that there are some among them who also return to live with their MB (1961, p. 409). These slight differences are unlikely to be of great significance, for the reader should recall that many of these marriages take place in the same village or area, that in this region houses and huts are easy to build and that Nayar men tend to build houses for their wives and children as well. 121 591 60 [564] [114]

In Gough's writings the similarity of the kin structure between the Tiyyar and the Sinhalese is particularly evident. The claims of the cross-cousins upon each other, the categorical Dravidian terminology, the nature of the marriage tie, and the various details of custom clearly indicate that we are dealing with the same cultural idiom. 60 171

The claims of the MB and FZ are manifested in *rites de passage*. In the *tali* ceremony (which is the well-known prepuberty rite in this area) both these persons appear, and the FZ (or MB wife) ties the *tali* as a "potential mother-in-law" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 58). 604 588

The role of the cross-cousins is perhaps more revealing. "The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband . . . must be met at the . . . marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack . . . He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 59).[8] This symbolic statement is identical to the Sinhalese, where the cross-cousin stops the bridal couple at the gate and demands his rights. He is given one hundred betel leaves and the couple moves on. 605 582 585 [171]

The Tiyyar of Cochin

It is intriguing to study the kin structure of the Tiyyar caste South Malabar and Cochin—the same term as in North Malabar—which 564 611 591

[8] There is an interesting contradiction in Gough's materal: though she writes of the similarity of the Nayar and the Tiyyar, she notes that with the Tiyyar the MBS (i.e., FZD) is the correct marriage partner (1955*a*, p. 57), whereas with the Nayar the FZS (i.e., MBD) is considered the rightful claimant (1961, p. 398). In view of Dumont's discussion, it would be interesting to know whether significant preferences are involved. Gough does not pursue the matter, but given the contradictions involved in patrilateral cross-cousin marriage (e.g., it cannot be combined with hypergamy rules) it is likely that Gough is merely using a shorthand formula for symmetrical cross-cousin marriage. [114]

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61). 121 602

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough. 602 613 114

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin." 602 614 114 [582]

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific. 602 611 [582]

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy. 121 564 582 613

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent. [114] [184]

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

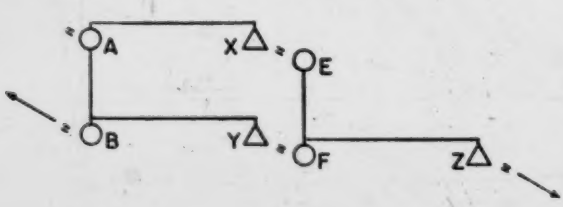

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore. actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

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121 they were landless orphans. If he bought land, built a house and settled there
564 with his sister, bringing up her children, he would gain social status. He said
613 he knew of many a poor labourer serving in the mill, saving money to establish a Tharvad in his sister's name and become "somebody" in his caste. (Karve, 1953, p. 267)

The problem of finding suitable husbands for the women of aristocratic matrilineal Tharvads has been solved by the Nambudiri Brahman connection in Cochin. The situation is not very different with North Malabar aristocrats. We are told that the Kolattiri lineage had difficulty in getting accepted as of high status among the ancient "Kshatriya" lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad, so the Kolattiri Rajas brought a caste called Koil Tamburan from Travancore. "Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambudiri men and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 56).

Karve with her usual insight and evocative examples puts the issue simply (1953, pp. 258–259): "The Kshatriyas claim descent from the sun-family of the ancient Hindu Kshatriyas of the north—the house of Rama. All the sons born in Kshatriya families, i.e., ruling houses of Travancore and Cochin have Sanskrit names of the Sun-god with the suffix varmā . . . We have already seen that in olden times as a rule and even now generally the Kshatriya women have Nambudiri Brahmins as husbands. . . . There is a village near Cochin belonging to a rich Nayar Thārvad . . . which is called the 'village of evening visits of the Nambudris.' " And this accurate and colorful picture is rounded up with the direct statement, "Among poorer Nayars cross-cousin marriage is favoured."

Other Evidence from Malabar

121 We have considered the evidence from Malabar from the point of
611 view of other South Indian systems and have, I believe, been able to establish both the principles of the general structure and the association of systems of hypergamy with unilineal descent. A further point to note is that systems of descent, at least in this region, could be considered as a secondary feature to a large extent independent of the specific forms of kinship and marriage. Very similar groups appear to follow different forms of descent in various regions. We should
[171] recall that even the Sinhalese, who are regarded as being "patrilineal" by many authors today, followed "matrilineal" descent at least among the royal family in the seventeenth century. And conversely one author has noted that in some parts of Kerala "the Nairs also follow the father right social system" (D'Souza, 1959, p. 493).

[564] There is a vast body of literature, especially in connection with

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads,* several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

565 Nayar subjects within the kingdom. Between
613 kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and
631 would not intermarry: though exogamous, therefore, each lineage considered itself to form a separate and unique [13] subcaste. The Cochin lineage, being more ancient than the rest, claimed the ritual rank of Kshattriyas (the second of the four varnas or major caste-groups of ancient North India Vedic Society, in ancient times kings and warriors.) The Walluvanad and Calicut lineages, of more recent Nayar origin, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas, but were accorded the title of Samantans, a
[643] Sanskrit word meaning "leaders." In each royal lineage, the oldest man of the whole lineage, irrespective of branch, was the crowned king and administered traditional secular rule with assistance from advisers of wealthy Nambudiri families of the kingdom, some of whom were employed as ambassadors.

Each kingdom was divided into nads or chiefdoms. In the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, some of these nads were former independent kingdoms which had been conquered by Calicut but were still ruled by their traditional monarchs who paid tribute to Calicut. These nads included Parappanad, Beypore and Chavakkad, each of whose rulers, though feudatory, claimed and were accorded higher ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage by reason of their more ancient tradition of government. Other nads of the Calicut kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (naduvaris) originally appointed by the Zamorin. [14] These ruled with

565 similar powers to those of the feudatory mon-
613 archs, but, though they were accorded the title
631 of Samantans, were considered of lower ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage. Similarly, some nads of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory kings of higher ritual rank than, but administratively subordinate to, the royal lineage, and others by lower ranking Samantan chiefs appointed by the king. Within each kingdom, the Samantan chiefs' lineages formed a single subcaste.

565 Each nad was in turn divided into villages or
621 desams, the basic units of the political system.
423 A desam appears usually to have covered from one to four square miles, comprising one or more stretches of dry garden land surrounded by, or surrounding, flats of alluvial paddy land. The land in each desam was owned by one landlord family of superior ritual rank to the other occupants of the villages. In some villages, the land was owned by a single Nambudiri partilineal extended family whose large house stood in a central position in the village. In others, it was owned by one or other branch of the royal matrilineage which had built a small palace in the village and whose eldest male member acted as a village headman. In other villages, the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineal lineage of the nad, whether this [15] were of feudatory rank of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live in a small palace in the centre of the village and fulfill the role of headman. In other villages, the land was owned by some famous Hindu temple of the kingdom, often

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord. [994] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired [427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
744 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, hav
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold orna-
[583] ments or other objects of ostentation. Among the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

596 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
[595] might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then droppe to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
[597] many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

613 In the royal lineages, since each lineage,
582 though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate
837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, royal women had liaisons only with [37] Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 when they had established themselves as of high
582 ritual rank, and when some of their vassal lin-
837 eages had died out, the Zamorins too looked only to Nambudiri for genitors. Royal men similarly had liaisons with women of the lower matrilineal subcastes, as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms.

582 Among temples servants, retainer-Nayars
837 and middle class Nayars, the majority of unions took place between individuals of the same subcaste. A small proportion of retainer and middle class Nayar women had liaisons with Nambudiris of the lower subcastes, Embrandiri Brahman priests (who followed the same descent system as Nambudiris) or with royal, chiefly, village headmen or temple servant men. In the Nayar village headmen's lineages, a larger proportion of women had liaisons with men of the chiefly or royal lineages, or with Nambudiris; and in the chiefs' lineages, with royal or Nambudiri men, though in these subcastes too, individuals of the same subcaste but different lineages might have unions with each other. Similarly, a small [38] proportion of men in each Nayar subcaste, down to re tainers, had liaisons with Nayar women of a lower subcaste, down to the rank of middle class Nayars. Chart I shows the mutual ritual ranking and the direction of hypergamous unions between the higher castes of the kingdom. In the temple servant castes, whose occupational allegiance was exclusively with Nambudiris, women had liaisons either with Nambudiris or with men of their own caste. There was no intermarriage either way between temple

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village headmen, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

582 Hypergamous unions, even more than other
613 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
837 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate in his natal household and was maintained by it; he visited his mistress after supper and left before breakfast, after which he took a purifying bath before re-entering his natal house. He might not eat in his mistress's household, and following the morning bath might not touch her or his children. The only exception to these
[644] residential rules arose in the case of Nambudiris who had liaisons with royal women. These were received as temporary occupants of the palace and housed in separate buildings at the expense of the royal lineage, at some distance from the buildings occupied by the princes and the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri genitors of Nayar children, however, they [39] visited their mistresses at night and in the daytime carried out their ritual duties in private, attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serving men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
571 knit together the several castes concerned with the secular administration and with the religious law and public rituals of the state. Though not recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly members of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

613 lineages still take pride in the fact that for cen-
837 turies, their lineages have been partly fathered
571 by men of the higher castes of royalty, chiefs, and (particularly) priests. The allegiance of Nayar soldiers to their headmen, of headmen to their chiefs, and of chiefs to the king, was undoubtedly strengthened by this network of sexual ties, as was the unity of the secular and religious hierarchies, which might otherwise have been opposed.

613 IV The Traditional Lineage System of the Nayars

(1) Structure and Functions

[621] In each traditional village, four to six "military" Nayar lineages of one subcaste was present as retainers of the janmi. The retainer lineage commonly had a depth of nine to twelve generations and usually comprised between 12 to 100 members. It was called a taravad, derived from tara, the word for the raised foundation on which a house is built. Taravad can mean both the members of a lineage, living and dead, and the ancestral house from which they sprang: it corresponds to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and place. The members of a taravad are a group, usually of actual and not merely putative matrilineal kin, descended from a common ancestress (whose name may or may not be known), but they describe themselves as a group whose matrilineal forbears once lived in one house. That their lineage should be associated with the house befits the sedentary economy of the Nayars and the importance of their ancestral land. Powerful

613 Powerful emotional ties bind a Nayar to his ancestral [342] land and to his house, which is large and beautifully constructed of whitewashed laterite, carved wooden pillars and a tiled roof. The lineage-names of retainer-Nayars are the names of original ancestral sites in the village, e.g., Kirakkutt Velappil ("Eastern Garden"). Desavari lineages take the name of their desam, chiefly lineages of their nad, and royal lineages of their kingdom. The knowledge that their matrilineal forbears once jointly owned a house and land holds lineage-members together.

[361] Except in unusual circumstances (i.e., if it is dying out) a lineage comprises several households, traditionally congregated in separate gardens some distance apart on a stretch of dry land 613 in the village. Today with the vast increase in 596 population during British rule, a lineage may comprise up to 20 or more households; traditionally, it seems usually to have contained about four to ten. Each of these households comprised a segment of the lineage, [41] usually, a group of siblings together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. The household was also the unit whose members jointly owned ancestral garden land, kanam rice lands and movable property: I call it a property-group. The lineage as a whole (unless it were dying out and comprised only one property-group) owned no property in common and its members had no economic cooperation as a group.

613 The lineage was exogamous, and matrilineal kinship terms were extended throughout its

613 range. The rule of exogamy, and the sense of close kinship which bound members of a lineage meant that the local subcaste group of the kara (whether this comprised one or more lineages) was divided into a small number of compact groups. At assemblies the members separated out into lineage groupings. Only the legal heads (karanavans) of property-groups attended such assemblies, and within each lineage these tended to defer to each other on the basis of age, spokesmanship being left to the eldest man(also sometimes called a karanavan) of the lineage as a whole.

613 681 Though it owned no property in common, the lineage was in some contexts a corporate group in the sense of having legal responsibility for its members' acts. If some member of a lineage broke a caste law, for example by dining or fornicating with a low caste person or failing to pay dues to the temple, his whole lineage was temporarily ostracized by the assembly until it called him to book. [42] His property-group must then pay a fine (prayaschittam) to the assembly and he must go through a rite of purification before his lineage could be readmitted to caste. In cases of grave offence such as fornication with a Paraya woman, his lineage was during British rule ostracized until he had been excommunicated from lineage and caste and his funeral rites performed; during native rule until he had been executed by order of the chief of the king.

613 628 In other ways, the lineage held itself responsible for disputes entered into by its members.

613 Even in the last 50 years, quarrels between men
628 of different lineages, usually over field-boundaries or women, have resulted in prolonged hostility, sometimes with fighting, between their lineages. In South Malabar and Cochin, such hostility between individual lineages could not take the form of actual blood-feuds (kudipaga) such as were known in the politically less centralized area of North Malabar. These were prevented by the strong organization of the village assembly, the power of desavari and naduvari, and the existence of the royal court. Fighting between groups of men of different lineages, as between groups of men of adjacent villages owing allegiance to different and sometimes mutually hostile desavaris, was soon stopped by the appropriate local authority - the desavari in the first case and the naduvari in the second. If however a Nayar were slain by a man of another lineage, his matrilineal kinsmen had the right sanctioned by the king to place his body in the [43] house or the outhouse of his slayer and burn house and coprse together. His lineage might then, after paying a fee to the naduvari, select one of their number to fight a duel to the death with a chosen man of the slayer's lineage in order to avenge the murder. The lineage was thus a corporate group in contexts involving murder and offences against the religious laws of the caste, though the property-group was the corporate group in contexts involving disputes over property.

613 The individual lineage was linked to its local
602 subcastes assembly by the institution of enangar.
621

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

581 perpetuate their lineage. Shortly before or after
613 puberty, they might, following this ceremony,
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons
621 (called sambandham - "joining together") with
581 one or more men of their own or an appropriate
613 higher subcaste, including, if they wished, the
man who had tied the tali. These men visited
them in their natal houses at night. Similarly a
Nayar man, (whether or not he had ever perform
ed a tali-rite) might enter into relationships
with any number of women of his own or an
appropriate lower subcaste. These marital
customs are further discussed below: here it
is relevant to point only to the role of the enan-
gar bridegroom. Since the enangar stand to the
lineage as formal representatives of the local
subcaste group, it seems appropriate to inter-
pret the tali-rite as a ceremony at which the [46]
subcaste group as a whole "married" the imma-
ture girls of the lineage as a whole, and ritually
set free their procreative powers for the per-
petuation of their lineage. It was also signifi-
cant in that it appears that in general among the
Nayars, enangar relationships between lineages
(i.e., hereditary intergroup relationships) ful-
filled the functions of integrating the total local
community which in many unilineal systems
(e.g., the patrilineal system of the lower castes)
are fulfilled by interpersonal cognatic and affin-
al ties. This was possible, and necessary, be-
cause the marital tie was so weak among Nayars
that all the interpersonal kinship ties between
individuals of different lineages were also in-
sufficiently stable to carry these functions of
ritual and other social cooperation.

000 ritual and other social cooperation.

613 983 (2) Ritual Cooperation in the Lineage

In addition to the joint performance of the pre-puberty marriage rite, members of a lineage were united in ritual observances at a birth or death. On each of these occasions, all members fell for fourteen days into a condition of ritual pollution (pula) in which they might not touch, eat with, or enter into the houses of other members of their caste, enter the public temples or bathing pools of the village, enter their own ancestor shrines, sacred snake groves or other sacred places of their lineage, or take part in everyday social life. This period of ritual pollution resembled one of temporary excommunication from caste, the only difference being that those ostracized were regarded by others with special friendliness rather than hostility. It effectively set apart the lineage as a solidary group at times of crisis in its history, and gave recognition to their joint concern with increase or decrease in their membership.

613 794 Lineage members were also united in worship of the lineage goddess or dharma devi ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, is a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi, and in this context was probably though of as a primeval ancestress of the lineage, though I lack data definitely to indicate this. Her idol was housed in a small shrine in the precincts of the oldest ancestral house, or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of

613 794 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a pre-puberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 608 621 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage

Since lineages were usually groups of actual and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own subcaste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

1 [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess --- Analyst]

613 by the local janmi, was formally accepted into
608 the Nayar assembly of its new area, and was
621 accorded enangar relations with some of the lineages already present. If the incoming segment was small, it was customary for it to ally itself with one or other established lineages for the performance of the first tali-rite. This set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the new segment and the old lineage, which must henceforth observe exogamy. Such fictitious matrilineal kinship, while serving to keep stable the size and number of exogamous groups in the village, was relevant only to intergroup relations in the microcosmic political life of [49] the village and not to matters which concerned only lineage members and had to do with their interpersonal family life. Thus, death and birth pollutions were not extended to include the incoming segment, which for several generations observed these in common with other segments of its parent-lineage, and with them also continued to worship the lineage goddess in their ancestral village. After some generations, however, the old matrilineal ties were forgotten or (if distance from the parent lineage was great) deliberately sundered, until in time even the rule of exogamy might unwittingly be broken and a division of the original lineage finally completed. If it had increased in numbers the new segment became a complete lineage in its own right; if not, it might gradually come to be regarded as a "real" genealogical branch of its host lineage in the new village.

Even within one village, a lineage might

613 become so large that over many generations
608 members of distant segments forgot that they
621 were matrilineal kin, ceased to observe joint pollution, and finally broke the rule of exogamy. One case of this came to my notice in the Cochin village I studied. A man and woman of two lineages which were not enangar, and for some reason unknown to my informants, had never been known to intermarry, entered into a liaison. Certain elders of the village then began to look into the history of the two lineages and to wonder whether long ago, they might have been matrilineal kin or putative matrilineal kin by joint performance of the [50] tali-rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to younger members of the village, however, the liaison continued and thus what was probably an ancient tie of lineage exogamy was tacitly broken.

[597] Cases of extinction of a lineage were rare, since if one property group were without women in any generation it was customary to adopt one or more girls from collateral property groups of the same lineage and thus continue to perpetuate all the property-groups. In rare cases of the extinction of a lineage, its jenmam lands eschested to the king for reallocation to another lineage, and its kanam lands to the janmi. Today, the property of a group with no women is divided equally between surviving male members and inherited after their deaths by their wives and children.

613 (4) Succession and Segmentation in the Lineage
187 Among retainer Nayars whose lineages owned

613 no political office, the role of oldest man of the
881 lineage was unimportant. His voice was heard respectfully in the village assembly, he might be regarded as an authority on traditional custom, and he was accorded special respect as an arbitrator in village disputes. He had, however, no sanctioned authority within the lineage and could be set politely aside by the heads of its other property-groups in crucial matters affecting joint action by the group. Overall headship in the lineage became important only for desavaris, chiefs and royalty where political office was vested in the oldest man, [51] irrespective of branch. Even here, however, authority inhered chiefly in the political office and could be exercised (in a political sense) only over members of lower subcastes and (in a kinship sense) over members of the office-bearer's own property-group. A king, chief or village headman had no rights to interfere in the management of other property-groups of his own lineage, each of which had its separate karanavan as legal guardian of its members. Indeed in the case of most royal and chiefly lineages, the senior office-bearer had no rights to management even in the property-group into which he was born: he was set apart on a separate landed estate and headship of his property-group passed to the next younger man. The dimension of authority, like that of economic cooperation, was therefore absent from the lineage and inhered instead in the hierarchy of political offices on the one hand, and in individual property-groups on the other.

613 Within each lineage, even today when it may

6.13 comprise ten to twenty property-groups, exact genealogical relationships, and the order of segmentation of the several branches, are usually though not invariably known by elders. Members of very distantly related segments of the same lineage may however gradually cease to use kinship terms for each other and in any case tend to feel less strong emotional ties for each other than do members of more recently partitioned segments. These are of course closest [52] between property groups which have recently partitioned, those whose recent ancestresses were all born in one house. The order of segmentation of the lineage is also recognized in that should a property-group be allowed to die out, its property customarily reverts in equal shares to segments of the same order as itself - those which formed one unit with it before the most recent partition - rather than to the lineage as a whole.

But in other ways, the order of segmentation in a lineage is unimportant for the structuring of social relations. Segments intermediate between the property-group and the lineage have no special property, activities or ceremonies, and no headmen, and their members never meet to the exclusion of other lineage members. Neither do whole intermediate segments oppose
[627] each other in quarrels between their individual members. These remain restricted to the property-groups of the disputants and are normally settled voluntarily through appeal to some popular arbitrator of the village or, if they become serious, are forcibly settled by intervention of the assembly.

613 the assembly.

Though the order of segmentation is known in the taravad and is relevant to reversion of property, to the emotional strength of matrilineal ties, and to ultimate division of the group into new exogamous taravads, the Nayars cannot therefore be said to have a lineage in the strict British sense of a system in which "minimal groups of unilineal kin combine into larger groups in contrast to [53] other groups of like nature which in turn combine until a maximal lineage or clan is formed as a capstone to the whole structure." (4) However, since it does not appear certain that matrilineal lineages of this type exist anywhere, yet since the term "matrilineage" is in current use to describe corporate groups of a matrilineal society in which the order of segmentation is known, I use this word to describe corporate groups of a matrilineal society in which the order of segmentation is known, I use this word to describe the taravad.

421 V The Traditional Kinship System

(1) The Property-Group

(a) The Corporate Character of the Group

A traditional property-group was a small segment of the lineage, usually comprising a group of brothers and sisters by the same mother, and the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint property-owning unit: its members, male and female, were from birth equal copartners in the buildings, gardens, kanam and janmam lands, movables, ritual objects and serfs owned by the group. The group

592 from sight behind a pillar, holding his hand be-
602 fore his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. [69] With younger mother's brothers more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's etiquette is necessarily relaxed, but he observes the greatest possible formal respect before them. A similar etiquette is preserved before older brothers and classificatory brothers: after puberty these never joke, sit or chew betal and areca nuts together. A junior man never sits before his senior except at mealtimes when all men may sit in the dining hall in order of age, served by women of the group who eat later in company in the kitchen. In general, age overrides generation and also segment in the formal structuring of relationships between men of a property-group: mother's mother's brother is accorded the same etiquette as mother's brother, and classificatory older brother as older brother. Emotionally, however, there tends to be less acrimony and more tenderness, as might be expected, between alternate than between proximal generations; there is also a strong tendency for own siblings to support each other against classificatory sib-
613 lings. This is part of the process of clear-cut
593 segmentation in the lineage along lines descending through sisters: it culminates regularly in quarrels between classificatory brothers and division of property between the segments. This process of segmentation throughout the whole lineage derives from the paramount strength of the mother-child bond, the key-pin of the kinship system. For both men and women,

613 no other personal relationship can override this:
573 both sexes have their permanent home with the mother throughout her life and accord her unfailing [70] reverence and affection. From this bond issues the unity of the sibling group, (9) particularly the strong tie between brother and sister which emotionally reflects the dependence of men on their mothers. With the elder sister as with the mother a man has an intimate relationship of reverence mingled with easy familiarity: the two may sit together and discuss affairs of their kin-group, and the sister early accords her brother the right to discipline her children. With her elder brother, as with her maternal uncle, after her puberty, a woman must maintain a formal etiquette of partial avoidance: she may not sit before him speak to him unasked, or be alone in a room or a house with him. Only if she gravely offends against traditional morality, he may traditionally beat her even after puberty, for a Nayar woman owes the same obedience to all older matrilineal kinsmen as a collectivity as does a woman of the patrilineal castes to her father and later her
[684] husband. Incest with the younger sister or classificatory sister or sister's daughter is a most heinous crime, formerly punishable by death, and in modern times by total ostracism by the caste and lineage. It does however occasionally take place and is evidently recognized as a temptation under matrilocal residence, hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.
572 In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the

584 outside on the verandah before he comes to visit
595 her.

These statements however again require some modification in the case of hypergamous unions. In recent years at all events, a powerful Nambudiri or royal landowner might occasionally force his attentions on a Nayar woman, whose family would be unlikely to oppose him. In two cases I even heard of Nambudiris who had succeeded in carrying on a liaison with a dead Nayar wife's younger sister, though this is contrary to Nayar rules of mating and led to unhappiness and strong covert [77] disapproval among the woman's kinsmen. In general, however, the traditional picture of Nayar marriage is one in which women voluntarily seek the favours of men: rape, for example, is a crime
[684] apparently unheard of among them. Certainly, cases are recorded of the dismissal of a higher caste man by a Nayar woman.

613 Combined polyandrous and polygynous mating
595 had a function in maintaining the unity of the
592 lineage. It seems that in every matrilineal system one basic conflict is inherent, namely the conflict between a man's ties to his natal kin on the one hand and to his kin by marriage and procreation on the other. In the Nayar system in this area, the conflict was resolved by almost completely eliminating the claims of the father and his kin. Polyandry and polygyny, combined, minimized the rights of the husband and father, and dispersed their roles between a number of men. This preserved the unity of the lineage, by preventing the close attachment of men to

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated with-
out religious rites) underlined the necessity to
the lineage of marriage and procreation, and
the exclusion of the individual husband and fath-
er from a legally and socially significant role
in relation to it.

594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary
to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an
economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them.
This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in
the world, was evidently made possible by their
specialized role as one caste group in a larger
society in which, in general, marriage and the
elementary family were institutionalized. First,
the Nayar system could probably not have come
about in any but a leisure class supported by
the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of
this, young Nayar men need give economic [78]
support neither to their wives nor to their sis-
ters. Women were the people who sat at home
on the land; their maintenance was assured by
the payment of rents from low caste tenants
and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to
have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
585 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied
men for their occupation as a mobile militia.
In explaining their peculiar marriage relation-
ships, I am inclined to emphasize the military
organization even more than the status of Nayars

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that the were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 644 423 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages

We saw that the traditional property-group of retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every [427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

613 longer periods.
644 In all the royal and chiefly lineages, political
423 office was normally held by the eldest member irrespective of branch. In several of these lineages, however, including Calicult, Walluvanad and Kolattiri, there existed also separate office subordinate to that of the kind. In Calicut, the five oldest men of the Zamorin's lineage, irrespective of branch, held five offices or sthanams (occupant = sthani), each with a landed estate, separately from the lands jointly owned by each property-group of the lineage. The eldest sthani was the Zamorin who ruled at Calicut. The second was called Eralpad: he was the naduvari of Ernad, the oldest of the Zamorin's nads from which his forbears originally sprang. To prevent rivalry with the [89] king, the second sthani was forbidden during his tenure of office to cross over into the Calicut nad until the Zamorin died and he was summoned to perform the funeral rites and receive the crown. The third sthani, the Munalpac, was commander-in-chief of the Zamorin's army: his estate was in Calicut but he travelled throughout the kingdom. The two youngest sthanis held no political office but lived as desavaris or independent landlords in separate villages of the kingdom. When the Zamorin or any of the other sthanis died, those below him in rank moved up one place, and the next eldest man was appointed as the fifth sthani.

From the 14th century until 1792, the Zamorin's lineage was able to cohere as a single property-group without partition between its

613 segments lifted out of their group on to separat
644 estates. The jointly owned land of the royal lin
423 eage, in Ernaq, was managed by the sixth man
karanavan after the fashion of an ordinary Na-
[101] yar property-group. As among Nayars, young-
er men of the lineage were trained as soldiers
and fought in the Raja's wars.

However, it also happened that during these centuries, the Zamorin's lineage did not greatl increase in numbers. Indeed, in the 18th century it was obliged to save itself from extinction by adopting three girls from the royal lineage o Nileswaram in South Canara, north of Kerala. In 1792, the Zamorin was conquered by the British and, along with other rulers of what becam Malabar District, retired from political office as the head of a large landowning lineage. The British to compensate the royal lineages gave them political pensions, payable in cash sums annually to each male and female. Shortly afterwards, the Zamorin's [90] lineage began to increase in size, and by the mid-nineteenth century had partitioned into three property-groups, Pudiya (New) Tavari which lives in a village in the modern Calicut division of Malabar District, Padinyare (West) Tavari, also in Calicut, and Kirakke (East) Tavari in Ernad Division. Pudiya Tavari has this century partitioned into three new property-groups. The extensive lands of each group are managed by their separate karanavans. The five sthanams with their landed estates are still occupied by the five eldest members of the lineage, who in addition receive their political pensions independently of the rest

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

613 is a recent practice which grew out of the de-
644 mands for separate payments of those princes
423 who had left the palace to find modern work outside. Until about ten years ago, the karanavan completely controlled the group's finances and paid maintenance in kind to its members, even to toilet requisites such as oil for bathing and ash for cleaning the teeth. Since they began to receive allowances in cash, several princes have acquired private land and built small house for their wives and children, where a very few of them now live and eat, despite caste rules against interdining with lower caste kinsfolk. In addition some princes now work in government service or in one of the coast towns or in one of the large cities of India. They return to the palace only for vacations and ceremonies. The lands of the major royal property-groups of Malabar are at present declared impartible by law, but there is dissatisfaction with this law among their younger members. Individual partition of property, in accordance with the new Nayar inheritance laws to be explained below, is expected to take place in most palaces within the next few years, and has already been applied for in some. The royal lineages are in fact now breaking down in precisely the same manner as are retainer Nayar taravads.

It is clear, however, that royal property-groups were traditionally able to comprise more segments and cohere for longer periods than could retainer groups. The differences in structure which made this possible were: 1) the landed estates which were large enough to [93]

613 support many members and, together with the
644 political office, had a sentimental value for
423 them; 2) sthanams, which lifted the five oldest men out of the factionalism of their property-groups; 3) the spacious construction of palaces with privacy for each woman and her descendants, each adult man, and each visiting Nambudiri husband; 4) the very rigid rules of etiquette and avoidance which discouraged quarrels between men and incest between men and women; 5) the ability of the palace to employ separate servants for each adult; and 6) the peculiar residence-arrangements in royal and a few chiefly lineages, which, together with the universal practice of hypergamy, gave the property-group some of the features of a matriclan (14) and enabled it to live for generations on the same site. The existence of Nambudiri Brahmans as a leisure class of ritual specialists, many of whom were free to leave their own estates and live as drones (or "as breeding bulls", as one Calicut prince remarked) in the palaces, was crucial to this, as was the ability of the royal lineage, because of the concentration of wealth and political power in its hands, to maintain a horde of retainer lineages at its doorstep to provide mistresses for the princes and a bodyguard for the king.

613 In spite of these special devices, royal and
644 chiefly lineages did, even traditionally, divide into separate property-groups when their numbers became unwieldy. Unfortunately I lack genealogies to show whether, as in retainer lineages, this regularly occurred at a particular

613 point in their development. There is plenty of
644 historical evidence, however, to show that they did so. In many cases, especially of the smaller Rajas and the chiefs, the kingdom or chiefdom was also divided between the segments at some point after their own private estates had been partioned.

613 [94] Reference to Map 7 helps to clarify this
644 statement. Nads I and II (Kolattunad and Arik-
631 kal) were once united under the Kolattiri Rajas, but nad II early broke away as a small independent chiefdom ruled by a segment of the lineage which had been converted to Islam by the Arabs. Nad I, which remained the kingdom of Kolattiri, was subdivided into smaller nads ruled by Samantan naduvaris. There are today several lineages of these, but Innes reports that they have all split off from one of two original lineages. Nad II was similarly ruled by a high class Nayar chieftain lineage (14) which at various times was feudatory to Kolattiri. This lineage divided into several branches each of which took as portion of the nad and ruled it independently. Nad IV was also once ruled by a single naduvari lineage as one property-group (Mithangath Kovilagath Thottoli), as feudatory of Kolattiri. In 1766, the group partitioned its properties between its five segments, but retained the office of naduvari, and also a second athanam, for the first and second male of the whole lineage.

The Kurumbranad Rajas, (nad X), like the Kolattiri Rajas, are said to be one of the oldest ruling families of Kerala and to have received their nad from the last of the Perumals. The

1/1 [See p. 105, category 116 -- Analyst]

613 The area ruled by the Kurumbranad Rajas is
644 thought to have once extended as far south as
631 nad XI, where it bordered on the Zamorin's territory, and as far north as nads IV and VI. Nad IX was formerly ruled by the Rajas of Kollam, who are thought to have been an independent segment of the Kurumbranad family. The Kollam Rajas were conquered and expelled by the Zamorins.

The Kottayam Rajas, who ruled nads VII and XXX, and were in possession of nad XI for a short time before the British took over, are said by some informants to have once formed one lineage with the Kurumbranad Rajas, (with whom Innes too reports that they were "closely related".) This is likely, since the two lineages acknowledge each other to be Kshattriyas, but will not intermarry. Innes also reports that nad XXX (a mountainous, sparsely populated area) was conquered by Kottayam and Kurumbranad together and later divided between them. Before the British came, the Kottayam lineage redivided and one property-group, Parassi, became independent chieftains over part of nad VI. When the Muslims invaded from Mysore the main branch of the Kottayam family fled temporarily to Travancore and in their absence Parassi became rulers of nads VI and XXX. They later opposed the British settlement of Malabar and were therefore deposed and not given a pension. Parassi and Kottayam (who returned) are still independent lineages but do not yet intermarry. The Payyormala Nayar chieftains of nad VIII who ruled as feudatories

613 of Kurumbranad, were also once one lineage,
644 which divided its rule and its lands between
631 three segments. This nad, like nads X and XI was for a short time conquered by the Zamorin, and its rulers, along with the Kurumbranad Rajas, became his feudatories.

The Kadattunad Rajas of nad VII are not one of the oldest lineages of Kerala and are not a segment of one of the neighbouring lineages. Krishna Iyer reports (15) that [96] Kadattunad was once a branch of the Porlattiri royal lineage which once ruled nad XII. The Porlattiri lineage was the first to be dispossessed by the Zamorin and its members are said to have fled north and sought refuge with the Kolattiri lineage. Innes says that the Kadattunad lineage sprang from the union of a Kolattiri woman with a Porlattiri man, but our informants in North Malabar thought that Kadattunad are descended from a Kolattiri man who gave this nad to his Porlattiri wife and children, in accordance with a common North Malabar custom.

The Pulavayi Nayar chieftains of nad XIV were once independent rulers in their jungly nad, but became nominal feudatories of the Zamorin. Their lineage and rule were also divided into several branches. Nads XIII and XV were once united under the Parappu royal lineage, which divided its nad between two branches, both of which were early overrun by the Zamorin. The Beyport Rajas' lineage, which remained as a feudatory of the Zamorin and is still extant, is a branch of the Parappu lineage. Nads XXIII and XXIV were similarly once one with nad XXV

613 under the Palghat Rajas, but the Zamorin drove
644 a wedge into their territory in the 18th century
631 and took nad XXV. The other two nads were divided between two branches of the Palghat lineage.

Nad XXVIII was formerly ruled by the Chavakkad Rajas, whose lineage became a feudatory of Cochin. The lineage divided into four tavaris, which quarreled with each other for political power. One of these branches, known as the Rajas of Punnattur, finally appealed to the Zamorin for [97] support against the other three, which were supported by Cochin. The Zamorin came to their help, overran the whole nad, and made its rulers feudatory to himself.

The Vellatiri Rajas, who ruled nad XIX and formerly nads XX and XXI as the kingdom of Walluvanad, remained a small lineage and, like the Zamorins, did not partition until the British began to rule. Their numbers then increased and they are now divided into four palaces.

Since the Zamorin's lineage, which maintained its kingdom intact, was one which happened not to increase in numbers or divided its property-group over four centuries, it might be thought tempting to argue that the cohesion of each kingdom traditionally depended on the cohesion of its royal lineage.

However, we must be clear in recognizing that the cohesion and expansion of the Zamorin's kingdom, and to a lesser extent of that of Cochin, and later of Travancore, depended on factors other than the structure of their royal lineages. Chief of these factors were, it seems likely,

613 the expansion of overseas' trade with the Arabs
644 and later, the Europeans, from the twelfth to
631 the eighteenth centuries; the developments of better means of communication in the larger kingdoms of the plains, where this was not too difficult; some ammassing of wealth in the hands of rulers; and leading from this, their ability to organize larger armies which (especially after the adoption of gun-warfare) permitted them to conquer neighbouring weaker nads. The persistence of these larger units seems to have depended on the strength of their new political institutions, chiefly [98] the militia and the central courts of justice, as well as on a widening of the field of social relations of the "good" castes who controlled the administra-
613 tion. Along with this went a very slow process
644 of social mobility in the upper reaches of the
631 society. The caste system of rulers, chiefs,
565 village headmen and retainers was not entirely stationary: retainer-lineages which had distinguished themselves in war were sometimes appointed as desavaris and gradually changed their ritual rank, and it was possible for a desavari lineage to increase in wealth and be made a naduvari lineage, or for a small naduvari lineage to increase in wealth (as did the Zamorins), expand its territory, and call itself a royal lineage, claiming the rank of Kshattriyas. This process took some time, indeed; it was not until the eighteenth century that the Zamorin's lineage, after going through a ceremony in which its members passed through the body of a golden cow, were able to claim that

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable
613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

613 property-groups. These in turn scrambled for
644 the crown and in turn allied themselves with the
631 Zamorins, the Portuguese and the Travancore Rajas to help them to establish their claims. Despite periodic total conquest by one or other neighbouring ruler, however, the kingdom was never divided between its segments as were many of the smaller chiefdoms, I think because, like Calicut and Walluvanad, it had developed trade and centralized political institutions which would not permit of its reversion to smaller units. Whether, had their kingdoms grown much larger the rulers would have been obliged to abandon the matrilineal system, is a question which cannot be answered out of the data available. [100]

At all events it is clear that despite its militia and relatively centralized administration, the whole political structure of the central area, as well as the kinship system of its rulers, depended for its persistence on a relatively stationary or only very gradually changing economy which would permit the perpetuation of hereditary political offices. For the administration, managed by the "good" upper castes, was built up round a network of kinship ties. Nambudiris fathered the Rajas and sporadically, the high caste population at large; the Rajas fathered the chieftains, and the chieftains the desavaris; while the whole retainer Nayar population, despite its division into karas, villages, and lineages linked in perpetual affinal kinship, was also united throughout the kingdom by the practice of sexual unions between the mobile

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food. [101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

113 1921), p. 241.

(11) A. I. Richards, Some Types of Family Structure amongst the Central Bantu, in African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (Radcliffe-Brown and Forde, 1950).

582 (12) Matrilateral cross cousin marriage is preferred to patrilateral, since it harmonizes the conjugal interests of a man and his sister's son, the most rivalrous relationship between men. It is also of course possible with hypergamous unions, whereas patrilateral cross cousins unions are not. In one Cochin village 7.2% of living Nayar women had married the father's own or classificatory maternal nephew; 1.6% had married the own or classificatory mother's brother's son. [103] Taking the women of six lineages over five generations, 13.9% of marriages were to the father's nephew, 9.0% to the uncle's son. In Walluvanad division, South Malabar, of the women of nine lineages over five generations, 11.2% had married the father's nephew, 4.7% the uncle's son (own or classificatory).

613 (13) In Murdock's sense of a matrilineal, matri-
543 local unit with the husbands of the women as permanent residents. However, in a true matriclan adult male members of the matrilineage or matrisib would be living away with their wives whereas in the royal lineages princes lived at home and merely visited their wives nearby. In most naduvari and all lower subcaste lineages, women were visited only occasionally by their Nambudiri lovers who lived in their own households.

613 (14) Called Randatara Acchanmar, (lit. "Fathers over the two taras".) The nad was composed of two taras, and the chieftain taravad had the title of acchan, common in North Malabar.

(15) The Zamorins of Calicut, p.1.

1: Gough-105 E-4, 5 (no date) 1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

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MAP II MALABAR DISTRICT

Showing the boundaries of the nads and kingdoms in the mid-eighteenth century.

Nads	Rulers
1 Kolattunad	Kolattiri Rajas
2 Randatara	Nayar Chiefs
3 Tellicherry	E. India Co.
4 Iruvalinad	Nayar Chiefs
5 Kurangoth	Nayar Chiefs
6 Kottayam	Kottayam Rajas
7 Kadattunad	Kadattunad Rajas
8 Payyormala	Nayar Chiefs
9 Payyanad	Zamorin
10 Kurumbranad	Rajas
11 Tamarasseri	Kottayam Rajas
12 Poland	Zamorin
13 N. Parappanad	Parappanad Rajas (Zam.)
14 Pulavayi	Nayar Chiefs (Zamorin)
15 S. Parappanad	Parappanad Rajas (Zamorin)
16 Ramnad	Zamorin
17 Cheranad	Zamorin
18 Ernad	Zamorin
19 Walluvanad	Walluvanad Rajas
20 Walluvanad	Zamorin
21 Nedunganad	Zamorin
22 Kavalappara	Nayar Chiefs
23 Vadamalappuram	Palghat Rajas
24 Temmalapuram	Palghat Rajas
25 Naduvattam	Zamorin
26 Bettatnad	Bettem Rajas (Zamorin)

Nads	Rulers
27 Kutnad	Zamorin
28 Chavakkad	Chavakkad Rajas (Zamorin)
29 Arikkal	Arikkal Rajas
30 Wynaad	Kottayam Rajas
31 Cochin	Cochin Rajas

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic lead-
[162] ers. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit lan-
[174] guage and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera
564 kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nam-budiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of
463 ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a
[611] role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in
613 Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Al-
635 though of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaṅ:s*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or
[178] vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
[622] in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages iso-
[613] lated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants." 564

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. 564 554 [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs. 621 613 564 566 471 427

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristocratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They 564 794

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564 794 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matrilineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 794 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden. [782] [793] Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as permanent tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the [613] second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 794 613 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhagavadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 564 [793] [791] [782] In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman, attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

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vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

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lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris'*) judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

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system of Nambudiris. In the Nambudiri patrilineal extended family only the eldest son was permitted to marry (with Vedic rites) within his caste, and beget children for his family. Younger sons had recognized liaisons with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to their mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. These hypergamous unions were regarded by Brahmans as socially acceptable concubinage, for the union was not initiated with Vedic rites, the children were not legitimized as Brahmans, and neither the woman nor her child was accorded the rights of kin. By the matrilineal castes, however, the same unions were regarded as marriage, for they fulfilled the conditions of ordinary Nayar marriage and served to legitimize the child as an acceptable member of his matrilineal lineage and caste.

If a Nambudiri eldest son remained childless the second son might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget children for his family. Unmarried Nambudiri women, of whom there were many, remained in their natal homes and were maintained by their fathers and brothers. The eldest son of a Nambudiri house might however have several Brahman wives (who lived patrilocally with him) and also several Nayar partners whom he visited in their homes. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then dropped to the next generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments and was enabled to maintain its ancestral estate intact over many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man related through some cognatic tie.

The possible directions of hypergamous marriages in the Cochin kingdom are briefly as follows. In the royal lineages marriages were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad royal women married only Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest sub-castes within the kingdom. Royal men married women of chiefly lineages within the kingdom, of village headmen's lineages within their own domain, or of retainer Nayar lineages in the royal villages. In the Calicut kingdom royal women married either Nambudiris or the feudatory princes of higher rank and more ancient lineage than themselves. Royal men married women of the same lower matrilineal groups as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms. Women of the feudatory royal lineages married only Nambudiris; men married royal women or women of chiefly, village headmen's, or retainer Nayar lineages within their own area of rule.

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Each Nayar chiefly lineage, like royalty, normally counted itself a separate caste and married only hypergamously. Women of chiefly lineages married the royals or feudatory royals to whom their lineages were immediately subordinate, or wealthy Nambudiris, usually of their own district. Men of chiefly lineages married women of village headmen's lineages within their district, or women of retainer Nayar lineages, usually in their own villages.

Village headmen's lineages occasionally contracted marriages reciprocally with other village headmen's lineages of the chiefdom which had originally sprung from the same retainer caste. They also provided wives for chiefs and Brahmans and husbands for retainer women, usually of their own villages.

Among temple servants, Nayar retainers, and Nayar temple menials the majority of marriages were between persons of the same caste. A few women in the Psharodi, Variyar, Poduval, and Nambyar castes married Nambudiris, especially those whose families managed the temples where they worked. A few such women also married men of the Chakkyar and Pushpagan castes, which had descent systems like that of the Nambudiris. A few men of these matrilineal temple-servant castes married women of Nayar retainer and Nayar temple-menial castes in the villages of their work. Nayar women were particularly convenient partners for temple servants and Nambudiri temple priests because of the latters' spatial distribution. Often a temple-servant lineage or a Brahman priestly family held the hereditary right of service in six or eight small temples in villages up to ten miles away. One man of the lineage might spend much of his life working away from home in one of the more distant temples. He would live on food previously offered to the deity, occupy a room attached to the temple kitchen, bathe in the temple bathing pool, and visit a local Nayar wife at nights, returning home for life crises and festivals.

Women of the retainer Nayar castes might receive husbands from all the castes above them. Sudra Nayar women living in Brahman-owned villages or on the estates of large temples were the most likely to form links with Brahmans and temple servants; Charna Nayars and Pallichans, with royalty or chiefs; and Kiriattil women, with village headmen. Thus hypergamous unions entered into by retainer Nayars in general followed the main lines of lord-vassal relationships. However, "odd" marriages with individuals of any higher rank in nearby villages were permitted.

Because the higher castes were much smaller than they were, the Nayar retainers probably gave less than 10 per cent of their women

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564 to men of higher caste. Men of the retainer castes made still fewer marriages in the castes of temple menials. The latter also received as husbands a few temple servants and a few Nambudiris of the lowest sub-castes of cooks and household priests. The temple-menial castes did not intermarry, and their men seem thus to have been confined to women of their own caste. Hypergamy stopped at this level and the Nayar servant castes were each endogamous.

564 613 The hypergamy of the Nayar office-bearing lineages fitted their gradual social mobility and lack of rank parity with each other. With time, because of the vicissitudes of war and conquest, a retainer lineage might be appointed as village headmen, and might later even aspire to chiefly rank. Several of the chiefly lineages of Kerala can be traced back to much humbler origins three to six centuries ago. Apart from the regular offices of rule over territorial units, commoner Nayar lineages might also attain special rank as ministers or military leaders. When a lineage received promotion in this way, its members in course of time declared themselves ritually higher than those of the caste from which they sprang and would no longer interdine or intermarry with that caste on equal terms. Hypergamy permitted these isolated office-bearing lineages to marry in unequivocally higher and unequivocally lower groups, but to side-step the awkward question of their precise rank in the hierarchy as a whole.

Hypergamous marriages, like all Nayar marriages, were tenuous and carried few obligations. Nevertheless, the dependence of aristocratic castes on each other for spouses and genitors must have strengthened relations between them. Hypergamy inextricably linked the secular and the religious hierarchies, whose interests in many contexts were opposed. Nambudiris waged a perpetual struggle to preserve their lands and judicial powers from encroachment by kings and chiefs. Their religious laws forbade bloodshed on the estates of their great temples. If a local ruler invaded such an estate or flouted its laws, the Brahmanical assembly exercised its religious authority to fine him in land, cash, or elephants and closed their gates till he repented. This does not mean that the kings were puppets of the Brahmans. When a king conquered a new district its Brahmans came over to his side. They gave him the right to protect their temples and to use their Nayar retainers in war, on receipt of a fine for any personal inconvenience they had suffered. They obviously needed the ruler's military protection of their religious and landed rights. The rulers in turn needed the Brahmans, for the whole social system was sanctioned by religious beliefs of which they were the chief

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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tion they entered for fifteen days into a condition of ritual pollution. They might not eat with nor touch other Nayars, enter the temple or other houses, bathe in the public bathing pools of their caste, or eat meat or salt. Death pollution, and to a milder degree birth pollution, cut off the clan from participation in the social life of the caste. It isolated the members as a group set apart in a special and dangerous ritual condition, who had to observe taboos for their own and each others' safety. Its observance stressed the kinship connection of clansmen and marked their common concern on the occasion of an increase or decrease in their membership. Only those clansmen living within the neighborhood, however, were obliged to attend a funeral or visit a house of birth. Beyond these observances clansmen had only loosely defined rights of hospitality in each other's homes. As far as I am aware they never assembled as an organized group.

In time a clan might divide into two or more clans by the common consent of its members. The decision to separate depended both on geographical distance and on distance of relationship. If a segment of the core unit moved into an adjacent neighborhood its members might maintain clanship with the parent lineage for several hundred years thereafter. If they moved to a distant part of the district (say, fifteen miles away) their grandchildren might sever the connection. Severing clanship was called "cutting the pollution bond." Representatives of the branches met and decided not to inform each other of future deaths in their respective groups. Usually the outlying branch would soon afterward adopt the name of the oldest ancestral house site in its own vicinity as its clan name. Exogamy was theoretically preserved as long as matrilineal ties were remembered—usually, about three generations after the division.

Beyond the neighborhood, clan ties had no legal or economic concomitants and were relatively unimportant, their claims being subordinated to those of lineage, village, neighborhood, district, and kingdom.

THE LINEAGE

A lineage comprised those members of a clan living in one Nayar neighborhood, and it operated within the legal and social framework of this unit. As we have noted, the retainer Nayars of a neighborhood were of the same caste. They interdined and intermarried freely and the neighborhood was their unit of caste administration. A neighborhood might comprise the retainer Nayars of one village or of two or three adjacent villages, or occasionally Nayars of only part of a large village (e.g., a royal village) in which more than one caste of

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Nayar retainers resided. A neighborhood normally contained some six to ten lineages and probably had a population of about three hundred Nayars. 613

The lineage was called a *taravād*. If it occupied the ancestral village of the clan its members used the ancestral house name as both clan and lineage names. If it lived elsewhere its members added a distinctive name, derived from their new locale, to the clan name. Each segment of a lineage occupying one house in turn had its own house name, and each Nayar had a personal name followed by the caste title. A typical Nayar name might therefore be "Thengiparambil Padikkil Kirakkutt-Velappil Govindan Nayar"—"Clan of the coconut garden, lineage of the gatehouse, household of the eastern garden, Govindan (personal name) Nayar." Usually one branch of a lineage continued to occupy and to rebuild the oldest ancestral home of the clan. The clan, lineage, and house names of these members would then be collapsed into one.

A lineage normally comprised some four to eight households, each a matrilineal segment of three to six generations' depth, including the youngest children and the common ancestress. Sometimes the households of a lineage might occupy adjacent gardens on a continuous stretch of dry land in the high-caste residential area of one village. Alternatively the houses of a lineage might become scattered throughout the high-caste residential areas of the several villages of the neighborhood. For it was possible for Nayar tenants, with the consent of the various overlords concerned, to buy or exchange the tenures of gardens. Further, a branch of a lineage which was expanding might be allotted the tenure of a newly developed garden at some distance from its former abode. Normally, however, the gardens in which their houses were built remained in the possession of one or other branch of a lineage over many generations. 613 592

Some writers would not apply the word lineage to the group which I am discussing. It was not always a lineage in the sense of a matrilineal group tracing descent from a common ancestress through a determinate number of generations (cf. *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*, 1952: 88–89). This definition applied to lineages which had occupied a neighborhood only for six or seven generations. It might also apply to an older lineage some of whose branches had died out, or to an older lineage whose membership had not happened to expand greatly over several generations. Often, however, there would be very old lineages whose most distantly related segments no longer remembered their exact genealogical relationship and whose members 613

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613 were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The [592] reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

613 However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be 592 forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmenta- 768 tion within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which [614] had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

613 In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the [578] households of the disputants and were normally settled through ap- [692] peal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

[614] As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations [834] were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave
[553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the
[588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month,
[881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony
[843] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the
[769] subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem-
[765] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the
[783] fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides
[885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
776 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
794 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrol-
[588] oger might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
826 lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of
[784] caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence
681 is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
564 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[823] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 681 564 [784]

castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

613 681 684 564

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

613 682 [696]

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613 687 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 627 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth [178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction 613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis- 627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor 835 839

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of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

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birth pollutions were not extended to them by their host lineage. Instead, as we have seen, they continued to observe these rites for several generations along with their clansfolk elsewhere.

The information on this procedure is incomplete because it does not take place in modern times. It is not known whether a lineage segment ever became incorporated into a new retainer caste as well as a new neighborhood, although this seems unlikely. It is not known whether an indigenous lineage which shrank to the size of one small property group ever allied itself in putative matrilineal kinship with another established lineage. It is also uncertain whether major segments of a very large lineage might over time break the pollution bond and gradually cease to observe exogamy. Some evidence from a Cochin village suggests that this may have happened. Shortly before my stay a man and woman of two lineages which had the same enangar and had never been known to marry, entered into a traditional type of informal marriage relationship. Elders of the village then began to wonder whether the lineages had not once formed one lineage, either by true matrilineal kinship or by joint performance of the tāli rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to the junior generation the marriage persisted. Thus, what may once have been an ancient tie of lineage and clan exogamy was quietly broken. I do not know whether fission within a lineage was traditionally possible or whether it occurs only in modern times, when the neighborhood assembly and the lineage itself are both disintegrating.

THE PROPERTY GROUP

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Structure The property group among Nayar retainers was a segment of the lineage having a time depth of some three to six generations, including the youngest members and the common ancestress. It therefore typically comprised a group of brothers and sisters (real or classificatory), together with the children and daughters' children of the sisters. This group was the joint-property-owning unit. Its members were from birth equal co-parceners in the buildings, land, movables, serfs, and all other property which had come to them from their matrilineal forebears, or had been conferred on them by their feudal lord, or had been acquired by the efforts of individual members. The group's oldest male member (kāranavan) was its legal guardian and represented it in the caste assembly.

When spoken of in its own right the property group, like the lineage, was called a taravād. When spoken of as a segment of the lineage it was called a *tāvari* (literally, "mother's line"). Tāvari could also be used of any intermediate segment of the lineage or of a mini-

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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
241 ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts, and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

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613 his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the prop-
592 erty group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor
681 on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new
[687] district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with
[703] property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

613 The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was con-
592 ferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority
681 of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal
692 punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

613 It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de*
592 *facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior
681 men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of
692 officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their prop-
703 erty groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[753] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [175] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. [858] A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, [863] especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the man- [867] ners and morals of their caste.

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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters. 604

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister. [601] [551]

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling. [601] [602] [613] [614] [578]

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and 603

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took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' children, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was responsible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste, in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural matters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

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was formalized to the point of avoidance. A boy or man might not touch his mother's brother. Before entering the uncle's presence he removed his upper clothing as a mark of respect. He might not speak first to the uncle but stood with arms folded and head bowed, attentively awaiting commands. He might not sit before his uncle except at mealtimes; he then sat down last and rose as soon as the uncle's meal was finished. When summoned for a lengthy interview he stood half hidden behind a pillar, holding his hand before his mouth lest his breath should reach the hearer. He might not chew betel leaves, smoke, spit, or use any but the most serious and respectful language in the presence of his senior. These rules of intercourse were most strict in the relationship with the kāranavan. For this reason a kāranavan absented himself as much as possible from family gatherings, living on the upper floor of the granary among his age mates of other lineages who came to visit him. With junior mother's brothers, who were more intimately responsible for his education, a youth's behavior was necessarily more relaxed. Even so, he observed the greatest possible formality, walked several feet behind them, and avoided them when he could. 604 576

A man should show loyalty to his mother's brothers in relations with outsiders, if necessary defending them with his life. He was expected to identify with them, receiving and perpetuating the noble traditions of his taravād. In fact Nayars did show great pride in the elders of their taravād as a group, exhibiting their virtues and hiding their weaknesses in the presence of strangers. There was regularly, however, deep hostility in their interpersonal relationships. The Nayars of today are well aware of this and expect acrimonious rivalry between the men of a taravād; hence, they say, the need for formal etiquette and strict ranking on the basis of age. A Nayar will speak of himself as bound to his taravād through natural love for his mother and sisters, and obliged for their sakes to maintain outward decorum in his relations with matrilineal kinsmen. In a modified form this suppressed hostility traditionally extended to all the men of the own, first ascending and second ascending generations. All male elders in the taravād might be collectively called *kāranavar* (singular, kāranavan). Within the property group they were numbered in order of age (irrespective of generation) as first, second, and third men. All owed loyalty and obedience to those above them and protection to those below them, but all envied their seniors and feared the rivalry of juniors. The mother's own brothers were, however, the prototypes for this generalized rivalry. Whether or not Nayars experienced Oedipal hostility 604 613 604 613 561 578

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604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy rctained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

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duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

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593 to the kāraṇavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 561 461 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighboring groups. [422] Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped [613] them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns. 595 [201]

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union. 585 595

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. 595 431 [796] [776] [613] [586] [302] [262] [276] [584] [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 843 595 431

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843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and
564 not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obliga-
[431] tion. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or
[839] village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the
[564] favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

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In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal.

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news.

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172).

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilateral kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who *must* take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar-

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riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her enangar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group marriage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

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595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
701 Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
[566] adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made possible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons)
[178] organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

THE LINEAGE

613 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
592 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when
423 the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

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ual process of fission. This state of affairs was in harmony with the small amounts of land controlled by retainer property groups and with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to their land. The conditions of kānam tenure not only allowed for changes in the tenures of plots of land within one village, but even permitted segments of an expanding taravād to change their feudal allegiances and if necessary to hive off from their natal village.

The situation was different in the aristocratic lineages of royalty and district chiefs. By jenmam right they owned large domains which could support greater numbers of members. Their members also had a stake in the political office which they were reluctant to surrender. On the whole these lineages tended to cohere for longer periods than did those of retainers. Some of them today number over three hundred members and trace their descent back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When segments of these lineages did move away from their ancestral lands it was usually because they had been conquered and forced to vacate their territories and offices.

In the beginning, when one of these aristocratic lineages rose to power, it did so as a small property group. It did so either (in the case of royals) through conquest or (in the case of chiefs) through being appointed to office by some royal power. When they acquired office these upstart property groups seem to have severed ties with their former lineages and clans and to have conferred on themselves a higher ritual rank as independent castes.

After a few generations such a property group might expand in numbers and separate out into segments. I lack data on the precise point at which aristocratic property groups segmented; it seems to have been always at a later point with them than with retainer Nayars. (Today, some royal and chiefly property groups have a time depth of eight or more generations and over a hundred members.) When fission did occur the segments moved into separate palaces, each taking a portion of the ancestral domain for its maintenance. The oldest man resident in each segment acted as kāranavan and managed its internal affairs. For a time at least, the political office remained vested in the oldest man of the lineage irrespective of branch. When he was able, he kept a tight hold over all the segments, deflecting part of their income to himself for the upkeep of his palace staff, private army, and the larger forces he mustered through his subordinate vassals in war. The office bearer also retained sole right to the customs dues on trade within his chiefdom or kingdom, and to the tribute from village headmen within his area of rule.

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613 178 Theoretically, office-bearing lineages were supposed to cohere forever, the officer being the eldest man of the lineage regardless of branch. In fact, if the lineage continued to expand, some other development would occur within a few generations. What its pattern might be depended on the economic and political circumstances of the times. One pattern was for the political office itself to become divided between the segments some time after they had divided their private domain. The head of each segment would then become ruler in his own right over a portion of the original territory, either (in the case of royals) as an independent small king, or (in the case of district chiefs) as a small chief independent of the rest of his lineage but still owing nominal allegiance to the original king of the kingdom as a whole. This type of fission of offices took place in areas and periods in which for some reason trade was declining, customs dues were running low, and neither king nor chiefs could muster enough extra wealth to fight wars which would maintain them in full political control. This 613 process went on apace from the fifteenth century to the end of the 178 seventeenth both in Kolattunad and in Travancore, the northernmost 175 and southernmost kingdoms of Kerala. They had been powerful 648 kingdoms for a period, with the help of Chinese traders, but declined in the fifteenth century after the Chinese trade collapsed and the Arabs built up Calicut. After 1500, different trading powers supported the smaller chiefs of these areas in trade wars against each other, so that these kingdoms remained weak and disunited until the second quarter of the eighteenth century. During this period segments of the royal lineages in both kingdoms carved up much of each kingdom into virtually independent chiefdoms. Within each of these in turn, the lineages of formerly subordinate Nayar chiefs tended also to break into segments, each retaining control over four or five villages. Early in the eighteenth century the British and French each tried to consolidate North Malabar by allying themselves with different local powers, but their struggles were temporarily eclipsed by invasions from Bednur to the north and later, in the 1760's, from Mysore in the east. In Travancore the process of disintegration persisted until the British obtained a trade monopoly and, in the 1730's, helped the king to reconquer his kingdom once and for all and to establish a bureaucratic form of rule (Innes, 1908: 55–75; Pillai, 1940: 286–466; K. M. Panikkar, 1931: chap. V).

613 669 The other course of development was for one branch of a ruling lineage to seize the office and most of the private domains and, temporarily or permanently, exclude or banish the others. This process

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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade. Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups. The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, supported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656 the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches, and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thirteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and, except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid-eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to vil-
635 lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if neces-
622 sary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office.
726 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed
635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When
634 a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral
613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there
554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as
[648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[183] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

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613 eage with which one was neither at enmity nor in regular asymmet-
597 rical political relationships. Thus the Travancore royal lineage several times adopted from Kolattiri, at the other end of Kerala, and the Calicut lineage from Nileswaram, the northernmost independent chiefdom of the Malabar Coast.

613 The giving and receiving of food, normally a hallmark of caste rank-
262 ing, presented other problems. Some royal lineages were vegetarians
564 and employed Nambudiri Brahman cooks who, being ritually higher than themselves, were permitted to serve them with food. Others seem to have drawn to themselves a small group of lineages as cooks and houseservants upon whom they conferred equivalence of caste rank, while maintaining them as their social inferiors and not intermarrying with them.

613 RESIDENCE AND KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

592 The property groups of village headmen's and chiefly lineages had
593 residential arrangements similar to those of retainer Nayars, except that their houses were larger. The men of these groups visited their
554 lower-ranking wives in the latters' homes. If they lived nearby, visits would occur at night; if at a distance, the husband might visit his wife about once a month and remain for two or three days. Similarly, women of these groups received visits from their higher-ranking husbands at convenient intervals. If he came from a distance the husband brought his own servants and cook, occupied a building near the taravād house, and stayed at his conjugal family's expense.

613 In the royal lineages each property group occupied a large palace.
344 Within it each princess had her own suite of rooms in company with her children under the age of fifteen. Princes over this age had private
554 rooms in a separate wing. The Nambudiri Brahman husbands of prin-
592 cesses (who were younger sons in their own households and had no managerial duties) lived at the palace for the duration of their marriages and were maintained at its expense. In the daytime they occupied a building within the royal courtyard, with its own bathing pool, kitchen, and servants, and visited their wives' rooms mainly at night. Junior princes visited their wives in nearby retainers' households or in more distant chiefly taravāds. Each royal sthāni had his own palace, estate, and retainers for the duration of his office. He would normally bequeath a house to a Nayar wife within the palace grounds and visit her and his children there.

595 Although group marriage appears to have existed in theory among
554 aristocrats, polyandry was in fact perhaps less common than among
[586] retainer Nayars. Princesses are said to have been sometimes poly-

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between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

Kinship Terms

601 613 As might be expected, kinship terms were used only between matrilineal kin and between ego and the spouses of members of his lineage. The terms were as follows.

A. MATRILINEAL KIN (extended throughout the lineage)

(1) *Mūttassi* ("Oldest woman"). M. and F. speaking. Woman of the second ascending generation, primarily MoMo. May be prefaced by *valiya* ("big") or *cheriya* ("small") for women respectively older or younger than MoMo.

(2) *Ammāman* ("Male mother"). M. and F. speaking. Men of first and second ascending generations, primarily mother's own brother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya for men of first ascending generation respectively older or younger than Mo. May be prefaced by *mūtta* ("oldest") for men of second ascending generation.

(3) *Amma*. M. and F. speaking. Women of first ascending generation, primarily own mother. Prefaced by valiya or cheriya for women respectively older or younger than Mo.

(4) *Jyēshtan*. M. and F. speaking. Men of own generation older than ego, primarily own elder brother. Sometimes corrupted to *ētan*.

(5) *Anujan*. M. and F. speaking. Men of own generation younger than ego, primarily own younger brother. Reference only.

(6) *Jyēshtatti*. M. and F. speaking. Women of own generation older than ego, primarily own elder sister. May be corrupted to *eraṭṭi* (South Malabar) or *chēchi* (Cochin).

(7) *Anujatti*. M. and F. speaking. Women of own generation younger than ego, primarily own younger sister. Reference only.

(8) *Ängala*. F. speaking. Own brother by same mother. Reference only.

(9) *Pengal*. M. speaking. Own sister by same mother. Reference only.

(10) *Marumakan*. M. speaking. Male of first or second descending generations, primarily own sister's son. Reference only.

(11) *Marumakal*. M. speaking. Female of first or second descending generation, primarily own sister's daughter. Reference only.

(12) *Makan*. F. speaking. Male of first descending generation, primarily own son. Reference only.

(13) *Makal*. F. speaking. Female of first descending generation, primarily own daughter. Reference only.

(14) *Pērakutti* ("Name child"). F. speaking. Male or female child

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of second descending generation, primarily own daughter's child. Reference only. 601 613

(15) *Kāranavar* (singular, *kāranavan*). M. and F. speaking. All males of the lineage older than ego, living or dead. Primarily, the eldest living man of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

(16) *Anandravar* (singular, *anandravan*). M. speaking. All males of the lineage younger than ego. Primarily, junior males of ego's property group. Reference only. [561]

Comment: Older relatives are addressed by terms; younger, by name.

The overriding of generations which appears in terms 2, 10, and 11 is suitable because the men under 2 are not in the direct line of ascent and their authoritative roles are similar. Terms 15 and 16 further emphasize the age rank of lineage males regardless of segment or generation. [561]

The separation of terms 1 and 3 may be related to the fact that women are in a direct line of descent. Moreover, 1's role is more authoritative than that of 3.

The existence of special terms 8 and 9 points up the interdependence of own brother and sister on which the unity of the sibling group and the cohesion of the property group are based.

The merging of lineals and collaterals within each generation points up the lack of institutional segregation of one woman and her children.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES 601

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu in the sambandham relationship. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Mūttacchan* ("Oldest father"). M. and F. speaking. Hu of A1.

(5) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Hu of A3, especially of own mother. May be prefaced by valiya or cheriya according to age of the man's wife in relation to ego's mother. Followed by the caste title (e.g., Nambudiri) if he is of higher caste.

(6) *Ammāyi*. M. and F. speaking. Wife of A2.

(7) *Aliyan*. M. speaking. Reciprocal between a man and his wife's lineage kinsmen of her generation, primarily within her property group. Reference only.

(8) *Jyēshtatti Amma*. Wife of A4. M. and F. speaking. Sometimes

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terms. When one of these terms applies to more than one relative the equation issues simply from the equation of the matrilineal kin who are their spouses.

There was a lack of terms for affines younger than ego because unless sex difference caused ego to avoid them completely, the principle of age rank made it possible to address them by name. Descriptive compound terms were adequate to refer to them.

However, the existence of the special reciprocal reference term between brothers-in-law points up the uniqueness of the brother-sister tie and the fact that a woman's brothers and her husband were brought into a specially close relationship by virtue of their claims upon the woman who linked them.

The use of B3 as a collective term reflects the fact that, as sex partners and fathers, these men had a common interest in ego's matrilineal group and it in them.

MODERN CHANGES

Since about 1890, as I have described elsewhere (Gough, 1952), Nayar marriage has become monogamous and men have assumed rights in and obligations to their children. The matrilineage is gradually disintegrating and the elementary family is gradually emerging as the key group in a system of bilateral, interpersonal kinship ties.

As a result of these changes, terms formerly restricted to matrilateral kin are today sometimes used to address corresponding patrilateral kin, although this usage is not yet standardized. The most common equations are MoMo = FaMo, MoMoBr = FaMoBr, MoFa = FaFa, MoBr = FaBr, MoSi = FaSi, MoBrWi = FaBrWi, and MoSiHu = FaSiHu. Cross cousins and paternal parallel cousins still have no reference terms but if older are addressed as siblings. No other regular changes are observable for kin of ego's or ascending generations, and no regular changes have occurred in terms for descending generations.

As the system now stands, therefore, ego's matrilineal kin of the same sex are still merged within each generation, but the transferences to patrilateral kin have created a mixture between "lineal" and "generation" systems in the sense of Murdock and earlier writers, as far as the own and ascending generations are concerned (Murdock, 1949: 149). A "generation" classification is used for both sexes of ego's generation, with all cousins equated with siblings. A "generation" classification is also used for women of the first ascending generation, if we discount the age prefixes used to differentiate older and younger sisters of the parents. If we classify the age prefixes as constituting sep-

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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Murder among the Nayars

627 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
613 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but
628 even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

614 THE CLAN
564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [627]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some [427] garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

613 591

Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal [701] residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

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divorced or widowed women of the group and their children, together with temporarily divorced men or elderly widowers. The kāranavan, his wife, and his immature children would occupy a wing of the ancestral house or a separate building in the same courtyard. Married men of the group would live with their wives and children in separate houses, all on the matrilineal estate. The kāranavan would then allocate separate gardens and rice fields for usufruct to each married man. A junior would often hold such land on kānam tenure from the taravād as a whole. The kāranavan would retain a larger portion of the estate for his own maintenance and that of unmarried persons living in the ancestral house. In any case he retained ultimate management of the whole property and might retract portions of it at will. If, however, a junior man leased new land from the taravād on kurikānam tenure, the improvements he made on it might, by custom although not by law, become the separate property of his mother's matrilineal descendants. If, later, the whole property was divided between major segments of the property group, each branch might take as its share the fields and gardens on which improvements had been made by male members of that branch. In the larger aristocratic taravāds one or two sthānam estates might be set aside for the men immediately junior to the kāranavan. Their holders managed such estates with greater independence than the plots allocated to more junior men. All cultivation was carried on with the aid of Tiyyar laborers attached by hereditary right to the taravād. In some cases also plots were given on sub-tenure to Tiyyar cultivating tenants in the same manner as in Central Kerala.

A man might also—at least in the nineteenth century—with the consent of his own and his wife's kāranavan, lease land on kānam or kurikānam tenure from his wife's taravād. A few junior men actually went to live matrilocally in the wife's ancestral house or in a separate house which they built on the wife's ancestral estate. Houses and improvements to land provided by a husband in this way customarily became the separate property of the wife and her matrilineal descendants. Land on which such improvements had been made also normally passed to the wife's descendants as their share when the whole property of the wife's taravād was finally divided. Matrilocal residence by a junior man was rare and could always be objected to by the man's kāranavan if his services were needed at home. However, a man who was himself a kāranavan had considerable freedom to build a house and develop new gardens on his wife's taravād estate, which would later enrich his wife's matrilineal descendants. If

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village headman, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [634] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this [635] way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

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591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and
428 the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother, wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[161] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[701] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

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their land, there has been a tendency—under the new law of division of taravād proper—for women and immature children to retain the ancestral houses and much of the land and for men to take their individual shares of the property in cash. Thus, having left their taravāds with their shares, some men now find themselves living in a house owned by the wife and her young children. Other men pool their share of property with that of the wife and jointly buy a new garden and house. When the location of their work permits it, most men remain in their ancestral homes until middle age and visit their wives in the traditional manner.

Modern residential patterns in Central Kerala, although moving in the direction of autonomy for the elementary family, thus show a different bias from that seen in North Kerala. Our contrast is made with data from a Cochin village three miles from a large town, where 75 per cent of Nayars of retainer castes worked for wages in the town. Here, out of 65 high-caste Nayar houses, 40 (61 per cent) had been built by kāranavans for their taravāds in the traditional manner; only 22 per cent had been built by a man for his wife and children, and 11 per cent had been built or bought jointly by husband and wife; 3 per cent had been built by a man for his private use, and 3 per cent by a woman for herself and her children.

Taking the constitution of households, we find that 46 per cent contained matrilineage segments more or less of the traditional type, except that one or more husbands of the women might live regularly in the house. Seventeen per cent contained a "broken" matrilineage segment, the adult men of which had left their natal kinswomen, taken a share of the property in cash, and gone to live with their wives. In these houses the husbands of the remaining women might or might not be living with their wives. Twenty-nine per cent of the households were simple elementary families; 3 per cent contained only one man; 3 per cent contained an extended family composed of some modern mixture of matrilineal and patrilateral kin; and one house contained a widow with her small children.

Taking the residence of married couples by household, we find that out of 100 couples, 58 lived duolocally, the husband dividing his time between his natal home and that of his wife in the traditional manner. In some cases the wife might occasionally move for a few weeks to live in the husband's natal home if circumstances made this particularly desirable. Such an arrangement was however very modern in Central Kerala; it was much disliked by women and was seldom resorted to. Eighteen of the couples lived matrilocally; the couple

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591 shared a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with others of
592 her matrilineal elders. Twenty-four lived neolocally in a house con-
178 taining no natal kinsfolk of either partner; of these 24 couples, 7 lived in a private house acquired by the husband; 11 lived in a house jointly acquired by husband and wife; and 6 lived in a house acquired by the wife.

591 As these figures suggest, duolocality is still the accepted norm of
178 residence for younger married couples in Central Kerala, and avun-culocality slightly less so for those in North Kerala. In both areas
[434] participation in a market economy has caused a shift toward ne-olocality, especially for middle-aged couples. In the North Kerala village, however, the modern prevalence of cash-crop farming has carried this tendency further than has small-scale urban wage work
[562] in the village in Cochin. At the same time, because of the coöperation of North Kerala men in cultivation, the male sex normally determines the pattern of residence. Couples live avunculocally, neolocally, or
591 even patrilocally because men must live on their land. In the Cochin
562 village, by contrast, the male shift from military to small-scale salaried
464 employment has only partially undermined the position of women as the sex which remains on the ancestral land and for which the land
178 is cultivated by lower-caste servants. It is still women whose claims, in the majority of cases, determine the choice of residence in Central Kerala. Women, whenever possible, remain on their own land and men adapt themselves to this condition by living duolocally, matri-locally, or in some cases neolocally in a house partly provided by the wife.

Kinship Relationships

613 MATRILINEAL KIN

576 The etiquette of behavior between matrilineal kin was traditionally the same in North as in Central Kerala, but the emphases in terms of rights and obligations were somewhat different.

The kāranavan's ultimate legal authority was much the same as in the Central kingdoms. However, he lacked domestic authority over women and their small children, who resided elsewhere. Among
[591] adults, avunculocal residence caused great emphasis to be placed on the unity of the matrilineally related men, who should coöperate in work and property management for the good of the taravād as a whole. Covertly, their relationships tended to be rivalrous and hostile. Open disputes between them were often avoided through the separate allocation of plots to individual men. The distance thus created be-

613 576

tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

591 593

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

591 582 [428] [593]

591 593

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravad.

[844]

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's niece.

[593] [584] [184]

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000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, observed rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions —during their periods of co-residence.

Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

MARRIAGE

Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

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and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste. 585 684 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time. 593 [591] [264] [844] [613] [431]

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate. [595]

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area. 586

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live. 587 [858]

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they 593 184 858 [613]

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593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore,
● [613] children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship
more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that
which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between
maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal
half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be
comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may
be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted
613 out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never
polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal
and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live
on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children
occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual
pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but
their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they
reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal
obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals,
to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction
in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he
often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

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605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In
[593] such households there was a certain authority structure between the wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[578] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and
[607] nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his
[604] wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

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The wives of her elder matrilineal kinsmen figured prominently in the life-crisis rites of a girl, performing the ritual acts done by enangar women in Central Kerala. 602 613 796

Because of residence patterns men had less contact than did women with the property groups of their spouses. They must be invited to all ceremonies and had ritual duties in those connected with their own children. As sambandhakkar of a property group, the husbands of its female members were usually consulted formally by its kāranavan before he undertook important matters such as building houses or dividing property. He was not, however, obliged to follow their advice. 613 602

Kinship Terms

601 184

A. MATRILINEAL KIN

The pattern of terms was the same as in Central Kerala. Lexically, the only difference was that MoMo and her sisters (A1) were called *acchamma* (literally, "father's mother"), a term extended to them from FaMo. This usage probably resulted from the fact that a child normally recognized FaMo earlier than MoMo and had more contact with her.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES

In North Kerala, as might be expected, there were customary kinship terms for the patrilateral kin. The terms for affines and non-matrilineal cognates were as follows.

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Acchappan* ("Father's father"). M. and F. speaking. FaFa and FaFaBr. FaFaSiHu, FaMoBr, FaMoSiHu. MoFa and MoFaBr. MoFaSiHu, MoMoSiHu.

(5) *Acchamma* ("Father's mother"). FaMo and FaMoSi. FaFaBr-Wi, FaFaSi and FaMoBrWi. MoFaSi, MoMo, MoMoSi, MoFaBrWi.

(6) *Amma* ("Mother"). M. and F. speaking. Extended from Mo and MoSi to FaSi and FaBrWi. FaSi is called *valiya* ("big") mother or *elaya* ("younger") mother according to her age in relation to the father. FaBrWi is so designated according to FaBr's age in relation to Fa.

(7) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Fa, mother's current husband,

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[894] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[57] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[6] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fruits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the taravād might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men 796 might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and 769 called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will 613 and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* 773 where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by 787 the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious [776] possession is still more common among the lower castes. [184]

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities 769 associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma* 776 *devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always 782 thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief 613 deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in [346] common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its [184] own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding [753] or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be [346] housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its 769 members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, 626 the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, 782 failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retri- 613 bution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* [597] adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the [429]

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613 782 597 429 [578] [753] *kāranavan*'s death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

769 613 776 753 761 787 The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

776 769 [843] [842] However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an [754] enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

692 *Sociological analysis.* A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. [776] [784] Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's [688] religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the *kāranavan* had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective responsibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the *kāranavan* himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [702] [212] [538] [785] [782]

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to 184
whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

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159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely re-
776 sembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother
593 finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults
613 are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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his forebears. Thereafter he offers rice balls and other oblations in a *śrāddham* ceremony 184
on each anniversary of the death. 564

Many of these customs are of long standing among the Nāyars. Barbosa[18] reported in 1518 that Nāyar royalty observed *dīkṣā* for the dead in the same manner as Nambūdiris. Sheikh Zein-ud-Deen[19] recorded the custom for commoner Nāyars in 1579. Linschoten[20] reported in 1598 that Nāyars normally cremated their dead. Today, Nāyar death and anniversary rites are almost identical in form with those of Nambūdiris. During the period of death pollution they employ a lower matrilineal caste to instruct them in the rites. (In Cochin, Chīdigans fulfill this function; in South Malabar, Attikūrssis; and in North Malabar, Mārārs.) The same caste assists Nambūdiri Brahmans to prepare the ritual materials for their funerals, and has clearly transmitted the Brahmanical rites to the Nāyars. Similarly, at the end of the death pollution on the sixteenth day, during the *dīkṣā* period, and on anniversary days, Nāyars are instructed in their oblations by a priest of a degraded subcaste of Brahmans. (This subcaste is the Elayads in Cochin and South Malabar and the Nambidis in North Malabar.) A few peculiarly non-Brahmanical rites do, however, survive. In Kottayam, poorer Nāyars among commoners customarily bury their dead.[21] In both areas those who burn the dead bury the bones and ashes in a pot under a jack-fruit tree outside the ancestral house near the ancestor shrine. Some leave the bones there permanently and consider that the ghost remains near the bones and the ancestral house. Others dig up the bones after the period of mourning, dispose of half of them in a sacred river, and return the other half to the grave. The bones of *kāranavans* are sometimes [613] placed on an open platform under a jack-fruit tree, to which food offerings are made on days of propitiation. Other rites spring from the Nāyar view that the ghost requires appeasement rather than mere assistance to another world. Brahmans, for example, pour holy water into the mouth of a dying man to purify him for entry into the world of ancestors. Old-fashioned Nāyars offer rice gruel as a last act of appeasement.

Even the Sanskritic rites are in fact so adapted to Nāyar requirements that they 76
carry a quite different emphasis of meaning from that associated with them by Brah- 184
mans. First, the role-structure of the rites is, of course, completely adapted to the 564
descent system. A Nambūdiri deceased's chief mourner is his or her eldest son, or, 613
if there is no Nambūdiri son, the eldest brother's son. A Nāyar woman's chief mourner is her eldest son; that of a man, the man next junior to him in the property group. But all males of the *taravād* junior to the deceased make subsidiary *bali* offerings to him in the period of pollution. Brahman spouses observe mourning and death pollution for each other. Nāyar spouses traditionally observe no mourning or pollution for each other, for they belong to different *taravāds* and have no mutual legal obligations. If a Nāyar dies in a wife's house, his body must traditionally be returned to his *taravād* for cremation. Shortly before or after the death of her husband, a woman goes to view his body for the last time. She is then ceremonially conducted out of the house on the north side—the side opposite to that from which the god of death arrives. She is returned to her natal home, and after this she may never reenter her dead husband's house. In Cochin, where men traditionally had no obligations to their children, a child did not observe death pollution for his genitor. But in North Malabar, [591] where children have an intimate relationship with the father in avunculocal residence during childhood, a man's sons make offerings for him during death pollution, and the eldest son is second-in-command to the chief mourner at the cremation. The

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves 613
make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are 566
especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their 564
own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by 769
the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by 613
other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a 566
certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of 564
cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippū 175
Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible 782
conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, 769
often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being 613
outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been 684
killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman [762]
called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* [682]
and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She [842]
became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower 769
caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and 564
counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any 782
case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by [787]
Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kuttichāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[794] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of
[613] commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing *imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants*—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft,
769 however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad,
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and
152 submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[35] and the initiation rites[36] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all
177 the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked
564 occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in
[782] government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Urâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [851] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race [613] and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493] * A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live 613
there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

486 564 784 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstru-562 ation. While in her period she may not eat or drink 178 with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. 783 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South 841 Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* 564 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, 613 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear 486 (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna 178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more 562 liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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Nâyar is affixed as an honorific after the name. Thus one whose name is Gôvindan is called Gôvindan Nâyar.

Taravâd name.	Name.	Occupation.	Age
Manjôli	Gôvindan ...	Domestic servant ...	30
Kêdôth	Karunâkaran ...	Milk seller	34
Chuliotkolodi ...	Ithapu	Cultivator	32
Puliakôth	Kêlu	Do.	27
Kurunthal	Narrâinan	Do.	35
Kazhaparambath ...	Shankaren	Do.	32
Etalakandiel	Kêlu	Servant	22
Thanikât	Cherukutti	Do.	25
Thattatath	Chekkunni	Peon	35
Nambidivittil	Kunhunni	Cultivator	50
Nadaviladatha	Chandukutti ..	Do.	25
Tuthenvittil	Vêlu	Writer	24
Thekakamukal	Râmuni	Cultivator	22
Kulangarathathil ...	Kannan	Do.	37
Kizhukalangot	Gôvindan	Do.	25
Pitôli	Râmuni	Do.	36
Puliakôth	Kôman	Do.	25
Edakapura	Rârappan	Peon	46

There seems to be a distinct or specific name for every garden, every acre of land in Malabar, whether in the forest or cultivated, whether enclosed or not. We shall hear of this again when we come to speak of the jungle people, some of whom change their name, their *house* or Taravâd name, as they change their residence from one place to another, always calling themselves after the land on which they are at the time living. Others again cling to the name which is that of the land whence the family has sprung, so to speak.

That the Taravâd name of the Nâyar is that of the land is tolerably evident. Contrary to the rule in Southern India there is, in Malabar, absolute proprietorship of land; and the land, the family house built on it, the land wherein lie the ashes of the ancestors, and the family itself are all included in the meaning of the word Taravâd.

ÚRÂLI NÂYARS: ENDOGAMOUS.

Ages ranging between 20 and 45.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.	Remarks
Stature	180·8	152·2	163·1	...	
Height, sitting	89·9	79·1	84·2	51·6	
Do. kneeling ...	135·3	113·3	120·8	74·0	120·75
Span	193·0	161·7	171·3	105·0	

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301 *564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—[789] in each ear. An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami- *564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

● 613

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
*564 Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

*142 *564 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *564 [304] *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

[515] [789] (4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

163 *564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
463 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
115 Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

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*301 *564 Copper sheet on which the charm was inscribed in a silver cylindrical case. Copper ring on ring-finger, right hand.

(2) Two copper rings on the ring-finger, right hand. Belongs to the Ellenkiria, so wore no earrings.

(3) Brass ring, ring-finger, right hand. Also of the Ellenkiria.

(4) Copper ring, ring-finger, right hand. Gold earrings of the ordinary pattern.

(5) The ordinary gold earrings. Silver string round the waist; not exclusively ornamental. He fastened his loin cloth to it.

*163 *564 *Vital Statistics* were noted in but two cases. In one family there were two brothers and three sisters; in another, one brother and two sisters.

Names, etc., of a few Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
115 *564 Puthen Vîtil ...	Krishnan ...	Cultivator ...	52
Parithil ...	Achutan ...	Do. ...	27
613 Malabîtil ...	Sivarâman ...	Do. ...	22
Cholale ...	Râman ...	Do. ...	20
551 Muthîra ...	Narrâyanan ...	Teacher ...	26
Kanakath ...	Kunhi Krishnan* ...	Unemployed ...	22
463 Mannareth ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	30
Kûmbiyal ...	Kannan ...	Peon ...	25
Othianmâdattil ...	Gôvindan ...	Do. ...	33

NAMBIYÂR NÂYARS.

*553 *564 Men of this clan affix Nambiyâr to their name. Thus, Gôvindan Nambiyâr, Kêlu Nambiyâr.

141 *564 Ages ranging between 20 and 40.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 22.	To stature = 100.
Stature	177·1	155·7	165·1	...
Height, sitting	89·3	80·0	84·2	51·0
Do. kneeling	129·8	115·0	122·0	73·9
Span	188·0	166·5	175·3	106·2
Chest	84·0	75·0	80·3	48·6
Shoulders	42·8	37·8	40·0	424·2
Left cubit	50·5	43·6	46·0	27·9

* This individual had 'Menon' instead of Nâyar after his name, he having been invested with the distinction by the Zamorin.

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*115 564 Names, etc., of some of those who were examined are given below:—

613 463 55

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pathushêri	Kanâran ...	... Rent Collector (for a temple).	22
Mâvila	Kumâran ...	... Cultivator	21
Châlayil Kandôth ...	Châttu ...	... .	22
Puthiotil	Râman ...	... Servant	22
Chalil Kannôth ...	Anandan ...	... Cultivator	25
Ramath	Kunhi Râman	... Landlord	34
Kalliat-panôli ...	Râmuni ...	... Stamp vendor ...	30
Thêrugandi	Paidal ...	... Cultivator	25

*564 553

PURATTU CHÂRNA NÂYARS.

Men of this clan bear the affix Nâyar after their name, as Gôvindan Nâyar, Gôpâla Nâyar.

14 561

Ages ranging between 20 and 70.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 25.	To stature = 100.
Stature	174·8	155·0	166·1	...
Height, sitting	92·4	77·7	85·3	51·3
Do. kneeling	130·2	113·7	122·7	73·9
Span	184·1	155·6	174·0	104·7
Chest	87·6	69·7	79·6	47·9
Shoulders	43·9	33·3	39·6	23·9
Left cubit	49·1	42·0	45·8	27·6
Left hand length	19·3	16·8	18·5	11·1
Do. width	8·3	6·5	7·9	...
Do. middle finger	11·6	9·8	10·5	6·3
Hips	28·0	23·8	25·7	15·5
Left foot length	27·4	22·3	25·3	15·2
Do. width	9·9	7·4	8·7	...
Cephalic length	20·6	17·6	19·5	11·7
Do. width	15·3	12·9	14·5	...
Do. index	81·5	65·2	72·2	...
Bigoniac	11·1	9·3	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·9	11·7	13·0	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	88·8	73·9	79·5	...
Nasal height	5·2	4·0	4·8	2·88
Do. width	3·9	2·9	3·6	2·17
Do. index	90·0	56·9	76·8	...
Vertex to tragus	14·4	12·2	13·1	7·9
Do. to chin	21·1	17·5	19·8	11·9
Middle finger to patella	17·5	5·3	10·7	6·44

Cephalic length.—In 8 individuals or 32 per cent. of the whole, the cephalic length was 20·0 or over. The maximum cephalic width (of one individual only) is abnormal; the next nearest to it is 14·8. In 6 individuals the nasal

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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian —a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah. 301 564* [776] [789]

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention. [304]

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family. 163 563

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal. 564*

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandan, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

115 551 463 613 564*

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary. [553]

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

The hair on the person of a youth aged 20 (No. 1 above) was noted thus—

(*a*) On the head very plentiful, black, glossy and wavy; treated with gingelly oil. Sprouting on the lip and chin. A small patch of moderate thickness on the sternum; slight on the arms; moderate on the legs.

Another, aged 25—

(*b*) On the head very thick, and approaching the outer edge of the eyebrows. Thick on the chest and mid line of abdomen, although these parts have been shaved recently, as also the arm pits. Thick hair in the small of the back. Slight growth on the back. Moderate on the arms; thick on the legs.

The individual (*a*) said he shaved any day of the week, and any day of the month. He was the Kârnavan of his Taravâd: a very youthful one.

Colour of the skin.—The fairest was between 33 and 40 (Broca); the darkest was 43 (redder). The average seems to be between 29, 37 and 44.

Colour of the eyes is a light brown. The actual numbers are—

Of colour type No.	1	(Broca)	5	individuals.
" " "	1 to 2	"	6	"
" " "	2	"	7	"
" " "	2 to 3	"	5	"

(Two were not included.) So that, although the eyes of rather more than one-fifth were dark brown, what would ordinarily be called black, the remainder were distinctly lighter in colour; and the number of persons whose eyes might be called quite a light brown, equalled those whose eyes were nearly black.

Weight of but 3 was recorded. The average is 105½ lb.

Prolificness.—In the 8 recorded instances the average number of children in each family was 3·7. It will be remembered that this clan is perhaps most of all under process of intermixture, its women mating with men of several higher clans (their own included) and with Nambûtiris.

Ornaments.—Ears are always pierced, and the usual Malabar earrings—kadukkans—are worn; sometimes as many as four in each ear. Individuals were noted thus—

(1) Aged 24. Circular patch of sandalwood paste, 1·8 cms. in diameter over the glabella. Two stripes of sandalwood paste on each upper arm. No ornaments,

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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand.

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off.

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vltil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjêli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out.

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than else- [421]
where. The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be attempted. The first of these, described as "most [127]
peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:—

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a 588
Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungádi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

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along with those of the boys of her Enangan (a recognised member of one's own clan) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers, is marked out as a fit person to tie the tâli, and a day is fixed for the tâli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Káranavan of the boy's family. On the appointed day the boy is invited to a house near that of the girl, where he is fed with his friends by the
[574]
head of the girl's family. The feast is called 'Ayani Unu,' and the boy is thenceforth called 'Manaválan' or 'Pillai' bridegroom. From the house in which the Manaválan is entertained, a procession is formed, preceded by men with sword and shield shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her taravâd, to meet the other procession, and after meeting the Manaválan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the pandal erected for that purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour and there his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths on the occasion. The Manaválan is then taken to the centre of the pandal where bamboo-mats, carpets, and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside of the house, and after going round the pandal three times, places her at the left side of the Manaválan, and the father of the girl then presents a new cloth tied in a kambli to the pair, and with this new cloth (technically called 'mantravadi') they change their dress. The wife of the Káranavan of the girl's taravâd, if she be of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting anklets, etc. The Purohita called 'Elayatu' (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tali to the Manaválan, and the family astrologer shouts 'Muhurtham' (auspicious hour), and the Manaválan, putting his sword on the lap, ties tali round the girl's neck, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families a Brâhmini sings certain songs intended to bless the couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a certain Nayâr who is versed in songs performs the office. The boy and the girl are then carried by Enangans to a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank or river, holding each other's hands. After changing cloths, they come home preceded by a procession, which varies in importance according to the wealth of the girl's family. Tom-toms and elephants usually form part of the procession, and saffron water is sprinkled. When they come home the doors of the house are all shut, which the Manaválan is required to force open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt

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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtaining in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is represented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II., 6 (1891).

564 613 588 of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) [184] which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, [586] confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the [765] divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli [783] on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while 585 the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of [588] her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu 184 Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[613] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the
[564] house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[483] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[677] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[787] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

writes thus in speaking of the Nâyars:—"When the 581
man visits the woman he lays down his arms at the 585
door; but, if there are no arms at the door, any acquaint-
ance may visit her. To visit the house when there are [201]
arms at the door, or remove them, is death." Now-a-days [178]
a man leaves his shoes outside the door. Equality of the [562]
sexes in all sexual matters, the man and woman being on terms of equality, having equal freedom, is certainly an uncommon merit in the Marumakkattâyam system. Either party may terminate the union—even after one 586
night of hymeneal bliss; and those who are unsuited to each other sexually, or in the way of temperament, in fact in any way, may put an end to their union and turn towards other partners. It may be thought that this liberty induced perpetual change, so it is as well to state here that it does nothing of the kind. Mere arbitrary divorce is very rare. Permanent attachment is the rule. 581
The basis of the system seems to be that the Taravâd 613
estate is held in trust for the support of the females and
of their descendants in the female line. This trust is 421
placed in the hands of the Kâranavan, the senior male member of the Taravâd who is the legal guardian of every member of it, and whose control of the Taravâd property is absolute. The odd feature in the Marumak- [604]
kattâyam system is that a man has his nephews about [591]
him in the house, and not his sons. He lives in one
house, while his wife and family live in another. That [184]
is, in South Malabar; in North Malabar they live together.

When we come to consider the degrees of relationship 582
within which marriage is prohibited, we find the rule is 613
that persons descended from a common female ancestor
are not at liberty to marry. Those of the same Taravâd can never intermarry; but this prohibition does not of course extend to the children of a brother and a sister, who are naturally of different Taravâds. Again, the principle that "no member of the Taravâd of a deceased [589]
wife or husband (is) eligible as the second wife or husband is true only as far as the woman is concerned; for a man may marry a woman of his deceased wife's Taravâd. But he who does this is not in harmony with social sentiment." We find this observance amongst the forest Mûppans of Wynâd. In the case of a man's wife dying, I found that a Mûppan could not take another wife from her family.

The rule does not interfere with union between the children (or their descendants) of a brother and sister

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613 such children belonging of course, under the Marumak-
[171] kattâyam system, to different Taravâds. We have seen already, when speaking of the Nambûtiris, that this rule of marriage between the children of a brother and sister, never between the children of two brothers or two sisters, is general throughout Southern India. It seems to be common, though there are exceptions, to the Brâhmans and the peoples commonly called Dravidian, with most of whom it is the most fitting marital union.

564 It will be interesting to add here a note on Samban-
dham as it is amongst the Akattu Chârna, or Akathitha-
553 parisha Nâyars (Akattu inside, parisha class),* by one of
585 themselves. The members of this clan being devoted to indoor services, chiefly writing and casting accounts. To those of the sub-clan attached to the Zamorin who were sufficiently capable to earn it, he gave the titular honour "Mênon," to be used as an affix to the name. The title Mênon is in general hereditary, but, be it remarked, many who now use it are not entitled to do so. Properly speaking only those whose investiture by the Zamorin or some other recognized chief is undisputed, they or their descendants (in the female line of course), may use it. Those invested pay a small fee to the Zamorin. A man known to me was invested with the title Mênon in 1895 by the Karimpuzha chief, who in presence of a large assembly said thrice "From this day forward I confer on Krishnan Nâyar the title of Krishna Mênon." Now-a-days be it said, the title Mênon is used by Nâyars of clans other than the Akattu Chârna. Those who belong to the sub-clan who owe Lordship to the Zamorin look to him even now to settle their caste disputes, and for permission to perform the tâlikettu and other important ceremonies. The ceremony to be described is that of this sub-clan.

564 As the old order changeth giving place to new in the
585 distribution of the honourable affix "Mênon," so too doth it change even in such an important piece of life as
178 marriage, or what under another name means the same thing amongst the Nâyars. It is truly sad to read of celebration of a Sambandham ceremony at Calicut whereat there was cake and wine for the guests, and (shades of all the departed!) a ring for the bride. The departure from national and therefore rational custom, for adoption of that which is neither custom nor cere-

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. C. P. Raman Menon, B.A., a prominent Police official of Calicut.

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place [582] the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In [181] North Malabar, which is much more conservative than [184] the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâra- 585 navan and the women † of his household choose the 564 bride, and communicate their choice to the intending 613 bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they [787] agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for [574] the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

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* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his pro-
cession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again serv-
ed with food, after which they are conducted to a room
where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass
or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over,
sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal
chamber, where the women of the house and others are
assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
hides herself behind the others. Here again the bride-
groom and his party go through more chewing while
they chat with the women. After a while the men with-
draw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the
women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one
of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occa-
sions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas
each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom,
sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited
receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the
men and women are separate; at different ends of the
[574] house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far
away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's
house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the
bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving
under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means
but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the
expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The
Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her
own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior
woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
613 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and
on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu; Thiruvathîra she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco.
The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32,
or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher
numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house
express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to
their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'"

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there),

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595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in [787] the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is [824] fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family. 843 613 [574]

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. 846 564 783 613 [844] [237]

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places. [828]

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important 846 613 553

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

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event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

"*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

"Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

"*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

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the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

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613 in the larger houses), and, if there is not, is taken to the [351] front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandalwood paste and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is then done what is called the Potavekkuka ceremony or placing new cotton cloths (kóti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the (deceased's) Taravâd followed by all the other members, also sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse when being taken to the place of burial or cremation. In some parts [184] of Malabar the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried (well covered in the cloths) by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is [184] removed there is done another ceremony called Para Virakkuka (filling up pâras—a pâra is a measure nearly as big as a gallon). All adult male members of the Taravâd take part in it under the direction of a man of the Atikkurissi clan (who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisite all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit). It consists in filling up three pâra measures with paddy, and one edangâli ($\frac{1}{10}$ of a pâra) with raw rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a (burning) lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela villâku. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end, one in the middle; on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased, tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist, and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist a piece of iron, generally a

* The eldest male member of the Malabar Taravâd is called the Kâranavan, as noted already (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1); all male members, brothers, nephews and so on, who are junior to him are called Anandravans of the Taravâd.

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

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* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
●613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
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[804] * Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who are junior to the deceased. They

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
[825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[231] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
613 been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
574 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
783 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
[824] place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
[431] bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
613 the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no
[783] ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

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765 613 the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better [778] by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

765 Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched 613 by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he 383 enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the [564] Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling [465] and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

554 In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is 621 the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day 765 after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5.4 boundaries

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [782]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he [613] was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 562 611 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person *is* and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road *as Zamorin*, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

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APPENDIX A.

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The account of the funeral ceremonies which has been given is not, of course, full and accurate as regards all the clans; but it is precise as regards one, and suffices for the present to give a clear idea of the ceremonies as performed by all. There are many interesting features in the ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil clan. Want of space forbids more than the briefest mention of some of these.

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Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the Taravâd thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are well lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the Taravâd prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the Enangru carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round.

They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men, standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled.

After this is done the "kodali karma" ceremony, using the spade, the axe and a big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all; and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre.

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/For information on the function of the Taravād as a clan, lineage and matrilineal household unit, the researcher is advised to check all three categories listed above./

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121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[127] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dube 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambûdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāḍuvaris*) of districts (*nāds*). These owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
175 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavaris*) of villages (*desams*).
564 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sûdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respec-
631 tively called Illath Sûdras and Swaroopattil Sûdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sûdra Nayars were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal
613 family of Nambûdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāḍuvari* or *desavari* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*tarawād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukada, Attikurusi (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 851 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. [692] 613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them. 613 [581]

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place. 588 613 564 [787]

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups. 121 588 [115] [114] [178]

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn. 588 346 621 532 564

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri 588 613 [776] [782] 588

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'. 588 184 595 851

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death. 588 586 184 [765]

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage. 588 184 582 [613] [114]

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life. 588 833 114

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers. 588 114 124

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston & 588 184 431

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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*asvatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the [842] arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a 184 clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the tradi- 178 tional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and 776 themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he [613] could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen, where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on 613 ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony 564 with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before 184 puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit 833

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 6[illegible]).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambûdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanâd lineages the *tâli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tâli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tâli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravâd* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tâli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tâli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tâli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambûdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nâdu-varis* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nâdu-varis*, and in religious matters, of Nambûdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
175 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[627] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
591 Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambūdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tāli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambūdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

58 564 182 It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tāli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tāli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambūdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambūdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambūdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tāli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tāli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tāli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannāns, called Mannāns in the south) and barbers (Kāvutiyyans, called Vātthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [422] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 29 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

564 613

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*.

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do 582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished 585 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each [606] husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the 595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern [601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the [428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death ~~of their~~ fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *achāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564] [587]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

[262] [783] [834]

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

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Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *karanavan*. This man is usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but particularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

Nayar
Tiyyar

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

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The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

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The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

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Again, in all the groups studied the *taravād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pedham*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *imar*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the
226 Tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
782 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
787 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to
182 these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

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[1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1926) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

Nayar
Tiyyar

184 The unconscious
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
the spirits of dead *kāraṇavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavans'* spirits,
593 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is
705 male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests
of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their
595 mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation
with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers
to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar
system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset
184 of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
593 gods of their natal *tarawāḍ*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect
that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are
towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among
Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with
182 his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children
613 for the sake of *tarawāḍ* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates
the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
182 who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
184 avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between
a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed,
however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother.
He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are per-
mitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister
is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal
kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the
spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar
mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there
182 is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear
593 that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under
the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a
woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
593 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond
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7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

796 831 78 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nāḍuvari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 831 78 182 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is normally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women 564 588 881 182 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a Nayar or Tiyyar puberty-ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty, 182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so 831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man. 613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emotional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and 564 masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This dependence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed 423 on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and perpetuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, 593 in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened To The mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-03) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 A WII Kerala A WII
Nayar
Tiyyar

CHART I. *Variations in Essential Features of the* Tali-*Rite in Four Groups*

Essential Features of the Ceremony	*South Malabar and Cochin Nayars*	*North Malabar Nayars*	*North Malabar Tiyyars*	*South Malabar and Cochin Tiyyars*
Basic economic and residential group in the Kinship System	Matrilineal lineage segment, uxorilocal	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence	Matrilineal lineage segment with virilocal residence; or patrilineal or ambilineal group	Patrilineal, patrilocal extended family
Descent and inheritance systems	Exclusively matrilineal	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Matrilineal with strong paternal rights and obligations	Double unilineal descent; patrilineal inheritance
Age of girl at *idli*-rite	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty	Pre-puberty
Place of ceremony	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house	Matrilineal lineage's ancestral house or father's own house	Patrilineal group's ancestral house
Expenses of ceremony met by	Matrilineal lineage as a whole	Matrilineal lineage as a whole with help from fathers	Senior MB and father jointly	Father with help from senior MB
Preliminary mock menstrual seclusion	Yes	Uncertain	Yes	Yes
Girl ceremonially 'given away' by	Brother or head of matrilineal group	Brother or head of matrilineal group	MB, MBW, or father	Father; secondarily, MB
Tāli tied by	*Eanaen*, district chief, or elderly Nambūdiri Brahman	Elderly Nambūdiri Brahman	MBW, FSi, prospective mother-in-law, or barber woman (Barbers – elderly man)	Young boy, sometimes prospective husband
Supplementary 'fertility' or 'defloration' rites performed by	Nambūdiri Brahman priest or village military leader	Marar (lower caste of funeral priests)	Barber	Village headman's wife
Subsequent seclusion of girl	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Couple secluded as for cohabitation	Uncertain	Girl secluded with 'bridegroom' or with bridegroom's loincloth

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8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

264 626 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were per-
564 suaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their
621 178 village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it
[425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar
351/ house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called
613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women.
[562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns
421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family,
[177] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

When the

family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

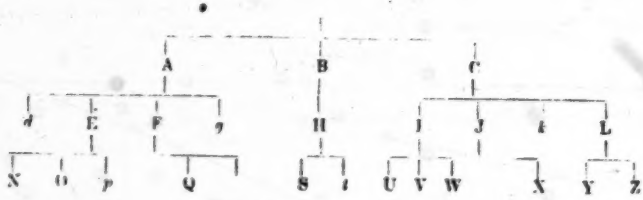

[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Taliketta kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working 604 829 against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children 604 more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in 586 two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. [564] Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

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why a man's affection for his own son is neither so intense nor so permanent as his affection for his sister's son.

Also, in matrilineal communities family tradition descends only through the sister's progeny. As the Nāyars formed a fighting aristocracy before the British conquest, they had naturally acquired family tradition, mottoes and arms, which descend of right only in the female line. Hence also a man looks to the training of his sister's sons to keep up his family tradition. All these contribute to an extraordinary, and at first sight inexplicable, tenderness towards the children of one's sister. 613 611 604

Relationship.[1]—Among the Nāyars the classificatory system of relationship is prevalent. When the ties of the family extend not only to one's immediate relations but to all who trace descent from the same ancestress in the female line, it is but natural that the terms of close relationship are used to all who belong to the family. As a matter of fact, the distinction between own brothers and collateral brothers does not exist. All the persons of your own generation older than you are called brothers, and equal respect is shown to them. They are called by such terms as big brother, small brother, etc., *only when they are older than you.* Those who are younger are always called by their names. 601 [613]

All women of your mother's generation are called mothers; those older than your mother are called *Peramma* or *Valiamma*, which means nominal mother or bigger mother, and those younger are called *Kochamma*, little mothers. But unlike among brothers, the distinction between one's mother and other females of the same generation is always maintained. Though respect is paid to all of them alike, own mother is always spoken of as mother, without qualification, and she alone has complete right to command you. Mother's own sisters are also different from those who are only collateral cousins to her. Mother's own brother and all of his generation are called *Ammavan* (literally mother's brother). Here also the distinction between own *Ammavas* and collateral *ammavas* was very slight in Nāyar society till nearly thirty years ago. Now, however, one looks more on one's own *Ammavan* as different from others, which is obviously due to the influence of the authority of direct relationship inculcated through the new system of education.[2]

The mother-in-law has no special name. This is, of course, due to the universal prevalence of first cross-cousin marriage. The mother-in-law is generally addressed 606 601

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Native Tribes of Central Australia*, p. 58) try to prove that the classificatory terminology to express relationship shows the existence in some earlier time of group marriages. Perhaps it does so when such relationship terms are in use in a patrilineal community. On the other hand, in a matrilineal community such terms have nothing to do with the system of marriage, but only with relationship counted on the mother's side. [114]

[2] Note specially: though all the women of the mother's generation stand in equal relationship, it is only the actual parent that is entitled to be called mother without any qualification to it. All the others are spoken of in comparative terms, as big mother, *i.e.*, elder mother, small mother, *i.e.*, younger mother.

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606 as *Ammari Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother,
601 and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social*
601 *Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever
606 first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His
114 explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

601 Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister.
604 She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

613 *Enangar.*—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has
621 decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed *a social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of
[564] a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always
[264] of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-
613 marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent
621 opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate
582 months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety
178 and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

582 *Marriage Restrictions.*—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by
[191] the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property [871] in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best [875] Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

588 [114] to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] [613] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the [787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the [791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar* [301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the [576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The [605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (*i.e.*, her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

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595 the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in
175 the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it
[609] must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house.
[114] Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that
595 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar,
174 whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes
538 minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to
174 be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking
613 of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer,
[564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the
[187] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the
[604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few
[593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangar* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be. 843 613 [604] [593] [787] [842]

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Amomāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?" 843 613 182 [604] 843 182 789

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter. 843

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it. 846 783

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar 853 846 608

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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This is mostly due to two reasons: 434

First of all, there is the joint family system which provides for all the members [187] without distinction. Secondly, every Nāyar family lives on its own plot of ground [245] on which coco-nut palms are grown, which bring in a small but quite comfortable sum.

The standard of life is comparatively high. Among the richer classes it is 511 fairly decent, even according to the higher material standards of Europe, while, among the poorer classes, it never comes anywhere near the uncleanliness, the misery, the unrefined and uncultured barbarism which is the atmosphere of the slum life of the big cities of Europe. Poverty is less disreputable than in civilised communities, and the difference this makes is immense. The peculiarly civilised idea that success is the criterion of intrinsic merit, and that, consequently, failure by itself proves that it was deserved, is almost totally unheard of among the Nāyars. The fact that [613] the individual members of a family have to pool their abilities and, to some extent, [182] their personal incomes, prevents the sharp distinction between the rich and the poor which is so characteristic of societies organised on an individual basis.

Food.—The Nāyars are not vegetarians. Like all Hindus, they do not eat 262 beef, but nothing else is prohibited. Fish is a favourite article of food, and there is an old couplet which sings:

> "*Katal vizhakkū Kari yunjoru vaku*
> *Bhata Bhojana matu Kootāttillā.*" [539]
>
> "Then there is a kind of banana of the seas (fish)
> And the Nayars cannot live without it."

There is another couplet, which says:

> "There is nothing among the various kinds of food which equals the flesh of a boar."

The Nāyars are great epicures and they cook beautifully. Rice, of course, is the staple food, but milk curds, butter and *ghee* are things of equal importance.

Most Nāyar families have three meals a day. The breakfast, among the poor 264 people, consists of rice boiled with water in the form of a pudding. With it is taken 262 as relishes pickles, fried fish, cooked vegetables, etc. The next meal is at noon. The main course, of course, is rice. The first part of it is eaten with butter, boiled peas, and many other relishes. The second course is fish, vegetables, etc., mixed with rice. The third part is eaten with buttermilk, mangoes, and pickles. The supper at night is also a meal of which rice is the chief part. The thing about it is that, though the main course is the same as porridge among the Scotch, the variety, as well as the taste, of the subsidiary dishes is what makes all the difference.

Clothing.—The typical Nāyar (male) clothing is the *Mundu*. This is generally 291 2½ yards long, 1¼ yards broad, cloth of fine texture made at Eraniyal, in South 184 Travancore. Nowadays, people wear cotton cloth from Lancashire, while the [439]
richer classes go in for Benares silk.

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gent, persevering, and prosperous community. Fourthly, there are the foreign 564
Brahmins, who are chiefly usurers, making money by lending at a fabulous high rate of interest and buying up property. Now, the *Tharawad* (or the joint undivided family) system gives the Nāyars a great advantage. Their capital is strategically 178
massed, so to say, and while the property of a family is joined together its credit is 613
much more than it would be if it were divided between the various members. Intel- 434
ligent Nāyars see the advantage of this position, and are loth to break up what is most certainly an effective economic organisation.

The tendencies of change that are visible are mainly the following: 178

There is, first of all, a distinct process of change from the *matrilocal* to the *patri-* 591
local system. This is at present confined to a few of the English-educated families. The officials and those in learned professions have their wives and children staying with them, and this has most certainly set up a new current of opinion. The tendency among these people has been to change the matrilocal matriliny into patrilocal. The older families still look with disapproval on this, and it has not progressed very much, except among a few ultra-moderns. Even in orthodox families the women were allowed for a few months every year to go and stay with their husband's people. Now, by the Nāyar Regulation Act (1912) of Travancore, the husband is given the right to demand that his wife should come and stay with him. Of course, it is open to the *Karnavan* to prohibit this, but in such a case the husband can divorce his wife immediately. Therefore we may safely predict a definite change to a patrilocal system among the English-educated classes of Nāyars.

But whether this would contribute towards a change from matrilineal to 178
patrilineal system is a question more difficult to answer. On the whole I am 611
inclined to answer it in the negative. But for the economic competition of other communities, the Nāyars would certainly have partitioned their estates and started on a patrilineal existence. But now it is too late. The economic interest involved is so vast, the number of people to be affected by it so great, the change in itself so revolutionary, that it is, for a long time at least, beyond the scope of either legislative or administrative action. It would, indeed, be very interesting to watch the line of evolution which such a community, placed as it is between the close and powerful oligarchy of the Nampudiri Brahmins, and the no less powerful and at present unquestionably more aggressive Syrian Christians, would take. The next quarter of a century will probably solve the problem. What the solution will be it is impossible for us to say; that it will not for a long long time, at least, be real patriliny, I can prophesy; the rest time alone can answer.

APPENDIX.

Note No. 1.—The Origin of the word "Nāyars."

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There are many reasons to believe that the term Nāyar is a corrupted form of the word *Nagar* or "serpent-men." The generally accepted derivation of the word

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595 circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, [554] his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away [613] whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *kiranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kiranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kâranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding [84] him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman [626] is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest [184] stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her [582] husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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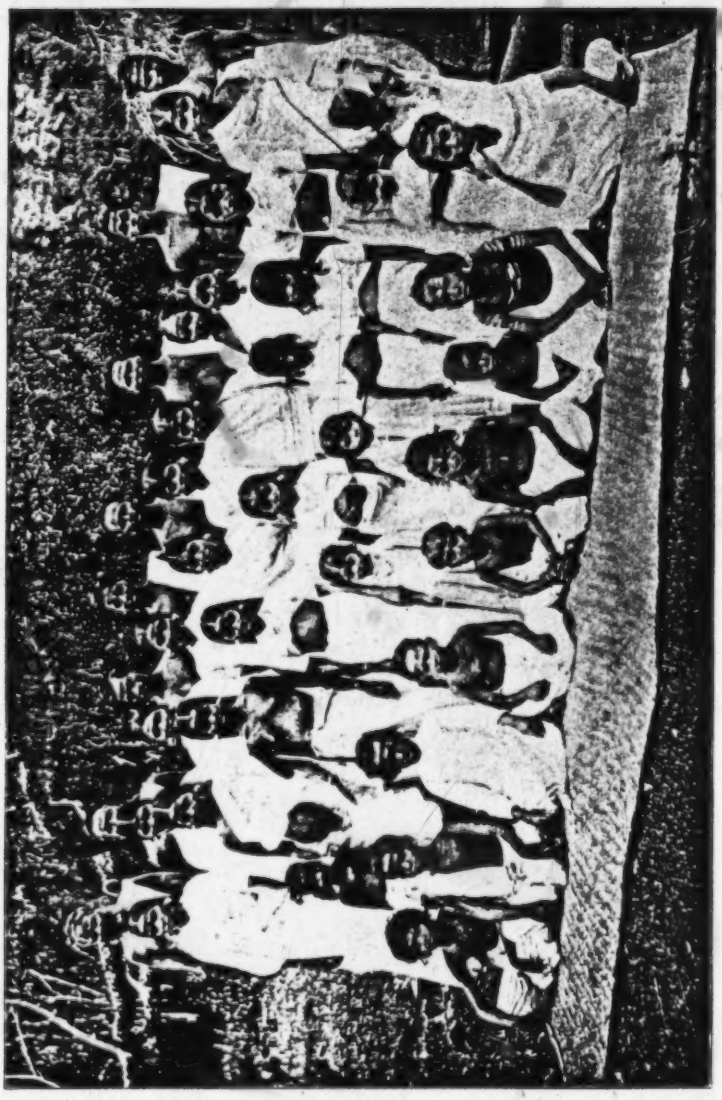

A TYPICAL NAYAR FAMILY

[facing p. 47]

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deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large number of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the breakfast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

592 [871] [788] [264] [513] [352] [556] [184] [735]

Mention has already been made of the *kâranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *tâvazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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613 592 [421] by the woman's brother or some other senior member as *káranavan*.

There are some who love and admire the system, and they depict the *tarawád* as a group of males and females bound together by the sacred tie of common descent from one ancestors' grand-mother. "The females have only to follow the natural instinct to be fruitful and to multiply, while the males, free from all care for their own progeny, are expected to labour like the honey bee for the common good of the *tarawád*-hive, and pour their earnings into the lap of the venerable *káranavan*, who, in the exercise of absolute discretion, administers the income for the benefit of all. Protected by the impartibility of the estate, refreshed by the acquisitions of the junior members, and under the beneficent sway of the senior male, the *tarawád* would rise high and endure through generations."[1] The advantages of such a complete joint family system are three-fold: firstly, the genial society it affords, the closest association of young and old, and the abundant opportunity for recreation and instruction; secondly, in the process of production many of the advantages of concerted labour are secured, as is obvious, without carelessness, dishonesty or misdirected production and consumption; and thirdly, there is the remarkable saving in the process of consumption. The [562] freedom and independence of Nayar women, their influence in the family and the absence of conventional restrictions, such as child marriage, enforced widowhood and the other customs which exercise so baneful an influence upon Hindu society elsewhere are other advantages that add to the excellence of the Nayar system of life.

613 592 182 178 The system above described, may have worked smoothly enough in former days; but in these days of civilization, with the growing wants of the members, coupled with the indifference and selfishness of the *káranavan* and the other members, the joint family tends to disintegration. At a certain point the mere increase of the members renders it intolerable for them all to live together under one roof, and when that stage is reached, the *tarawád* splits up into *távazhis*, each containing a mother, her brothers and her children.

[562] It is to the woman that the fortune of the family belongs, and yet she is not the mistress of the house but only one

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 44.

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of many joint members dependent on the *kâranavan*. The females and the junior members pass their lives in utter discontent and misery, if the *kâranavan* happens to be unsympathetic and tyrannical. The father is not the legal guardian of his children, for whose training and education the *kâranavan* is responsible. In families, where there are many boys and girls, the chances are that he educates none of them, on the plea that he cannot afford to educate them all, nor can he make any invidious distinction. The family, in certain cases, becomes the seat of envy, hatred and dissensions, and not a day passes without some dispute or other among the members. It is said that with the advancement of civilization the system becomes more and more unworkable; it offends against every principle of economy, healthy life and natural affection. By freeing a man from the obligation of maintaining his wife and children, it sanctions the reckless propagation of species, destroys the motive power for prudence and foresight, forces up the population to the very point where it must be kept down by actual want of means of subsistence. It "huddles together" as a family a number of distant relatives not necessarily drawn to each other by any bond of natural affection. It makes home life impossible, for the father is a casual visitor, and mother and children are but units in a heterogeneous flock, dependent on a practically irresponsible guardian, who from a mere accident of his being the eldest of the flock is expected to be able to regard every member with an impartial eye, and at the same time preserve the interests of his wife and children.[1] These causes are at work and tend to divide the families into several branches in the direction of *tévazhis* by partition. Fortunately, in the Cochin State, such evils as those above described are of rare occurrence, for partition is effected as early as the symptoms of disunion and ill-feeling among the members are visible.

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1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 48.

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CHAPTER III.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

592 The Nayars follow the *marumakkathâyam* law of succession, *i. e.*, the law which regulates succession through the female line. The senior male member called the *kâranavan* is entitled to the full possession of the property, and is absolute in its management. The junior members, on the other hand, have a claim to residence and maintenance in the family house. They cannot call for an account except as an incident to a prayer for the removal of the manager for gross misconduct, nor claim any specific share of the income, nor even require that the maintenance provided for them should be in proportion to the income of the *tarawâd*. An absolute discretion in this direction is vested in the manager who is the legal guardian of every member of the family.[1] He is not accountable to any member in the *tarawâd* in respect of its income, nor can a suit be maintained for an account of the *tarawâd* property in the absence of fraud on his part. He is under no obligation to support any member of his *tarawâd* by his own labour or from his self-acquisitions. The only restraint on him in the management is, that he cannot alienate the lands of the family except with the consent of all the other members and without proper necessity.[2] If a family has so far increased in the number of its members that they cannot conveniently live under the same roof any longer, it divides itself with the consent of the senior member into *tâvazhis* to each of which is assigned a portion of the property for maintenance, and such *tâvazhis* may reside in separate houses or farm-houses belonging to the family and appropriating from the lands newly assigned to them an income sufficient to maintain themselves. In the partition of

Inheritance.

613 [611]

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1. Vide Mayne's Hindu Law, sec. 268,
2. I. L. R. II, Mad. 328.

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a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathíyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kāranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Pūrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 238.

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764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udakakriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chithayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prinan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brahman sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified.

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned carefully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared

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824 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring
765 with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an
782 obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread
613 some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawad*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank
[825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the
[775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave
[231] any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

During the seven days the house of the deceased and all
765 its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the mem-
783 bers of that *tarawad* may not go to any other house nor can
613 members of other *tarawads* visit them without polluting them-
574 selves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *karanavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *karanavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawád* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawád*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawád*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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765 613 [782] and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when [825] clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

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[p. 17]

The Nayar Family in a Disintegrating Matrilineal System[1]

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Introduction

In this short essay, I will present one case of the disintegration of a Nayar *tarwad* (matrilineal joint family), based on the materials collected by myself. 121

The general institutional system of a traditional Nayar *tarwad* is already well known, and has been much discussed recently by anthropologists, including K. Gough.[2] Here I state it briefly as a preface to the main discussion. A traditional Nayar *tarwad* was a property group consisting of a matrilineal lineage exclusively, headed and represented by the senior male member, called *karanavan*. Normally the members of a *tarwad* formed a distinguishable domestic unit. Spouses of the members of a *tarwad* resided in the *tarwad* where they were born, and a husband visited his wife at her *tarwad* at night and returned early morning.[3] The father had no duty or obligation on his own children, instead, the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the offspring of the female members of the *tarwad*. 613 591 593 429

The Nayars are one of the Hindu upper castes in Kerala, next to the Nambudri Brahman, and traditionally the majority of the Nayars had been land holders or managers, not cultivators. On such a social and economic base, the function of the *tarwad* had been maintained. Various factors have led to the disintegration of the *tarwad* system, the major cause of which, I think, was the economic changes accompanied by modernization since the beginning of the 613 182 564 471

1 This essay is one of the outcomes of my field work on matrilineal systems in India (1955–56) carried out by the generous grant of the Elin Wagner Foundation in Sweden, to which my profound acknowledgement goes. Also I am very thankful for the help of Dr. John Mogey. 114 122

2 E. Kathleen Gough: "Changing kinship usages in the setting of political and economic change among the Nayars of Malabar," *J. R. Anthrop. Inst.* 82, pp. 71–87; "A comparison of incest prohibitions and the rules of exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Mairabal," *International Achives of Ethnography*, Vol. XLVI, Part I, 1952, pp. 82–105. 113

3 The *karanavan* was an exception: he could take his wife and children in his *tarwad*. In North Malabar, not only the *karanavan*, but also other male members used to take their wives and children to their *tarwad*. However, these wives, including children, had to leave their husband's *tarwad*, as soon as their husband died.

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19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad* occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually. The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan* becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

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1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

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except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad*; and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

[text continues on p. 21]

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[Marayil Tarwad]

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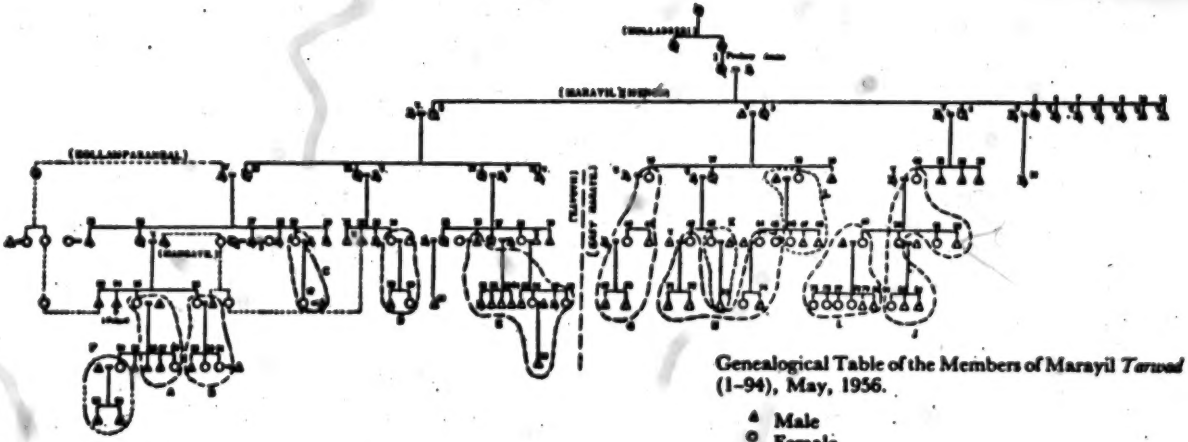

Genealogical Table of the Members of Marayil *Tarwad* (1–94), May, 1956.

- ▲ Male
- ○ Female
- ▲● Dead
- ▲* Husbands who practised a visiting marriage
- ▲ Husband who established his own household with his wife and children
- ⬡ Independent household; households of F, K and L are not in Ernakulam.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

by which the

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 613 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944. 182

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male 613 members who are not included in these groups formed each household with 594 wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree 182 of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups 182 consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members 613 of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if 621 they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is 594 visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy [594] tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother 613 (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact 621 of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two 574 or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the 182 group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members 613 of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another 582 *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded 613 by Prabaty Amma (*1*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows: 173

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 173 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 193 591 968 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death. Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 175 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898, the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 591 593 182 175 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations, took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 591 175 182 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 591 175 182 [421] [594] 613 591 594 175 182

group was named "East Marayil," while the former retained the original name "Marayil." The property was not entirely divided, but managed independently. The group of East Marayil shifted their residence to one mile east of the original one.

After the first partition, in the new Marayil group where I concentrated my study, the *karanavan* was at this time *15*. Among the members of this group, *12* and her sons and daughters had a separate residence built by her husband, Nando Pillai, and supported by him without help from her *tarwad*. It seems to have been already customary in this period among those Nayars who had a considerable individual income, to establish an independent household for their *elementary families*, as in the case of Nando Pillai. By these men a new type of family came into being alongside the matrilineal joint family.

Nevertheless, it was to take a long time for the establishment of such an elementary family with a neolocal residence pattern among the majority of the Nayars. As the next generation of this case shows, in spite of the paternal activities of Nando Pillai, the family retained its matrilineal pattern. His eldest daughter did not leave the house, and her husband practiced the traditional visiting marriage; the second daughter *29* returned to this house after her husband, who was the *karanavan* of another *tarwad*, died. However, his sons left his house each establishing an independent house where they lived with their wives. As a result, the first and second daughters, with their children, occupied this house, which produced a very similar pattern to a traditional *tarwad*, except for the absence of married out male members.

Through this picture, we can see that the role of the husband/father lies in the establishment of a new segment of a matrilineal group, rather than in the establishing of a nonmatrilineal system. The basic framework of the Nayar system was still matrilineal in this stage. As the result, a *tarwad* or Nayar household was often occupied by some married female members and their children, though the total number of the matrilineal members decreased rapidly by marrying-out members.

The fact that husbands of *26* and *38* did practice visiting marriage might give an impression that they were very old fashioned in their time, but it is really the outcome of the residential situation in the transitional stage: for some of the female members, it was natural to remain in the vacant *tarwad*; and a husband might not have enough economic resources to establish a new house for his wife and children, or might be occupied by the work of his own *tarwad*.

Such a stage also introduced uxorilocal marriage which was new to the Nayar. A husband, instead of building a new house for his wife and children, used the vacant wife's *tarwad* or wife's house built by her father, and he supported his family largely by his own income, as in the cases of *25*, *34* and *53*. Therefore, even in such uxorilocal cases, paternal authority was well developed. When the *tarwad* was in full function, the Nayar never practiced uxorilocal residence, though there were cases of virilocal residence. Uxorilocal residence in this case is irrelevant to the matrilineal system: it came into the picture because of the disintegration of the matrilineal system. It should be treated as a different problem from the uxorilocal residential patterns of other matrilineal systems.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The increase in the establishment of paternal elementary families gradually
425 split the *tarwad* into pieces, lessening the function of the *tarwad*. This Marayil
175 *tarwad* finally divided its property between individual members in 1944, as did
182 many *tarwad* in this period. This was forty-seven years since the first partition in 1898, and this period saw the disintegration of this *tarwad*.

613 The members of the fourth and fifth generations in the Diagram make up
175 the transitional period: they had the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad* and at
182 the same time they played a role of the husband/father as in a patrilineal family. Their duties and obligations were transitional from those of the *karanavan* to
[593] those of the father. Though by law then the *karanavan* was the legal guardian of the members of a *tarwad*, actually the father who lived with his children was
[429] already *de facto* guardian of his children. These individuals were pulled in their obligations and duties between their matrilineal kin and their wives and children. In fact they differentiated their roles according to the economic and residential circumstances in which they were involved, though the degree of differentiation differed from individual to individual.

613 When the fifth generation were in their youth, the *karanavan* of the *tarwad*
593 was *15*. According to the Nayar rule the duty of the fostering and educating
175 these members should be performed by *15*. However, in actuality among these
182 members, those who had been given a higher education by the *karanavan* were sons of *13* and *14* (*31*, *32*, *33*, *36* and *39*), while that of the sons of *12* (*25*, *27*, *28* and *30*) was given by their father. The latter's case is indeed the result of the father's economic ability and his affection towards his children whom he lived with. Yet this father, on the other hand, made also a considerable economic contribution to the members of his own *tarwad* as the *karanavan*. Thus such a man played the two roles of father and *karanavan* at the same time.

613 Such behaviour and contributions created ambivalent psychological
602 inclinations among his descendants through his wife as well as through his sisters.
421 For example, the descendants of *12* who live now partly on property left by
175 *12*'s husband, tend to complain that their grandfather's sisters' daughters who
182 live in the house built by *12*'s husband, are enjoying property left by their grandfather. They said that "they are enjoying our grandfather's property," a situation reasonable from the point of view of the working of the matrilineal system, since "our grandfather" is "their maternal uncle." Here we see an interesting fact that they think in terms of the father (grandfather): "the father (grandfather) is of ours." At the same time, they have a tendency to expect and depend on the economic help from *32* and *27*, who are their matrilineal kin. In fact *57* after the death of her father, was economically helped by *32* and (27), which she took for granted. Among these members at the transitional stage, a confusion of rights and obligations is obvious.

613 In such an unstable situation involving ambivalent elements, what gave
582 them a certain satisfaction or solution was cross-cousin marriage. The marriage
175 of *53*, whose wife is his classificatory cross-cousin brought satisfaction to both
182 matrilineal groups (Marayil and Kallamparanbal), because by this marriage both parties would have a chance to enjoy, and exercise rights on, the property

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left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's
604 advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
182 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
591 the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
602 were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma, the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
353

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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children regard this picture of Prabaty Amma as that of their ancestress through their father. It appears from this symbol, combined with the frequent visits of their father's sisters and their children, that the father's matrilineal kin are conceptualized as if they were that of the mother. This tendency is greater in the case of the wife and children of *32*, which I think largely derives from the fact that *32* is playing the role of the central figure of the Pula Sambantham of his matrilineal group, and that his wife is a member of Mangayil *tarwad*, which is one of the important and close affinal matrilineal groups to Marayil members: the mother's brother and brother of *32*'s wife also married with members of Marayil *26* and *56*.

In spite of the inclination of these children towards their father's matrilineal group, and paternal authority being well established, they still maintain the surname of the male members of their mother's matrilineal group.[1] In Trivandrum the Nayar said to me it depended on the individual free choice whether one should take the father's surname or the mother's brother's: in fact, I found some of them taking their father's surname. However, among the Nayar in Ernaklum, all they are taking mother's brothers' surname and they are proud to do so.

The greater approach of the children to their father's matrilineal group seems to me largely due to their father's important status in his matrilineal group, the members of which live very near to him, combined with his distinguished economic activities, which make him maintain closer contact with his matrilineal kin. For example, if *32* was not the central figure in his matrilineal group, and poor, and on the other hand his wife had a very wealthy uncle to help her now and then, his wife and children might have more attachment to their mother's matrilineal kin, rather than to the father's.

In such a transitional stage, including the earlier stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad* as already discussed, a man has two orientations, to his matrilineal group and to his elementary family. And a man stands balanced between the two groups, differentiating his role according to the circumstances in which he is involved. In this situation to decide a man's behaviour the given law seems less effective than the actual situation in which an individual is involved. *36* who married and once resided in his wife's *tarwad*, later returned to his own *tarwad*, taking the role of a *karanavan* of his old *tarwad*. He said that he felt his need as a guardian for his sister's children, as there was no grown up male member in this *tarwad* building; but he did not mind leaving his wife and grown-up daughters and sons behind. This case should be compared with the case of Nando Pillai who lived his later life with his wife and children, though he was the legal guardian *(karanavan)* of his *tarwad*.

1 Among Nayars, traditionally the surname is used for only male members of a *tarwad*, while female members are called by her maiden name, adding the term "Amma" instead of the surname, after their initiation ceremony. All male members of a *tarwad* share the same surname: for example, the surname of Marayil members is Menon. However, since the same surname is used by many *tarwad* among the Nayars, it does not necessarily indicate common descent lines.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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The observed ambivalent attitudes found in Nayar men during and after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system is very similar to that of many matrilineal peoples, where the system allows the cohabitation of husband and wife. There it is a characteristic feature that a man is placed in an ambivalent situation between the obligations and duties towards his own matrilineal kin and towards his wife and children. From this angle, the present Nayar still live in the matrilineal atmosphere. It is very interesting to speculate where Nayar system will go. How long does it take the Nayar to become free from a matrilineal ideology, the shadow of the *tarwad* life? Many of the present Nayar population have experiences of the *tarwad* life, so the real change might be expected in the next generation. However, even then, it seems to me it would not shift to a patrilineal system, though it could possibly take the patrinominal system with a kind of bilateral arrangement. Whatever it may be, I think the future of the Nayar family and kinship system presents one of the most interesting examples for its study of the effects of historical and economic changes on a kinship system; and how far this kinship ideology can persist.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not 105
wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. 564
Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always 576
praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya 291
factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of 104
the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and 105
of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their 564
mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. 614
Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and [611]
through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in [428]
matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in [613]
principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, mar- [584]
riage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in [591]
the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. [611]
They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and [613]
patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden [582]
days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his
caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons 105
were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devo- 564
tees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as [588]
sambandham to which we shall revert in a moment. They were main- [463]
tained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a [582]
meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by [428]

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

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841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction
823 has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does
784 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 784 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a 562 chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

588 invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and, in the presence of friends and castemen, ties a tāli (marriage badge) round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. [587] Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined along with those of her enangan (a recognised member of one's own class) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers is marked out as a fit person to tie the tāli, and a day is fixed for the tāli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Karanavan * (senior male in a tarwad) of the boy's family. The feast is called ayaniūnu, and the boy is thenceforth called Manavālan or Pillai (bridegroom). From the house in which the Manavālan is entertained a procession is formed, preceded by men with swords, and shields shouting a kind of war-cry. [613] In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her tarwad, to meet the other procession, and, after meeting the Manavālan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the booth erected for the purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour, and his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths. The Manavālan is then taken to the centre of the booth, where bamboo mats, carpets and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside the house, and, after going round the booth three times, places her at the left side of the Manavālan. The father of the girl then presents new cloths tied in a kambli (blanket) to the pair, and with this new cloth (called manthravadi) they change their dress. [613] [564] The wife of the Karanavan of the girl's tarwad, if she be

* The rights and obligations of Karanavans are fully dealt with by Moore, Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd edition, 1905.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the proces- [231] sion, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

588 178 174 [585] [613] Nāyars by divine law to administer to the lust of the Nambūdris were disseminated abroad. The better classes among the Nāyars revolted against the degrading custom thus established, and a custom sprang up, especially in North Malabar, of making sambandham a more or less formal contract, approved and sanctioned by the karnavan (senior male) of the tarwad to which the lady belonged, and celebrated with elaborate 585 [174] ceremony under the pudamuri form. That there was nothing analogous to the pudamuri prevalent in Malabar from A.D. 1550 to 1800 may, I think, be fairly presumed from the absence of all allusion to it in the works of the various European writers." According to Act IV, Madras, 1896, sambandham means an alliance between a man and a woman, by reason of which they in accordance with the custom of the community to which they belong, or either of them belongs, cohabit or intend to cohabit as husband and wife.

Of sambandham the following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon to the Malabar Marriage Commission. "The variations of the sambandham are the pudamuri, vastradānam, uzhamporukkuka, vitāram kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malaiyāli who would not readily understand what is meant by sambandham tudanguga (to begin sambandham). The meaning of this phrase, which means to 'marry,' is understood throughout Kēraḷam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. It is thus found that sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among marumakkatāyam [192] Nāyars. [Sambandhakāran is now the common term for [184] husband.] It will also be found, on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this

however, my experience that sambandham was rare on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585 little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431] sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796] are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585 husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574 brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787] Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788] on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431] lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613 where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596 a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585 hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591] husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, "women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852 approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853 puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613] chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782] is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice-[553] giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852 hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846 Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564 Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386] are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824] the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

553
613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his
[576] right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda." 304 [301]

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all 763 [824] [823] [613] 764 [824] [613] [775] [613] [766]

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
[782] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at 764 the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of 613 the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The [824] whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among [782] the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The [823] corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghī (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravād. Here must be stated [561] the invariable rule that no member of the taravād, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

* The eldest male member of the taravād is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravād.

764 importance that the whole pyre burns at once. The
613 greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's taravād who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or grounds round every Nāyar's house). The eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation.
[763] It should be said that, on the news of a death, the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the taravād go and bathe, they remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead body has been placed. A small image representing the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done, the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses. When the
764 cremation has been done by night, the duty of sēshakriya
782 (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun
775 the next day between 10 and 11 A.M., and is done on
613 seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11, and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the taravād younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from

the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

764 613 722 775

They kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandal paste, and leaves of the cherūla, the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making the offerings. The half boiled rice is made into balls (pindam), and each one present takes one of these in his right hand, and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and leaf is gently tapped with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed, and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing. The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and the piece of iron in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

The spirits of those who have committed suicide, or met death by any violent means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman priests are called in, and appease them by means of tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it." 766 775 [782]

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting features in the death ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round. They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all, and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre." 764 184 613 [564]

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 763 184

342 [823] west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlapura or four-556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

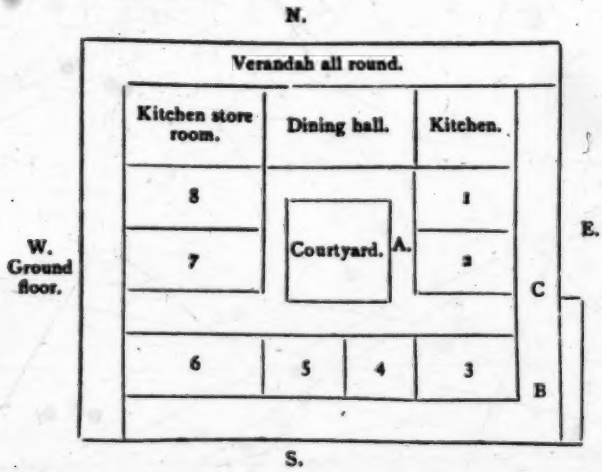

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

 342 556

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

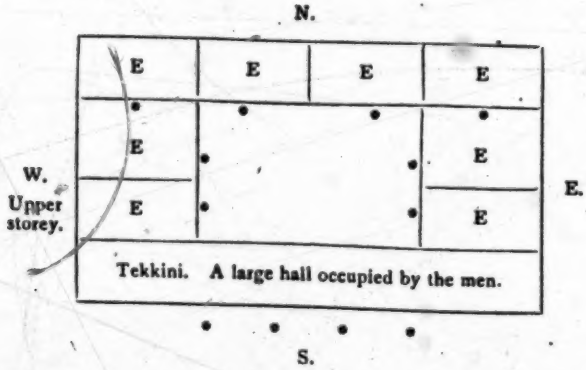

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by 526
squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nāyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nāyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, 631
"have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the dēsam, presided over by a Dāsavazhi. A number of dēsams adjoining one another constituted a nādu, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the Nāduvazhi. Above the Nāduvazhis was the Rājah, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each nādu split itself up into a certain number of taras, over the affairs of which a Karanavan, or elder, presided. An assembly of these Karanavans [613]
constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military [623]
organisation of the Nāyars in mediæval times. These 631
six hundred are referred to in two places in the second 175
Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 623
A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371
M.E., the same organisation is referred to as Venattarunuru, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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complex, contradictory, and difficult material collected by many authors, and, second, to test the Ceylon model of the association of hypergamy with unilineal descent. It will be recalled that Gough's Kumbapettai village seemed to include the variations in kinship found dispersed over a large area in Ceylon. On the Malabar coast, the situation is, if possible, made even more complicated: in this famous region we find every possible variation of our model, from matrilineal hypergamous systems to endogamous and patrilineal hypergamous systems, all existing pell-mell in the same area. In general, it seems clear that these various features are used as structural indices to distinguish communities from one another. The over-all pattern, by contrast, seems uncluttered: in lower levels of social rank we find, on the whole, endogamous castes which so far as the material goes exhibit the fundamental characteristics of the general structure. In the higher levels of Hindu and Muslim society we find an intense preoccupation with status and social rank, and unilineal descent systems are built out of the general structure. Then, in the limiting cases, each matrilineage behaves as if it were a single unique caste having only hypergamous connections with the outside world.

In this section, I shall first attempt to establish the existence of the general structure in castes in both North and South Malabar, and I shall then go on to examine the questions of descent and hypergamy. Before we come to specific cases, I should observe that the region exhibits an impressive general cultural uniformity: the language, Malayalam, is very closely related to Tamil; the details of the customs find immediate echoes not only in the material from the rest of South India but among Buddhists in Ceylon as well. Quite apart from structural matters, there is an intuitive appreciation of the fact that we are in a civilization with a distinctive style of its own in which the different customs of discrete groups appear as permutations and combinations of the same set of general ideas.

The term Nayar covers a motley collection of categories of people. Primarily, they are aristocratic Nayar descended from the important royal houses of Cochin and Travancore. There are also people of servant castes who have allegedly taken on the Nayar title in the last century and are only Nayar by courtesy. Some of these categories may be fully endogamous and others, at the higher levels, hypergamous. Though there are again uniformities, it is important to specify which group of Nayar are being considered. The word *taravad,* used by various castes in Malabar, denotes a group of matrilineally related persons with the same name who observe rules of exogamy. The *taravad* may be split into smaller property-holding groups, each with a head *Karanavan.*[7]

[7] "One who 'acts'": comp. *Karanava,* "to do" in Sinhalese.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape. 613 114

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve (1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles. 613 114 184 [554]

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan. 613 [184] [614]

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children (a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. 591 [844] [171] [851] [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the 601 [602]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely dimi-
[613] nution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61). 121 602

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough. 602 613 114

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin." 602 614 114 [582]

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific. 602 611 [582]

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy. 121 564 582 613

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 564 582 613

but *B* will from *A*; furthermore, *A* will not 'give' women to *B*, but will 'take' women from *B*." The second method (hypergamy), though only a logical development of the first, and a very precise way of manifesting superior status, has complex implications. In effect, a progressive distinction of status is made between the children of the sister (superior) and the children of the brother (inferior). Hence not merely the caste but the entire network of kinship is placed on a gradient of ritual status. Furthermore, if hypergamy is to be combined with lineages, it should be clear that, although the matter can be harmoniously combined with matrilineages (i.e., the brother partaking of the superior ritual connections of his sister), the patrilineal principles raise difficult problems, since the sister is given "away" to a superior group and the brothers can partake in the increase in ritual status only by reason of their claims on her children or in some other indirect fashion. Also, since the position of the woman affects the status of her children in both matrilineal and patrilineal contexts, it appears difficult to combine intracaste hypergamy with patrilineal descent at least in South India. Thus we get ZD marriage (i.e., symmetrical exchange) coupled with Brahman caste endogamy in Tanjore, but an entire scale of hypergamous matrilineages all the way from Kshatriya to Sudra status in Malabar. A similar feature was observed in eastern Ceylon.

The first method (endogamy) permits the ethnographer to make simple statements about discrete categories of people; the second (hypergamy) is more complex, since the status-bearing unit can be a single lineage with hypergamous connections and it may be difficult in the continuous descending steps of status to say exactly where one "caste" category ends and the next begins (see fig. 37).

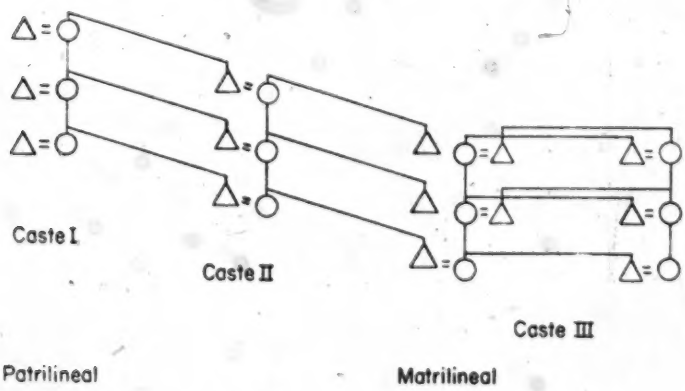

Figure 37. Patrilineal and matrilineal hypergamy.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Let us now return to the facts:

The Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar (also referred to as Central Kerala) is also organized on the principles of the matrilineal *taravad*. Among ordinary people, matrilineal groups beyond the household are barely recognized for most intents and purposes, but among the wealthy and aristocratic classes, the *taravad* finds an impressive elaboration. Gough presents the ideal model as a matrilineal clan with localized matri-lines all of which are exogamous. The women have equal or hypergamous connections with men of other *taravad* or castes, whereas the men visit women of lower *taravad*. The residential pattern is that brothers and sisters live in the same household and men visit their "wives" in their own households. This contrasts with the North Nayar picture in which women join their husbands in their houses, and with the Mapilla picture (their Muslim neighbors) in which the men join their wives in the houses as in Ceylon. Of course, in a climate and region where houses are easily built and where the kin of both the husband and the wife are quite likely to be in the near vicinity of the married couple, if not in the same community, these residential arrangements may be looked upon primarily as symbolic statements of "difference" rather than fundamental differences in kinship systems and sentiments.

We may now raise further questions:

First: to what extent does our previous discussion of the general structure help us to understand the Nayar situation? A careful examination of the data makes it clear that the Nayar family in Cochin and South Malabar presents a further elaboration upon the Dravidian theme. It should be emphasized that this is hardly the impression one would have received from the earlier work of Gough. It is curious to observe, as Dumont (1961*a*) does, to what extent Gough's picture of the Nayar situation has progressively altered from one in which there were matrilineages with hardly any recognition of the role of the *pater*, to one in which the father and his kin are recognized and "preferential" cross-cousin marriage is at least observed. The change in point of view is a sobering thought as far as "objective" anthropology is concerned: for a perusal of the writings of this highly observant and careful author shows that she is using an African model (including concepts of clanship and ties of ritual collaboration) in her earlier work. It is only very gradually that she comes around to consider her material in its context in South India.

As far as we can observe, the kin terminology of the high-caste Nayar of Cochin and South Malabar is structurally identical to that of North Malabar and hence to the Dravidian terminology of cross-cousin marriage, with one significant difference: there appears to be no term for actual cross-cousins. It is true that Gough does not provide

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
121 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
114 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
613 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
184 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question
[605] of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957*a*).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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(1961*b*, pp. 20 ff.), and it is important in tying the Nayar material into the South Indian picture. 121 613

With all these similarities, in what sense, then, is this system a logical elaboration of the general structure? What makes the structure of kinship among the aristocratic Nayar a special case is that in it we find again the combination of hypergamy and unilineal descent. [114] [84]

As we noted above, extensive hypergamy in the context of matrilineage results in a consistent differentiation of status between lineages, and it allows special ritual status to be claimed by each autonomous matrilineage. It will be observed that matrilateral cross-cousin marriage is the only consistent pattern that can be associated with the hypergamous and matrilineal kin structure described above.

121 582 613

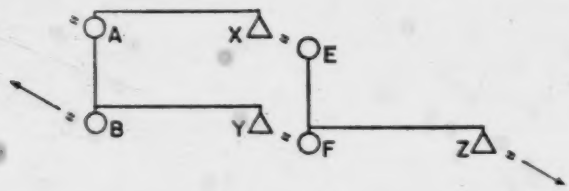

Figure 38. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage.

In figure 38, sister A establishes a *sambandam* connection with a person of superior status. Her children, B and Y (members of the matrilineage), are themselves superior in status to the children of their MB (X), who has a *sambandam* with a woman of equal or lower status to himself (E). Hence if cross-cousin marriage is to take place, the MBD (F) may be hypergamously connected with Y (i.e., matrilateral cross-cousin marriage), but B, like her mother A, will be given further up the hierarchy and cannot be permitted to have *sambandam* with Z (i.e., patrilateral cross-cousin marriage).

We should note in passing that this association of MBD marriage and hypergamy in these castes is a remarkable corroboration of Leach's hypothesis regarding the structural implications of matrilateral cross-cousin marriage systems. Leach (1951) writes of patrilineal systems associated with hypogamy (women go down) among the Kachin. It is certainly salutary to find that this mirror-image of Leach's model, that is, matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a matrilineal context, is associated with hypergamy, asymmetry, and distinctions of status. 121 114 582 611 [171]

To return to Malabar, the combination of matrilineal descent together with the rules of hypergamy is consistent with great differentiation of status between the descent groups—so much so that in the proliferation of descent groups it appears to be difficult, indeed impossible, to say where one caste ends and the other begins. Some de- 121 564 611

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Paricha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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perior but politically inferior to the royal lineages. This would indicate that the arguments emanating from the power structure are of limited value. Nor does the psychoanalytic argument carry conviction (see Yalman, 1963). 121 114 564 613

Dumont further suggests that the Nayar position has significant cultural affinities to certain practices of the Basavi. Among the Basavi, a girl is given in marriage to a god. She may then be approached by all kinds of men, and the children she may bear belong to her own family. Thus by virtue of her marriage to a god, her children are freed from the constraints of the rule of patrilineal descent and follow matrilineal descent. In the same fashion, Dumont thinks the girls of aristocratic matrilineages are married to Nambudiri Brahman, who are referred to as "Gods of the Earth."

Dumont's point is worth making, for it shows the element of piety involved in these customs which have been severely misunderstood in India and elsewhere. The man of the matrilineage sacrifices his own children (who belong to others) in order to give his sister to a god and keep her children.

This may indeed be one of the cultural dimensions of hypergamy in this region, but the system is so clearly and effectively associated with the fundamental structural principles of matrilineal descent groups in a caste context that the specific cultural features (piety, etc.) do not need to be treated as a necessary part of the picture. A similar set of structural circumstances gives rise to an essentially similar picture in Ceylon. 121 564 613 [171]

The general principles of status differentiation in Cochin have been subsumed under the following ideal formula by Karve (1953, p. 269):

Nambudiri	m.	marries	Nambudiri f.	Children	become	Nambudiri	[851]
Nambudiri	m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	Kshatriya	
Ksatriya	m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	non-Kshatriya [*sic.*]	
Nambudiri	m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 1	
Ksatriya	m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 2	
Nayar	m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 3	

It is quite clear that we find the matrilineal *taravad* in its most impressive development as a corporation precisely at the highest levels of society. At the other end of the scale we have only the desire for prestige:

The Tharvad is always named after an ancestress and referred to as the Tharvad of so and so (woman). If a man does not belong to a Tharvad he is not respected and I was told by an officer in a mill that though he was well educated and a salaried man he had not the requisite social position as

121 they were landless orphans. If he bought land, built a house and settled there
564 with his sister, bringing up her children, he would gain social status. He said
• 613 he knew of many a poor labourer serving in the mill, saving money to establish a Tharvad in his sister's name and become "somebody" in his caste. (Karve, 1953, p. 267)

The problem of finding suitable husbands for the women of aristocratic matrilineal Tharvads has been solved by the Nambudiri Brahman connection in Cochin. The situation is not very different with North Malabar aristocrats. We are told that the Kolattiri lineage had difficulty in getting accepted as of high status among the ancient "Kshatriya" lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad, so the Kolattiri Rajas brought a caste called Koil Tamburan from Travancore. "Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambudiri men and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 56).

Karve with her usual insight and evocative examples puts the issue simply (1953, pp. 258–259): "The Kshatriyas claim descent from the sun-family of the ancient Hindu Kshatriyas of the north—the house of Rama. All the sons born in Kshatriya families, i.e., ruling houses of Travancore and Cochin have Sanskrit names of the Sun-god with the suffix varmā . . . We have already seen that in olden times as a rule and even now generally the Kshatriya women have Nambudiri Brahmins as husbands. . . . There is a village near Cochin belonging to a rich Nayar Thārvad . . . which is called the 'village of evening visits of the Nambudris.'" And this accurate and colorful picture is rounded up with the direct statement, "Among poorer Nayars cross-cousin marriage is favoured."

Other Evidence from Malabar

121 We have considered the evidence from Malabar from the point of
611 view of other South Indian systems and have, I believe, been able to establish both the principles of the general structure and the association of systems of hypergamy with unilineal descent. A further point to note is that systems of descent, at least in this region, could be considered as a secondary feature to a large extent independent of the specific forms of kinship and marriage. Very similar groups appear to follow different forms of descent in various regions. We should
[171] recall that even the Sinhalese, who are regarded as being "patrilineal" by many authors today, followed "matrilineal" descent at least among the royal family in the seventeenth century. And conversely one author has noted that in some parts of Kerala "the Nairs also follow the father right social system" (D'Souza, 1959, p. 493).

[564] There is a vast body of literature, especially in connection with

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

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/For information on the function of the Taravād as a clan, lineage and matrilineal household unit, the researcher is advised to check all three categories listed above./

/The term "clan" has been used by at least two authors in this file, notably Fawcett and Thurston and Rangachari (who quote from Fawcett), to refer to subdivisions of the Nayar caste, which are actually subcastes and have accordingly been marked for category 564. These "clans" as listed by Fawcett (6: Fawcett, p. 187) are as follows:

Kiriyattil	Kitâvu
Sûdra	Pallichan
Kurup	Muppathinâyiran
Nambiyâr	Vîyâpâri or Râvâri
Urali	Attikkurissi
Nalliôden	Mânavallan
Viyyûr	Vengôlan
Akattu Châma	Adungâdi
Purattu Châma	Adiôdi
Vattakkâd	Âmayengolam./
Vangiloth	

within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between members of the same caste or sub-caste, but at a higher caste feast members of lower castes might receive food from higher caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs, temple servants, retainers, middle-class and servant Nayars thus collectively formed the "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

Below all these castes, living in a separate part of the village, were the "low" or "polluting" castes. These included in order of rank, Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with 20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (astrologers) with one to three households per village; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one to three houses per village; low caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas, Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal extended families with fraternal polyandry, cross-cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal descent with patrilocal extended families and fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked for each other and for the "good" castes of the village. Iravas, the most numerous and influential, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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tion they entered for fifteen days into a condition of ritual pollution. They might not eat with nor touch other Nayars, enter the temple or other houses, bathe in the public bathing pools of their caste, or eat meat or salt. Death pollution, and to a milder degree birth pollution, cut off the clan from participation in the social life of the caste. It isolated the members as a group set apart in a special and dangerous ritual condition, who had to observe taboos for their own and each others' safety. Its observance stressed the kinship connection of clansmen and marked their common concern on the occasion of an increase or decrease in their membership. Only those clansmen living within the neighborhood, however, were obliged to attend a funeral or visit a house of birth. Beyond these observances clansmen had only loosely defined rights of hospitality in each other's homes. As far as I am aware they never assembled as an organized group.

In time a clan might divide into two or more clans by the common consent of its members. The decision to separate depended both on geographical distance and on distance of relationship. If a segment of the core unit moved into an adjacent neighborhood its members might maintain clanship with the parent lineage for several hundred years thereafter. If they moved to a distant part of the district (say, fifteen miles away) their grandchildren might sever the connection. Severing clanship was called "cutting the pollution bond." Representatives of the branches met and decided not to inform each other of future deaths in their respective groups. Usually the outlying branch would soon afterward adopt the name of the oldest ancestral house site in its own vicinity as its clan name. Exogamy was theoretically preserved as long as matrilineal ties were remembered—usually, about three generations after the division.

Beyond the neighborhood, clan ties had no legal or economic concomitants and were relatively unimportant, their claims being subordinated to those of lineage, village, neighborhood, district, and kingdom.

THE LINEAGE

A lineage comprised those members of a clan living in one Nayar neighborhood, and it operated within the legal and social framework of this unit. As we have noted, the retainer Nayars of a neighborhood were of the same caste. They interdined and intermarried freely and the neighborhood was their unit of caste administration. A neighborhood might comprise the retainer Nayars of one village or of two or three adjacent villages, or occasionally Nayars of only part of a large village (e.g., a royal village) in which more than one caste of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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613 were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The
[592] reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

613 However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be
592 forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmenta-
768 tion within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which
[614] had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

613 In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the
[578] households of the disputants and were normally settled through ap-
[692] peal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

[614] As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations
[834] were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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WOMAN-SISTER'S CHILDREN

A woman and her sister's children should behave toward each other so far as possible in the same way as a woman and her own children. A motherless child was brought up collectively by his mother's sisters, usually attaching himself in particular to one of her younger sisters. As a member of their household who stood in a maternal relationship to them, a woman expected reverence, companionship, and practical help from her sisters' sons and a measure of obedience, companionship, and coöperation in domestic tasks from her sisters' daughters. 604

Terminologically and behaviorally, the mother's sisters were differentiated by age in relation to the mother. The mother's older sister received more respect than the mother, especially if she was the oldest woman in the household. Her role approximated that of the maternal grandmother after the latter's death. The mother's elder sister usually had children of her own by the time ego was born. She tended to advise ego's mother on how to care for him rather than tending him intimately herself. The mother's younger sister's role, by contrast, approximated that of a much older sister. Before she had children of her own, she often played the part of a long-suffering nursemaid and usually remained a favorite throughout her life. A mother's younger sister who was younger than ego was called by her personal name and treated as a younger sister. [601] [551]

Theoretically, attitudes proper toward the mother should be extended to all women of her generation within the lineage and clan. Actually, a rather sharp distinction was drawn between "mothers" of ego's own property group and those outside it. Behavior which was axiomatic within the property group became a matter of polite etiquette toward more distant kinswomen. Within the property group two or more sibling groups descended from sisters might oppose each other in adulthood. When the maternal grandmother and all males of senior generations were dead, their disputes might culminate in division of the property even while their mothers were living. Such inter-segmental disputes created strains in the relationship with the mother's sisters, but these ought not to become apparent in open quarreling. [601] [602] [613] [614] [578]

WOMAN-DAUGHTER'S CHILDREN

A woman had strong control over her daughter's children. Her authority surpassed that of the mother and she retained the last word in matters of feeding or of care in sickness. At a time when her daughters were absorbed in childbearing and in relations with their husbands, she was deeply concerned for the future of her taravād as a group and 603

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
North Kerala Nayar

Murder among the Nayars

627 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
613 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but
628 even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown. [635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village, [582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order [608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised 614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's 564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally 591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters [425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [627]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

131 North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nāduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
[629] as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nād*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
631 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
613 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
423 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
[614] appointed by the Raja or the *nāduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nāduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[566] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
591 Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
594 his *taravād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
[582] married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

586 Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
595 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
684 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambûdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tâli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambûdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tâli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tâli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambûdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambûdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambûdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

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613 588 182 Similarly, the *tâli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tâli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tâli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tâli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [621] [564] 614 [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannâns, called Mannâns in the south) and barbers (Kâvutiyyans, called Vâtthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [422] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *mangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *mangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [569] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [565] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished
585 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWII Kerala AWII Nayar

101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as
614 *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were
174 called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days
825 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still
771 holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a
[161] community of 3¼ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattus*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred ser-
[784] pents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars
174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Ambalavásis form alliances with Nayar women, but the latter and their children cannot touch their husbands and fathers without polluting them. The children of this union belong to the mother's family. In the clan system, descent was at first reckoned in the female line; consequently, uterine ties alone constituted kinship. The father was not regarded as related even to his children, and not considered as a member of the family. In this system all the children bear the clan name, and the clan name becomes the test of blood relationship. But the moment the descent is recognised through the male, the clan system breaks down. Among the Nayars the kinship is still reckoned through the female line. 564 582 783

Marriage is endogamous among the low caste Sudrás. The following restrictions are however in force among all classes of Sudrás. There cannot be intermarriages between the descendants of any female ancestor. It is strictly prohibited even in the case of two persons belonging to the same *taravád* or family whose relationship cannot be traced to its origin, but is only traditional. A man cannot marry the sister of his deceased wife. The custom is more changing. A man cannot marry from the family of his deceased wife, but is now limited to the *thdvazhi* to which his wife belonged. Even this is now being overlooked. 564 582 [614]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White,
563 Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other
[795] Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian
564 Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more en-
783 lightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a
[784] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy,
[264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a
[463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay-
[484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into
[784] town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala
[841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are
[846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv-
[614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con-
[846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing
[765] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

Respect towards a superior, towards a God, towards a respected Parent, or towards the higher casteman, was always shown in Kerala by not wearing anything in his presence above the waist, be one man or woman. Basically, this has changed but little, the Nambudri Brahmin always praying in his private temple with only a loin cloth on, the modern Tiya factory girl now removing the blouse which she has taken to wearing before some important personage of her kin group, so that her breasts are exposed. What is a less frequent sight nowadays is Nayar, Tiya or Kammalan women in the streets and on the roads without some covering over the upper parts of their bodies. Lower caste people, however, Cherumas, Pulayas and aboriginals, being less affected by progress, are still to be seen on the highways, their shapely bodies exposed from the waist upwards.

A striking phenomenon in Kerala is the coexistence, even today, of the two radically opposed systems of *marumakkathayam* (matriliny) and of *makkathayam* (patriliny). In the first, children are born into their mother's caste, while in the other they are born into their father's caste. Inheritance is through the mother's brother in the first instance, and through the father in the second. The matrilineal people are grouped in matrilineal clans called *tarawads*, of which the senior male member, the *karanavan*, is the recognized head; the patrilineal people have patrilineal clans called by the same name, *tarawad*, also with the senior male as the *karanavan*, but at the same time, they observe descent through the mother, and all are members of matrilineal descent groups known as *illams* or *kiriyams*. While castes and, strictly speaking, subcastes are in principle endogamous, clans and lineages are definitely exogamous, marriage being matrilocal in the case of matrilineal people and patrilocal in the case of patrilineal people.[1]

Of the high castes, only the Nambudri Brahmins are *makkathayam*. They have patrilineal *gothras* or lineages which are exogamous, and patrilineal clans like *tarawads* which they, however, call *illams*. In olden days, only the eldest son could contract a regular marriage within his caste, marriage being polygamous and patrilocal. The younger sons were either expected to live as *brahmacharyas* (bachelor religious devotees) or could cohabit with Nayar women in a form of union known as *sambandham* to which we shall revert in a moment. They were maintained by their own efforts (they generally became cooks) and by a meagre allowance from the family *illam*. This has now been changed by

[1] I continue to make use of the terms *matrilocal* and *patrilocal* here, rather than *uxorilocal* and *virilocal* as still being perfectly adequate as they were for Ceylon previously.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible. 105 564 588

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish. 105 564 588 428 [648] [614]

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union. 105 588

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

community. It was confirmed that this name, meaning "headman", is 595*
really a title (like so many others in Kerala – Nayar, Panikkar, Kurup, [551]
Menon, etc.) by which the Tiyas of south Malabar are known. He also [115]
answered questions about *tarawad* and *kiriyam*, marriage rites and cross-
cousin preference, the prevalence of polyandry in the community and [124]
the changing times, points which have all been accounted for in the first
part of this chapter.

On the second day, I made out the family's genealogy, which is given 595*
in the accompanying Table 3. A few words of comment are no doubt 601
needed here. I had three informants in all, since two others were added,
later, to the first. I have marked them as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. The generation to which the first informant belonged had originally consisted of nine children, from Kunji, the eldest, to Narayana, the youngest. Their [614]
tarawad was patrilineal and exogamous, as was also their matrilineal *kiriyam* in principle, but the rules of the latter were not observed very much any more beyond their immediate acquaintances. Kunji, now sixty two, was married at twenty; Kali, married when she was sixteen, divorced a year later and lived with her brothers; she was now sixty. All five brothers, when they were young, had been married polyandrously to Devaki, the eldest, Mayadi, now deceased, being sixteen at the time. Nani and Raman were issued from that marriage, and the young Raman and his family lived here, with his elder namesake in the same house. Devaki died when she was twenty nine, and the brothers were then all remarried, again polyandrously by their parents, to Kuniyama. Mayadi, then aged thirty, died the following year, and Raman senior became the *karanavan*.

Sankara then suddenly said that he was displeased with the common wife. He expressed a desire to break away, and asked his father and maternal uncle to find him another wife. There was considerable opposition to begin with, but, eventually, they gave in, and Kodamah was found for Sankara, who, however, did not move out and put up another household, but stayed in the family mansion with Raman. The latter retained Kuniyama as his wife and had four children by her – Krishna, Janeki, Kerthiyani, and Madivi. Sankara and Kodamah, now forty five and thirty five respectively, had one daughter, Devaki, whom they married off three years ago when she was sixteen.

The breaking away of their elder brother, Sankara, seems to have given Panju and Narayana ideas of liberty as well. Kuniyama was apparently not a very popular common spouse, or else Raman monopolized her too much – it was difficult to find out which, for all that I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

*595 the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to
564 Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In con-
[361] trast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the
Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather
[342] miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite
loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs
[241] about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now
[231] also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps
in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

*595 We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged
[601] fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their
wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by
[574] us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of
hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to
drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the
[611] Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected,
[614] and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only
observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom
*595 they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple
427 *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-
293 mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the
harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from
the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this
year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866¼) and they were wondering what
they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work"
[464] (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to
raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and
*595 they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of
[326] goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given
[936] this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they
asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached
Rs. 77?

[601] Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) =
[804] 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11. 595 601 [582]

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there. 595* 564 326 [351]

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan. 595* 601 [853]

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-* [614]

[Text continues on p. 197]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Kammalans

thayam was followed and caste, or rather sub-caste, endogamy. There was more polyandry in the second generation of this family than in any other encountered so far. I found that Kunji was married to two husbands; Lakshmi, aged thirty three, to four husbands; Paru, thirty, to two husbands; Sita, twenty eight, to three husbands; and Narayani, already mentioned, to two husbands. All the respective husbands were brothers, and only fraternal polyandry was practised. The women had all married early: Kunji and Yakshmi at sixteen, Paru at fifteen, Sita a bit later at twenty four, and Narayani, the youngest, at eighteen. The reason for which Sita had married later was that she had been taken by the three younger husbands of her elder sister Lakshmi, after seventeen years of marriage with the latter. Only Kanju, the eldest, had remained with Lakshmi, and Raman, Narayan and Krishna had decided to marry Sita jointly, when they found that she was not getting married and showed no inclination to do so outside. The two younger brothers of the Mudrikkelparampil household, Raman and Kunyuni, were eighteen and sixteen when they took Nani to wife; she was now twenty. Polyandry certainly did not look as if it were dying out in the blacksmith's caste, judging, at least, from this striking example.

The property upon which the family lived was worth four thousand rupees. It consisted of the house, some agricultural implements and a paddy field. The people were tenants of the Nambudri Brahmin *janmi* Kodierthamana, and paid him the rent of a customary *verumpattam* nine rupees yearly, plus a renewal fee of thrice the rent every twelve years. Poreyn and Kunyuni were practising smiths, hence the implements we had seen on coming in, and Raman worked at the Metal Industries Ltd. in Shoranur, where we camped. They also cultivated the paddy field to produce some of the rice they needed themselves, althought the yield was not very great. The genealogy is given in Table 12.

On the 15th of November, 1949, together with interpreter and guide, I visited a family belonging to the third sub-caste of the Kammalans, that of the carpenters or *Asari* (often pronounced *Ashari*). I heard that laterite-cutters called *Puri-asari* or "mud carpenters" were assimilated to these people, but that they only constituted a division of the sub-caste. They are also reputed to be polyandrous; I did no have an opportunity, however, to verify this myself.

The *Asari* whom I saw that day, lived at Palappuram, a village on the main Shoranur-Palghat road, some few miles east of Ottappalam. The compound of the house was by the side of the road on the right, just beyond the village, coming from the west. It was a very poor looking

[Text continues on p. 199]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

kiriyam; in that matrilineal descent group they limit themselves to not marrying those of their acquaintances whom they know belong to it. The sub-caste is also endogamous, carpenter only marrying "carpentress", and never a *Puri-asari*. Normally, boys alone can inherit the property, but if there are no male heirs, the girls, even if they are married, will inherit equal shares. 564 614 [587] [428]

The members of the Perinkulam household were subtenants of a Nayar tenant called Mutad Achutah Nayar, himself the *verumpattamdar* of a Nayar *janmi* from Kavalappaia near Shoranur called Kavalappaia Mupil Nayar. As *kudiyiruppu* tenants of the site where the house was built, they paid a yearly rent of only one rupee. 427

On the 17th of November, 1949, I visited the house of a member of the fourth and last sub-caste of the Kammalans, the *Musari* (often pronounced *Mushari*), bell-metal (an alloy of lead and brass) smiths or braziers. It was near Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, one furlong north of the main road, and to reach it, my interpreters and I followed a very attractive path, sunk deep between high banks of earth and overshadowed with coconut and arecanut palm trees. 595* [564] [326]

We arrived at a miserable house, standing in a grove of palms and plantains, a red laterite courtyard in front, in which could be seen some stone moulds in grooves – no doubt the foundry. There was nobody about, but when we called out, a little girl (whom we later heard was called Menakhi) appeared and said that she would go and fetch her father. He arrived soon afterwards, a big, strong man, fifty years old, called Krishnan. He wore his hair over his forehead in the typical Malayalam top knot, and he had a very ugly face. [351] [302]

The name of the household, he told us, was Puawutterparamba and it belonged to the Chelamanaparamba *tarawad*. Our informant was the youngest brother of three, and there was a sister called Kali, aged forty nine, about whom, however, he could tell us nothing at all. The whole family used to live, it seemed, at a place called Nedungothani, near Palappuram. That was their village, he said. But then, the elder brother, Konnan, now sixty five years old, had got married some thirty years ago to a woman named Sita whom he had met while "roaming about". He had married late as a result of this proclivity for wandering away from home, and, with his bride, aged fifty today (Krishnan could not tell us the name of her *tarawad*), he had moved to Wallancheri, near Kutipuram, Pattambi, because he had found business bad in Nedungothani. He was still living in Wallancheri and had five children, of whom four were married, the two daughters away to men of other vil- 595* 601

[Line in the carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans -- Analyst]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

lages. Here again, the informant was unable to give us *tarawad* names, and indeed this was most characteristic of the whole interview. He gave village names instead, saying that they used these now in his caste.

After Konnan had left, their father and their mother's brother got Kunyikai, his elder brother aged sixty two today, and himself married to Kunyu, a young girl fifteen years old at the time, from the Kerikell *tarawad* in Cochin state, resident very close to Lakkidi on the other side of the Ponani river, only about a mile away. That was twenty five years ago, and Kunyu was now forty years old. Very soon, Kunyikai found it impossible to live in this polyandrous atmosphere (Krishnan would give no details), and asked their maternal uncle to get him another wife. Their father had died in the meantime, and their mother's brother was thus the only person who could do this for him. He found Chiru for Kunyikai, and they were wed two years after the former marriage.

All the members of the family never lived together, however, because as soon as the wedding had taken place, Krishnan and the former common wife, took their part of the property (which was not much) and moved to this place near Lakkidi, where they established themselves. They chose it because it was so close to the wife's relatives. All the children they now had were Krishnan's, as Kunyu did not have any for five years after the polyandrous marriage. Krishnan, the eldest boy, now twenty, was born three years after the shift of residence. Kunyikai stayed behind in the family home, and was still there at the time of the interview. He had one boy called Kunju, aged twelve. Of the children of Krishnan and Kunyu, only the second, a daughter called Kalyany, and aged eighteen, was married. She became the wife of two brothers, Raman and Chami, of Ambalapara village, at the age of fifteen. She had one child, a boy called Paru, one year old. The genealogy which I established from this information is given in Table 14.

I was very surprised to find the informant so ignorant of the *tarawad* names – although he did know that of his own *tarawad*. He assured me that village names had now taken their place and that, in his caste, they observed what might be called "village exogamy". Did this mean that the bellmetal smith's patrilineal clans coincided with topographical units such as villages? There was, it seemed to me, a possibility of this being so, although I could get no confirmation of the hypothesis from anybody, not even from my interpreters and guides. The *Musari* observed exogamy also in their *kiriyams*, Krishnan said, although, as in the case of other castes which I have previously described, they only did so for those of the group whom they knew. Inheritance was *makkathayam*,

[TEXT Continues on P. 204]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kolla-Kurups

The name of the household was Palappuram *Kalarikel*. Intrigued that it should have the same name as the neighbouring town, and that a new word instead of *tarawad* should be used, I enquired how this had come about. I was told that the *Kolla-kurups* did not have patrilineal clans of the usual Kerala pattern because they were too few and far apart; instead, they used the name *kalarikel*, which is that of a Nayar armoury for training soldiers, or a "gymnasium". This is in accordance with their profession as masseurs, and in order to distinguish them from each other, they qualified them with the name of the town or village in which they were situated. Otherwise, the same rules of marriage as in the rest of the artisan caste were enforced: the *kalarikels* were patrilineal and exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. There were also *kiriyams* or matrilineal descent groups in which exogamy was observed; Shankaran was even able to give me the name of his, Pal, which meant "white", he told me. I was struck by the resemblance between the *kalarikel* system of the *Kolla-kurups* and that of the "villages" of the *Musaris* whom I had encountered three days before (see p. 202). It was as though this instance of something different from the more usual *tarawads* had acted as a transition between these and the *kalarikels* of the *Kurups* today.

I made the family's genealogy, which is given here in Table 15. Shankaran had had two fathers, Raman and Karapan, both dead now, aged fifty four and forty two respectively. His mother was called Kunji, and was still alive, aged seventy. His fathers had had a sister, who died when she was thirty, called Paru and who had married a certain Krishnan of another *kalarikel*, at Malleshamangalam. There had been no issue from the marriage. Of his own generation, only he himself and his sister, Kalyany, were still alive. His eldest sister, Kunyiama, who had been married to two brothers, Kutan and Shanghuni of a *kalarikel* at Paratipullivil, had died when she was forty; her offspring included two boys, one of whom was married, and a girl, married polyandrously to two brothers, Balan and Bhaskar of Chunangad *kalarikel*. Kalyany had two husbands also, Kunyuni and Velu, but I did not manage to record these men's *kalarikel*. (I took a photograph of Kalyany standing at the entrance gate of the compound, with the paddy fields at the back, and another one of the family sitting round Kunji, the informant's twelve year old daughter, and listening to her singing a song; see Figs. 11 and 13.)

The house in which they all lived (except Kalyany who was only here on a visit to her brother, and lived elsewhere with her husbands), stood on land belonging to a *janmi* called Kollapuri Nayar. They did not pay

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1955

Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595*
Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601
to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [115] [55] helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582] matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 427 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465 ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [243] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast- 853 feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 [868] [126] Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 614 [428] Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

*595 [429]

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

564 750 971

[Text Continues on P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWII Kerala AWII
Pulluvans

* 595 [361] We found the house, which was a small one, in a grove of plantains, surrounded by tapioca fields. A man named Komon, aged twenty nine, met us and took us onto the neat verandah of the building which was constructed in the usual Kerala style. He told us that the name of his household was Putanpunakkil, meaning "new house", and I made out the genealogy of his family, as shown here in Table 20.

*595 601 His elder brother, Raman, aged thirty three, had died recently, he said. He had had two younger sisters too, Chimdevi and Narayani, both of whom were also dead, the eldest at fifteen and the youngest at twelve. He and his elder brother had been married first polyandrously to a woman called Kalyany, for four years. Their father had found her for them, from the village of Churumudacheri. They had had a daughter by her, Ittiyadi, who was now eleven.

Kalyany, it seemed, had never really settled down in polyandry, and had always said that she did not like having two husbands. She wanted to stay alone with the eldest, Raman, but the latter did not accept. As he persisted in this attitude, in spite of her insistence that she have him all to herself, she eventually ran away, back to her parents' home, leaving the daughter with the brothers. That was seven years ago, and their father had immediately provided them with another wife, Kunji, from Manar village. She was twenty at the time, and had been married earlier, at the age of fourteen, to two brothers, Velu and Aiyappan of Tirumatankodu village. She did not get on with these two men and wanted to leave them. When Komon's father chose her for him and his brother, she left her married home, and the men, quite exceptionally, allowed her to take away the boy they had had with her, called Paramesuram and who was now aged ten. Kunji herself was now twenty seven years old and she had had three children with her new husbands, two boys and a girl. I could see that she was expecting another child shortly (in two months time, they told me).

564 614 428 There appeared to be no *tarawads* with these people, and village names were used instead for the patrilineal clans, which were exogamous. There were *kiriyams*, also exogamous, and inheritance was *makkathayam*. The sub-caste was reputed to allow marriage of brothers and 564 sisters; the Gazeteer mentions this on p. 133. When I asked *Komon* 582 about it, he protested that it was calumny and that they had never done 588 such a thing. In my opinion, the reputation wrongly based on insuf- 114 ficient evidence, comes from the fact that these people form a very small group and those persons who are of the same generation use classificatory kinship terms which are apt to make it appear that "sister" mar-

[Text continues on p. 216]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight 613
to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of 114
Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape.

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice 613
among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to 114
the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also 184
within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve [554]
(1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles.

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In 613
North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region [184]
around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group [614]
in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan.

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but 591
she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children [844]
(a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when [171]
grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of [851]
matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. 601
I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are [602]
to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

claim of the brothers and sisters upon one another, a point which is indeed specifically made by Gough (1955*a*, p. 61). 121 602

In view of all this evidence, it is somewhat disconcerting to discover that Gough finds it necessary to identify "residual matrilineages" to explain the role of maternal kin as well as the taboos on maternal parallel cousins in this caste. We are faced once more with the inexplicable bias in the direction of "lineage" explanations to the exclusion of others even in so sophisticated an observer as Dr. Gough. 602 613 114

She notes (1957*a*, p. 61) that "the former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinfolk, especially their brothers." But the evidence she gives (p. 60) to show even the former existence of such clans is hardly convincing: "My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do not remember their clan names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin." 602 614 114 [582]

Although the general structure is verified in this group as well, we have no information regarding hypergamy. We can only say with certainty that the comparison of the Tiyyar in North and South Malabar shows quite directly that slight variations permit the general structure to be linked to a patrilineal as well as a matrilineal descent ideology. The underlying theme is general, and the variations in descent, in residence, in inheritance are local and highly specific. 602 611 [582]

THE MATRILINEAL CASTES OF COCHIN AND HYPERGAMY

Before we turn to an examination of the aristocratic matrilineages of Cochin which have fascinated many anthropologists by their perfectly logical but highly exotic solutions to sex and marriage, I wish to underline some of the principles of endogamy and hypergamy. 121 564 582 613

First, the purpose of endogamy is to cut off the unit from kinship connections with other units. A complete severance of all intercourse (food and sex are usually chosen as symbols) renders the unit unique, but it will not in itself establish hierarchical superiority. To express hierarchy (as well as separation) some asymmetrical relations are logically necessary. In endogamous castes this takes the form of asymmetrical forms of address, dress symbolism, and, significantly, a rule such as "They will take food from us (*A*), but we will not take food from them (*B*)—*A*, in other words, is superior to *B*.

Second, when the groups are placed on an interlocking hierarchy, more subtle expressions can be used. "*A* will not accept food from *B*,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kúvalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asúns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asún* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Srec Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

565 similar powers to those of the feudatory mon-
613 archs, but, though they were accorded the title
631 of Samantans, were considered of lower ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage. Similarly, some nads of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory kings of higher ritual rank than, but administratively subordinate to, the royal lineage, and others by lower ranking Samantan chiefs appointed by the king. Within each kingdom, the Samantan chiefs' lineages formed a single subcaste.

565 Each nad was in turn divided into villages or
•621 desams, the basic units of the political system.
423 A desam appears usually to have covered from one to four square miles, comprising one or more stretches of dry garden land surrounded by, or surrounding, flats of alluvial paddy land. The land in each desam was owned by one landlord family of superior ritual rank to the other occupants of the villages. In some villages, the land was owned by a single Nambudiri partilineal extended family whose large house stood in a central position in the village. In others, it was owned by one or other branch of the royal matrilineage which had built a small palace in the village and whose eldest male member acted as a village headman. In other villages, the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineal lineage of the nad, whether this [15] were of feudatory rank of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live in a small palace in the centre of the village and fulfill the role of headman. In other villages, the land was owned by some famous Hindu temple of the kingdom, often

565 at a distance of several miles, and managed by
621 Nambudiri Brahmans. In this case a represen-
423 tative Nambudiri patrilineal family might live in the village and play the role of headman. In yet other villages, which probably comprised about half the villages in the kingdom, the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (desavari) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the nad. The Nayar desavaris of a chiefdom collectively formed a subcaste ritually lower than the subcaste of chiefs of their kingdom. In Walluvanad and Calicut the subcaste of village headmen was called Kiriattil Nayar; in Cochin they were called Vellayma Nayars.

565 The landowning families in all of these types
622 of villages were called janmis. In every case,
423 no matter whether the janmi were of a patrilineal or a matrilineal caste, the eldest man of the extended family had legal guardianship of his own family, and in another sense, of the village lands and the lower caste inhabitants. [16] In addition to his economic rights, the janmi had administrative rights. First, he must sanction marriages of all castes in the village, none of which could be performed without his consent. Second came ambalapadhi or control of ceremonies in the village temple(s); and third urayma or direction of temple lands and servants.
[346] (It should be made clear that each village had its public temple apart from the larger temples of the chiefdom and the kingdom.) While headman of the village and a landowner in a certain sense, however, the janmi could not sell away his lands

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
565 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord.
[994] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-
[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired
[427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
794 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

613 lineages still take pride in the fact that for cen-
837 turies, their lineages have been partly fathered
571 by men of the higher castes of royalty, chiefs, and (particularly) priests. The allegiance of Nayar soldiers to their headmen, of headmen to their chiefs, and of chiefs to the king, was undoubtedly strengthened by this network of sexual ties, as was the unity of the secular and religious hierarchies, which might otherwise have been opposed.

613 IV The Traditional Lineage System of the Nayars

(1) Structure and Functions

[621] In each traditional village, four to six "military" Nayar lineages of one subcaste was present as retainers of the janmi. The retainer lineage commonly had a depth of nine to twelve generations and usually comprised between 12 to 100 members. It was called a taravad, derived from tara, the word for the raised foundation on which a house is built. Taravad can mean both the members of a lineage, living and dead, and the ancestral house from which they sprang: it corresponds to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and place. The members of a taravad are a group, usually of actual and not merely putative matrilineal kin, descended from a common ancestress (whose name may or may not be known), but they describe themselves as a group whose matrilineal forbears once lived in one house. That their lineage should be associated with the house befits the sedentary economy of the Nayars and the importance of their ancestral land. Powerful

613 Even in the last 50 years, quarrels between men
628 of different lineages, usually over field-boundaries or women, have resulted in prolonged hostility, sometimes with fighting, between their lineages. In South Malabar and Cochin, such hostility between individual lineages could not take the form of actual blood-feuds (kudipaga) such as were known in the politically less centralized area of North Malabar. These were prevented by the strong organization of the village assembly, the power of desavari and naduvari, and the existence of the royal court. Fighting between groups of men of different lineages, as between groups of men of adjacent villages owing allegiance to different and sometimes mutually hostile desavaris, was soon stopped by the appropriate local authority - the desavari in the first case and the naduvari in the second. If however a Nayar were slain by a man of another lineage, his matrilineal kinsmen had the right sanctioned by the king to place his body in the [43] house or the outhouse of his slayer and burn house and coprse together. His lineage might then, after paying a fee to the naduvari, select one of their number to fight a duel to the death with a chosen man of the slayer's lineage in order to avenge the murder. The lineage was thus a corporate group in contexts involving murder and offences against the religious laws of the caste, though the property-group was the corporate group in contexts involving disputes over property.

613 The individual lineage was linked to its local
602 subcastes assembly by the institution of enangar.
621

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
•621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

581 perpetuate their lineage. Shortly before or after
613 puberty, they might, following this ceremony,
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons
•621 (called sambandham - "joining together") with
581 one or more men of their own or an appropriate
613 higher subcaste, including, if they wished, the
man who had tied the tali. These men visited
them in their natal houses at night. Similarly a
Nayar man, (whether or not he had ever performed a tali-rite) might enter into relationships
with any number of women of his own or an
appropriate lower subcaste. These marital
customs are further discussed below: here it
is relevant to point only to the role of the enangar bridegroom. Since the e nangar stand to the
lineage as formal representatives of the local
subcaste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tali-rite as a ceremony at which the [46]
subcaste group as a whole "married" the immature girls of the lineage as a whole, and ritually
set free their procreative powers for the perpetuation of their lineage. It was also significant in that it appears that in general among the
Nayars, enangar relationships between lineages
(i.e., hereditary intergroup relationships) fulfilled the functions of integrating the total local
community which in many unilineal systems
(e.g., the patrilineal system of the lower castes)
are fulfilled by interpersonal cognatic and affinal ties. This was possible, and necessary, because the marital tie was so weak among Nayars
that all the interpersonal kinship ties between
individuals of different lineages were also insufficiently stable to carry these functions of
ritual and other social cooperation.

613 794 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a pre-puberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage

608 621 Since lineages were usually groups of actual and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own subcaste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

[1] [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess --- Analyst]

613 by the local janmi, was formally accepted into
608 the Nayar assembly of its new area, and was
621 accorded enangar relations with some of the lineages already present. If the incoming segment was small, it was customary for it to ally itself with one or other established lineages for the performance of the first tali-rite. This set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the new segment and the old lineage, which must henceforth observe exogamy. Such fictitious matrilineal kinship, while serving to keep stable the size and number of exogamous groups in the village, was relevant only to intergroup relations in the microcosmic political life of [49] the village and not to matters which concerned only lineage members and had to do with their interpersonal family life. Thus, death and birth pollutions were not extended to include the incoming segment, which for several generations observed these in common with other segments of its parent-lineage, and with them also continued to worship the lineage goddess in their ancestral village. After some generations, however, the old matrilineal ties were forgotten or (if distance from the parent lineage was great) deliberately sundered, until in time even the rule of exogamy might unwittingly be broken and a division of the original lineage finally completed. If it had increased in numbers the new segment became a complete lineage in its own right; if not, it might gradually come to be regarded as a "real" genealogical branch of its host lineage in the new village.

Even within one village, a lineage might

613 become so large that over many generations
608 members of distant segments forgot that they
621 were matrilineal kin, ceased to observe joint pollution, and finally broke the rule of exogamy. One case of this came to my notice in the Cochin village I studied. A man and woman of two lineages which were not enangar, and for some reason unknown to my informants, had never been known to intermarry, entered into a liaison. Certain elders of the village then began to look into the history of the two lineages and to wonder whether long ago, they might have been matrilineal kin or putative matrilineal kin by joint performance of the [50] tali-rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to younger members of the village, however, the liaison continued and thus what was probably an ancient tie of lineage exogamy was tacitly broken.

[597] Cases of extinction of a lineage were rare, since if one property group were without women in any generation it was customary to adopt one or more girls from collateral property groups of the same lineage and thus continue to perpetuate all the property-groups. In rare cases of the extinction of a lineage, its jenmam lands eschested to the king for reallocation to another lineage, and its kanam lands to the janmi. Today, the property of a group with no women is divided equally between surviving male members and inherited after their deaths by their wives and children.

613 (4) Succession and Segmentation in the Lineage
587 Among retainer Nayars whose lineages owned

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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaṉs*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samántan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

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621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
[622] lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each vil-
lage, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative
power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or
[178] vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
[622] from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages iso-
[613] lated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants." 564

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. 564 554 [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs. 621 613 564 566 471 427

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristocratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They 564 794

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564 tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in
[361] a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title
121 today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes.
564 Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name
[703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their
162 personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a separate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They
● 621 included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

2:Gough E-4,5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

701 702 634 564 castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and 726 the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use [411] after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than [177] 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

726 177 Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic [436] feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

564 692 Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with [681] members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders [567] were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then be- [439] came the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

564 621 Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This [692] area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; [623] we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kûttam*

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris*') judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5.a boundaries

564 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more
582 wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons
421 only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but
[833] sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover
[431] customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was
[843] obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-
[851] caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been
[431] licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown.
851 Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their
601 lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the
564 house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her
[613] children.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony
613 shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature
588 girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by
[881] her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of
621 villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-
564 operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollu-
[692] tions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly.
613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangal(yam)*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 613 564 [582] Rajas to assist at their ceremonies. Kolattiri women married Koil Tamburan or Nambûdiri men, and Kolattiri men Samantan Nambiar or Nambiar women. In the Kadattunad lineage, which once owed fealty to Kolattiri as an ordinary chiefly lineage, the *tâli* was tied by Kolattiri princes. Women of the lineage married Kolattiri or Nambûdiri men, and men, chiefly women of or village headmen's lineages of their kingdoms.

It is clear that, at least for the 'ordinary' Nambiars who married almost exclusively with each other, the *tâli*-rite was no more than an initiation ceremony giving the girl the status of a married woman. It is fitting that the *tâli* should not be tied by an *enangan*, for, polyandry being prohibited, the girls of a lineage were not married collectively to the local group as a whole. Since the *sambandham* union was permanent, the husband's sexual rights exclusive, and the father accorded legal, ritual, and social rights, it is difficult to explain this rite in terms of social function. It is true, of course, that like all Nayar rites it had the function of identifying the Nayars as a group with customs distinctive from those of other groups. It may also be possible to argue that it gave ritual recognition to the overlordship of Nambûdiris. It was not, however, as in South Malabar, closely in keeping with the political and economic systems, either in the kingdom or the village. Nambûdiri landlords were few, and many Nayars would have to call for the rite Nambûdiris of distant villages to whom they had no relationship as retainers.

58 564 182

613 588 182 Similarly, the *tâli*-rite in the Kolattiri lineage seems to have resulted less from the lineage's bond to the Koil Tamburans, than the reverse: for, if we are to believe informants, the Koil Tamburans were brought from Travancore expressly to perform the *tâli*-rite and assist at other ceremonies of the Kolattiri lineage. I am not prepared to state that the North Malabar *tâli*-rite had no other social function, since I never saw it and the evidence is incomplete. It seems, however, that certain aspects of the rite, both in north and south, cannot be explained in terms of social function but only in terms of psychological motivations. This I defer until I have discussed the place of this rite in the kinship systems of North and South Malabar Tiyyars.

Part III. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tâli*-Rite in North Malabar

427 62 613 The Tiyyars farm land leased on short-term tenures from Nayars and live in the low-caste quarters of the same villages. In this area they are matrilineal. Like Nayars, they were organized into *taras*, the hereditary headman (Tandan) of the *tara* being responsible to the *desavari* for the administration of caste law among Tiyyars and the lower castes.[1]

613 [62] [564] [614] [582] Each *tara* might contain ten to twelve Tiyyar lineages and one each of Tiyyar washermen (Vannâns, called Mannâns in the south) and barbers (Kâvutiyyans, called Vâtthis in the south). The Tiyyar lineage, like the Nayar, is exogamous, is united by birth and death pollutions, the worship of a lineage goddess, and snake-worship, and is divided into property-groups each containing a sibling group together with the children and maternal grandchildren of the sisters. The Tiyyars, like the Nayars, have dispersed matrilineal exogamous clans. In this area (but not in South Malabar) Tiyyar men may hypergamously marry women of the Tiyyar barber (but not the washerman) caste.

[591] [427] [423] 000 Tiyyars, like Nayars, are predominantly virilocal. Unlike Nayars, Tiyyar men, having little ancestral property, may remain with the father and build a house on land leased from Nayars near the father's dwelling-group. Though filiation is officially matrilineal, and children retain rights in any land or houses their matrilineal group may own, the *local* descent-group, persisting over three to four generations, is therefore often patrilineal. Polyandry is forbidden,

[1] I have no information on the *enangar* institution of North Malabar Tiyyars. Dr Aiyappan's (1944, *passim*) discussion of the Tiyyar *enangar* system seems, from my knowledge of Tiyyars, to apply only to patrilineal Tiyyars of South Malabar. In Kottayam informants did not remember the institution which, if it existed, must have died out thirty to fifty years ago

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyyar

likeliest if his lineage is wealthier than his father, his parents divorced or his *kāranavan* sonless. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is likeliest if the father has no personal property to leave to his son, if the father has no nephews, or if the husband has quarrelled with his *kāranavan*. 58 605

The cross-cousin's claim to become a girl's husband, seen in the *tāli*-rite, must be met at the later marriage ceremony if the girl marries some other man. As the couple leave the house, the girl's cross-cousin steps forward in mock attack, formerly with a sword. He is bought off by the bridegroom with a nominal fee and the couple then pass unmolested.

The tying of the *tāli* by a potential mother-in-law foreshadows the later role of the wife as a subordinate who performs menial tasks under her guidance. Nayar women in North Malabar, too, do housework under the mother-in-law's supervision and customarily behave submissively to her. But their work is not obligatory, and a Nayar wife may decide to live for long periods in her *taravād* and receive her husband there; unless she denies him sexual rights this will not be seen as adequate grounds for divorce. Though the system is nominally matrilineal, a Tiyyar wife lacks this privilege. At marriage, the payments of dowry and earnest money transfer the rights in her domestic services to her husband's group and place on them the burden of her maintenance. Her desertion would therefore be grounds for divorce by the husband. 58 591 [606]

In my Kottayam village the barber woman, as well as conducting the 'cooking' rites, tied the *tāli* herself. Informants stated that the *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife, or prospective mother-in-law) must be present; they knew, moreover, that in some areas she tied the *tāli*. They were unable to explain this difference of custom. Among Tiyyar washermen and barbers themselves, the *tāli* was tied by an old man of the caste not previously related to the girl. 588 564 606

The North Malabar Tiyyar woman's *tāli* may therefore be tied by her prospective mother-in-law, by a woman of a lower, polluting caste or (among barbers and washermen) by a respected elder of the community. It is difficult to find a sociological explanation of why these three persons should be regarded as comparable, i.e. capable of fulfilling the role of initiating girls into womanhood. In the case of the mother-in-law, we have seen that other facts about Tiyyar kinship to some extent explain the form of the rite. Even here, however, it is difficult to explain why it is necessary at all. To what end must a girl observe mock menstrual seclusion before she has menstruated? To what end must she go through a form of marriage, carried out by her prospective mother-in-law, a barber woman, or an elderly man, before she is of age to marry? I revert to these questions after describing the Tiyyar ceremony in South Malabar and Cochin.

Part IV. The Tiyyar Kinship System and *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin 564

Here, as in the north, Tiyyars rank below Nayars as the highest 'polluting' caste and are tenant-farmers and coconut-growers. But in this area they have, like the other lower castes above serfs, localized, named patrilineal lineages comparable in size and distribution with the matrilineal lineages of the north. The lineage is exogamous; it has a depth of about five to seven generations; is united by the observance of pollutions, by the worship of patrilineal ancestors, of a lineage-god and of snakes, and is sometimes subdivided into property-groups three to five generations deep. The lineage, like the North Malabar Tiyyar and the Nayar matrilineage, is called a *taravād*. 613

The internal organization of the local caste group of the *tara* was similar to North Malabar, with a hereditary headman (Tandan) whose powers derived from the *desavari*. The *enangar* relationship was remembered by my informants, though it began to die out about twenty years ago. Each lineage had a single *enangar* lineage through which it was linked to the group. *Enangar* obligations were reciprocal and exclusive. Tiyyar *enangar*, moreover, unlike Nayar, 613 [621]

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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampadiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer. 129 [538]

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization. 621 [421]

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist. 621 563 564 [361]

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim 631 634

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

634 He[1] had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
[874] Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa*
701 in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules
874 of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 701 even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Palayanis* (*Pala*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical
[121] example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[1] [i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home. 621

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*. [346] 621

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship). 622 [874] [576]

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends. 622 [796] [623] 622 585 626

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village 264 564 626

264 626 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were per-
564 suaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

621 178 The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it
[425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar
351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called
613 *Mutam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women.
[562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns
421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family,
[177] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

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as *Ammavi Amma*, the first word being the same as the wife of the mother's brother, and the second an honorific addition to it. Dr. Rivers, in *Kinship and Social Organisation*, as well as in *Melanesian Society*, has conclusively shown that wherever first-cousin marriage prevails, there the mother-in-law has no special name. His explanation that this is due to the obvious fact that, in most cases, the mother's brother's wife is the same person as the mother-in-law, and that the former position was antecedent to the latter, is fully borne out by the terminology among the Nāyars.

Another relation of importance in the Nāyar family life is the father's sister. She has a special name and has a very special function to perform. In Middle Travancore she is called *Appachi*. Her importance varies according to the status of the father's family. If the father's family is one of greater importance than one's own, then the father's sister is a person to be consulted on various matters with regard to the child. In any case she should be the first to visit the new-born child. This is called "*Kannom Kalcha*." In the marriage ceremony also she has a prominent place.

Enangar.—The whole of Nāyar family life used to be based, though this has decayed of late, on the close relationship with one or more other families, spoken of as *Enangar* or Allies. A *Tharawad* with its *Enangars* formed a *social group* rarely marrying outside its fold and generally arranging all festivities and ceremonies between themselves. Neither funeral rites, nor marriage ceremony, nor even any one of the hundred other minor things which go to make up the ordinary life of a Nāyar family, can take place without the co-operation, or at least the presence, of a member from the *Enangar* or allied families. The *Enangar* families are always of the same sub-caste, with a right to eat with you and enter any part of your house.

The *Enangar* system is evidently a kinship organisation, forming an inter-marrying class. The question of its origin is a very difficult one. The prevalent opinion is that it originated in the days when Nāyars fought and farmed in alternate months, when a kinship organisation of some sort was very necessary for safety and success. This organisation has become very lax of late, though it cannot in any way be said to be dying out.

Marriage Restrictions.—The marriage restrictions prevalent among the Nāyars have nothing much peculiar from the rest of the Hindu society. The bride must always be younger than the man, and must in strict orthodoxy belong to the same generation as his. He may not marry his mother's sister's daughter, who is to him as his own sister. All his sisters, own and collateral, together with ladies of a previous generation in his family, form a legal incestuous group. A man has, therefore, to marry either entirely out of the circle of his relations, or from among his *cross-cousins*.

Cross-cousin marriage[1] is the orthodox custom. Your maternal uncle's

[1] By cross-cousins I mean children of brother and sister. The relationship is expressed by the word *Machuna*, which is, it should be noticed, the same as in the Toda language. Among

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595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property [871] in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship [875] and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars. But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan immigration, there appears to have been a complete military organisation among the Sudras of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divisions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Nádavázhi* (ruler of a *Nádu*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désavázhi.

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were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

Village organisation and village life.

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions; and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *tharás* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Náduvázhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Náduvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-119.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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[Marayil Tarwad]

Marayil tarwad was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the *tarwad* split into two residential groups (Marayil and East Marayil), occurred in 1898, and the final partition of the property by individual members was in 1944.

In May 1956 the living members of the *tarwad* were grouped into ten different households (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, and J of the Diagram); the male members who are not included in these groups formed each household with wife and children. The relationships of these households show that the degree of familiarity is paralleled with the genealogical distance as well as geographical distance. According to my own observations, the following different stages of the matrilineal group consciousness were noticeable.

First, the strong coherence of matrilineal members, appear in the groups consisting of the members of A, B, and C, and that of D and E. The members of each group meet almost every day; their daily life gives an impression as if they were still carrying on the *tarwad* life. For example, when one household is visited by a guest, others are usually called to join the talking, and often enjoy tea and meals together. In fact, the households of each group are direct neighbours of each other.

Secondly, the group whose members have the same grand-grandmother (consisting of A-B-C and D-C together) is distinguished by the amount of contact of its members with each other, against other members. They meet at least two or three times a week. The third level of group consciousness appears in the group consisting of all descendants of the foundress, including both Marayil and East Marayil. If necessary, they visit each other; if they pass near a house of the group, they are ready to visit. The manner of speaking is a bit more formal than that of first and second groups. However this is distinguished as the ceremonial unit. Though they lost the function of the property group (Mudal Sambantham), they maintain strongly the function of the ceremonial group (Pula Sambantham); funerals, marriages and seasonal festivities are carried out by these members altogether. For this corporate unit, 32 (refer to the number of the Diagram) is acting as the head. This is indeed the last function which is left for the members of Marayil *tarwad*; it is the matrilineal lineage with the same history; all members clearly can trace their genealogical relations with each other.

Further than this range, there is no group consciousness, but these members of Marayil *tarwad* observe exogamy from those members of Mullasseri, another *tarwad*, from which Marayil had sprung. Though they cannot trace exact genealogical relationships, by the observation of exogamy, Mullasseri members are considered as matrilineal distant kin, sociologically different from other Nayars.

Disintegrating Process of Marayil Tarwad

Based on the information of the present members the Marayil was founded by Prabaty Amma (*1*). The process of the foundation of this *tarwad* is as follows:

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

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KOTHACHIRA DESAM (PONNANI TALUK).

[*By A. Krishna Wariyar, Christian College, Madras.*]

Preliminary.—This desam is situated about 13 miles south-east of Ponnani, a small thriving town at the mouth of the river of the same name, a Muhammadan centre and the headquarters of the taluk. The visitor to Kothachira leaves the train at Pattambi, the nearest railway station and after a six miles walk along the Pattambi-Chowghat road turns to the left and by a footpath over a rising eminence descends into the paddy fields. A two miles walk southwards through these fields will bring him to the borders of the Kothachira desam. 361

This desam is a completely rural area and there is nothing of interest in the place. The shortest distance from the nearest river (river Ponnani) is 5 miles. Hills and forests are not rare since the desam enjoys proximity to the Akalanum (east) and the Mattur (north) hills. [133]

The term 'desam' literally means a piece of territory. The desam is the political and social unit in Malabar, and is the nearest equivalent to the villages of the east. The chief differences, however, are—(1) the village organization, in its entirety, is not found here; (2) the village has no particular site. The population is distributed throughout the desam area, each individual landholder having his home and family compound often in the midst of his lands and gardens and separated far from his neighbours. 621

Population.—The population of this desam according to the censuses of 1891 and 1901 was as follows:— 162

Year of census.	Number of inhabited houses.	Total population.			Religion.			Occupation.				Population per 100 acres of occupied land.
		Males.	Females.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Others.	Landholders.	Labourers.	Weavers.	Others.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)
1891 ...	295	898	985	1,883	1,678	204	1	767	563	...	553	221
1901 ...	312	961	1,047	2,008	1,808	200	...	559	378	...	1,071	236

The report of the last census (that of 1911) is not obtainable. My enquiry gives the following results:—

Number of houses 333.

Males ...	1,216	Hindus ...	1,990	Landholders ...	442
Females ...	1,107	Muhammadans.	327	Labourers ...	518
		Others ...	6	Weavers ...	...
				Others * ...	1,363
Total ...	2,323		2,323		2,323

* Including all who have no regular occupation, children, women of higher castes, old men, and even a good many young men belonging to joint families.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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perform priestly functions for the lowest classes. There are also in the village a few families of Ambalavasis (about 35 persons) who rank above the Nayars and perform menial and other functions in temples, and also practise Ayurvedic medicine. 162

Births and deaths.—The village register gives the following statistics of births and deaths for the year 1915 (as far as I could ascertain, a normal year). 163

Births.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Hindus	37	41	78
Muhammadans	2	1	3
	39	42	81

Deaths. 165

Below 1 year	8	2	10
Between 1 and 5	1	4	5
" 5 and 10	4	1	5
" 15 and 20	2	1	3
" 30 and 40	2	2	4
" 40 and 50	3	...	3
" 50 and 60	2	2	4
Above 60	3	4	7
	25	16	41

Causes—

	Males.	Females.	
Fever	7	6	Causes are not accurate.
Dysentery and diarrhoea ...	11	6	
Respiratory diseases ...	6	4	
Injuries	1	...	
	25	16	

The figures seem to be fairly accurate, though not quite so. The death rate seems to be too low compared to the birth rate. But the figures are admittedly incomplete as is seen from the remarks made upon the register by the supervising authority. The deficiency is probably in the record of *deaths of young children.*

The causes of this defect are (1) registration not being compulsory; (2) indifference or ignorance of village authorities and of villagers who hardly seem to realize the importance of registration; (3) the villagers' suspicion of registration; they do not know its object.

There is no Paracheri strictly so called as in villages of eastern districts. There are scattered dwellings of depressed classes, Cherumas and Pariahs. There are five families of Pariahs, consisting of 13 men, 13 women and 16 children. Of the men two have gone for work to the Kolar Gold Fields and one to Wynaad. The proportion of children to adults is much smaller among the Cherumas and Pariahs than among the Brahmans and Nayars. 621 [167]

565 at a distance of several miles, and managed by
621 Nambudiri Brahmans. In this case a represen-
423 tative Nambudiri patrilineal family might live in the village and play the role of headman. In yet other villages, which probably comprised about half the villages in the kingdom, the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (desavari) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the nad. The Nayar desavaris of a chiefdom collectively formed a subcaste ritually lower than the subcaste of chiefs of their kingdom. In Walluvanad and Calicut the subcaste of village headmen was called Kiriattil Nayar; in Cochin they were called Vellayma Nayars.

565 The landowning families in all of these types
622 of villages were called janmis. In every case,
423 no matter whether the janmi were of a patrilineal or a matrilineal caste, the eldest man of the extended family had legal guardianship of his own family, and in another sense, of the village lands and the lower caste inhabitants. [16] In addition to his economic rights, the janmi had administrative rights. First, he must sanction marriages of all castes in the village, none of which could be performed without his consent. Second came ambalapadhi or control of ceremonies in the village temple(s); and third urayma or direction of temple lands and servants.
[346] (It should be made clear that each village had its public temple apart from the larger temples of the chiefdom and the kingdom.) While headman of the village and a landowner in a certain sense, however, the janmi could not sell away his lands

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
565 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
[701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaṅi*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

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621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or
[178] vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
[622] in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
[613] from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages iso-
lated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris'*) judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

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Each Nayar chiefly lineage, like royalty, normally counted itself a separate caste and married only hypergamously. Women of chiefly lineages married the royals or feudatory royals to whom their lineages were immediately subordinate, or wealthy Nambudiris, usually of their own district. Men of chiefly lineages married women of village headmen's lineages within their district, or women of retainer Nayar lineages, usually in their own villages. 564 613

Village headmen's lineages occasionally contracted marriages reciprocally with other village headmen's lineages of the chiefdom which had originally sprung from the same retainer caste. They also provided wives for chiefs and Brahmans and husbands for retainer women, usually of their own villages. [622]

Among temple servants, Nayar retainers, and Nayar temple menials the majority of marriages were between persons of the same caste. A few women in the Psharodi, Variyar, Poduval, and Nambyar castes married Nambudiris, especially those whose families managed the temples where they worked. A few such women also married men of the Chakkyar and Pushpagan castes, which had descent systems like that of the Nambudiris. A few men of these matrilineal temple-servant castes married women of Nayar retainer and Nayar temple-menial castes in the villages of their work. Nayar women were particularly convenient partners for temple servants and Nambudiri temple priests because of the latters' spatial distribution. Often a temple-servant lineage or a Brahman priestly family held the hereditary right of service in six or eight small temples in villages up to ten miles away. One man of the lineage might spend much of his life working away from home in one of the more distant temples. He would live on food previously offered to the deity, occupy a room attached to the temple kitchen, bathe in the temple bathing pool, and visit a local Nayar wife at nights, returning home for life crises and festivals. 564 794 613

Women of the retainer Nayar castes might receive husbands from all the castes above them. Sudra Nayar women living in Brahman-owned villages or on the estates of large temples were the most likely to form links with Brahmans and temple servants; Charna Nayars and Pallichans, with royalty or chiefs; and Kiriattil women, with village headmen. Thus hypergamous unions entered into by retainer Nayars in general followed the main lines of lord-vassal relationships. However, "odd" marriages with individuals of any higher rank in nearby villages were permitted. 564

Because the higher castes were much smaller than they were, the Nayar retainers probably gave less than 10 per cent of their women

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to village headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office. 635 622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and 726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed 635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When 634 a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral 613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there 554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as [648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

& Panikkar

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/Information on the Desa Vazhis, the "lord of the manor" and his role as military preceptor in the village community, will be found in category 631./

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Brihmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Anin*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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588 a white cloth, one over the other. His permission is solicited
622 for the performance of the ceremony, and, with his consent,
[465] the *tāli* is tied. He is paid four, eight, sixteen, thirty-two or sixty-four *puthans* (one *puthan* is equal to ten pies), according to the means of the family. He also gets some curry stuffs, betel
588 leaves, arecanuts and tobacco. There is also at the time a
574 grand distribution of *pān supāri*, scented sandal paste, jasmine
[431] flowers to the women of the village and to the wives of the relatives assembled there. Then follows the feast to the guests assembled there, for which certain formalities are observed, with regard to the seats arranged for them; any violation of the social etiquette will result in the guests abruptly leaving the dining hall without partaking of any food. The women of the family and their relatives are first served. The women of the sub-caste as well as those of the village return home after chewing betel. The men of the same sub-castes and others are
[564] next served, then others lower in status to them, and lastly come in for their share the village barber and washerman. Provision is sometimes made to feed the members of the very low castes. In the meanwhile, what is known as *Pukarcha* (cooked rice, curries, sweets, etc., for the feasts) is sent to the families of relations. It must be said that the various
[262] preparations of the feast are boiled rice, vegetable curries, *pāyasam* (rice boiled in milk) and butter milk, and the grandness of the feast is judged by the quantity of rice prepared for consumption, and other preparations are in proportion to it. The first day's ceremony and the feast thus come to an end. The ceremony however lasts for the next three days, but there is nothing of importance on the second and the third days, except some dancing and music by maidens inside the *pandal*. In some places, on the third day, the caste-men of the village are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding and to varieties of amusements, such as the *Kathakali* and other performances.

588 On the fourth day, the caste-men are again invited. The
[564] married couple bathe in the neighbouring tank or river holding each other's hand, and are taken in procession to worship the deity in the village temple amidst the beating of tom-toms and merry shouts, after which the party return home. The bridegroom and the bride are taken to the kitchen, which they are
[586] prohibited from entering during the first three days, and there they dine together. After this, they proceed to the pandal where

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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634
553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Nádnvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. 622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Nádnvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

Village organisation and village life.

[634] [622] [701] [451] [651] 621 [564]

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 528
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavālan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574] entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nāyar houses will feed 1,000 Brāhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tāli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nāyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801] represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622] a Nāyar tāli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

stool in the pandal. A male member of the family, 588 generally a brother or maternal uncle of the girl, washes 184 the feet of the bridegroom. The girls are covered with new cloths of cotton or silk, and brought into the pandal, and seated screened off from one another. After the [431] distribution of money presents to the Brāhmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the tāli, or thin plate of gold shaped like the leaf of aswatha (*Ficus religiosa*), and tacked on to a string, to the Tirumulpād, who ties it round the neck of the girl. A single Tirumulpād often ties the tāli round the neck of two, three, or four girls. He is given one to eight rupees per girl for so doing. Sometimes the tāli is tied by the mother of the girl. The retention of the tāli is not at all obligatory, nay it is seldom worn or taken care of after the ceremony. These circumstances clearly show the purely ceremonial character of this form of marriage. The Karamel Asan, or headman of the village, is an important factor on this occasion. In a conspicuous part of the marriage pandal [622] he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which a grass mat, a black blanket, and white cloth are spread one over the other. Before the tāli is tied, his permission is solicited for the performance of the ceremony. He is paid 4, 8, 16, 32 or 64 puthans (a puthan = 10 pies) per girl, according to the means of the family. He is also given rice, curry stuff, and pān-supāri. Rose-water is sprinkled at intervals on the males and females assembled on the occasion. With the distribution of 574 pān-supāri, scented sandal paste and jasmine flowers to 588 the females of the village and wives of relatives and 184 friends, who are invited for the occasion, these guests return to their homes. The male members, one or two from each family in the village, are then treated to a sumptuous feast. In some places, where the Enangu

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid onthe vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364. There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

/For data on Forest Panchayats and their finances, see 26: Rao, AW1 India, Tables 21-24, pp. 214-218, category 116.

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged through out the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

692 shrine and temporary ostracism were the chief
681 punishments, but at least among Iravas, grave offenders were sometimes excommunicated with the consent of the janmi and sold in slavery to
623 Arab traders. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages, who met
[562] chiefly at marriages and funerals. In all of these castes, the local group of the assembly, while not strictly endogamous, was the group within which the majority of marriages took place.

631 Among retainer-Nayars, the local group might
692 comprise either one large desam, or a group of
681 two to four adjacent desams when these were occupied by retainer Nayars of the same subcaste. Such an area was called a tara in South Malabar and a kara in Cochin, the assembly, a tara-koottam or kara-yogam. The assembly comprised the headmen of all Nayar property-groups who met to settle intra-caste disputes, adjudicate in trials of offences against caste law and arrange the public ceremonies of their common Bhagavadi temple. Offences such as wrongful interdining with low caste men, small debts, thefts and adultery with women of the lower polluting castes were punished by fines paid to [34] the Bhagavadi temple, or in grave cases by excommunication, and sale into slaver. Similarly intra-caste offences were settled among desavaris within an assembly of the nad, and among nadavaris within an assembly of the kingdom. The local Nayar assembly also had power to arbitrate in disputes and offences against the village at large among the lower castes. Some

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brahman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris'*) judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
776 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
794 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power
[588] to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
[826] lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess,
[784] she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence
681 is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
564 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[623] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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group supported each other firmly in disputes with other property 593
groups of the lineage, while the men of a lineage were expected to 578
defend each other to the death in outbreaks of violence against other lineages.

Inter-segmental conflicts between classificatory brothers, or between the men of a sibling group and their mother's classificatory brothers, eventually led to division of the taravād. This could not, however, take place until the men of all generations senior to the disputants were dead. As long as the taravād was obliged to cohere, the formalities associated with age rank between men countered incipient tendencies to segmentary fission. Men were ranked by age 593
irrespective of segment and generation, and the same etiquette of 561
formality and partial avoidance was due an elder own brother as to 578
an elder classificatory brother. Thus the etiquette of age rank not only reduced the dangers of open violence between individual "brothers" of any degree of relationship; it also *enforced* estrangement and social distance between full brothers, who in some contexts might otherwise have huddled together in unseemly amity to plot against their classificatory brothers in other segments of the property group.

SISTERS

Sisters shared many experiences and interests. They played together 593
in childhood and often experienced the tāli ceremony together. As adults they cooked, swept, pounded paddy, harvested, and cared for babies together. Women were in some respects ranked on the basis of age in the same manner as men. All who were older had some [561]
authority over all who were younger. A younger sister was not permitted to receive a visiting husband until after one had appeared to claim her elder sister's or elder classificatory sister's favors.

However, the age ranking and authority structure between women 593
was less formal than that between men. Women had no legal authority 562
over one another. All women of a household were legal minors, collectively under the authority of the men of their household, repre- [592]
sented by their kāranavan. Women had no place in the caste as- [564]
sembly and might not give evidence in trials. Disputes between [623]
women of different households or different lineages were not considered serious matters for public consideration. Women could not [578]
legally represent their households in relationships with other households, other castes, or political authorities.

For these reasons older women had only moral authority over 593
juniors. They could not enforce their decisions except by appeal

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

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588 to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets
[114] to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent
[613] people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the
[787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the
[791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar*
[301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the
[576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The
[605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (*i.e.*, her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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rights. Thus did these *kuttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramanis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 623 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 681 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There 564 was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom [671] fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [827].
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by 526
squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nāyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nāyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, 631
"have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the dēsam, presided over by a Dāsavazhi. A number of dēsams adjoining one another constituted a nādu, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the Nāduvazhi. Above the Nāduvazhis was the Rājah, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each nādu split itself up into a certain number of taras, over the affairs of which a Karanavan, or elder, presided. An assembly of these Karanavans [613]
constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military [623]
organisation of the Nāyars in mediæval times. These 631
six hundred are referred to in two places in the second 175
Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 623
A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371 M.E., the same organisation is referred to as Venattarunuru, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

631 [175] [623] working of temples and charitable institutions connected therewith. As Venad was divided into eighteen districts in ancient days, there might have been altogether eighteen six hundred in the country. The Nāduvazhis possessed considerable authority in all social matters, and possessed enough lands to be cultivated by their Kudiyans. A feudal basis was laid for the whole organisation. Large numbers served as soldiers in times of war, and cultivated their lands when the country was quiet. In modern times, none of them take to military service in Travancore, except those employed as sepoys in the Nāyar Brigade."

[901] Concerning the organisation of the Nāyars, Mr. Logan writes that they were, "until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district (Malabar). This name implies that they were the 'leaders' of the people. Originally they seem to have been organised into six hundreds, and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nād or country. The nād was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil teru, in Telugu teruvu, and in Canarese and Tulu teravu. The tara was the Nāyar territorial unit of organisation for civil purposes, and was governed by representatives of the caste, who were styled Kāranavar or elders. The six hundred was probably composed exclusively of those Karanavar or elders, who were in some parts called Mukhyastans (chief men) or Madhyastans (mediators), or Pramānis (chief men), and there seem to have been four families of them to each tara, so that the nād must have originally consisted of one hundred and fifty taras. This tara organisation of the protector caste played a most important

part in the political history of the country, for it was 631
the great bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of the Rājas. The evidence of the Honourable East India Company's linguist (interpreter, agent) at Calicut, which appears in the diary of the Tellicherry Factory under date 28th May, 1746, deserves to be here reproduced. He wrote as follows: 'These Nâyars, being heads of the Calicut people, resemble the parliament, and do not obey the king's dictates in all things, but chastise his ministers when they do unwarrantable acts.' The parliament referred to must have been the kūttam (assembly) of the nād. The kūttam answered many purposes when combined action on the part of the community was necessary. The Nâyars assembled in [623]
their kūttams whenever hunting, or war, or arbitration, or what not was in hand, and this organisation does not seem to have been confined to Malabar, for the koot organisation of the people of South Canara gave the British officers much trouble in 1832–33. In so far as 631
Malabar was concerned, the system seems to have 643
remained in an efficient state down to the time of the British occupation, and the power of the Rājas was strictly limited. Mr. Murdoch Brown, of Anjarakandi, who knew the country well, thus wrote to Mr. Francis Buchanan in the earliest years of the present (nineteenth) century regarding the despotic action of the Rājas when constituted, after the Mysorean conquest, the revenue agents of the Government of Haidar Ali. 'By this new order of things, these latter (the Rājas) were vested with despotic authority over the other inhabitants, instead of the very limited prerogatives that they had enjoyed by the feudal system, under which they could neither exact revenue from the lands of their vassals, nor exercise any, direct authority in their districts.' And

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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morning and evening and also in the leisure hours of the noon. I have often noted with interest the way in which even apparently illiterate people discuss among themselves the philosophy of life as preached in the Hindu sastras.

Village administration.—Panchayats were only introduced into the State in 1913. His Highness granted it as one of his boons during the celebration of his sixtieth birthday. "It is also my wish to revive, in commemoration of this occasion, the old village panchayat system which, I trust, will give facilities to the people to settle several matters of each village easily and quickly amongst themselves and give them some training in the art of self-government. It may also afford them better opportunities of representing their wants and grievances to the Darbar." With this Proclamation of His Highness the Raja begins the definition of the constitution and powers of the Village Panchayat Regulation. 623

Constitution.—Five members of whom the chief village officer of a revenue village (called locally "Parvathiakaran") is an ex-officio member. The rest are now nominated. It meets at least once a month.

POWERS.

I. *Administrative.*—(1) Maintenance and repairs of all minor irrigation works (i.e., works which do not require professional skill) below the cost of Rs. 500.

(2) Maintenance of road avenues.
(3) Maintenance of water-sheds.
(4) Prevention of epidemic diseases.
(5) Clearing and repairing of public wells and tanks.
(6) Formation of Co-operative Credit Societies.
(7) Improvement of public lanes and canals.

II. *Judicial.*—Civil disputes up to Rs. 50 with or without the consent of the parties, and up to Rs. 200 with the consent of the parties. 692

The judicial portion of the Regulation is still in abeyance and has not been brought into force in any panchayat in the State.

Even the administrative portion is applied only in three places in the taluk, since the rest have not sufficiently responded to the scheme. Watakancheri is still without a panchayat, though it is the headquarters of the taluk. 623

For executive work every taluk is under the direct administrative supervision of a Tahsildar (Revenue officer) who is also the Chief Treasury Officer. Until recently he was also a Magistrate, but this function is definitely taken away from him. Below him are Revenue Inspectors and village officers. The taluk in question, which has 74 villages, has 4 Revenue officers and more than 30 village officers. Watakancheri with an adjoining village is under a "Parvathiakaran" who collects the revenue and who has a clerk under him. This "Parvathiakaran" is paid Rs. 12 per month and his clerk Rs. 9. The revenue inspector supervises the survey work and collection work, and checks the village accounts. There are also a Munsif's Court and a Magistrate's Court in the village for the settlement of civil and criminal disputes. 631 [692]

Each taluk in the State has, as a rule, one Sanitary Inspector. The village officers should bring to the notice of the Sanitary 744

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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

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217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

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691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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*141 564 from those of the average Nâyar; also how the averages compare with the Nambûtiri.

But, before doing this, we will exclude the endogamous clans—the Ùrâli (wholly endogamous) and the Vattakkâd (partly endogamous), and take the averages of all the others. It will be observed that exclusion of these two, who are each units apart from each other, and the first from all the others here dealt with, leaves the averages of all those who intermingle much the same as before, when the Ùrâli and Vattakkâd were included. It cannot be said that exclusion of these two bring the measures of the others any nearer to those of the Nambûtiri, whose blood is in constant process of mixture with the others, but not at all with the Úrâli and not much with the Vattakkâd. It must, however, be remembered that there are about 39 Nâyars to every Nambûtiri in Malabar, and that the latter does not waive his opportunities to disperse his favours amongst the Nâyar ladies.

*141 564 The Úrâli and the Vattakkâd are not the only clans wholly or partly endogamous, but they are the only clans wholly or partly endogamous which have been examined thoroughly by me. The Attikkurissi clan is also endogamous, and there may be others.

[625] *Note.*—Individuals in the constabulary are excluded from all the tables, their measures being as a matter of course above the averages for their caste or clan.

	Averages of 136 Nâyars, Vattakkâd and Úrâli excluded.
Stature	165·7
Height, sitting	85·1
Do. kneeling	122·7
Span	175·3
Chest	80·4
Shoulders	40·0
Left cubit	46·2
Left hand, length	18·6
Do. width	8·0
Left middle finger...	10·9
Hips	25·9
Left foot, length	25·5
Do. width	8·8
Cephalic length	19·3
Do. width	14·1
Do. index	72·9

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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744 Inspector the outbreak of any epidemic. He makes tours in the villages; the two vaccinators in the taluk are under him. These vaccinators have to make tours in the taluk according to a programme previously laid down by the Sanitary Inspector. Public wells, tanks, cremation grounds, markets, cart-stands, etc., are also under his supervision. All towns which have no town-councils (and our town has not) are under health-officers, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon acting as the Health Officer. He attends to lighting.

625 *Police.*—Police administration is under a Sub-Inspector who has constables under him. He is under a Divisional Inspector (of whom there are three in the State) with a Superintendent of Police above him. There is, as a rule, one Sub-Magistrate for each taluk.

674 The official figures for the detection of crime are available only for a division of which there are three (A, B and C) in the State, and not for a village. The figures for the C Division, in which my village lies, are as follows:—

Cases.						Persons.						Property.					
1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.		
Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.
												RS.	RS.		RS.	RS.	
165	143	86·6	56	77	80·2	240	192	80	149	91	61	3,762	1,146	30·46	4,372	2,208	50·50

178 *History and Prospects of the village.*—I see no signs of economic improvement in the past; nor is there much deterioration worth speaking about. There has been, however, an increase in population in recent times. There has been no diversity of occupation. The same routine of paddy cultivation goes on with the old primitive tools and implements. Much capital is not invested even for agricultural improvements for the excellent reason that the small landholders who form the majority cannot afford to experiment on a grand scale, and the few big landholders are sleeping partners distributing their holdings to small men for rent. Nevertheless there are opportunities for economic improvement. The establishment of co-operative credit societies is an urgent need. An "Agricultural Society" consisting of members of the occupation could be conveniently started to diffuse modern scientific ideas in agriculture by distributing pamphlets in the vernacular and discussing questions of importance. A little more attention could be given to the rearing of agricultural stock and the use of agricultural implements. As irrigation does not depend for the most part upon wells in our parts, there is no use in multiplying them.

[454]

454 People buy land because land is the best form of investment

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364 There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
776 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
794 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrol-
[588] oger might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
[626] lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess,
[784] she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
681 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar
564 were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[623] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [776] [753]
impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the taravāds might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine 628
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste 688
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the 564
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear 684
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the 682
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the 564
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible 421
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in 476
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members 628
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. 694
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former 787
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts 782
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Nambūdiri Brahmans

769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
182 this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
626 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[24] and the initiation rites[25] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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582 endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look
*[564] upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where
[837] she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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264 626 564 was in a state of terrible fury. It was only with great trouble that they were persuaded not to excommunicate the poor man.

The Nāyar life and customs can be rightly understood only in the light of their 621 178 village organisation. The enormous influence the opinion of the village has in all matters connected with their social, as well as their family, life is the main reason of the persistence of the Nāyars as a vigorous and healthy community in spite of strong economic pressure, merciless competition and fast changing conditions. It is also due to this system of organised life that the customs of sexual relationship and marriage, which look so loose and immoral on paper, are found actually to be decent and tolerable. The Nāyar community is not more immoral than any other community in the world. The restraining influence among them does not come from actual written law, as among the Hindus of other parts of India, or from a belief in any social philosophy present in the mind of at least the leaders of thought. It comes from the strong feeling of social propriety which the village has developed to a very high degree.

III.—FAMILY LIFE AMONG THE NĀYARS.

613 The Nāyar family consists of all the descendants from the same ancestress, counting relationship exclusively from the side of the mother. Theoretically it [425] may contain all those who have a common ancestry of this kind, but, in practice, when families grow unwieldy, they divide the common property and live under different roofs. Ordinary families consist of relations four or five degrees removed. The numerical strength of the family varies. In old and aristocratic families one finds sometimes fifty to eighty people, though one or two families can be mentioned in Malabar which contain one hundred and fifty to two hundred people.

The undivided family generally lives under the same roof. In the house itself only the females live, while the male members of the family occupy rooms set apart for them, or, if they are rich, live in houses in neighbouring compounds. The Nāyar 351 house has always a large piece of enclosed ground in front of it, which is called 613 *Muttam*. Often it is used as an ornamental garden, and no man of the lower caste may enter it. There the children walk about and play in daytime, and the women have their dance and general merriment in the evening. Behind the house is a vegetable garden and a bathing tank, which is reserved exclusively for women. [562] The dominant idea in the arrangement of the house is the proper separation of sexes in the family.

613 The family owns property in common. What a private individual earns 421 belongs to him exclusively, but when he dies it is joined to the rest of the family, [177] according to the old Nāyar law which is still prevalent in some parts.[1] When the

[1] Legal tendency has been to modify this practice.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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564
463
182 Internal structure of the caste.
174

Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting [626] the Hindu race; the violation of which brings divine displeasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world [688] and in the world to come.

It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the 564 division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the 174 Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional [463] groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not [114] quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

564 In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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595 [554] circumstances of his matrimonial life. If however he do so, his family and society will not recognise it as such, and no woman of any respectability will enter into such an alliance.

586 According to the customary rules of *sambandham*, the relationship between husband and wife, ceases at the will and pleasure of either party; but in practice, such dissolution of marriage is of rare occurrence. The woman generally does not leave her husband, while the man may send her away whenever he chooses to do so. Marriage can be dissolved only with the consent of the *kiranavans* or the other elders of the family. There are certain formalities to be observed in this connection, which vary in detail in different places, but some secret act indicating the intention of repudiation seems necessary before the divorce. In the event of the husband trying to effect a separation from his wife, he sends two or three respectable men to give intimation to the *kiranavan* of the wife's family setting forth his reason for so doing. If the wife wishes to terminate the *sambandham*, she brings it to the notice of the *kâranavan*, and with his consent tells the husband in the presence of her relatives the reasons for discarding him. In the northern parts of the State, especially in the Chittur Taluk, the prevailing custom is to send for the husband and two of the fellow caste-men and to declare the reluctance of the woman to continue as wife, in the presence of these men. In some cases, instead of the formal declaration of the dissolution of marriage, certain conduct on the part of the parties is tantamount to such a declaration, such, for instance, as the failure by the husband or his family to send the usual presents to the family of the wife for *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira*, the refusal of the wife's people to accept them when sent, the failure to pay for wife's sustenance attended with deliberate omission to visit her, the deliberate absence for three consecutive nights with the consent of the elders from her husband's room. As a rule, no dissolution is allowed unless the cases for the same are enquired into and discussed by guardians and relations. Though a woman is free to marry and to dissolve the union, yet, as a rule, she never does so. The fear of social disgrace and self interest stand in the way of a woman's attempt to separate from her husband. In Cochin as well as in South Malabar, the women

Duration of conjugal union.

[613] [84] 626 [584] [582]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

852 846 564 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or may not be Mannāns. [844] On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance. [626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kērala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.

852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend. [591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband, [564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

613 comprise ten to twenty property-groups, exact genealogical relationships, and the order of segmentation of the several branches, are usually though not invariably known by elders. Members of very distantly related segments of the same lineage may however gradually cease to use kinship terms for each other and in any case tend to feel less strong emotional ties for each other than do members of more recently partitioned segments. These are of course closest [52] between property groups which have recently partitioned, those whose recent ancestresses were all born in one house. The order of segmentation of the lineage is also recognized in that should a property-group be allowed to die out, its property customarily reverts in equal shares to segments of the same order as itself - those which formed one unit with it before the most recent partition - rather than to the lineage as a whole.

But in other ways, the order of segmentation in a lineage is unimportant for the structuring of social relations. Segments intermediate between the property-group and the lineage have no special property, activities or ceremonies, and no headmen, and their members never meet to the exclusion of other lineage members. Neither do whole intermediate segments oppose
(27) each other in quarrels between their individual members. These remain restricted to the property-groups of the disputants and are normally settled voluntarily through appeal to some popular arbitrator of the village or, if they become serious, are forcibly settled by intervention of the assembly.

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613 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason
687 against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge
●627 him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth
[178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction
613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis-
627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor
835
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2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Murder among the Nayars

627 613 628 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196). Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown. [635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village, [582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order [608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised 614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's 564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally 591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters [425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [627]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was [671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of [428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both [635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. [578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged [627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *tarawād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *tarawād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *tarawād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *tarawād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *tarawād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *tarawād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *tarwād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[10] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *tarwād* had been unjustly.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pishurodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff., 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 238ff.

175 as Hamilton alleges, probably through lack of men to guard
635 him. Tradition asserts that the *Chāver* who managed on one
527 occasion to get through the guards and up to the Zamorin's seat belonged to the family of the Chāndrattil Panikkar.

"The chronicle winds up with a list of the *Chāvers* slain on this occasion, viz. :—

When the Zamorin was taking his stand on the terrace apparently at the commencement of festivities	5
On the day the elephant was adorned as already stated	18
"The next day of *Chandrattil Panikkar* and followers, the number who came and died	11
'Of *Verkōt Panikkar* and followers the number that came and died the third day.	12
'The number who came to Vakkayūr and died in the four days	4
'The number of *Chāvers* who were arrested at the place where Kalattal Itti Karunākara Menon was, and brought tied to Vakkayūr and put to death	1
'The number of *Chāvers* arrested on the day of the sacrifice, when all the men together made the obeisance below Vakkayūr at the time when the Zamorin was taking his stand, and left tied to the bars, and who were afterwards brought to Vakkayūr and after the ceremony was over and the Zamorin had returned to the palace were put to the sword	4
Total ...	55

"The chronicle does not mention the fact, but a current tradition states that the corpses of the slain were customarily kicked by elephants as far as the brink of the fine well, of which mention has been made, and into which they were tumbled promiscuously. The well itself is nearly filled up with débris of sorts, and a search made at the spot would probably elicit conclusive evidence of the truth of this tradition.

627 "The martial spirit of the Nāyars was in former days kept alive by such desperate enterprises as the above, but in every-day-life the Nāyar used to be prepared and ready to take vengeance on any who affronted him, for he invariably carried weapons, and when a man was slain it was incumbent on his

family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri, Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges, usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris* fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

The Nayar Kinship System. North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364 There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

624 *Village administration.*—There is no panchayat. There seems to be scope for one, and educated men are not wanting. The general administration of the village is in the hands of the village munsif or adhikari, who is assisted by the karnam. The adhikari represents the Government in all matters. The village 625 officers can send for the police from the nearest police station— 674 4 miles away. There is no regular police quartered in the village. But there is no need for any. The villagers are not prone to criminal acts and nuisances are not committed. The villagers are terribly afraid of the police too. Above the village officers is the Tahsildar of the taluk, who checks all their acts. Occasionally the Tahsildar or his deputy pays a visit to the village and is warmly welcomed by the prominent landlords. Revenue Inspectors and Land Records Tahsildars also visit the village to verify and check the village accounts. There has been no serious crime of any sort within recent years. Petty thefts are occasionally heard of particularly when corn is very dear and many of the poor actually starve.

691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

613 range. The rule of exogamy, and the sense of close kinship which bound members of a lineage meant that the local subcaste group of the kara (whether this comprised one or more lineages) was divided into a small number of compact groups. At assemblies the members separated out into lineage groupings. Only the legal heads (karanavans) of property-groups attended such assemblies, and within each lineage these tended to defer to each other on the basis of age, spokesmanship being left to the eldest man(also sometimes called a karanavan) of the lineage as a whole.

613 Though it owned no property in common, the
681 lineage was in some contexts a corporate group in the sense of having legal responsibility for its members' acts. If some member of a lineage broke a caste law, for example by dining or fornicating with a low caste person or failing to pay dues to the temple, his whole lineage was temporarily ostracized by the assembly until it called him to book. [42] His property-group must then pay a fine (prayaschittam) to the assembly and he must go through a rite of purification before his lineage could be readmitted to caste. In cases of grave offence such as fornication with a Paraya woman, his lineage was during British rule ostracized until he had been excommunicated from lineage and caste and his funeral rites performed; during native rule until he had been executed by order of the chief of the king.

613 In other ways, the lineage held itself respon-
628 sible for disputes entered into by its members.

613 Even in the last 50 years, quarrels between men
628 of different lineages, usually over field-boundaries or women, have resulted in prolonged hostility, sometimes with fighting, between their lineages. In South Malabar and Cochin, such hostility between individual lineages could not take the form of actual blood-feuds (kudipaga) such as were known in the politically less centralized area of North Malabar. These were prevented by the strong organization of the village assembly, the power of desavari and naduvari, and the existence of the royal court. Fighting between groups of men of different lineages, as between groups of men of adjacent villages owing allegiance to different and sometimes mutually hostile desavaris, was soon stopped by the appropriate local authority - the desavari in the first case and the naduvari in the second. If however a Nayar were slain by a man of another lineage, his matrilineal kinsmen had the right sanctioned by the king to place his body in the [43] house or the outhouse of his slayer and burn house and coprse together. His lineage might then, after paying a fee to the naduvari, select one of their number to fight a duel to the death with a chosen man of the slayer's lineage in order to avenge the murder. The lineage was thus a corporate group in contexts involving murder and offences against the religious laws of the caste, though the property-group was the corporate group in contexts involving disputes over property.

613 The individual lineage was linked to its local
602 subcastes assembly by the institution of enangar.
621

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants." 564

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain. 564 554 [628] [726]

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs. 621 613 564 566 471 427

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristocratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They 564 794

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

Murder among the Nayars

627 613 628 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196). Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 564 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown. [635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village, [582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order [608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised 614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's 564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally 591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters [425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members [629]
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. [694]
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[628] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup
clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the
582 Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhú-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri, Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges, usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

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Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south. *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

The Nayar Kinship System. North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage his *tarawâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

except to cease to function, and to divide the *tarwad* property among individual members. Theoretically the loss of the elements *A*, *B*, *C* and *D* marks the end of the *tarwad* institution. Nevertheless, the *tarwad* is still conceptualized as a distinctive social and ceremonial group by the element *E*, in spite of the loss of all other elements.

In 1956 (March-June) when I studied the Nayar, most of the *tarwad* in Kerala had already ceased to exist as a functional body. In a large building named *tarwad* where once lived more than fifty members of a matrilineal family, I found only a few members: such as an old mother and her daughter with her husband and children. The members of each *tarwad* were dispersed, forming independent small households each with a spouse and children, having already partitioned the *tarwad* property. Many of the older generation who are aged fifty and the head (father) of the household consisting of an elementary family, were born in a *tarwad*, and had experiences of the *tarwad* life. They are the people who lived through the dramatic stage of the disintegration of the *tarwad*. Their life history itself reflects the great changes in the Nayar matrilineal system.

It is extremely interesting to study through these living members the process, by which the members of a *tarwad* organized on a strict matrilineal principle, without allowing cohabitation of husband and wife, gradually reorganized into many individual elementary families in the course of half a century. The disintegration of the Nayar system as a whole took about two centuries but it seems that the actual disintegration of an individual *tarwad* is about half a century. The following discussion deals with how individual members acted at various stages of the disintegration of the *tarwad*; and what the changes of the matrilineal system actually mean to those individuals who are involved; and what are the consequences of the disintegration of the *tarwad*.

Marayil Tarwad

The *tarwad* which I have chosen for study is named Marayil, and one of the Nayar *tarwad* in Ernaklum, Cochin. This *tarwad* had many advantages for my purposes. The majority of the members of the *tarwad*, who now form many different households, still reside near each other, within the thirty minutes walk. The number of the descendants of the foundress of the *tarwad* amounts to 94 altogether in May 1956, ranging through seven generations. Many *tarwad* were much bigger in numbers, and deeper in generations, than this. Another advantage is that it represents a *tarwad* of a typical upper middle class among the Nayar caste in this area: present occupations of these members are government officials, advocates, teachers, etc. They have very friendly relationships with many other Nayars in this area, and are thought of as respectable people. The husbands, at every generation, are all Nayars, without a single case of a marriage with a Nambudri Brahman, as is common among the upper class Nayar in this area, nor with a Irawa, the caste below the Nayar.

Marayil *tarwad* was founded around 1830. The first partition by which the

[text continues on p. 21]

631
642

/For specific information on the political division of the Kerala state see the following:
kingdoms---635
nads (chiefdoms)---634
desams (villages)---621./

241 Large plantations of tea, coffee, rubber and
313 cinnamon have been developed, chiefly by British, in the highlands in the past hundred years, and in the forests teak provides a basic industry.

132 The rainfall is very heavy, especially in the north where the mountains encroach nearer to the sea. Through most of the area it varies between 75" and 170"; in the extreme south it drops to 32". Most of the rain comes with the southwest monsoon between May and September; lighter rains occur with the northeast monsoon in late November and December. Humidity is
[243] always very high. In most areas two wet paddy crops are taken in a year, in February and September. The temperature varies from 70° to 90°, and is hottest in April just before the monsoon breaks.

[4] (2) Political Divisions

631 From the establishment of British supremacy in 1792, until July 1949, the Malabar Coast was divided into three political areas. In the north is the Malabar District of Madras State, in area 5,790 square miles. It is governed in internal affairs by the legislative assembly of Madras, and is under a Collector (of land revenue) who lives in Calicut, the capital of the district. The port of Cochin is also administered as part of Malabar District. In the centre was Cochin State, in area 1,493 square miles. It was governed internally by the Maharaja of Cochin, assisted by the Cochin legislative assembly, whose headquarters was in Ernakulam, the capital. In the south was Travancore State with an area of 7,625 square miles, under the Maharaja

• 631 of Travancore and the Travancore legislative assembly, with headquarters in the capital, Trivandrum. On July 1st, 1949, by order of the Central Legislative Assembly in Delhi, the two southern states were integrated as the United States of Travancore and Cochin. The Maharaja of Cochin retired from office, and the Maharaja of Travancore became for the duration of his life the first Rajpramukh of the new united state. The State now has its headquarters and government offices [5] at Trivandrum.

/01 Despite these partly accidental political divi-
197 sions, the Malabar Coast is a discrete cultural area. Malayalam, (a Dravidian language strongly influenced in vocabulary by Sanskrit) which became distinguished as a deviant dialect of Tamil about the twelfth century, is the mother-tongue of all but a few immigrant Tamil groups in south Travancore. The area has also had some degree of political unity in the distant
174 past as the ancient kingdom of Kerala. The early history of Kerala is unknown. It was ruled by the Perumals, a succession of kings who seem to have come from outside Kerala and who may have been feudatories in the wider em-
175 pire of Chera. Their government came to an end sometime between the fourth and eleventh centuries A.D. After this Kerala was split into many petty kingdoms under indigenous Rajas of Nayar stock, having matrilineal descent. These continually fought each other and, from 1498, with the coming of the Portuguese and later the Dutch, English and French, made various alliances with these powers to gain their

175 individual ends. Their struggles were eclipsed by the Muslim invasions from Mysore which began in 1766, and ended when the East Indian Company took over the area in 1792. But the idea of a United Kerala has not died, and has been repeatedly suggested since India attained [6] Independence in 1947.

161 (3) Population

The Malabar Coast is the most densely populated part of India. The figures for 1931 show a population of 3,533,944 for Malabar; 1,205,016 for Cochin; and 5,095,073 for Travancore. In Malabar the mean density was 610 per square mile; in Cochin, 814; and in Travancore, 668. This includes forest and lagoon areas. The mean density of habitable land in Cochin was 1,400.

[511] Relative to the present exploitation of resources the whole coast is overpopulated. Most of the people lead a hand-to-mouth existence on an income barely sufficient to support life. Want and indebtedness are chronic and there is much unemployment.

Reliable figures are not available for before 1891, but at least since that date and probably for 50 to 100 years previsouly, a great increase has taken place. The figures for 1901 are for Malabar, 2,557,736; fo Cochin, 722,906; and for Travancore, 2,557,736. This increase in population is part of the baseline from which we must start in analysing kinship systems.

174 ●631 II The Traditional Political Background

European and Arabic reports on the Nayars

174 take us back to before 1498, when Basco da Gama
631 first reached Calicut. From the mid-fifteenth
century until the present, there is a fairly continuous series of records, by Arab, Portuguese, Dutch and later East India Company traders, and finally by British government officials and by Malayalis themselves. We may conveniently refer to the period before 1792, when the East India Company assumed government, as the period of the traditional political and economic organization, in contrast to the period between 1792 and 1947, which is the period of British
[127] rule. My picture of the traditional social structure is a composite reconstruction from literature and from the reports of my informants. It is not possible in the limits of this paper to give the derivation of each statement, but a bibliography appears at the end.

It seems clear from the literature that from the breakdown of the ancient kingdom of Kerala (c. 7th century?) until about the 14th century, the coast was divided into many small independent chiefdoms (nads.) Each nad was headed by a petty military chief of the Nayar caste. Sometime in the 9th century, the area was revisited by Arab traders after a long absence, who began to trade with the coastal chiefdoms in pepper and coconuts. Sometime between the 11th and 13th centuries, gunpowder was introduced by the Arabs, and it appears to have been from this date that some of the chiefs began to conquer neighbouring chiefdoms and to organize small kingdoms. By the early 15th century, the chief of these kingdoms were, from north to south,

174 those of Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad,
131 Kadattunad, Calicut, and Walluvanad (in what is now Malabar District), Cochin (the modern Cochin State) and to the south, the various feudatory chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore. By 1496 when the Portuguese arrived, however, the Zamorin (king) of Calicut, who had gained power by extensive Arab trade, had temporarily conquered the Walluvanad and Cochin kingdoms and reduced their rulers to the status of vassal lords. The Portuguese, allied with the Cochin Raja, drove back the Zamorin northward our of Cochin during the 16th century. From then on, wars between the major kingdoms were incessant for the next three centuries. The English reached Malabar in 1615, the Dutch in 1639, and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or other kingdom and took part in successive battles until, in 1763, the northern half of the coast was temporarily overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean invasions ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the British East India Company, and the establishment of the modern British political organization.

101 [9] Today, the coast is still divisible into three major areas, distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, by slight differences of dialect, dress and dietetic habits, and more marked differences in ritual beliefs and practices, and most markedly, by differences in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The nothern area is that of the modern North Malabar District, north

101 of the Kora River, comprising the former king-
doms of Kolattiri, Kottayam, Kadattunad and
part of Kurumbranad. The central area compri-
ses the modern South Malabar District and Co-
chin State (the former kingdoms of Calicut,
Walluvanad and Cochin), and the southern area,
174 the kingdom of Travancore. In the course of
631 fieldwork it became clear that these overall
differences of custom and social structure were
connected with major political boundaries in the
period of native rule. Though divisible into
separate small kingdoms and chiefdoms, the
whole of North Malabar District was temporarily
overrun by the Kolattiri Rajas in the 16th and
17th centuries. The central area at one period
or another was all conquered by the Zamorins
and incorporated in the Calicut empire, while
the whole southern area eventually became sub-
ject to the Travancore Rajas. In each of these
three major areas, a somewhat different politi-
cal system operated, [10] and in accordance with
this the higher castes, especially the Nayars,
were differently divided into subcastes with sep-
arate administrative functions: each of these
subcastes in turn had a kinship system influenced
by its occupation, relationship to the land, and
601 separate historical tradition. Much confusion
114 has arisen in past discussion of Nayar kinship
because of failure to differentiate between the
three areas: it was assumed that the Nayars had
one kinship system, whereas they in fact had
three, with different terminological structures.
121 In this paper I describe the traditional and mod-
101 ern political structures and the Nayar kinship

121 system of the central area of South Malabar and
101 Cochin, with brief references to social structure and Nayar kinship in North Malabar. No account is given of Travancore, since no fieldwork was done in that area.

631 III The Traditional Political System in the Cen-
564 tral Kingdoms

(1) Caste and Territorial Divisions

Throughout Kerala, the highest Hindu caste was the Nambudiri Brahmans, ritual and scholastic leaders of the people, who today form one hundredth of the total population. Carriers of the Sanskrit language and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar by peaceful infiltration from the eastern plateau [11] early in the Christian era and to have established themselves, by reason of their literacy and supposedly superior ritual knowledge, as religious leaders over the already established
565 population. In the traditional period, they were
631 throughout Kerala important landowners and priests, in charge of most of the temples and public rituals. They ranked ritually above the kings and were above and outside the political systems of the several kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved freely unmolested between enemy kingdoms, married across the boundaries, held periodic ceremonies and feasts attended by their caste-members from all parts of Kerala, and carried on their separate system
565 of intra-caste administration independently of the
631 administration of justice within the kingdoms.
623 For the latter purpose they divided out Kerala

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
•631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal ~~extended~~ families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged through out the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

525 Nayar subjects within the kingdom. Between
613 kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and
631 would not intermarry: though exogamous, therefore, each lineage considered itself to form a separate and unique [13] subcaste. The Cochin lineage, being more ancient than the rest, claimed the ritual rank of Kshattriyas (the second of the four varnas or major caste-groups of ancient North India Vedic Society, in ancient times kings and warriors.) The Walluvanad and Calicut lineages, of more recent Nayar origin, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas, but were accorded the title of Samantans, a
[643] Sanskrit word meaning "leaders." In each royal lineage, the oldest man of the whole lineage, irrespective of branch, was the crowned king and administered traditional secular rule with assistance from advisers of wealthy Nambudiri families of the kingdom, some of whom were employed as ambassadors.

Each kingdom was divided into nads or chiefdoms. In the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, some of these nads were former independent kingdoms which had been conquered by Calicut but were still ruled by their traditional monarchs who paid tribute to Calicut. These nads included Parappanad, Beypore and Chavakkad, each of whose rulers, though feudatory, claimed and were accorded higher ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage by reason of their more ancient tradition of government. Other nads of the Calicut kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (naduvaris) originally appointed by the Zamorin. [14] These ruled with

565 similar powers to those of the feudatory mon-
613 archs, but, though they were accorded the title
631 of Samantans, were considered of lower ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage. Similarly, some nads of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory kings of higher ritual rank than, but administratively subordinate to, the royal lineage, and others by lower ranking Samantan chiefs appointed by the king. Within each kingdom, the Samantan chiefs' lineages formed a single subcaste.

565 Each nad was in turn divided into villages or
621 desams, the basic units of the political system.
423 A desam appears usually to have covered from one to four square miles, comprising one or more stretches of dry garden land surrounded by, or surrounding, flats of alluvial paddy land. The land in each desam was owned by one landlord family of superior ritual rank to the other occupants of the villages. In some villages, the land was owned by a single Nambudiri partilineal extended family whose large house stood in a central position in the village. In others, it was owned by one or other branch of the royal matrilineage which had built a small palace in the village and whose eldest male member acted as a village headman. In other villages, the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineal lineage of the nad, whether this [15] were of feudatory rank of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live in a small palace in the centre of the village and fulfill the role of headman. In other villages, the land was owned by some famous Hindu temple of the kingdom, often

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
•631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
565 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

437 landlords, who would otherwise, apparently, have
423 been excluded from the cash economy. Such
[511] money could be spent by the Nambudiri and Nayar aristocracy on clothing and imported luxury goods available in Muslim bazaars in the towns. Some Muslims also held kanam lands in villages whence they could obtain rice and vegetables. Others bought food for cash from Nayar tenants.
[556] Apart from the kanam tenure the use of cash was, however, extremely restricted in inland villages, and surplus cash was converted into gold ornaments or other objects of ostentation. Among
[583] the lower castes small coins had a symbolic value, and a fixed number were handed over in marriage payments, but their use in economic exchange among the lower castes appears to have been negligible.

434 In spite therefore of the considerable overseas
554 trade, the complex division of labour, and the marked differences in wealth (expressed chiefly in size of houses, differences of clothing and jewelry, and types of food) between the several castes, the overall economy of Kerala in the traditional period was relatively stationary, and such social mobility as there was, was confined to the Muslims, Christians and "good" Hindu castes above Nayar retainers. It appears to
[613] have been this fact which permitted the persis-
[631] tence of such a relatively rigid feudal system and the existence, within each homogeneous local caste group, of a lineage system as the main organizing principle.

000 (3) Traditional Political Administration

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31] of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

692 shrine and temporary ostracism were the chief
681 punishments, but at least among Iravas, grave offenders were sometimes excommunicated with the consent of the janmi and sold in slavery to
623 Arab traders. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages, who met
[582] chiefly at marriages and funerals. In all of these castes, the local group of the assembly, while not strictly endogamous, was the group within which the majority of marriages took place.

631 Among retainer-Nayars, the local group might
692 comprise either one large desam, or a group of
681 two to four adjacent desams when these were occupied by retainer Nayars of the same subcaste. Such an area was called a tara in South Malabar and a kara in Cochin, the assembly, a tara-koottam or kara-yogam. The assembly comprised the headmen of all Nayar property-groups who met to settle intra-caste disputes, adjudicate in trials of offences against caste law and arrange the public ceremonies of their common Bhagavadi temple. Offences such as wrongful interdining with low caste men, small debts, thefts and adultery with women of the lower polluting castes were punished by fines paid to [34] the Bhagavadi temple, or in grave cases by excommunication, and sale into slaver. Similarly intra-caste offences were settled among desavaris within an assembly of the nad, and among nadavaris within an assembly of the kingdom. The local Nayar assembly also had power to arbitrate in disputes and offences against the village at large among the lower castes. Some

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[56] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

514 was confined to the village or (in the case of the
571 smaller castes) a group of adjacent villages.
631 For retainer-Nayars, apart from their excursions in war, it was confined to the group of adjacent villages of one subcaste; for temple servants and Nayar village headmen, the nad; for naduvaris and kings, the kingdom; and for Nambudiris, Kerala. It may be hypothesized that this variation in the field of social relations of the different ranked orders of the society is intrinsic in any feudal system with centralized political institutions.

582 (4) Hypergamy in the Upper Castes
611 Each of the castes below middle class Nayars was endogamous, as is usually in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes, a complicated system of hypergamous unions linked the several groups. By hypergamy I mean the union of a man of higher caste with a woman of lower caste.

582 In discussing hypergamy, it is necessary first
611 to explain the descent-system of Nambudiris.
596 In the patrilineal [36] extended family of Nambudiris, only the eldest son was permitted to marry, with Vedic rites, within his own caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons
595 had recognized liaisons (not initiated with Vedic rites and regarded by Nambudiris not as marriage but as concubinage) with women of the matrilineal castes, whose children belonged to the mother's caste and lineage by matrilineal descent. However, if in any generation the eldest Nambudiri son was was sterile, the second son

613 point in their development. There is plenty of
644 historical evidence, however, to show that they did so. In many cases, especially of the smaller Rajas and the chiefs, the kingdom or chiefdom was also divided between the segments at some point after their own private estates had been partioned.

613 [94] Reference to Map 7 helps to clarify this
644 statement. Nads I and II (Kolattunad and Arik-
631 kal) were once united under the Kolattiri Rajas, but nad II early broke away as a small independent chiefdom ruled by a segment of the lineage which had been converted to Islam by the Arabs. Nad I, which remained the kingdom of Kolattiri, was subdivided into smaller nads ruled by Samantan naduvaris. There are today several lineages of these, but Innes reports that they have all split off from one of two original lineages. Nad II was similarly ruled by a high class Nayar chieftain lineage (14) which at various times was feudatory to Kolattiri. This lineage divided into several branches each of which took as portion of the nad and ruled it independently. Nad IV was also once ruled by a single naduvari lineage as one property-group (Mithangath Kovilagath Thottoli), as feudatory of Kolattiri. In 1766, the group partitioned its properties between its five segments, but retained the office of naduvari, and also a second athanam, for the first and second man of the whole lineage.

The Kurumbranad Rajas, (nad X), like the Kolattiri Rajas, are said to be one of the oldest ruling families of Kerala and to have received their nad from the last of the Perumals. The

1/1 [See p. 105, category 116 --- Analyst]

613 The area ruled by the Kurumbranad Rajas is
644 thought to have once extended as far south as
631 nad XI, where it bordered on the Zamorin's territory, and as far north as nads IV and VI. Nad IX was formerly ruled by the Rajas of Kollam, who are thought to have been an independent segment of the Kurumbranad family. The Kollam Rajas were conquered and expelled by the Zamorins.

The Kottayam Rajas, who ruled nads VII and XXX, and were in possession of nad XI for a short time before the British took over, are said by some informants to have once formed one lineage with the Kurumbranad Rajas, (with whom Innes too reports that they were "closely related".) This is likely, since the two lineages acknowledge each other to be Kshattriyas, but will not intermarry. Innes also reports that nad XXX (a mountainous, sparsely populated area) was conquered by Kottayam and Kurumbranad together and later divided between them. Before the British came, the Kottayam lineage redivided and one property-group, Parassi, became independent chieftains over part of nad VI. When the Muslims invaded from Mysore the main branch of the Kottayam family fled temporarily to Travancore and in their absence Parassi became rulers of nads VI and XXX. They later opposed the British settlement of Malabar and were therefore deposed and not given a pension. Parassi and Kottayam (who returned) are still independent lineages but do not yet intermarry. The Payyormala Nayar chieftains of nad VIII who ruled as feudatories

of Kurumbranad, were also once one lineage, which divided its rule and its lands between three segments. This nad, like nads X and XI was for a short time conquered by the Zamorin, and its rulers, along with the Kurumbranad Rajas, became his feudatories.

The Kadattunad Rajas of nad VII are not one of the oldest lineages of Kerala and are not a segment of one of the neighbouring lineages. Krishna Iyer reports (15) that [96] Kadattunad was once a branch of the Porlattiri royal lineage which once ruled nad XII. The Porlattiri lineage was the first to be dispossessed by the Zamorin and its members are said to have fled north and sought refuge with the Kolattiri lineage. Innes says that the Kadattunad lineage sprang from the union of a Kolattiri woman with a Porlattiri man, but our informants in North Malabar thought that Kadattunad are descended from a Kolattiri man who gave this nad to his Porlattiri wife and children, in accordance with a common North Malabar custom.

The Pulavayi Nayar chieftains of nad XIV were once independent rulers in their jungly nad, but became nominal feudatories of the Zamorin. Their lineage and rule were also divided into several branches. Nads XIII and XV were once united under the Parappu royal lineage, which divided its nad between two branches, both of which were early overrun by the Zamorin. The Beyport Rajas' lineage, which remained as a feudatory of the Zamorin and is still extant, is a branch of the Parappu lineage. Nads XXIII and XXIV were similarly once one with nad XXV

613 under the Palghat Rajas, but the Zamorin drove
644 a wedge into their territory in the 18th century
631 and took nad XXV. The other two nads were divided between two branches of the Palghat lineage.

Nad XXVIII was formerly ruled by the Chavakkad Rajas, whose lineage became a feudatory of Cochin. The lineage divided into four tavaris, which quarreled with each other for political power. One of these branches, known as the Rajas of Punnattur, finally appealed to the Zamorin for [97] support against the other three, which were supported by Cochin. The Zamorin came to their help, overran the whole nad, and made its rulers feudatory to himself.

The Vellatiri Rajas, who ruled nad XIX and formerly nads XX and XXI as the kingdom of Walluvanad, remained a small lineage and, like the Zamorins, did not partition until the British began to rule. Their numbers then increased and they are now divided into four palaces.

Since the Zamorin's lineage, which maintained its kingdom intact, was one which happened not to increase in numbers or divided its property-group over four centuries, it might be thought tempting to argue that the cohesion of each kingdom traditionally depended on the cohesion of its royal lineage.

However, we must be clear in recognizing that the cohesion and expansion of the Zamorin's kingdom, and to a lesser extent of that of Cochin, and later of Travancore, depended on factors other than the structure of their royal lineages. Chief of these factors were, it seems likely,

613 the expansion of overseas' trade with the Arabs
644 and later, the Europeans, from the twelfth to
631 the eighteenth centuries; the developments of better means of communication in the larger kingdoms of the plains, where this was not too difficult; some ammassing of wealth in the hands of rulers; and leading from this, their ability to organize larger armies which (especially after the adoption of gun-warfare) permitted them to conquer neighbouring weaker nads. The persistence of these larger units seems to have depended on the strength of their new political institutions, chiefly [98] the militia and the central courts of justice, as well as on a widening of the field of social relations of the "good" castes who controlled the administra-
613 tion. Along with this went a very slow process
644 of social mobility in the upper reaches of the
631 society. The caste system of rulers, chiefs,
565 village headmen and retainers was not entirely stationary: retainer-lineages which had distinguished themselves in war were sometimes appointed as desavaris and gradually changed their ritual rank, and it was possible for a desavari lineage to increase in wealth and be made a naduvari lineage, or for a small naduvari lineage to increase in wealth (as did the Zamorins), expand its territory, and call itself a royal lineage, claiming the rank of Kshattriyas. This process took some time, indeed: it was not until the eighteenth century that the Zamorin's lineage, after going through a ceremony in which its members passed through the body of a golden cow, were able to claim that

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
•631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable
613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

613 property-groups. These in turn scrambled for
644 the crown and in turn allied themselves with the
631 Zamorins, the Portuguese and the Travancore Rajas to help them to establish their claims. Despite periodic total conquest by one or other neighbouring ruler, however, the kingdom was never divided between its segments as were many of the smaller chiefdoms, I think because, like Calicut and Walluvanad, it had developed trade and centralized political institutions which would not permit of its reversion to smaller units. Whether, had their kingdoms grown much larger the rulers would have been obliged to abandon the matrilineal system, is a question which cannot be answered out of the data available. [100]

At all events it is clear that despite its militia and relatively centralized administration, the whole political structure of the central area, as well as the kinship system of its rulers, depended for its persistence on a relatively stationary or only very gradually changing economy which would permit the perpetuation of hereditary political offices. For the administration, managed by the "good" upper castes, was built up round a network of kinship ties. Nambudiris fathered the Rajas and sporadically, the high caste population at large; the Rajas fathered the chieftains, and the chieftains the desavaris; while the whole retainer Nayar population, despite its division into karas, villages, and lineages linked in perpetual affinal kinship, was also united throughout the kingdom by the practice of sexual unions between the mobile

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food.[101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

1: Gough-103 E-4, 5 (no date) 1954 AW11 Kerala AW11

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631

MAP II MALABAR DISTRICT

Showing the boundaries of the nads and kingdoms in the mid-eighteenth century.

Nads	Rulers
1 Kolattunad	Kolattiri Rajas
2 Randatara	Nayar Chiefs
3 Tellicherry	E. India Co.
4 Iruvalinad	Nayar Chiefs
5 Kurangoth	Nayar Chiefs
6 Kottayam	Kottayam Rajas
7 Kadattunad	Kadattunad Rajas
8 Payyormala	Nayar Chiefs
9 Payyanad	Zamorin
10 Kurumbranad	Rajas
11 Tamerasseri	Kottayam Rajas
12 Poland	Zamorin
13 N. Parappanad	Parappanad Rajas (Zam.)
14 Pulavayi	Nayar Chiefs (Zamorin)
15 S. Parappanad	Parappanad Rajas (Zamorin)
16 Ramnad	Zamorin
17 Cheranad	Zamorin
18 Ernad	Zamorin
19 Walluvanad	Walluvanad Rajas
20 Walluvanad	Zamorin
21 Nedunganad	Zamorin
22 Kavalappara	Nayar Chiefs
23 Vadamalappuram	Palghat Rajas
24 Tommalapuram	Palghat Rajas
25 Naduvattam	Zamorin
26 Bettatnad	Bettem Rajas (Zamorin)

Nads	Rulers
27 Kutnad	Zamorin
28 Chavakkad	Chavakkad Rajas (Zamorin)
29 Arikkal	Arikkal Rajas
30 Wynaad	Kottayam Rajas
31 Cochin	Cochin Rajas

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[8] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[429] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [8] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1880's were significant events in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564 Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
[566] in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 3, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

7:Gough E-9 (1947-1949)1955 AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar

12 to elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[129] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curt Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1944, 1944; Dube 1955) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 The area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore–Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the *Zamorin* of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the *Zamorins* in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the *Zamorins* failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambūdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Nāmbūtaris, chiefs (*nāduvāzis*) of districts (*nādu*). These owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
175 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavāzis*) of villages (*desams*).
564 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sūdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illoth Sūdras and Swarupattil Sūdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sūdra Nayars
631 were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvāzi*
613 or *desavāzi* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this rite, I am chiefly indebted to Roheim (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1920, 1924), Melanie Klein (1920), and Roheim (1920).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*tarawād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukadu, Attakurusi (Chidigana in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *gurukkal*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KODA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
● 631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the *Zamorin*'s kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nāḍuvāzis*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavāzis* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nāḍ*, while within the *desam*, *kudippaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavāzis*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nāḍuvāzi*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nāḍuvāzi* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
his *tarawād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
684
851

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Malayalam has an extensive 129
literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampūdiris and the [538]
Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without 621
an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no village community: it has only a village organization. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar [421]
individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is unknown, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar 621
families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Eshuvs, and Jews. 563
For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. 564
All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart [361]
in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which 631
was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsams*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsams*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before 634
the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vanki* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
701 Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each
[874] village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari*
701 and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules
874 of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 even now hold a review in martial array (*vela*). In Trivandrum, which is the
701 capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Pataynais* (*Pata*—war, *ani*—to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine
[121] myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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a Nayar *tarawad*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawad* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawad* on his death.[1] In families where the *karanavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawad* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *karanavans* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawad* and their dislike to the rule of the *karanavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathayam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawad* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *karanavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organization.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 160.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 29-31.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and pleasure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws of the country.

Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuosity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

131 Ghats, the height of which varies between five and over eight thousand
[133] feet.

Before 1957, when the new State of Kerala came into being with the
[631] reorganization of the Indian States, the area included the large Madras district of Malabar, the French possession of Mahe, and the princely State of Cochin amalgamated with that of Travancore. The respective capitals were Calicut (today Kozhikode), Ernakulam, and Trivandrum, the French possession being limited to the town bearing the same name as itself.

133 All rivers in Kerala, except those of the more elevated taluk of the Wynaad, run from east to west, cutting the coastal strip into sections. Inland, however, vast stretches of practically stagnant water, comparable to lagoons, known locally under the name of backwaters, extend down the whole length of the State, affording uninterrupted communication.

133 Geologically, Kerala is a low tableland of red laterite and clay, fringed
134 by a coast of alluvial formation. Laterite, from the name given to it by Dr Buchanan in 1800, is really a soil of decomposed gneiss, from which the Western Ghats are made. When dug up and left to the action of sun and rain, only the skeleton of hard material remains, sponge-like in appearance, from which blocks of building material are cut. It is not very resistant or long-lived, and gradually disintegrates into a red type of gravel, more or less finely granulated.

134 The resultant soil or loam is a well-balanced mixture of clay and sand, admittedly poor in organic matter, but well-suited to the special types of crops which have given Kerala its wealth. Thus rice, coconuts, pepper
241 and betel, arecanuts, jack fruits, mangoes and cashews, do extraordinarily well in it, helped as they are by the damp, warm climate constant
132 throughout the year. There are two monsoons in Kerala, the south-west monsoon of the summer, which is the principal one, and the north-west monsoon of the autumn which, lately, often fails.

137 In appearance, the landscape of Kerala varies very little from the coastal line to the towering peaks of the Western Ghats. Along the beach of fine sand, coconut trees in an unending perspective, raise their gently waving palm leaves in a manner reminiscent of the South Seas and of Ceylon. Jack fruit trees and mangoes behind them, being of a darker coloured foliage, give depth to the romantic scene. It is among
[361] these that the houses of the inhabitants of Kerala are to be found. Unlike the rest of India, human habitations are not grouped together here in
[351] villages and towns. Each stands isolated from its neighbours, in a garden-like compound surrounded by a stout fence of brambles or of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

said, by dividing it up between the rajas of Travancore, Cochin, Kolattiri, Kurumbranad, Walluvanad and others. To the Zamorin of Calicut, who was later to become so famous, he left only his sword with the recommendation to "die, kill and annex". The latter potentate and his descendants took the injunction seriously and very quickly in the two following centuries, the 14th and 15th, assumed a leading role on the Kerala stage. They encouraged Arab trade in spices and other commodities, and by their scrupulous honesty and absolute security of commerce, obtained and held it for fully two hundred years. 175

It was then that the first Europeans arrived on the scene. The Portugese came to beign with, in an attempt to break the Moors' monopoly of Far Eastern products. Coming into conflict with their Mohammedan rivals and with their protégé the Zamorin, they successfully supported the raja of Cochin against these and thus gained a footing on the coast while taking over command of the sea. They were only forced out by the Dutch in the 17th century (although they still hold Goa further north, to this day), and the Dutch in turn were superseded by the British and the French, who settled respectively at Tellicherry and at Mahe, from which fortified places they fought each other for supremacy in the pepper trade for another two centuries.

In the 18th century, the Mohammedan rulers of Mysore descended on Kerala and, after forcibly converting a great number of its inhabitants to Islam, annexed large tracts of it. Tipu Sultan, however, the ally of Napolean, fell foul of the British East India Company, which eventually defeated him at Seringapatnam in 1792. British supremacy in Kerala dates from that year and a system of farming out revenue to the local rajas was instituted. It proved to be a mistaken method of collection, and was the cause of the serious rebellions of Kerala Varma, Raja of the Padinnara Kovilagam of Kottayam, the Pazhassi raja, otherwise known as Pychy raja, in 1797 and from 1800 to 1805. With their termination, the British took over direct administration of Malabar, while leaving Cochin and Travancore to that of their rajas. They were to keep it until 1947 when India was given her independence. 175 631 648

Two years later, the States of Travancore and Cochin were merged to form a United State under the Maharaja of Travancore. In 1953, France finally relinquished her hold on Mahe, and in 1957, the whole coastal region from South Canara to Cape Comorin became the State of *Kerala* which we know today. The name has been variously interpreted as meaning either "land of coconut trees" or "land of the Cheras", an ancient Hindu dynasty of south India. [101]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully.

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change.

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State.

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people;

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWII Kerala AWII

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by 526 squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs, in ever so many impossible ways. Nâyar shields are made of wood, covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle, and half way up the blade."

"The Nâyars," Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes, 631 "have a distinct feudal organisation, and the division of their territories had an unmistakeable reference to it. The territorial unit was the dêsam, presided over by a Dâsavazhi. A number of dêsams adjoining one another constituted a nâdu, which was under the jurisdiction of a chieftain called the Nâduvazhi. Above the Nâduvazhis was the Râjah, the highest suzerain in the country. In course of time, each nâdu split itself up into a certain number of taras, over the affairs of which a Karanavan, or elder, presided. An assembly of these Karanavans [613] constituted the six hundred—an old socio-military [623] organisation of the Nâyars in mediaeval times. These 631 six hundred are referred to in two places in the second 175 Syrian Christian document, which bears the date 925 623 A.D. In a South Travancore inscription, dated 371 M.E., the same organisation is referred to as Venattarunuru, or the six hundred of Venad, and one of their duties evidently related to the supervision of the

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4,.5 (no date) 1909
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Nayar

631 [175] [623] working of temples and charitable institutions connected therewith. As Venad was divided into eighteen districts in ancient days, there might have been altogether eighteen six hundred in the country. The Nāduvazhis possessed considerable authority in all social matters, and possessed enough lands to be cultivated by their Kudiyans. A feudal basis was laid for the whole organisation. Large numbers served as soldiers in times of war, and cultivated their lands when the country was quiet. In modern times, none of them take to military service in Travancore, except those employed as sepoys in the Nāyar Brigade."

[901] Concerning the organisation of the Nāyars, Mr. Logan writes that they were, "until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district (Malabar). This name implies that they were the 'leaders' of the people. Originally they seem to have been organised into six hundreds, and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nād or country. The nād was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil teru, in Telugu teruvu, and in Canarese and Tulu teravu. The tara was the Nāyar territorial unit of organisation for civil purposes, and was governed by representatives of the caste, who were styled Kāranavar or elders. The six hundred was probably composed exclusively of those Karanavar or elders, who were in some parts called Mukhyastans (chief men) or Madhyastans (mediators), or Pramānis (chief men), and there seem to have been four families of them to each tara, so that the nād must have originally consisted of one hundred and fifty taras. This tara organisation of the protector caste played a most important

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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part in the political history of the country, for it was 631
the great bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of the Rājas. The evidence of the Honourable East India Company's linguist (interpreter, agent) at Calicut, which appears in the diary of the Tellicherry Factory under date 28th May, 1746, deserves to be here reproduced. He wrote as follows: 'These Nāyars, being heads of the Calicut people, resemble the parliament, and do not obey the king's dictates in all things, but chastise his ministers when they do unwarrantable acts.' The parliament referred to must have been the kūttam (assembly) of the nād. The kūttam answered many purposes when combined action on the part of the community was necessary. The Nāyars assembled in [623]
their kūttams whenever hunting, or war, or arbitration, or what not was in hand, and this organisation does not seem to have been confined to Malabar, for the koot organisation of the people of South Canara gave the British officers much trouble in 1832–33. In so far as 631
Malabar was concerned, the system seems to have 643
remained in an efficient state down to the time of the British occupation, and the power of the Rājas was strictly limited. Mr. Murdoch Brown, of Anjarakandi, who knew the country well, thus wrote to Mr. Francis Buchanan in the earliest years of the present (nineteenth) century regarding the despotic action of the Rājas when constituted, after the Mysorean conquest, the revenue agents of the Government of Haidar Ali. 'By this new order of things, these latter (the Rājas) were vested with despotic authority over the other inhabitants, instead of the very limited prerogatives that they had enjoyed by the feudal system, under which they could neither exact revenue from the lands of their vassals, nor exercise any, direct authority in their districts.' And

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643 again, The Rāja was no longer what he had been, the head of a feudal aristocracy with limited authority, but the all-powerful deputy of a despotic prince, whose military force was always at his command to curb or chastise any of the chieftains who were inclined to dispute or disobey his mandates.* From the earliest times, therefore, down to the end of the eighteenth century, the Nāyar tara and nād organization kept the country from oppression and tyranny on the part of the rulers, and to this fact more than to any other is due the comparative prosperity, which the Malayāli country so long enjoyed, and which made Calicut at one time the great emporium of trade between the East and the West. But, besides protection, the Nāyars had
631 originally another most important function in the body politic. Besides being protectors, they were also supervisors or overseers, a duty which, as a very ancient deed testifies, was styled kānam—a Dravidian word derived from the verb kānuka (to see, etc.). Parasu Rāman (so the tradition preserved in the Kēralolpatti runs) separated the Nāyars into taras, and ordered that to them belonged the duty of supervision (*lit.* kan = the eye), the executive power (*lit.* kei = the hand, as the emblem of power), and the giving of orders (*lit.* kalpana, order, command), so as to prevent the rights from being curtailed, or suffered to fall into disuse. The Nāyars were originally the overseers or supervisors of the nād, and they seem to have been employed in this capacity as the collectors of the share of produce of the land originally reserved for Government purposes. As remuneration for this service, and for their other function as protectors, another share of the produce of the soil

* Buchanan, Mysore, Canara and Malabar.

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavaḷasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original
sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

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morning and evening and also in the leisure hours of the noon. I have often noted with interest the way in which even apparently illiterate people discuss among themselves the philosophy of life as preached in the Hindu sastras.

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Village administration.—Panchayats were only introduced into the State in 1913. His Highness granted it as one of his boons during the celebration of his sixtieth birthday. "It is also my wish to revive, in commemoration of this occasion, the old village panchayat system which, I trust, will give facilities to the people to settle several matters of each village easily and quickly amongst themselves and give them some training in the art of self-government. It may also afford them better opportunities of representing their wants and grievances to the Darbar." With this Proclamation of His Highness the Raja begins the definition of the constitution and powers of the Village Panchayat Regulation.

Constitution.—Five members of whom the chief village officer of a revenue village (called locally "Parvathiakaran") is an ex-officio member. The rest are now nominated. It meets at least once a month.

POWERS.

I. *Administrative.*—(1) Maintenance and repairs of all minor irrigation works (i.e., works which do not require professional skill) below the cost of Rs. 500.

(2) Maintenance of road avenues.
(3) Maintenance of water-sheds.
(4) Prevention of epidemic diseases.
(5) Clearing and repairing of public wells and tanks.
(6) Formation of Co-operative Credit Societies.
(7) Improvement of public lanes and canals.

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II. *Judicial.*—Civil disputes up to Rs. 50 with or without the consent of the parties, and up to Rs. 200 with the consent of the parties.

The judicial portion of the Regulation is still in abeyance and has not been brought into force in any panchayat in the State.

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Even the administrative portion is applied only in three places in the taluk, since the rest have not sufficiently responded to the scheme. Watakancheri is still without a panchayat, though it is the headquarters of the taluk.

631

For executive work every taluk is under the direct administrative supervision of a Tahsildar (Revenue officer) who is also the Chief Treasury Officer. Until recently he was also a Magistrate, but this function is definitely taken away from him. Below him are Revenue Inspectors and village officers. The taluk in question, which has 74 villages, has 4 Revenue officers and more than 30 village officers. Watakancheri with an adjoining village is under a "Parvathiakaran" who collects the revenue and who has a clerk under him. This "Parvathiakaran" is paid Rs. 12 per month and his clerk Rs. 9. The revenue inspector supervises the survey work and collection work, and checks the village accounts. There are also a Munsif's Court and a Magistrate's Court in the village for the settlement of civil and criminal disputes. [692]

744

Each taluk in the State has, as a rule, one Sanitary Inspector. The village officers should bring to the notice of the Sanitary

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364 There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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The statistics of births and deaths of this desam are obtainable only for the year 1915. They are given below :— 163 165

Births.

Males	50	Hindu	84
Females	43	Muhammadan ...	9
	93		93

Deaths.

According to age—	
Lifeless deliveries	7
Below one year	9
Between 1 and 10	13
" 10 and 20	1
" 20 and 30	7
" 30 and 40	3
" 40 and 50	...
" 50 and 60	3
" 60 and 80	5
	48

According to sex and castes—			
Males	24	Hindus	43
Females	24	Muhammadans ...	5

There is no paracheri in the strict sense of the term. The depressed classes, mostly Cherumas, are still in a state of semi-serfdom, depending for everything on their landlords and masters. 561

Land.—The area of the desam by settlement is 1,803·40 acres. This desam together with Mattupalli, Peringode, Pillakkattiri, Tolukad, Mathur, Alikara, Kuttanad, Perumannur and Chalisseri desams formed the old revenue amsam of Kothachira. Now Kothachira revenue amsam includes only Kothachira, Mathur and Peringode desams. 631

The areas under each description of land— 423 311

—	Wet.	Garden.	Occupied dry.	Unoccupied dry.	Unassessed.	Inam.	Porambokе.	Total.
	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS. C.	ACS C.	ACS. C.			ACS. C.
Private Jenmi.	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	...	...	...	1,787 57
Government Jenmi.	...	...	...	...	...		..	...
Unregistered lands.	...	...		...	15 83	...	...	15 83
	445 27	209 43	197 16	935 71	15 83	..	...	1,803 40

● 632, 633 Kerala AW11

[Additional data on individual cities has been marked for either 361 or 369 or both. For reference to these cities see Index, category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

632, 633 Kerala AW11

[Additional data on individual cities has been marked for either 361 or 369 or both. For reference to these cities see Index, category 116, 6: Spate AW1 India.]

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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvaṅ's*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to village headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office. 635 622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and 726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed 635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have 634 been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral 613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there 554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as [648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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separate segments, gave them economic independence and a share in the government, and made them representatives of the lineage as a whole. If the lineage separated into two or more branch property groups, their estates were managed by their senior men after the sthānis had been removed. The whole lineage might thus cohere for a number of generations. When, however, taxes ran low and the political offices became financially weak, the sthānis had a tendency to revert to the property groups from which they came and, as heads of them, to seek independent rule over a portion of the chiefdom or kingdom. Sthānams were thus an integrative device which developed when a ruling lineage was already strong. They could not maintain its strength if the economic basis of its power was removed, nor could they ultimately prevent disputes of the branches for the central office if the lineage became very large.

RELATIONS BETWEEN ARISTOCRATIC LINEAGES

Each office-bearing lineage had as its enangar one or two higher-ranking lineages from the range of those within which its women were wont to draw visiting husbands. Thus village headmen often had their district chiefs as enangar. A district chief's lineage might have the royal lineage, a conquered royal lineage, or a Nambudiri Brahman family as enangar. The Calicut royal lineage had two conquered royal feudatory lineages as enangar, and some other royal lineages had Nambudiri Brahman families. The enangar fulfilled the usual ceremonial obligations at life-crisis rites, and tied the tālis of girls. Unlike those among the retainer Nayars, these enangar obligations were not reciprocal. A district chief's lineage might thus receive enangar services from royals, but would give them to village headmen. Appropriately, the enangar relationship among aristocrats, like the marriage relationship, was thus asymmetrical. Unfortunately I lack information about whether aristocratic enangar, like those of retainers, had the right to bring to trial offenders against the religious laws of caste.

It is clear that hypergamous marriages and asymmetrical enangar relations were adapted to the potential political and ritual mobility of office-bearing lineages and to the fact that at any given time such a lineage might not be able or willing to acknowledge others as its equals in political or ritual rank. In most situations therefore an office-bearing lineage could act as though it formed a separate caste. There were some contexts, however, in which this was not possible. One of these was adoption. If a lineage was obliged to adopt, it had to find some other lineage whose members it was willing to acknowledge as peers. This problem was usually surmounted by adopting from a lin-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events in this process.

Political and Economic Systems

564
[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
648 or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
634 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
635 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [627]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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423 613 429 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

613 431 423 Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also managed to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal descendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife. This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village headman, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants. Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

[671] [428] [634] [635] [578] [627]

613 431 423 592 Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*, within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More commonly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627 This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627 this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634 when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627 another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634 chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578 being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525] two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chief- [652] tain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423 to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427 in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178] the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821] a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

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* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782] people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . [769] after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampūdiris and the Nāyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer. 127 [538]

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NĀYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nāyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.[1] Malabar has no *village community*: it has only a village *organization*. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization. 621 [424]

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nāyar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nāyar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nāyars do not exist. 621 563 564 [361]

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Dēsams*; and the *Dēsams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nāyar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nāyar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim 631 634

[1] Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India.* T. Fisher Unwin, 1915.

634 701 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were 631 701 [874] bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 701 874 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 874 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*, [346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 541 701 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained, even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 794 [346] The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community. The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these [631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 [121] In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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175

or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Nádavázhi* (ruler of a *Nád*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désavázhi.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

643
the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants 422
caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells. 825

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme 634
powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the
country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction 585
who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even [182]
now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the [431]
celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part
of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and
bought his consent with presents. For without such consent
no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His [574]
consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living 595
with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, 634
adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ,
giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus
even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's
power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a 588
girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the 634
local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other 421
things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return
the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised
to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a
one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect 634
buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the 342
inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile
thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed
only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ
issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restric- [369]
tions are not totally inoperative. In the State His High- [182]
ness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social 643
matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a 566
similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands.
Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies 634
were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the [493]
only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1] [564]
[553]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

634 553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Nádduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. 622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Nádduvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

Village organisation and village life.

[634] 634 [622] [701] [451] [651] 621 [564]

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kúvalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

MAP 1

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103
131
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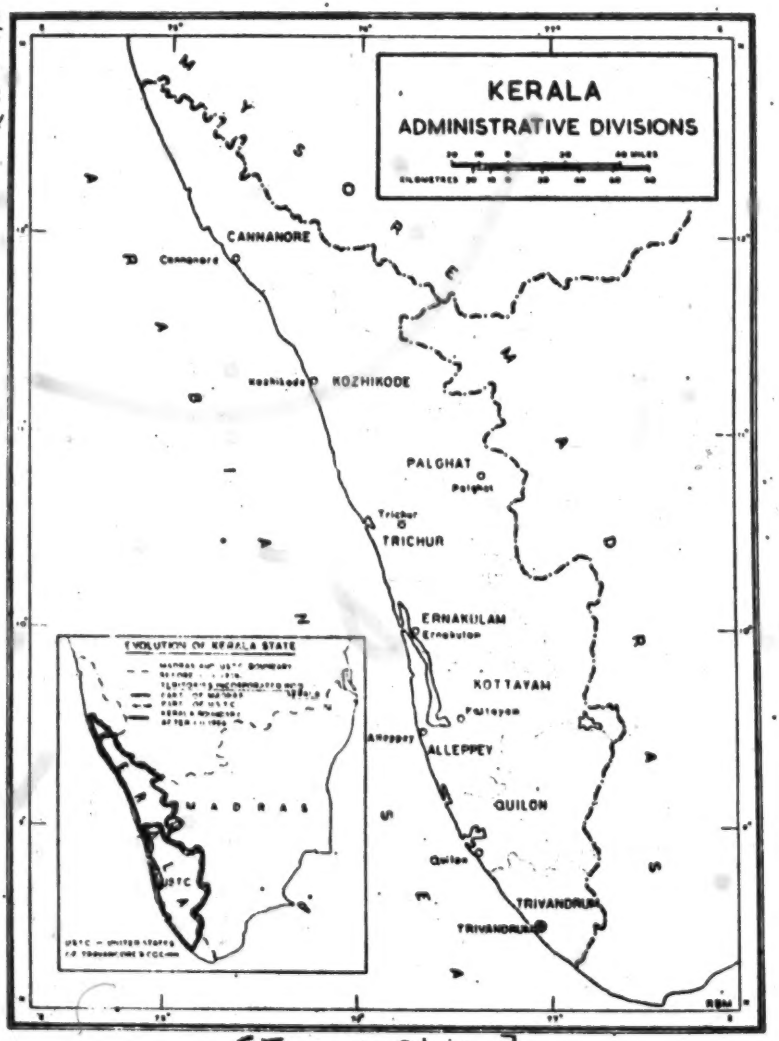

[Frontis Piece]
[facing p. I]

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [132]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.
[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

[p. 23]

MAP 5

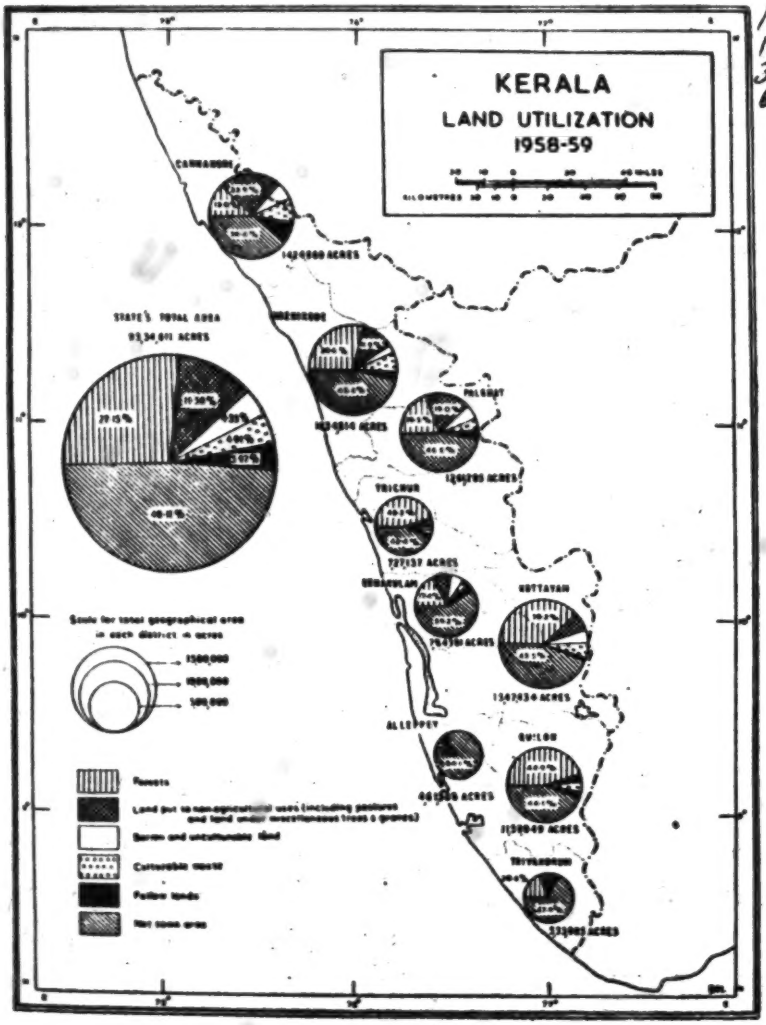

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11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 2

DENSITY OF POPULATION IN KERALA

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District	Population	Density per sq. mile
Trivandrum	1,738,085	2,052
Quilon	1,929,845	994
Alleppey	1,809,530	2,545
Kottayam	1,730,436	745
Ernakulam	1,858,440	1,468
Trichur	1,634,251	1,422
Palghat	1,775,477	896
Kozhikode	2,619,285	1,283
Cannanore	1,779,852	649
KERALA	*16,875,109*	*1,195*

SOURCE: 1961 Census Provisional Population figures.

TABLE 3

ESTIMATE OF STATE INCOME OF KERALA (1955-56)
(At current prices)

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	Kerala		India	
	Rs. crores	Per cent	Rs. crores	Per cent
A. Primary Incomes	*172.5*	*49.1*	*4,520.0*	*45.4*
1. Agriculture	151.3	43.1	4,300.0	44.9
2. Animal Husbandry	10.7	3.0	70.0	
3. Forestry	5.0	1.4	60.0	0.5
4. Fisheries	5.5	1.6		
B. Secondary Incomes	*52.3*	*14.8*	*1,550.0*	*15.6*
1. Factory enterprises	18.0	4.8	780.0	7.8
2. Non-factory enterprises	32.3	9.6	970.0	9.7
3. Mining	2.0	0.6	100.0	1.0
C. Tertiary Incomes	*126.8*	*36.1*	*3,810.0*	*38.3*
1. Communications	3.5			
2. Railways	55.9			
3. Other Transport and Commerce	3.5			
4. Organized Banks and Insurance	31.3			
5. Professions, Arts and Domestic Services	14.6			
6. Public Authorities	18.0			
7. House Property				
TOTAL	*351.6*	*100*	*9,880*	*100*
Population (millions)	15.01		383.0	
Per Capita Income	234.4		261.0	

[Pp. 216–269 have not been processed]

TABLE 20

CATTLE AND BUFFALOES IN KERALA (CATEGORIES) 1956

231

Categories	*Cattle* (in '000 numbers)	*Buffaloes* (in '000 numbers)	*Total* (in '000 numbers)
1. Males over 3 years	620	279	899
(i) Breeding	11	4	15
(ii) Working	571	268	839
(iii) Others	38	7	45
2. Females over 3 years	1902	142	1044
(i) Breeding			
(a) In milk	398	63	461
(b) Dry and not calves	577	65	642
(ii) Working	8	11	19
(iii) Miscellaneous	19	3	22
3. Young stock	914	94	1008
TOTAL	2536	315	2851

SOURCE: *Indian Livestock Statistics, 1953-54 to 1955-56*, Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

[113]

TABLE 21

NUMBER OF VETERINARY INSTITUTIONS IN KERALA STATE (1958-59)

232
634

District	*Hospitals*	*Dispensaries*	*Stockman's stations*	*Inspectors' stations*
Trivandrum	5	3	..	..
Quilon	5	7	..	..
Alleppey	6	5	..	..
Kottayam	5	4	..	..
Ernakulam	9	12	..	..
Trichur	7	13	4	..
Palghat	5	8	..	8
Kozhikode	2	10	..	..
Cannanore	1	7	..	3
TOTAL	45	69	4	11

SOURCE: Director of Animal Husbandry, Trivandrum.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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464
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TABLE 58

DENSITY OF POPULATION (KERALA STATE)
(Figures based on 1951 Census)

District		*Participation rate* (Per cent)	*Density of population*	
Trivandrum	Travancore-Cochin	36.2	1,569	
Quilon			749	
Alleppey			2,148	
Kottayam			664	
Ernakulam			982	
Trichur			1,188	
Palghat		28.5	793	783
Kozhikode			809	
Cannanore			618	
STATE TOTAL			904	

Palghat, Kozhikode and Cannanore formed the previous districts of Malabar.

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171

TABLE 59

OCCUPATIONAL BREAK-UP OF WORKING FORCE (1961)

	KERALA						*INDIA*					
	Rural		*Urban*		*Combined*		*Rural*		*Urban*		*Combined*	
	Lakhs	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*	*Lakhs*	*Percentage*
Agricultural Sector	22.3	60.3	1.1	18.9	23.4	51.4	990	81.8	30	18.9	1,020	71.8
Non-agricultural Sector	17.3	39.8	4.7	81.1	22.0	48.6	218	18.2	184	81.1	402	28.2
TOTAL	*39.6*	*100.0*	*5.8*	*100.0*	*45.4*	*100.0*	*1,208*	*100.0*	*214*	*100.0*	*1,422*	*100.0*

[Pp. 286–309 not Processed]

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 784 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 562 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

564 this tract or nād there were originally six stānis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Rāja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nāyars called Kūttams. Each kūttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Viyyūr, Nelliōt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellōli, Nilanchēri, Rendillat, Pulliyāni, Orakātteri, and
[553] Venmēri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyōdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nāyar. Of the six stānis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyōdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stāni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyūr and Nelliōt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyōdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyōdis
783 and Orakātteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattūr, Ara-Eravattūr (or half Eravattūr), and Attikōdan Nāyars, Tonderi Kidāvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mēnōkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchōli to which the remaining three stānis belong, Kōthōli, and Kuruvattān-
[553] chēri. All affix Nāyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvānian Nambiyars, Chellādan Nāyars,
[643] and Vennapālan Nāyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvānian means great or

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31]of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

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Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade. 175 [439] [197] [174]

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared. 174 101 564 175 701 648

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered 175 439 635

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175 about Quilon (Ricci, 1931: 326–330; Logan, 1951, I: 282–283). Chi-
439 nese trade declined in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,
●635 but that of Muslim Arabs (who had visited the coast from the eighth century) greatly increased. In the fourteenth century a third Nayar kingdom around Calicut, in the center of the coast, had expanded with the help of Arab merchants (Major, 1857: 13–18). By the time the Portuguese arrived, in 1498, Calicut practically monopolized the Arab trade, and the Zamorin (king) of Calicut held overlordship from Pudupattanam south to Porakkad (Logan, 1951, I: 293–294; Ayyar, 1938: 273, 291). Trickles of trade continued in Kolattunad and Travancore, but the kings there had grown weak by comparison with the Zamorin. Kolattunad had become divided into three virtually independent little kingdoms, and the Travancore ruler had surrendered large powers to the subordinate local chiefs of his realm. Two other small kingdoms remained independent in the interior to the east of Calicut: Walluvanad and Palghat.

The period 1498 to 1792 was one of bitter struggle between Euro-
175 pean and Middle Eastern powers, who formed shifting alliances with
439 native rulers for control of the pepper trade. By 1600 the Portuguese
648 had practically abolished the Arab trade, but they were themselves driven from the coast by the Dutch in 1663. The English reached Kerala in 1615 and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or another Nayar ruler and took part in successive battles until, in 1766, the northern half of the coast was overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean occupation ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the English East India Company and the establishment of the British bureaucratic political system (Logan, 1951, I: 404–473).

175 Shortly before the Mysorean invasions Kerala was divided into nine
648 small kingdoms and a number of border chiefdoms owing only ten-
635 uous allegiance to some king. The British after 1792 amalgamated the seven northern kingdoms (Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Kadattunad, Calicut, Walluvanad, and Palghat) to form the Malabar District of Madras Province, pensioned their rulers, and brought them under a British district officer responsible to the government of Madras. Cochin, a small kingdom in the center of the coast, remained a native state under its own ruler subject to the advice of a British Resident. So also did the southernmost kingdom of Travancore, whose ruler had already in the 1730's established a standing army, dispossessed his Nayar nobles, and formed a bureaucratic government. Kerala remained divided in this way until after the in-

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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

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Caste and Territorial Divisions

THE HIGH CASTES

564 *The Nambudiri Brahmans* Throughout Kerala the Nambudiri Brahmans were the highest Hindu caste and the ritual and scholastic lead-
[162] ers. Today they form one hundredth of the population (Censuses of Madras, Cochin, and Travancore, 1931). Carriers of the Sanskrit lan-
[174] guage and of ancient Vedic culture, they are thought to have entered Malabar from the eastern plateau sometime after the fall of the Chera
564 kingdom (Logan, 1951, I: 121, 243; Ayyar, 1938: 47). Most Nam-
463 budiris were landlords of substance, but they included a number of ranked occupational sub-castes of varying wealth. The greater landlords were managers of large temples, promulgators of religious law, legal advisers of the kings, priests of public sacrifices, or philosophers and Vedic scholars. The lower sub-castes, whose members owned smaller estates, included temple priests, physicians, and household priests and professional cooks who officiated at ceremonies in the Nayar castes.

564 The Nambudiris ranked ritually above the kings and were to some extent above and outside the political systems of the kingdoms. Alone of all the castes, they moved unmolested between enemy kingdoms. They held ceremonies attended by their caste fellows from all parts of Kerala and carried on their system of intra-caste administration independently of the administration of justice within the kingdoms. For the latter purpose they divided Kerala into *gramams* (caste areas) (Logan, 1951, I: 120). Over the whole region a dignitary called the Aravancheri Tamburakkal, who lived in the Calicut kingdom, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris (Buchanan, 1807: 423–426; Ayyar, 1938: 23). He held the right to install the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, even though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala and they played a
[611] role not dissimilar to that of the medieval Catholic church. Descent among the Nambudiris was patrilineal.

564 *The High-Caste Nayars* Below the Nambudiri Brahmans in ritual
613 rank came the royal *matrilineages* of the several kingdoms. Those in
635 Central Kerala were Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. Although of Nayar origin, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to the Nayar subjects within its kingdom. Between kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and would not intermarry. Although exogamous, therefore, each royal lineage considered

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itself a separate caste. The Cochin lineage claimed descent from the Perumals and ranked as Kshattriyas, the second of the four divisions of all-India Hindu society. The Walluvanad, Palghat, and Calicut lineages, once vassals of the Perumals, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas in Brahmin theory and held the title of Samantans. Normally, the oldest man in each royal lineage held the kingship and administered customary law with assistance from Brahman advisers. 564 613 635

Each kingdom was divided into *nāds* (chiefdoms or districts). In the Zamorin's kingdom at the height of its power some of these chiefdoms had once been independent small kingdoms. They were conquered by Calicut in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. They continued to be ruled by their traditional monarchs, who paid tribute to Calicut. Among them were the chiefdoms of Beypore, Chaliyam, Parappanad, Bettem, and Punnattur. Each of these ruling lineages, although feudatory, retained a higher ritual rank than the Zamorin by virtue of its more ancient tradition of government. Similarly, some chiefdoms of the Cochin kingdom were governed by conquered feudatory rulers of higher ritual rank than the royal lineage. The small kingdoms of Walluvanad and Palghat, however, had no feudatories of higher rank than their royal lineages. 634 613 554

The other chiefdoms of a kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (*nāduvan's*) originally appointed by the king, and these chiefs had more restricted powers than the feudatory monarchs. Most of them held the title of Samantan, but all were considered of lower ritual rank than their royal lineages. The Zamorin's kingdom (the largest) appears to have had twenty-eight such district chiefs in the fifteenth century. Each chiefly lineage, like each royal lineage, tended to regard itself as a separate caste acknowledging no peers. [564] [613]

Each chiefdom was divided into *dēsams* or villages. A village seems to have covered anything from one to four square miles, comprising both dry garden land and flats of alluvial rice land. Most of the land in each village was normally owned by one landlord family of higher ritual rank than the other occupants. 634 621 471

In some villages the land was owned by a Nambudiri patrilineal extended family, whose large house occupied a central position. In others it was owned by one or other branch of the royal lineage as part of the royal domain. There would then be a palace in the village and the senior prince of the household would act as village headman. In other villages the land was owned by the chiefly matrilineage of the district, whether this lineage were of feudatory royal rank or of vassal Samantan rank. Again in this case the chiefly family would live 621 564 471 613 [622]

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the 613
ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and 669
shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade.
Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the
period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth 175
century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups.
The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, sup- 613
ported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and 669
made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 648
they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed
them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1658
the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches,
and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thir- 613
teenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly
expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed
it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the
Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no [635]
dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to
say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of [726]
one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because
throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help [648]
of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and,
except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control
and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the
kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid- 635
eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were 578
usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to vil-
lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if neces-
635 sary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office.
622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and
726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed
635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When
634 a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral
613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there
554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as
[648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

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439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The develop-
ment of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and
the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events
in this process.

564 **Political and Economic Systems**

[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as
in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no
Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans
were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small num-
ber of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications,
sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made politi-
cal centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient
Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a man-
ner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial con-
trol was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent
kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number
of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note
5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
648 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
634 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
635 centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity
on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous
sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among
Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the
more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

621 634 [651] [701] [622] [613] [598] [423] [241] [427] [564] [437]

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

564 621 613 582

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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Murder among the Nayars

627 sometimes led to blood feuds between lineages (*ibid.*, I: 195–196).
613 Chiefs could usually cut short a feud between commoner lineages, but
628 even these feuds occasionally ran their course for a generation, although cognatic and affinal ties between lineages helped to bring them to a close. Greater feuds were sometimes waged between the lineages of village headmen or chiefs of adjacent districts, in which the commoner Nayars of each area might participate.

Matrilineal Units

THE CLAN

614 Among Nambiar commoners the largest matrilineal unit was the clan
564 (*vamsham* or *illam*). It had the functions of exogamy and mutual hospitality. Common descent was merely stipulated and not demonstrated and the order of segmentation within the clan was unknown.
[635] The clan might be dispersed throughout a kingdom or even, perhaps, between kingdoms. Its members might point to a particular village as their original ancestral site, but each clan seems to have been much older and its history less clearly documented than among Nayar retainers in Central Kerela. There is no doubt that clans became much more dispersed in the nineteenth century than they had traditionally been because of the development of new areas of cultivation and increased mobility between villages. However, even traditionally the clan seems to have had more members and a wider spread than in the Central area. Its characteristics may be attributed to several factors. First, Nambiars were not divided into separate retainer castes. Thus, although the majority of commoner marriages were within the village,
[582] Nambiars did have greater freedom to marry and move more freely between villages throughout the realm. Lacking a strong superordinate political structure and internal caste differentiation to give form to their relationships, they had larger kinship units. Newcomers to a village probably did not need to become affiliated to its assembly by order
[608] of a superior political authority. Instead, they could probably affiliate themselves with their clan fellows and so at once be provided also with classificatory affines in other clans. Second, Nambiars practised
614 avunculocal residence; husband and wife lived in the husband's
564 matrilineal ancestral house (Buchanan, 1807: 513–514). Sons normally
591 moved back to their own matrilineal homes at puberty, but daughters
[425] moved to their husbands' homes. However, Nambiar fathers occasionally gave privately acquired land to their wives and children when they were able. The children might then settle permanently in

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423 613 427 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also man-
613 aged to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal de-
431 scendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife.
423 This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and
[671] when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of
[428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-
[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both
[635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants.
[578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged
[627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants
613 led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*,
431 within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's
423 kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More com-
592 monly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

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CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
105 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be
184 absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[851] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore,
[114] contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[590] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

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.113 G. Roheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (New York, 1950), pp. 134, 135, 432; F. L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (New York, 1948), pp. 240-243; Mead, 1949, pp. 40-41; J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 263-304.

[12] Nāyar *Kāranavans* are of course not ancestors in the strict sense. However, I use this term for convenience as they fulfill roles similar to those of ancestors in many patrilineal societies.

[13] For an account of Īrava social organization and culture, see A. Aiyappan, *Iravas and Culture Change*, Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., 5 (1945).

[14] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 158-165.

[15] For a brief account of Tamil Brahman kinship, see E. K. Gough, "Brahman Kinship in a Tamil Village," *American Anthropologist*, XVIII, (1956), 826-853.

[16] See, e.g., Thurston, V (1909), 152-240.

[17] Fortes, 1949, p. 235.

[18] H. E. J. Stanley, trans., Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt, 1886), p. 15.

[19] R. Rowlandson, trans., Sheikh Zein-ud-deen, *Tohfut ul Mujahideen*. An Offering to Warriors Who Shall Fight in Defence of Religion Against Infidels (Hakluyt, 1883), p. 63.

[20] A. C. Burnell, trans., *The Voyage of John Hughyen Van Linschoten to the East Indies* 800 (From the Old English Translation of 1598) (Hakluyt, 1885), p. 284.

[764] [21] All castes on the southwest coast bury or cremate the dead in the southwest corner of the ancestral garden. This custom contrasts with that of Hindus in the eastern districts, who burn or bury the dead on communal sites, each owned jointly by a caste community, outside the residential area of the village.

[566] [22] The castes of agricultural serfs are absent in Kottayam, agricultural labor being done by Īrava tenants or by the Nāyars themselves.

[23] This form of propitiation of alien ghosts in Kottayam is called a *teyyam tira*. It closely resembles the *kāranavan tēre* of the neighboring Coorgs (Srinivas, 1952, pp. 158-165.) In Coorg, however, lower caste officiants impersonate the Coorg *taravād's* own ancestors. In Malabar, lower caste propitiants impersonate only alien ghosts attached to the Nāyar *taravād*.

[24] Witchcraft (*odi*), a witch (*odiyan*). For a more detailed account of witchcraft, see Thurston, VI (1909), 36-41, 122-127.

[113] [25] M. Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa* (Manchester, 1954).

[26] Gluckman, *The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies. Social Structure*, M. Fortes, ed. (Oxford, 1949), pp. 145-167.

[27] All of these statements apply to conditions in 1947-9. I observed no major changes in ritual activities during a brief revisit in 1952. The Malabar Coast, as the newly formed State of Kerala, elected a Communist government in April 1957, and I have little information on conditions after that date.

[114] [642]

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778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it.- This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed
[825] that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be
776 remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out
825 of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

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Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635 published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [762] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his [574] nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid 178 aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, 527 that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar [114] Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

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occasionally adopted this mode of escape from the chagrin of not being re-elected by their adherents." He goes on to say what Mr. Jonathan Duncan wrote about this festival, of which his account appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society. The festival was held last in 1743.

"Those who acknowledged the Zamorin's suzerainty sent flags in token of fealty; and the places where these flags used to be hoisted at festival times are still pointed out. The Valluvanād Raja, who is still represented in the management of the Tirunāvāyi temple by one of the four Brahman *Kārālars*, instead of sending a flag used to send men called *Chāvers* (men who have elected to die) whose office it was to endeavour to cut their way through the Zamorin's guards to his throne in a manner presently to be described. If they had succeeded in killing him—as on the occasion cited by Hamilton, whose statement except as to date, is moreover corroborated by tradition—it is uncertain what would have happened; but probably if a capable Raja had been ruling in Valluvanād at such a time, popular opinion would have endowed him with suzerainty, for the Nāyar militia were very fickle, and flocked to the standard of the man who was fittest to command and who treated them the most considerately.

"With the kind assistance of the present Zamorin, Maharaja Bahadur, the records of his family have been examined and a complete account obtained of the events attending the festival held in 1683 A.D., the festival next preceding that alluded to by Hamilton.

"The festival used to continue for twenty-eight days every twelfth year when the planet Jupiter was in retrograde motion in the sign of *Karkadagam* or Cancer or the Crab, and at the time of the eighth lunar asterism in the month of Makaram the festival used to culminate.

"On the occasion in question the Zamorin some months beforehand sent orders for the preparation of the necessary timber and bamboos for the temporary buildings required at *Tirunāvāyi* and the materials were floated down stream from the Aliparamba Chirakkal lands.

"Then exactly two months before the opening day he sent out a circular to his followers worded as follows:—

'Royal writing to the *Akampati Janam* (body-guards).

'On the 5th Makaram 858 is *Mahāmakha Talpuyam* (time of the eighth lunar asterism in the festival season), and the *Lōkars* (chief people of each locality) are required to attend at Tirunāvāyi as in olden times.

'Mangātt Raman and Tinayancheri are sent to collect and bring you in regular order for the Mahāmakham.'

"The Zamorin timed himself to arrive at Tirunāvāyi on the day after that appointed for the arrival of his followers, and the

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lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank.

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction.

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand.

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp.

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

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with 'one hundred and fourteen small links and one clasp, making in all one hundred and fifteen'—as the record specifically testifies—and with golden bosses and other ornaments too numerous to be detailed. But this part of the ceremonies is not to be permitted to pass unchallenged, for it signifies in a formal manner the Zamorin's intention to assume the *rôle* of *Rakshapurashan* or protector of the festivities and of the people there assembled. On the instant, therefore, there is a stir among the crowd assembled near the western gate of the temple directly facing at half a mile distance the Zamorin's standing-place on the upper terrace.

"From this post, running due east in a perfectly straight line to the western gate of the temple, is the straight piece of road already described, but the road itself is clear and the armed crowd on the plain, it is seen, are hemmed in by barrel palisadings running the full length of the road on both sides. Two spears' length apart the palisades are placed, and the armed crowd on either hand, consisting on this occasion of the thirty thousand Ērnād Nāyars, it is seen, are all carrying spears. The spearmen may not enter that narrow lane, and by the mere weight of their bodies present an impossible obstacle to the free passage of the foemen now bent on cutting down the Zamorin in his pride of place.

"Amid much din and firing of guns the *morituri*, the *Chaver* Nāyars, the elect of four Nāyar houses in Valluvanād, step forth from the crowd and receive the last blessings and farewells of their friends and relatives. They have just taken of the last meal they are to eat on earth at the house of the temple representative of their chieftain; they are decked with garlands and smeared with ashes. On this particular occasion it is one of the houses of Putumanna Panikkar who heads the fray. He is joined by seventeen of his friends—Nāyar or Māppilla or other arms-bearing caste men—for all who so wish may fall in with sword and target in support of the men whe have elected to die.

"Armed with swords and targets alone they rush at the spearmen thronging the palisades; they 'winde and turn their Bodies, as if they had no Bones, casting them forward and backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders,' as worthy Master Johnson describes them in a passage already quoted (page 137). But notwithstanding the suppleness of their limbs, notwithstanding their delight and skill and dexterity in their weapons, the result is inevitable and is prosaically recorded in the chronicle thus: 'The number of *Chavers* who came and died early morning the next day after the elephant began to be adorned with gold trappings—being *Putumanna Kantur Menon* and followers—were 18.

"At various times during the ten last days of the festival the same thing is repeated. Whenever the Zamorin takes his

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stand on the terrace, assumes the sword and shakes it, men rush forth from the crowd at the west temple gate only to be impaled on the spears of the guardsmen who relieve each other from day to day. The turns for this duty are specifically mentioned in the chronicle thus: 'on the day the golden ornaments are begun to be used the body-guard consists of the thirty thousand; of Ellaya Vakkayil Vellōdi (and his men) the second day, of Netiyiruppu,* Mūttarāti Tirumulpād (and his men) the third day of Ittatūrnād,† Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fourth day, of Ērnād Mūnāmkūr,‡ Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fifth day, of Ērnād,§ Elankur Nambiyāttiri Tirumalpād (and his men) the sixth day, and of the ten thousand,‖ the Calicut Talachanna Nāyar and Ērnād Mēnon the seventh day.'

"The chronicle is silent as to the turns for this duty on the eighth, ninth and tenth days. On the eleventh day, before the assembly broke up and after the final assault of the *Chāvers* had been delivered, the *Ernad Elankur Nambiyātiri Tirumalpad* (the Zamorin next in succession) and the *Tirumanisseri Nambūtiri* were conveyed in palanquins to the eastern end of the narrow palisaded lane, and thence they advanced on foot, prostrating themselves four times towards the Zamorin, once at the eastern end of the lane, twice in the middle, and once at the foot of the terraces. And after due permission was obtained they took their places on the Zamorin's right hand.

"After this, so the chronicle runs, it was the duty of the men who have formed the body guard to march up with music and pomp to make obeisance. On this occasion, however, a large portion of the body-guard seems to have been displeased, for they left without fulfilling this duty, and this story corroborates in a marked way the facts already set forth (page 132) regarding the independence and important political influence possessed by the Nāyars as a body.

"The *Ernād Menon* and the *Calicut Talachanna Nāyar* with their followers were the only chiefs who made obeisance in due form to the Zamorin on this occasion, and possibly by the time of the next festival (1695 A.D.), of which Hamilton wrote, the dissatisfaction might have increased among his followers and the Zamorin's life even may have been endangered

* The fifth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
† The fourth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
‡ The third Prince of the Zamorin's family.
§ The second Prince and heir apparent of the Zamorin's family.
‖ The ten thousand of Pōlanād, the district round about Calicut, formed the Zamorin's own immediate body-guard—Conf. the account contained in the *Kēralolpatti* of how these men were originally selected—Chapter III, section (*a*).

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175 635 527 as Hamilton alleges, probably through lack of men to guard him. Tradition asserts that the *Chāver* who managed on one occasion to get through the guards and up to the Zamorin's seat belonged to the family of the Chāndrattil Panikkar.

"The chronicle winds up with a list of the *Chāvers* slain on this occasion, viz. :—

When the Zamorin was taking his stand on the terrace apparently at the commencement of festivities	5
On the day the elephant was adorned as already stated	18
"The next day of *Chandrattil Panikkar* and followers, the number who came and died	11
'Of *Verkōt Panikkar* and followers the number that came and died the third day.	12
'The number who came to Vakkayūr and died in the four days	4
'The number of *Chāvers* who were arrested at the place where Kalattal Itti Karunākara Menon was, and brought tied to Vakkayūr and put to death	1
'The number of *Chāvers* arrested on the day of the sacrifice, when all the men together made the obeisance below Vakkayūr at the time when the Zamorin was taking his stand, and left tied to the bars, and who were afterwards brought to Vakkayūr and after the ceremony was over and the Zamorin had returned to the palace were put to the sword	4
Total ...	55

"The chronicle does not mention the fact, but a current tradition states that the corpses of the slain were customarily kicked by elephants as far as the brink of the fine well, of which mention has been made, and into which they were tumbled promiscuously. The well itself is nearly filled up with débris of sorts, and a search made at the spot would probably elicit conclusive evidence of the truth of this tradition.

627 "The martial spirit of the Nāyars was in former days kept alive by such desperate enterprises as the above, but in every-day-life the Nāyar used to be prepared and ready to take vengeance on any who affronted him, for he invariably carried weapons, and when a man was slain it was incumbent on his

In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

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635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, [613] the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 562 611 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person is and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road as Zamorin, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

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121 be elucidated only in terms of a psycho-analytic hypothesis. Part V of the essay is therefore
[588] an attempt to try out a psycho-analytic approach to Hindu ritual, and to show, with reference to one ceremony, that this approach permits a deeper analysis than is possible if we limit ourselves to a discussion of social function.

The use by anthropologists of psycho-analytic findings to interpret primitive myth and ritual is familiar from modern American writings; it has scarcely been accepted by British anthropologists. I admit that, for anthropologists, psycho-analytic theories must in the long run depend for their authority on analyses of a significant number of individuals in the society whose symbolism it is hoped to interpret. Such data are not, however, at present forthcoming, and in many Indian groups it is doubtful if they will be forthcoming before the myths and rites have died out. In the meantime, as I hope to show, the results of psycho-analytic work in the West can give us insights into the probable unconscious motives behind primitive religious practices, and allow us to formulate new if tentative hypotheses on the connexions between the kinship structure of a group and its religious symbolism.

[129] This essay therefore, while confined to the analysis of one ceremony, fulfils the terms of the Curl Bequest Competition, since it incorporates in a single theory field data recently collected on four Malabar kinship systems; uses the material of other anthropologists (see Aiyappan 1942, 1944; Dubé 1953) who have worked on Indian initiation rites in the past ten years, to advance a sociological interpretation of these rites; and tests, with reference to these rites, certain hypotheses of the British school of psycho-analysts put forward in recent years.[1]

Part I. The Nayar *Tāli*-Rite in South Malabar and Cochin

635 This area is in the centre of the Malabar Coast, south of the Kora River and north
175 of the Travancore-Cochin boundary. Before 1792, it comprised the mutually hostile kingdoms
564 of the Zamorin of Calicut, the Raja of Walluvanād, and the Maharaja of Cochin. The area
184 was temporarily conquered by the Zamorins in the late 15th century and Cochin and Walluvanād were made feudatory kingdoms. Probably for this reason, the Nayar sub-castes of
[131] Walluvanād and Cochin correspond closely to those of Calicut, since they owed their existence to a political system common to these three kingdoms. By contrast, the kingdoms to the north and south, where the Zamorins failed to penetrate, had different political systems and correspondingly different hierarchies of Nayar sub-castes. Today, the Nayars of South Malabar and Cochin still show greater cultural similarity, feel greater unity, and intermarry more freely than they do with Nayars to the north or to the south.

175 At the head of each of the central kingdoms was a royal matrilineage. Being at enmity,
613 the royal lineages disputed for rank, would not intermarry, and, though exogamous, formed
564 each a separate caste. Each however acknowledged itself inferior to the Nambûdiri Brahmans
635 (landlords and priests) whose separate caste-organization extended throughout the Malabar Coast, and who were above and outside the laws of the separate kingdoms.

Below the royal lineages came the Sāmantans, chiefs (*nāduvaris*) of districts (*nāds*). These owed allegiance to the Raja and had administrative control over the next sub-caste, of Kiri-
175 yattil Nayars (called Vellayma Nayars in Cochin), the headmen (*desavaris*) of villages (*desams*).
564 Below the Kiriyattils came three parallel sub-castes: Sûdra Nayars, Charna Nayars (respectively called Illath Sûdras and Swaroopattil Sûdras in Cochin), and Pallichans. Sûdra Nayars
631 were hereditary tenants and retainers in villages where the land was owned by a patrilineal family of Nambûdiri Brahmans. Charna Nayars were retainers in villages owned by *nāduvari*
613 or *desavari* lineages. Pallichans owed similar allegiance in villages owned by a branch of the

[1] For the psycho-analytic interpretation of this essay I am chiefly indebted to Freud (1913, 1918, 1919), Ernest Jones (1931, 1951), Melanie Klein (1932), and Roheim (1950).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

131 North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nāḍuvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nād*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
631 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nāḍuvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nāḍuvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *taravād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

586 Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
595 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
684 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and at the auspicious hour the bridegroom and his party proceed to a conspicuous part of the house, where a seat is specially provided for him. On either side of the seat and a little in front of it, are placed two lighted lamps. There the bridegroom and the bride make obeisance to the *káranavans* and other elderly men present there, distribute presents of money to the Brahmans who pronounce their benediction upon the conjugal pair. The bridegroom or his *káranavans* in the northern parts of the State give her the wedding dress in which she is dressed. The bride is then ushered in, either by her mother or by an elderly member of the family when cloths are given to the bride by the bridegroom. In some places the bridegroom and his party chew betel leaf and nut, while they chat with the women. After a while, the party begins to break up, one by one, wishing the couple all happiness, and the women, departing one by one, leaving the couple alone, one of them closing the door from outside. About daybreak, next morning, the bridegroom departs from the house, leaving under the pillow a sum of money according to his means. The *sambandham* is now complete. The woman resides in her family, and her husband visits her there. A few days after this, the bridegroom's mother or some senior woman of his family sends some cloths including *pívu mundus* (superior cloths) and *thórtha mundus* (towels) and also some gingelly oil for her use during the next six months. Every six months, she does the same, and on the festivals of *Onam*, *Vishu* and *Thiruvithira* she is given a little money, arecanut, betel, tobacco and banana. Before long the women of the bridegroom's family express their wish to see her, and have her brought to their family by a few women of the former. She stays there for a few days and is sent back to her own house with presents of ornaments and clothes from senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious.

In the Chittur and Talapilly Taluks of the State as also in the Palghat Taluk of South Malabar, this form of marriage is called *Kidakkóra* or *Kidakka kalyánam* (the bed chamber ceremony). As part of this ceremony, a declaration is made by one of the bridegroom's party to the senior female of the bride's house in the presence of the assembled guests in the following terms:— " Let this youth visit this damsel for

Chapter 1

The Setting

KERALA IS THE smallest State in the whole of India.[1] It is a narrow strip of land along the western coast of India. It has an area of 14,992 square miles[2] and the coastal line is nearly 360 miles. The breadth of the State varies from 20 to 75 miles, as one moves from the extreme north to the middle. Its boundaries touch the State of Mysore in the north and that of erstwhile Madras in the east and south-east. It lies between 8°15′ and 12°45′N latitude and 74°50′ and 77°30′E longitude. 131

1.2 Kerala was created in 1956 at the time of the reorganization of the State through the integration of the erstwhile State of Travancore-Cochin and the Malabar district and the Kasargod taluk in South Kanara district of the erstwhile Madras State. At the same time Travancore-Cochin lost Kanyakumari, part of the Trivandrum district and Shencottah, part of the Quilon district, to Madras State. However, the net area of the State increased by about two-thirds after the reorganization of the State. Prior to the formation of Kerala as a separate State, Travancore-Cochin was administratively divided into four districts, while Malabar was a single district. At the time of integration, Malabar was broken up into three districts. Subsequently, during 1957 two new districts, viz., Alleppey and Ernakulam were carved out of the territory belonging to Trichur, Kottayam and Quilon. The State, therefore, now comprises nine districts. The total length of the State from its northern extremity to the southern tip is about 360 miles. But its width is nowhere more than 75 miles. 175 635 634 [131]

PHYSICAL FEATURES

1.3 The State territory may be broadly classified into three natural sub-divisions, the highland, the midland and the lowland. Western Ghats which range along the eastern border of the State form the highland. This is mostly a mountainous and rocky terrain ranging in height from 3,000 ft. to 8,000 ft. Anamudi, the highest peak of the Western Ghats (8,837 ft.) is located in the Kottayam district. The highland is thickly forested in its upper ranges, while in the lower ranges the forests are interspersed with plantations. 133 [137]

1.4 On the western fringe of the State are the lowlands which stretch along the coastal plain. Coconut palms, which cover most of this area, lend a richness to the landscape of the region. The soil in this plain is sandy. Coir-making and fishing are the two main occupations. Sandwiched between the lowland and the highland [134] [433]

[1] Excluding the Union Territories.

[2] *Statistical Outline of Kerala State*, Department of Statistics, Government of Kerala. [113]

of paddy. This would not only give additional production of pulses which are deficit in the State, but also enrich the soil by leaving a nitrogen residue, and thereby constitute a better rotation. It may be possible to develop pulse crops on 250,000 acres. Assuming an yield of a quarter ton per acre, the additional production of pulses by crop intensification, as suggested here, would be roughly 62,500 tons per year. 433* 242

2.74 Better plant protection is another measure for getting a substantial increase in yields. It is estimated that yields increase approximately by about 10 per cent through this method. The Department of Agriculture should tackle this problem more effectively. This would only be possible by strengthening the Plant Protection Wing of the Department of Agriculture. [642]

Implements

2.75 Agricultural implements in use in the State are antiquated and inefficient. The wooden plough continues to be the master implement and is used for tillage operations of almost all the crops. Iron ploughs and other tillage implements are not popular. In fact the number of iron ploughs decreased by 22 per cent during 1951–56 and at present stands at 10,225. Tractors during the same period, however, increased from 59 to 187. Irrigation pumps too have shown an increase of 116 per cent. 407

2.76 The slow adoption of improved implements is mostly due to non-availability of implements and machinery suited to local conditions as well as due to their high cost. The topographical conditions and techniques of cultivation are unique in Kerala and there are no implements designed and developed to suit such conditions. There is, therefore, need for developing efficient implements for rice cultivation, plantation crops, soil conservation work and also for specialized implements such as ridgers and earthers for ginger and tapioca. It would be necessary to have a well equipped and adequately staffed agricultural engineering station to undertake the type of work suggested here. The proposed station may also do some work in designing of irrigation aids and may advise farmers on the selection of pumping sets and cane crushers. 433* 407

Soil Erosion

2.77 Soil erosion is a serious problem in Kerala. Conditions prevalent in the State such as lateritic soils, undulating to steep topography, the system of farming followed and heavy cloud burst—all these constitute towards excessive soil erosion. There is no reliable estimate regarding the extent of area affected or vulnerable to soil erosion, but it is estimated that about one-third of the cultivated area—approximately 1.5 to 2 million acres—is affected by it. It should be possible to protect at least one million acres through soil conservation measures by 1971. 134 185

2.78 Soil conservation work as carried out by the Department of Agriculture has become very popular with the farmers. The Department gives technical advice on soil conservation matters and undertakes operations in specified areas in water-shed units. [647]

796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 578 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple, by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

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/For specific information on the political division of the Kerala state see the following:
kingdoms---635
nads (chiefdoms)---634
desams (villages)---621./

565 Nayar subjects within the kingdom. Between
613 kingdoms, royal lineages disputed for rank and
631 would not intermarry: though exogamous, therefore, each lineage considered itself to form a separate and unique [13] subcaste. The Cochin lineage, being more ancient than the rest, claimed the ritual rank of Kshattriyas (the second of the four varnas or major caste-groups of ancient North India Vedic Society, in ancient times kings and warriors.) The Walluvanad and Calicut lineages, of more recent Nayar origin, were not strictly recognized as Kshattriyas, but were accorded the title of Samantans, a Sanskrit word meaning "leaders." In each royal lineage, the oldest man of the whole lineage, irrespective of branch, was the crowned king and administered traditional secular rule with assistance from advisers of wealthy Nambudiri families of the kingdom, some of whom were employed as ambassadors.

[643]

Each kingdom was divided into nads or chiefdoms. In the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, some of these nads were former independent kingdoms which had been conquered by Calicut but were still ruled by their traditional monarchs who paid tribute to Calicut. These nads included Parappanad, Beypore and Chavakkad, each of whose rulers, though feudatory, claimed and were accorded higher ritual rank than the Zamorin's lineage by reason of their more ancient tradition of government. Other nads of the Calicut kingdom were ruled by hereditary Nayar chiefs (naduvaris) originally appointed by the Zamorin. [14] These ruled with

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31]of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 The power of the king to command his Nayar
701 retainers was checked by periodic assemblies
664 of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

692 Within the kingdom, justice was administered
681 at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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HIS HIGHNESS SIR RAMA VARMA, G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., F.M.U.,
RAJA OF COCHIN.

[frontispiece]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Bráhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnóttu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Bráhmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purínic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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Nayar

a Nayar *tarawád*, all the members are equally entitled to a share. The self-acquisitions of each member of a *tarawád* are at his absolute disposal during his life-time, but this right lapses to the *tarawád* on his death.[1] In families where the *káranavans* look after the welfare of each individual member and the savings of the junior members go to increase the wealth of the family, there is peace and prosperity. Such families are rarely found in these days. Times are changed, as also the conditions of the community, and the old and large families are disappearing through mismanagement. In the majority of cases, when the senior member takes up the management, he is too old and unfit to govern a score of men and women younger than himself and bound to him by no natural tie of affection. He often becomes a mere puppet in the hands of an unscrupulous but stronger member while the other members of the *tarawád* suffer from the injustice consequent under such circumstances. In some cases he misappropriates the family property and alienates it in favour of his wife and children, and the gross acts of spoliation carried on by *káranavan* have reduced some of the respectable families in Malabar and elsewhere to poverty and misery. It is also said, that the junior members are disobedient and do not work for the common good and this state of things is also common everywhere. Another cause for the downfall of the ancient family system is the growing disinclination among its junior members to work for the common good of the *tarawád* and their dislike to the rule of the *káranavan*.[2]

The Nayars who follow this *marumakkathíyam* law of inheritance include nearly all the aristocracy of the country, but the notion that every *tarawád* has an estate sufficient to feed an indefinite number of souls is unfounded and erroneous. Most of the families are poor, and the *káranavans* are mere tenant farmers cultivating a few acres of land on a precarious tenure, and a law which requires such a man, from the produce of his farm, to feed and provide for all the descendants of his female relatives from the time of their birth to their death, whether they work or not, is one of those laws which continue to exist in name but are actually disregarded in practice.[3]

Tribal organisations.

In ancient times the rulers of Cochin held supreme sway in the territories which belonged to them. There were no regular councils, nor assemblies;

1. II, Mad. H. C. R. 162.
2 and 3. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 49-51.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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631 and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and plea-
643 sure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many
[644] of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the funda-
mental and long established laws of the country.

676 Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by
[203] right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were
[428] despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

643 The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were
646 conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuo-
578 sity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly
[687] sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper

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rights. Thus did these *kuttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 623 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 681 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There 564 was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom [671] fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

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564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days
during which every method of torture known to the keepers of
the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued
in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore
that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty
person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into
a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted
guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form
of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not
confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a
mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrap-
ped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was
guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of
alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom
seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a
cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulies Marco Polo, page 374.

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the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells.

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living with her husband proved an object of attraction to another, adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkázhcha* and other things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restrictions are not totally inoperative. In the State His Highness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands. Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles [1]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykutta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a strenuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom [643] of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the community that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
101 564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghāt and Valluvanād within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nāyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nāyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nāyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nāyars. Again the rājahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nāyars. These men were thereafter styled Nāyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nāyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nāyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sūdra."

173 According to the Brāhman tradition, the Nāyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambūdris with Dēva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurāma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nāyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

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Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in ravaging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

726 175 564 701 643 796 762 175

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
184 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

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* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. 175 828

. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise." 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

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175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat * that the Nayars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [595]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

564 this tract or nād there were originally six stānis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Rāja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nāyars called Kūttams. Each kūttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Vīyyūr, Nelliōt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellōli, Nilanchēri, Rendillat, Pulliyāni, Orakātteri, and
[553] Venmēri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyōdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nāyar. Of the six stānis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyōdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stāni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyūr and Nelliōt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyōdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyōdis
783 and Orakātteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattūr, Ara-Eravattūr (or half Eravattūr), and Attikōdan Nāyars, Tonderi Kidāvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mēnōkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchōli to which the remaining three stānis belong, Kōthōli, and Kuruvattān-
[553] chēri. All affix Nāyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvānian Nambiyars, Chellādan Nāyars,
[643] and Vennapālan Nāyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvānian means great or

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principal oil-man ; and it is the duty of this caste to present the Kurumbranād Rāja with oil on the occasion of his formal installation. The fifth group consists of the three kulams, Mannangazhi, Paramchela, and Pallikara Nāyars, all observing fifteen days' pollution. A member of the first-named class has to place an āmanapalaga (the traditional seat of Nambūdiris and other high castes) for the Kurumbranād Rāja to sit on at the time of his installation, while a member of the second has to present him with a cloth on the same occasion. The sixth group consists of four kiriyams named Patam, Tulu, Manan, and Ottu respectively, and has the collective name of Rāvāri. The seventh group consists of six kulams, Kandōn, Kannankōdan, Kotta, Karumba, Kundakollavan, and Panakādan Nāyars. All observe fifteen days' pollution, and the women of these six kulams have certain duties to perform in connection with the purification of women of the Vengalat, Paṭṭillat, and Orakatteri kulams. Besides these seven groups, there are a few other classes without internal sub-divisions. One such class is known as Pāppini Nāyar. A woman of this class takes the part of the Brāhmini woman (Nambissan) at the tāli-kettu kalyanam of girls belonging to the kulams included in the third group. Another class called Pālattavan takes the place of the Attikurissi Nāyar at the funeral ceremonies of the same three kulams."

In illustration of the custom of polyandry among the Nāyars of Malabar in by-gone days, the following extracts may be quoted. "On the continent of India," it is recorded in Ellis' edition of the Kural, "polyandry is still said to be practiced in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayālam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely

588
184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is
[574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by
[424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain
[643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is
[782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

tamarind, and mango. The whole house is known as vitu. The houses are built on various models, such as pattayappura, nālukettu, ettukettu, and kuttikettu." 342

Concerning the dress of the Nāyars, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the males dress themselves in a mundu (cloth), a loose lower garment, and a towel. A neriyatu, or light cloth of fine texture with coloured border, is sometimes worn round the mundu on festive occasions. Coats and caps are recent introductions, but are eschewed by the orthodox as unnational. It is noted by Mr. Logan that 'the women clothe themselves in a single white cloth of fine texture, reaching from the waist to the knees, and occasionally, when abroad, they throw over the shoulder and bosom another similar cloth. But by custom the Nāyar women go uncovered from the waist. Upper garments indicate lower caste, or sometimes, by a strange reversal of Western notions, immodesty.' Edward Ives, who came to Anjengo about 1740, observes that 'the groves on each bank of the river are chiefly planted with cocoanut trees, and have been inhabited by men and women in almost a pure state of nature, for they go with their breasts and bellies entirely naked. This custom prevails universally throughout every caste from the poorest planter of rice to the daughter or consort of the king upon the throne.'" [According to ancient custom, Nāyar women in Travancore used to remove their body-cloth in the presence of the Royal Family. But, since 1856, this custom has been abolished, by a proclamation during the reign of H.H. Vanchi Bala Rāma Varma Kulasakhara Perumal Bhagiodya Rāma Varma. In a critique on the Indian Census Report, 1901, Mr. J. D. Rees observes* that

* Nineteenth Century, 1904.

part in the political history of the country, for it was 631
the great bulwark against the tyranny and oppression of the Rājas. The evidence of the Honourable East India Company's linguist (interpreter, agent) at Calicut, which appears in the diary of the Tellicherry Factory under date 28th May, 1746, deserves to be here reproduced. He wrote as follows: 'These Nāyars, being heads of the Calicut people, resemble the parliament, and do not obey the king's dictates in all things, but chastise his ministers when they do unwarrantable acts.' The parliament referred to must have been the kūttam (assembly) of the nād. The kūttam answered many purposes when combined action on the part of the community was necessary. The Nāyars assembled in [623]
their kūttams whenever hunting, or war, or arbitration, or what not was in hand, and this organisation does not seem to have been confined to Malabar, for the koot organisation of the people of South Canara gave the British officers much trouble in 1832–33. In so far as 631
Malabar was concerned, the system seems to have 643
remained in an efficient state down to the time of the British occupation, and the power of the Rājas was strictly limited. Mr. Murdoch Brown, of Anjarakandi, who knew the country well, thus wrote to Mr. Francis Buchanan in the earliest years of the present (nineteenth) century regarding the despotic action of the Rājas when constituted, after the Mysorean conquest, the revenue agents of the Government of Haidar Ali. 'By this new order of things, these latter (the Rājas) were vested with despotic authority over the other inhabitants, instead of the very limited prerogatives that they had enjoyed by the feudal system, under which they could neither exact revenue from the lands of their vassals, nor exercise any, direct authority in their districts.' And

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

631 again, 'The Rāja was no longer what he had been,
643 the head of a feudal aristocracy with limited authority, but the all-powerful deputy of a despotic prince, whose military force was always at his command to curb or chastise any of the chieftains who were inclined to dispute or disobey his mandates.'* From the earliest times, therefore, down to the end of the eighteenth century, the Nāyar tara and nād organization kept the country from oppression and tyranny on the part of the rulers, and to this fact more than to any other is due the comparative prosperity, which the Malayāli country so long enjoyed, and which made Calicut at one time the great emporium of trade between the East and the West. But, besides protection, the Nāyars had
631 originally another most important function in the body politic. Besides being protectors, they were also supervisors or overseers, a duty which, as a very ancient deed testifies, was styled kānam—a Dravidian word derived from the verb kānuka (to see, etc.). Parasu Rāman (so the tradition preserved in the Kēralolpatti runs) separated the Nāyars into taras, and ordered that to them belonged the duty of supervision (*lit.* kan = the eye), the executive power (*lit.* kei = the hand, as the emblem of power), and the giving of orders (*lit.* kalpana, order, command), so as to prevent the rights from being curtailed, or suffered to fall into disuse. The Nāyars were originally the overseers or supervisors of the nād, and they seem to have been employed in this capacity as the collectors of the share of produce of the land originally reserved for Government purposes. As remuneration for this service, and for their other function as protectors, another share of the produce of the soil

* Buchanan, Mysore, Canara and Malabar.

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
525 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

621 occupied separate sets of villages and were not
631 subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war,
565 however, they might interdine freely and spend
644 the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

613 In each village, there were traditionally four,
621 five or six matrilineages of the appropriate re-
427 tainer subcaste. The separate households or
566 property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village head-
men, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

Hypergamous unions, even more than other
582 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
613 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the
837 lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate in his natal household and was maintained by it; he visited his mistress after supper and left before breakfast, after which he took a purifying bath before re-entering his natal house. He might not eat in his mistress's household, and following the morning bath might not touch her or his children. The only exception to these
[144] residential rules arose in the case of Nambudiris who had liaisons with royal women. These were received as temporary occupants of the palace and housed in separate buildings at the expense of the royal lineage, at some distance from the buildings occupied by the princes and the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri genitors of Nayar children, however, they [39] visited their mistresses at night and in the daytime carried out their ritual duties in private, attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serving men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
571 knit together the several castes concerned with the secular administration and with the religious law and public rituals of the state. Though not recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly members of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

595 away from his village on military service. Buchanan, as late as 1807, reports that Nayar women vied with each other as to the number of lovers they could obtain. (p. 411).

595 [76] Until late in the nineteenth century, women
584 evidently had freedom to choose their own lovers.
644 This was until recently still the case in the royal lineages, where women selected their lovers from a small group of aristocratic Nambudiri families. Young men of these families were introduced into the palaces by older kinsmen already established there, and might become ensconced as regular occupants of the Nambudiri quarters until such time as they were dismissed by their royal mistresses. The princes of the lineage appear to have had little say in arranging these unions. I was told by one informant that the senior Raja periodically held an audience at which Nambudiris currently living in the palace were presented to him by his secretaries, but that otherwise he had little knowledge of
595 marital life within the palace. Today, as also
584 in commoner lineages, this is no longer the case: monogamy has been customary in all subcastes for the past forty to fifty years, and the prospective husband of a woman is selected by her karanavan or elder brother. In orthodox families of the retainer subcastes, at least for the past fifty years, the karanavan or the elder brother of a woman has had the right to dismiss a husband of whom he disapproved. Alternatively
[586] a woman may still, as of old, divorce her husband at will by refusing him admittance or causing her kinsmen to place his sleeping mat

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that they were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages

● 644 We saw that the traditional property-group of 423 retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every [427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

613 longer periods.

●644 In all the royal and chiefly lineages, political
423 office was normally held by the eldest member irrespective of branch. In several of these lineages, however, including Calicult, Walluvanad and Kolattiri, there existed also separate offices subordinate to that of the kind. In Calicut, the five oldest men of the Zamorin's lineage, irrespective of branch, held five offices or sthanams (occupant = sthani), each with a landed estate, separately from the lands jointly owned by each property-group of the lineage. The eldest sthani was the Zamorin who ruled at Calicut. The second was called Eralpad: he was the naduvari of Ernad, the oldest of the Zamorin's nads, from which his forbears originally sprang. To prevent rivalry with the [89] king, the second sthani was forbidden during his tenure of office to cross over into the Calicut nad until the Zamorin died and he was summoned to perform the funeral rites and receive the crown. The third sthani, the Munalpac, was commander-in-chief of the Zamorin's army: his estate was in Calicut but he travelled throughout the kingdom. The two youngest sthanis held no political office but lived as desavaris or independent landlords in separate villages of the kingdom. When the Zamorin or any of the other sthanis died, those below him in rank moved up one place, and the next eldest man was appointed as the fifth sthani.

From the 14th century until 1792, the Zamorin's lineage was able to cohere as a single property-group without partition between its

613 segments lifted out of their group on to separate
644 estates. The jointly owned land of the royal lin-
423 eage, in Ernaq, was managed by the sixth man karanavan after the fashion of an ordinary Na-
[701] yar property-group. As among Nayars, younger men of the lineage were trained as soldiers and fought in the Raja's wars.

However, it also happened that during these centuries, the Zamorin's lineage did not greatly increase in numbers. Indeed, in the 18th century it was obliged to save itself from extinction by adopting three girls from the royal lineage of Nileswaram in South Canara, north of Kerala. In 1792, the Zamorin was conquered by the British and, along with other rulers of what became Malabar District, retired from political office as the head of a large landowning lineage. The British to compensate the royal lineages gave them political pensions, payable in cash sums annually to each male and female. Shortly afterwards, the Zamorin's [90] lineage began to increase in size, and by the mid-nineteenth century had partitioned into three property-groups, Pudiya (New) Tavari which lives in a village in the modern Calicut division of Malabar District, Padinyare (West) Tavari, also in Calicut, and Kirakke (East) Tavari in Ernad Division. Pudiya Tavari has this century partitioned into three new property-groups. The extensive lands of each group are managed by their separate karanavans. The five sthanams with their landed estates are still occupied by the five eldest members of the lineage, who in addition receive their political pensions independently of the rest.

8

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

613 is a recent practice which grew out of the de-
644 mands for separate payments of those princes
423 who had left the palace to find modern work outside. Until about ten years ago, the karanavan completely controlled the group's finances and paid maintenance in kind to its members, even to toilet requisites such as oil for bathing and ash for cleaning the teeth. Since they began to receive allowances in cash, several princes have acquired private land and built small houses for their wives and children, where a very few of them now live and eat, despite caste rules against interdining with lower caste kinsfolk. In addition some princes now work in government service or in one of the coast towns or in one of the large cities of India. They return to the palace only for vacations and ceremonies. The lands of the major royal property-groups of Malabar are at present declared impartible by law, but there is dissatisfaction with this law among their younger members. Individual partition of property, in accordance with the new Nayar inheritance laws to be explained below, is expected to take place in most palaces within the next few years, and has already been applied for in some. The royal lineages are in fact now breaking down in precisely the same manner as are retainer Nayar taravads.

It is clear, however, that royal property-groups were traditionally able to comprise more segments and cohere for longer periods than could retainer groups. The differences in structure which made this possible were: 1) the landed estates which were large enough to [93]

613 support many members and, together with the
644 political office, had a sentimental value for
423 them; 2) sthanams, which lifted the five oldest men out of the factionalism of their property-groups; 3) the spacious construction of palaces with privacy for each woman and her descendants, each adult man, and each visiting Nambudiri husband; 4) the very rigid rules of etiquette and avoidance which discouraged quarrels between men and incest between men and women; 5) the ability of the palace to employ separate servants for each adult; and 6) the peculiar residence-arrangements in royal and a few chiefly lineages, which, together with the universal practice of hypergamy, gave the property-group some of the features of a matriclan (14) and enabled it to live for generations on the same site. The existence of Nambudiri Brahmans as a leisure class of ritual specialists, many of whom were free to leave their own estates and live as drones (or "as breeding bulls", as one Calicut prince remarked) in the palaces, was crucial to this, as was the ability of the royal lineage, because of the concentration of wealth and political power in its hands, to maintain a horde of retainer lineages at its doorstep to provide mistresses for the princes and a bodyguard for the king.

613 In spite of these special devices, royal and
644 chiefly lineages did, even traditionally, divide into separate property-groups when their numbers became unwieldy. Unfortunately I lack genealogies to show whether, as in retainer lineages, this regularly occurred at a particular

613 point in their development. There is plenty of
644 historical evidence, however, to show that they did so. In many cases, especially of the smaller Rajas and the chiefs, the kingdom or chiefdom was also divided between the segments at some point after their own private estates had been partioned.

613 [94] Reference to Map 7 helps to clarify this
644 statement. Nads I and II (Kolattunad and Arik-
631 kal) were once united under the Kolattiri Rajas, but nad II early broke away as a small independent chiefdom ruled by a segment of the lineage which had been converted to Islam by the Arabs. Nad I, which remained the kingdom of Kolattiri, was subdivided into smaller nads ruled by Samantan naduvaris. There are today several lineages of these, but Innes reports that they have all split off from one of two original lineages. Nad II was similarly ruled by a high class Nayar chieftain lineage (14) which at various times was feudatory to Kolattiri. This lineage divided into several branches each of which took as portion of the nad and ruled it independently. Nad IV was also once ruled by a single naduvari lineage as one property-group (Mithangath Kovilagath Thottoli), as feudatory of Kolattiri. In 1766, the group partitioned its properties between its five segments, but retained the office of naduvari, and also a second athanam, for the first and second man of the whole lineage.

The Kurumbranad Rajas, (nad X), like the Kolattiri Rajas, are said to be one of the oldest ruling families of Kerala and to have received their nad from the last of the Perumals. The

1/1 [See p. 105, category 116 --- Analyst]

613 The area ruled by the Kurumbranad Rajas is
644 thought to have once extended as far south as
631 nad XI, where it bordered on the Zamorin's territory, and as far north as nads IV and VI. Nad IX was formerly ruled by the Rajas of Kollam, who are thought to have been an independent segment of the Kurumbranad family. The Kollam Rajas were conquered and expelled by the Zamorins.

The Kottayam Rajas, who ruled nads VII and XXX, and were in possession of nad XI for a short time before the British took over, are said by some informants to have once formed one lineage with the Kurumbranad Rajas, (with whom Innes too reports that they were "closely related".) This is likely, since the two lineages acknowledge each other to be Kshattriyas, but will not intermarry. Innes also reports that nad XXX (a mountainous, sparsely populated area) was conquered by Kottayam and Kurumbranad together and later divided between them. Before the British came, the Kottayam lineage redivided and one property-group, Parassi, became independent chieftains over part of nad VI. When the Muslims invaded from Mysore the main branch of the Kottayam family fled temporarily to Travancore and in their absence Parassi became rulers of nads VI and XXX. They later opposed the British settlement of Malabar and were therefore deposed and not given a pension. Parassi and Kottayam (who returned) are still independent lineages but do not yet intermarry. The Payyormala Nayar chieftains of nad VIII who ruled as feudatories

613 of Kurumbranad, were also once one lineage,
644 which divided its rule and its lands between
631 three segments. This nad, like nads X and XI was for a short time conquered by the Zamorin, and its rulers, along with the Kurumbranad Rajas, became his feudatories.

The Kadattunad Rajas of nad VII are not one of the oldest lineages of Kerala and are not a segment of one of the neighbouring lineages. Krishna Iyer reports (15) that [96] Kadattunad was once a branch of the Porlattiri royal lineage which once ruled nad XII. The Porlattiri lineage was the first to be dispossessed by the Zamorin and its members are said to have fled north and sought refuge with the Kolattiri lineage. Innes says that the Kadattunad lineage sprang from the union of a Kolattiri woman with a Porlattiri man, but our informants in North Malabar thought that Kadattunad are descended from a Kolattiri man who gave this nad to his Porlattiri wife and children, in accordance with a common North Malabar custom.

The Pulavayi Nayar chieftains of nad XIV were once independent rulers in their jungly nad, but became nominal feudatories of the Zamorin. Their lineage and rule were also divided into several branches. Nads XIII and XV were once united under the Parappu royal lineage, which divided its nad between two branches, both of which were early overrun by the Zamorin. The Beyport Rajas' lineage, which remained as a feudatory of the Zamorin and is still extant, is a branch of the Parappu lineage. Nads XXIII and XXIV were similarly once one with nad XXV

613 under the Palghat Rajas, but the Zamorin drove
644 a wedge into their territory in the 18th century
631 and took nad XXV. The other two nads were divided between two branches of the Palghat lineage.

Nad XXVIII was formerly ruled by the Chavakkad Rajas, whose lineage became a feudatory of Cochin. The lineage divided into four tavaris, which quarreled with each other for political power. One of these branches, known as the Rajas of Punnattur, finally appealed to the Zamorin for [97] support against the other three, which were supported by Cochin. The Zamorin came to their help, overran the whole nad, and made its rulers feudatory to himself.

The Vellatiri Rajas, who ruled nad XIX and formerly nads XX and XXI as the kingdom of Walluvanad, remained a small lineage and, like the Zamorins, did not partition until the British began to rule. Their numbers then increased and they are now divided into four palaces.

Since the Zamorin's lineage, which maintained its kingdom intact, was one which happened not to increase in numbers or divided its property-group over four centuries, it might be thought tempting to argue that the cohesion of each kingdom traditionally depended on the cohesion of its royal lineage.

However, we must be clear in recognizing that the cohesion and expansion of the Zamorin's kingdom, and to a lesser extent of that of Cochin, and later of Travancore, depended on factors other than the structure of their royal lineages. Chief of these factors were, it seems likely,

613 the expansion of overseas' trade with the Arabs
644 and later, the Europeans, from the twelfth to
631 the eighteenth centuries; the developments of better means of communication in the larger kingdoms of the plains, where this was not too difficult; some ammassing of wealth in the hands of rulers; and leading from this, their ability to organize larger armies which (especially after the adoption of gun-warfare) permitted them to conquer neighbouring weaker nads. The persistence of these larger units seems to have depended on the strength of their new political institutions, chiefly [98] the militia and the central courts of justice, as well as on a widening of the field of social relations of the "good" castes who controlled the administration. Along with this went a very slow process
613 of social mobility in the upper reaches of the
644 society. The caste system of rulers, chiefs,
631 village headmen and retainers was not entirely
565 stationary: retainer-lineages which had distinguished themselves in war were sometimes appointed as desavaris and gradually changed their ritual rank, and it was possible for a desavari lineage to increase in wealth and be made a naduvari lineage, or for a small naduvari lineage to increase in wealth (as did the Zamorins), expand its territory, and call itself a royal lineage, claiming the rank of Kshattriyas. This process took some time, indeed; it was not until the eighteenth century that the Zamorin's lineage, after going through a ceremony in which its members passed through the body of a golden cow, were able to claim that

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
•644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable
613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

613 property-groups. These in turn scrambled for
•644 the crown and in turn allied themselves with the
631 Zamorins, the Portuguese and the Travancore Rajas to help them to establish their claims. Despite periodic total conquest by one or other neighbouring ruler, however, the kingdom was never divided between its segments as were many of the smaller chiefdoms, I think because, like Calicut and Walluvanad, it had developed trade and centralized political institutions which would not permit of its reversion to smaller units. Whether, had their kingdoms grown much larger the rulers would have been obliged to abandon the matrilineal system, is a question which cannot be answered out of the data available. [100]

At all events it is clear that despite its militia and relatively centralized administration, the whole political structure of the central area, as well as the kinship system of its rulers, depended for its persistence on a relatively stationary or only very gradually changing economy which would permit the perpetuation of hereditary political offices. For the administration, managed by the "good" upper castes, was built up round a network of kinship ties. Nambudiris fathered the Rajas and sporadically, the high caste population at large; the Rajas fathered the chieftains, and the chieftains the desavaris; while the whole retainer Nayar population, despite its division into karas, villages, and lineages linked in perpetual affinal kinship, was also united throughout the kingdom by the practice of sexual unions between the mobile

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food. [101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first converstions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others. 533 554 [644]

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar. [1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play. [874]

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *avan*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British [451]

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

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and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and pleasure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws of the country.

Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuosity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of 556
Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient 553
times, this title was conferred on others also, in recogni- 424
tion of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and
appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The [644]
consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. [584]
If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is [597]
generally adopted into one of these families. The title
Karta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a
titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the
Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas
claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura
and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur [643]
Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the
title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In
social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme,
and it was only on important points that higher author-
ities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong [564]
to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title
Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars,
really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged
with various functions. Some were, for instance, instruc- [644]
tors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents
of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing con- 175
cerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa 556
states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to 644
whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the
court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he
does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to
sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a 643
matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call 584
out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, 553
after the presentation of silk and cloth has been per- 644
formed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the
[463] Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 784 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 562 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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631 and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and plea-
643 sure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many
[644] of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the funda-
mental and long established laws of the country.

646 Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by
[203] right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were
[428] despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

643 The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were
646 conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuo-
578 sity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly
[687] sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

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rights. Thus did these *kúttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers and Brahmans in administering it. All caste disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76–77.

134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be
[464] Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conservation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
647 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should
[656] be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 245 [439] 2.85 The country is deficit in the output of coconuts and annually imports about Rs. 15 crores worth of copra and coconut products. This is a heavy drain on foreign exchange resources of the country. Even after imports the total available supply of coconuts is not enough and the oil millers are, therefore, hard hit by this shortage. The demand for this commodity is increasing year after year while the production has been more or less stagnant at 3,100 million nuts. If this situation is allowed to drift unchecked, imports of coconuts will have to be increased progressively. In view of these factors, measures to increase productivity and the output of coconut are of extreme urgency.

2.86 Coconut cultivation in the State today faces a multitude of problems. The average yields are only about 40 nuts a tree per annum, that is, 3,000 nuts an acre, as against 60 to 100 nuts per tree in Philippines and some of the other Far Eastern countries. Moreover, the yield has shown no tendency to increase over the last 10 years. The focal point of coconut development programme, therefore, should be to break through the stagnant levels of productivity of coconut. The following discussion follows this line of argument.

*433 245 241 2.87 Poor yields are largely due to the absence of regular and adequate manuring. The crop needs large quantities of manure. But the farmers, majority of whom are poor, cannot afford to spend on fertilizers which in the case of coconuts show results only after two or three years. Farmers, therefore, prefer to invest whatever resources they have in manuring the field crops which bring in quicker returns. Coconuts thus get neglected. In addition to starving the coconut trees of fertilizers, many farmers grow exhaustive crops such as banana and tapioca as an understorey. This practice exhausts the soil and it needs large funds and a long period ranging from 3 to 5 years, to rehabilitate such gardens.

[647] 2.88 To raise the yields, an intensive application of fertilizers containing NPK has been recommended by the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The Committee is of the opinion that fertilizers are more suited to acidic soils on which coconut is generally grown in Kerala. It estimates the cost of requisite fertilizers to be of the order of Rs. 93 per acre per annum but that is beyond the means of a small farmer. It is, therefore, suggested that the State should arrange to advance loans for the purchase of fertilizers, and these loans may be recovered after three years. To start with, 30 per cent of the area may be brought under this programme. The annual requirement of fertilizers would be about 26,000 tons of superphosphate. The programme would cost Rs. 3 crores per year, that is, Rs. 9 crores for the first three years after which the loans may be granted out of the recoveries. The programme may be extended to cover 75 per cent of the area earmarked for coconut during the Fourth Plan. Better manuring coupled with the necessary cultural operations, can raise the yields from 40 nuts to 60 or 70 nuts per tree which would thus amount to an increase of 50 to 75 per cent over the present rate of production.

*433 245 242 2.89 Coconut crop is subject to a heavy incidence of diseases and pests. The diseases such as "leaf rot" and "root diseases" are rampant and widespread and have spread to six districts affecting over 50 per cent of the trees in the State. The annual loss of production due to these diseases is estimated at Rs. 2 to 3 crores. There is already a scheme in force to spray about 7 million trees in the infected pockets.

Forest Roads

4.57 Although in respect of overall position regarding forest roads, Kerala is comparatively better off and accessibility is quite good, there are some remote areas for which new roads are required. Opening up of these areas through forest roads would permit tapping of certain pockets of forest resources uptil now lying untapped. Some of these important roads which have been suggested for being taken up during the Third Plan are :

(a) *Roads from Dhon to Palamalai*—to tap the Chenat Nair reserved forests and to make Palamalai a summer resort.

(b) *Extension of the Silent Valley roads to the borders of the Nilgiris district*—to tap the rich resources of the Silent Valley reserved forest and the improvement of its existing natural regeneration.

(c) *Construction of a road from Nelliampathy Parambikulam Tellikkal.* This will make Sungam and Parambikulam Ranges accessible through the Kerala territory only. At present, the State has to depend on the goodwill of the Madras Forest Department for the extraction of forest produces.

The cost of constructing these roads is estimated to be Rs. 50 lakhs.

Training Facilities

4.58 The programme for raising forest plantations can be implemented smoothly only if there is adequately trained personnel to deal with the several technical problems. At present the staff is generally deputed to Forest Colleges at Dehra Dun and Coimbatore for training. These colleges cannot, however, meet the requirements of training lower grade staff. It is, therefore, suggested that in view of the importance of forestry to Kerala, this State should have a separate training institute of its own. This institute, may be located at Peechi.

Resource Survey

4.59 For proper planning of forest-based industries, the exact extent of availability and location of different types of forest resources should be known. In the past, development has been impeded by industries being allotted more areas than was warranted by their capacity. This has thwarted development of other industries which could have utilized the surplus raw material from the forest coupes. These defects can be remedied only if a full inventory of forest resources is available. Uptil now only a survey of bamboo areas has been carried out. During the Third Plan a full resource survey should be carried out.

ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED FOR THE DEVELOPMENTS PROPOSED

4.60 If the development programmes proposed in this report are to be carried out, strengthening of the Forest Department will be necessary. Appointment of

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 313 647 two more Conservators of Forest, one to deal with general development works of the State and the other for the new plantations may be considered. It is also proposed that an additional Chief Conservator of Forests to cope with the heavy work may be appointed as soon as the tempo of development work has gained momentum, say, by the middle of the Third Plan period. The Territorial Divisional Forest Officers should each be given a gazetted assistant to deal with all the development works in their divisions. The present annual expenditure on Establishment amounts to Rs. 8.23 lakhs (1958-59). If the above suggestions are accepted there should be an increase of about 25 per cent. It is also expected that if the tempo of developments is maintained, higher amounts will be needed in the Fourth Plan. The establishment expenditure is, therefore, worked out as under :

Third Plan period	Rs. 10.29 lakhs annually.
Fourth Plan period	Rs. 10.97 lakhs annually.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

*433 313 655 651 4.61 The major part of investment during the coming decade will be on raising the various commercial plantations discussed above. Investment on other items is summarized in Table appearing under Para 4.53. The amount of Rs. 3 crores[1] which is expected to be spent during the Third Plan period on acquisition of private forests, does not appear in the investment figures since the amount is only in the nature of a monetary transfer.

4.62 As a result of the development programmes suggested above, output contributed by the forests may be envisaged to increase from the following sources during the coming decade :

(1) Sale of forest produce from areas clear-felled for teak plantations. This item will be quite substantial.

(2) Income from thinning of teak plantations.

(3) Income from bamboo and eta reed resources, which will start accruing by the end of the Third Plan period when all the flowered areas would have been regenerated.

(4) Income from other plantations would start accruing only towards the end of the coming decade or during the beginning of the Fifth Plan since gestation period before the plantations start maturing is rather long.

4.63 It is difficult to give an exact forecast but taking the above factors into account, the increase in income accruing from forestry during the coming decade is taken to be as follows. It is assumed that income at the end of the Second Plan, that is, during 1960-61 would be 10 per cent higher than that in 1955-56, in 1965-66 twenty per cent higher than that in 1955-56 and by 1970-71 it would be one and a half times the income in 1955-56. On this basis projections for State income from forestry would

[1] The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 3.75 crores for Forest Development which compares quite favourably with investment suggested by us. However, it has to be kept in mind that our figure does not include finances for acquiring private forests, which the State Plan has to provide for.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
647 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be espe-
655 cially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

will be essential to provide a properly trained and experienced Fisheries Development Officer in overall charge of each Integrated Centre for coordinating its activities.

Training

5.57 At present there are three centres to train fishermen in the State. The training course which extends over six months aims mainly at training the fishermen in the operation, servicing and maintenance of marine engines, making of nets and tackles, improved fishing methods and the fundamentals of navigation.

5.58 These centres are located at Neendakara, Ernakulam, and Beypore. The first two centres can train 20 fishermen each in a batch, and the last can train 15. So far, 272 fishermen have been trained at the Ernakulam and Beypore centres (run by the Fisheries Department), of whom 150 are now actually employed in mechanized fishing. At the Neendakara centre, which is run by the Indo-Norwegian Project, 121 fishermen have undergone training so far.

5.59 The programme suggested for the next 10 years would require a crew of about 6,400. This would involve a huge training programme and entail a heavy burden on the State. Arrangements can at best be made to provide training facilities to about half the number. The rest can receive on-the-job training from the trained fishermen. As about 1,200 trained fishermen would be required by the end of the Third Plan, not only will the capacity of the existing training cenfres have to be increased but also at least five new centres will have to be established.

5.60 The operation of the proposed medium-sized boats will also require the services of trained skipper-cum-master fisherman. Either a special centre for training skippers should be established in the State, or the facilities at the Government of India Deep-Sea Fishing Stations at Bombay and other places should be expanded. For operating trawlers, the State Government should enlist the collaboration of foreign fishing companies in order to obtain along with the fishing vessels, the services of trained technical personnel. At the same time efforts should also be made to train Indian personnel in the various fields by appointing them as understudies to the foreign technicians or by sending them abroad. The training of Fisheries Development Officers, Marketing Officers and other high level technical staff can be arranged at the Institute of Fisheries Education, which is proposed to be started by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture. For training the middle and lower level staff, it is desirable to establish a Fisheries Training Institute in the State.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

5.61 A substantial part of investment will be on mechanization of boat craft and acquisition of trawlers for off-shore fishing. These two items alone will absorb Rs. 6.35 crores out of a total investment of Rs. 10.72 crores.[1] Details of investment on various items are given in Table 27.[2] This does not include expenditure on deve-

[1] The outlay allocated for the Third Plan is Rs. 4.5 crores, which will leave a balance of Rs. 6.75 for the Fourth Plan, if suggestions made in this Report are to be implemented.

[2] [Table 27, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of
563 manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

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175 about Quilon (Ricci, 1931: 326–330; Logan, 1951, I: 282–283). Chi-
439 nese trade declined in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries,
635 but that of Muslim Arabs (who had visited the coast from the eighth century) greatly increased. In the fourteenth century a third Nayar kingdom around Calicut, in the center of the coast, had expanded with the help of Arab merchants (Major, 1857: 13–18). By the time the Portuguese arrived, in 1498, Calicut practically monopolized the Arab trade, and the Zamorin (king) of Calicut held overlordship from Pudupattanam south to Porakkad (Logan, 1951, I: 293–294; Ayyar, 1938: 273, 291). Trickles of trade continued in Kolattunad and Travancore, but the kings there had grown weak by comparison with the Zamorin. Kolattunad had become divided into three virtually independent little kingdoms, and the Travancore ruler had surrendered large powers to the subordinate local chiefs of his realm. Two other small kingdoms remained independent in the interior to the east of Calicut: Walluvanad and Palghat.

The period 1498 to 1792 was one of bitter struggle between Euro-
175 pean and Middle Eastern powers, who formed shifting alliances with
439 native rulers for control of the pepper trade. By 1600 the Portuguese
648 had practically abolished the Arab trade, but they were themselves driven from the coast by the Dutch in 1663. The English reached Kerala in 1615 and the French in 1725. Each European trading power allied itself with one or another Nayar ruler and took part in successive battles until, in 1766, the northern half of the coast was overrun by Muslim armies from Mysore to the northeast. The Mysorean occupation ended in 1792 with the settlement of the whole area by the English East India Company and the establishment of the British bureaucratic political system (Logan, 1951, I: 404–473).

175 Shortly before the Mysorean invasions Kerala was divided into nine
648 small kingdoms and a number of border chiefdoms owing only ten-
635 uous allegiance to some king. The British after 1792 amalgamated the seven northern kingdoms (Kolattunad, Kottayam, Kurumbranad, Kadattunad, Calicut, Walluvanad, and Palghat) to form the Malabar District of Madras Province, pensioned their rulers, and brought them under a British district officer responsible to the government of Madras. Cochin, a small kingdom in the center of the coast, remained a native state under its own ruler subject to the advice of a British Resident. So also did the southernmost kingdom of Travancore, whose ruler had already in the 1730's established a standing army, dispossessed his Nayar nobles, and formed a bureaucratic government. Kerala remained divided in this way until after the in-

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dependence of India in 1947. Cochin and Travancore were amalgamated in 1949 and, under popular pressure for the formation of linguistic states, the whole area was reunited as the State of Kerala in 1956. This state elected a Communist government in 1957.

After 1498 there were certain changes in Kerala's economy. Trade and towns expanded, gunpowder was introduced and wars became more devastating, and cash transactions became more prevalent among the aristocratic castes in villages (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: chap. XIV). But the basic form of the caste system and the pyramidal system of kingdoms, subordinate chiefdoms, and villages persisted with little change until after the Mysorean conquest. The Calicut kingdom gradually declined after 1498, for the Portuguese allied themselves with the small kingdom of Cochin to the south, freed it from Calicut's overlordship, and used it as a base from which to expel the Arabs and subdue the Zamorins. Nevertheless, with fluctuating boundaries Calicut remained the most powerful kingdom until the 1730's.

Although its internal political boundaries have shifted continually, Kerala is today still divisible into three major cultural areas. These are distinguished by differences in the names and numbers of the castes who occupy them, in dress, dietetic habits and ritual practices, and in the kinship systems of the several Hindu castes. The northern area, north of the Kora River, comprises the former kingdoms of Nileswaram, Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. This was the area dominated by the Kolattiri kings in the fourteenth century and at various periods thereafter. In British times it became the northern part of Malabar District and the southern part of South Canara District; I shall call it North Kerala. The central area comprises the former kingdoms of Calicut, Walluvanad, Palghat, and Cochin. It was overrun by the Zamorins of Calicut at various times between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. In British times it formed South Malabar District and Cochin State; I shall refer to it as Central Kerala. All the southern area (until recently, Travancore State) was at one time or another subordinate to the kings of Travancore. The political systems—and consequently the internal caste divisions of the Nayars and the forms of their kinship systems—differed in these three areas. Much confusion has arisen in the past because of failure to distinguish between the three regions. It has been assumed that the Nayars had one kinship system, whereas in fact they had three, with different terminological structures. In this paper I describe Nayar kinship in two kingdoms of Central Kerala: Calicut and Cochin.

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613 Theoretically, office-bearing lineages were supposed to cohere for-
178 ever, the officer being the eldest man of the lineage regardless of branch. In fact, if the lineage continued to expand, some other development would occur within a few generations. What its pattern might be depended on the economic and political circumstances of the times. One pattern was for the political office itself to become divided between the segments some time after they had divided their private domain. The head of each segment would then become ruler in his own right over a portion of the original territory, either (in the case of royals) as an independent small king, or (in the case of district chiefs) as a small chief independent of the rest of his lineage but still owing nominal allegiance to the original king of the kingdom as a whole. This type of fission of offices took place in areas and periods in which for some reason trade was declining, customs dues were running low, and neither king nor chiefs could muster enough extra wealth to fight wars which would maintain them in full political control. This
613 process went on apace from the fifteenth century to the end of the
178 seventeenth both in Kolattunad and in Travancore, the northernmost
175 and southernmost kingdoms of Kerala. They had been powerful
648 kingdoms for a period, with the help of Chinese traders, but declined in the fifteenth century after the Chinese trade collapsed and the Arabs built up Calicut. After 1500, different trading powers supported the smaller chiefs of these areas in trade wars against each other, so that these kingdoms remained weak and disunited until the second quarter of the eighteenth century. During this period segments of the royal lineages in both kingdoms carved up much of each kingdom into virtually independent chiefdoms. Within each of these in turn, the lineages of formerly subordinate Nayar chiefs tended also to break into segments, each retaining control over four or five villages. Early in the eighteenth century the British and French each tried to consolidate North Malabar by allying themselves with different local powers, but their struggles were temporarily eclipsed by invasions from Bednur to the north and later, in the 1760's, from Mysore in the east. In Travancore the process of disintegration persisted until the British obtained a trade monopoly and, in the 1730's, helped the king to reconquer his kingdom once and for all and to establish a bureaucratic form of rule (Innes, 1908: 55–75; Pillai, 1940: 266–466; K. M. Panikkar, 1931: chap. V).

613 The other course of development was for one branch of a ruling
669 lineage to seize the office and most of the private domains and, temporarily or permanently, exclude or banish the others. This process

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the 613
ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and 669
shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade.
Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the
period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth 175
century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups.
The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, sup- 613
ported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and 669
made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 648
they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed
them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656
the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches,
and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thir- 613
teenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly
expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed
it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the
Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no [635]
dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to
say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of [726]
one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because
throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help [648]
of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and,
except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control
and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the
kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid- 635
eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were 578
usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to vil-
635 lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office.
622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and
726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed
635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have
634 been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral
613 house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there
554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kolattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as
[648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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Nayar: North Kerala

The Nayars of North Kerala live between the Chandragiri and the Kora rivers. This area lay north of the Calicut kingdom and had been conquered by the Kolattiri kings at some period before the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 283; Innes, 1908: 57). It then disintegrated into the small kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad. North Kerala was invaded from the Bednur kingdom of South Canara in the 1730's. It was later occupied by Muslim armies from Mysore between 1766 and 1792, after which it passed under British rule (Logan, 1951, I: 360, 399–473). This account deals with conditions before 1760, so far as these are known, and with the major changes of the nineteenth century.

Ecology

The mountains approach nearer to the sea in North Kerala than in Central Kerala. There are fewer stretches of lowland suitable for wet-rice cultivation, and gardens of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and spices on hillsides are more extensive. Since rice was the main subsistence crop, population density was lower than in Central Kerala. The houses of a village (*dēsam*) were scattered in gardens on hillsides surrounding a wet-rice flat in a valley. Villages were often separated by three to six miles of uncultivated scrub or jungle. Until the Mysoreans built roads after the 1760's, transport and communication by narrow mountain paths were difficult, especially in the heavy monsoons.

North Kerala had four major ports during the period of European trade—Cannanore, Tellicherry, Mahé, and Badagara (Hamilton, ed. 1727: 369–371). Pepper and other spices were exported from inland villages probably from Roman times, but villages were virtually self-sufficient for food until the mid-eighteenth century. After that time the Mysoreans' roads permitted greater import of goods both from the coast and from Mysore, and greater spatial mobility. In the nineteenth century cash-crop farming for export increased, as did imports of

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

439 food and other goods. The population expanded and much formerly
[161] waste land was brought under cultivation as gardens for the produc-
[241] tion of coconuts, pepper, cashew nuts, and cinnamon. Higher in the
[464] mountains Europeans developed estates of tea, coffee, and spices,
[496] which attracted wage labor from villages to the west. The development of the steamship, the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the entry of railways into Kerala in the 1860's were significant events in this process.

564 **Political and Economic Systems**

[566] Traditionally, a hierarchy of the major Hindu castes was present as in Central Kerala, except that large areas of North Kerala had no Pulayas or agricultural serfs (*ibid.*, I: 148). Nambudiri Brahmans were fewer than in Central Kerala, but they controlled a small number of temple estates and claimed religious superiority over the Nayar
439 rulers. Muslims were the dominant trading population of the ports
563 and inland trading centers.

631 The mountainous terrain, heavy rainfall, poor communications, sparse population, and comparatively low productivity made political centralization more difficult than in Central Kerala. The ancient Kolattiri kingdom was divided into chiefdoms and villages in a manner similar to the later kingdom of the Zamorin, but judicial control was perhaps never as well centralized as in the Calicut kingdom.
175 From the fourteenth century, when the Zamorins captured most of
635 the Arab trade, the Kolattiri kingship lost some of its former power.
[634] The kingdom disintegrated into three smaller, virtually independent kingdoms—Kolattunad, Kottayam, and Kadattunad—plus a number of small border chiefdoms of uncertain allegiance (*ibid.*, I: 343–344).
174 Each of the three North Kerala kingdoms probably had a population
161 of between 150,000 and 250,000, in contrast to the Calicut kingdom,
635 which seems to have numbered some 600,000 to 720,000 (see note 5, page 473).

175 After 1500 each of the North Kerala rulers sought the help of one
or another of the mutually hostile European and Middle Eastern trad-
648 ing powers, thus maintaining a state of fragmentation until the My-
634 sorean conquest. In the struggles of the seventeenth and eighteenth
635 centuries some new Nayar chiefs also arose with mushroom rapidity on the basis of European support and gained partially autonomous sway over small groups of villages. Political and social mobility among Nayar aristocrats was thus more marked in North Kerala than in the more stable central kingdoms. Indeed, a North Kerala proverb re-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerala.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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until the second half of the nineteenth century. Their existence before 1750 seems to have been chiefly associated with conquest of land by chiefs. After the British conquest they became associated rather with the gradual expansion of the population to newly cultivated lands, and with the ability of men to acquire land as personal and freely marketable property.

Recent Developments in North and Central Kerala Contrasted

The modern North Kerala practice, whereby a man acquires newly cultivated garden land and gives it to his wife and children, makes Nayar residence heterogeneous at the present time. My data come from a village of Kottayam division where, in 1948, the great majority of Nambiar men were small owner- or tenant-cultivators. It was found that out of 42 Nambiar houses, 23 (55 per cent) had been built by individual men and given to their wives and children. Only 45 per cent had been built in the traditional manner by a matrilineally related group of men for their taravād.

Regarding the constitution of households, it was found that 29 per cent were "traditional," avunculocal extended family households comprising matrilineally related men, their wives, and small children, with or without divorced or widowed mothers or sisters of these men; 48 per cent contained an elementary family with or without another relative of either husband or wife—a widowed mother, unmarried sibling, etc.; 14 per cent contained a widow or divorcee with her unmarried children; 7 per cent contained a segment of a lineage —a group of matrilineally related men *and* women of the Central Kerala type, with the men visiting their wives in other households; 2 per cent (1 house) contained a man whose wife had just died, and the unmarried children.

Taking the residence of the 53 married couples by household, it was found that 26 per cent lived in the traditional manner in the matrilineal home of the husband. Some of these husbands were kāranavans; others lived avunculocally with a mother's brother. Fifteen per cent lived duolocally as in Central Kerala, with the husband visiting the wife. At least half, however, were couples in which the wife had recently had a child and was only temporarily living in her natal home; she would later return to her husband's matrilineal home, thus bringing the total percentage of couples in the husband's matrilineal home up to about 33 per cent. Six per cent lived patrilocally in the husband's father's private house, while 4 per cent lived

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusque hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis iucundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

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APPENDIX B.

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[127] At the last moment I have received from Dr. E. Hultzsch, Ph.D., the Government Epigraphist, the following excerpt from the number of the *Epigraphia Indica* which is now under publication, and which with his permission I add to this monograph. It is interesting evidence of the old martial spirit of the Nayars :—

"According to an inscription of the 14th year of his reign (=A.D. 1083–84) the Chola King Kulôttuṅga I. 'conquered Kuḍamalai-nâḍu, *i.e.*, the Western hill country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the Nayars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.'—*South-Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 130.

TRANSLATION OF AN INSCRIPTION OF THE 14TH YEAR OF KULÔTTUNGA I. AT TIRUKKAḶUKKUṆRAM.

Line 27.—'While all the heroes [1] in the Western hill-country (Kuḍamalai-nâḍu) ascended voluntarily to heaven,' etc.—*South Indian Inscriptions*, Vol. III, p. 147.

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[192] 1 In Malayâlam *châvêr* (Tamil *sâveru*) means 'one who has elected to die, *moriturus*.'

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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vocal music, etc., goes on. One by one the guests soon depart, and the bridegroom stays in his wife's house for a few days. It must be remembered that the Nāyars are a strictly matrilocal community, though the custom shows a laxity in these days. 585 [591] [198]

The *Sambandham* customs are not the same all over Malabar. They vary considerably in details, but the principle is the same all over. *Sambandham* in itself, though recognised as legal, has not the binding effect of a proper marriage. It is in theory dissoluble at will, and often it happens that, due either to misunderstanding or quarrel, either of the parties breaks off relations. In such a case, the marriage is deemed to have ended, and the aggrieved party can, without further formality, marry anybody else. The legal position is slightly altered in Travancore. By the Nāyar Regulation Act of 1912 it was enacted that if a man wants to break off his marriage relations with a woman to whom he was united by a properly conducted *Sambandham* he has to give her six months' notice and provide for the maintenance of her children by him (till they attain their twelfth year, unless the mother marries in the meantime). But this law has very little influence, and marriages and divorces go on in the same free fashion as before. In British Malabar, there is the Malabar Marriage Act of Sir C. Sankaran Nayar, the present Educational Member of the Imperial Government, by which a Nāyar entering into a *Sambandham* with a Nāyar woman can, if the parties choose to do so, register their union as a marriage to which ordinary marriage laws apply. This has been found very ineffective, for in the last twenty years during which it has been in force only six marriages have been registered, and all of them have been in the family of its distinguished author. [184] [581] 586 [648] 581 [648]

Before such laws came to be enacted (and to a very great extent even now) there has been singular freedom of marriage and divorce among the Nāyars. The men that a girl could possibly marry were strictly restricted by certain conditions. A Nāyar girl is not allowed to contract a marriage with men of a lower subcaste. She can marry either in her own subcaste or in castes above hers. She is not allowed to marry one who is not at least two years older than herself. She cannot marry anyone who shares pollution with her (that is descended from the same ancestress on the maternal side, however remote). There are cases when the common ancestress lived nearly four hundred years ago, but still her descendants are supposed to be so closely related in blood as to preclude matrimonial relationship of any sort. 582 [564]

The husband visits the wife's house after dinner, and this does not cause any particular inconvenience, as, till lately, marriage was restricted to people of one's own village or of its immediate neighbourhood. But in these days the tendency is strongly patrilocal, though ancient and aristocratic families still refuse to send their ladies out of the house. To keep within one's own house is considered to be a specially aristocratic privilege. 591 [582] [178]

The question of polyandry among the Nāyars is a much debated point. This can be said with certainty: there has been no authenticated case of it at least for the last fifty years. 595

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers and his peculiar weapon is an instrument with a thin but very broad blade hooked towards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet' or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies,

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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like other conventionalities, is an accident, and the Nayar women are as chaste and faithful as their neighbours, just as they are as modest as their neighbours, although their national costume does not include some of the details required by conventional notions of modesty."[1] Nevertheless, the existing state of things in the community does not quite satisfy the sentiments of the educated public. There was a loud cry for reform and legislation in British Malabar. The Madras Government appointed a commission, which, after its protracted labours, enacted a permissive law, Act IV of 1896. The main provisions of the Bill are, that, when a *sambandham* has been registered, it shall have the incidence of a legal marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father respectively and to succeed to half his self-acquired property if he dies intestate, while the parties to such a *sambandham* cannot register a second one during its continuance. The law does not extend to this State. The fewness of the number of marriage registrations shows how little the Nayars, as a community, have availed themselves of it. The principal objections urged against it are: (1) that it ignores caste and customary restrictions on marriage and thereby interferes with caste; (2) that it sanctions what according to social usage is deemed to be incestuous marriage; (3) that marriage before the Registrar is obnoxious to the people, and that no one has any scruples about going through the customary form; (4) that the provisions relating to divorce are ill-adapted to the present state of society in Malabar, and that revelations of conjugal infidelity in public courts are the most repulsive to the people; (5) that the provisions relating to the giving of the whole of the self-acquired property to wives and children amount to violent interference with the customary law. The following extract from Moore's Malabar Law and Customs is well worth the perusal[2]:—

From the date on which the Act in Malabar came into force up to 31st March 1910, one hundred *sambandhams* have been registered. "In his last report of the working of the Act, the Registrar-General states, that the number of notices of

1. Logan's Manual of Malabar, Vol. I, page 138.
2. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 85.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent yo' hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulles Marco Polo, page 374.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

said, by dividing it up between the rajas of Travancore, Cochin, Kolattiri, Kurumbranad, Walluvanad and others. To the Zamorin of Calicut, who was later to become so famous, he left only his sword with the recommendation to "die, kill and annex". The latter potentate and his descendants took the injunction seriously and very quickly in the two following centuries, the 14th and 15th, assumed a leading role on the Kerala stage. They encouraged Arab trade in spices and other commodities, and by their scrupulous honesty and absolute security of commerce, obtained and held it for fully two hundred years.

It was then that the first Europeans arrived on the scene. The Portugese came to beign with, in an attempt to break the Moors' monopoly of Far Eastern products. Coming into conflict with their Mohammedan rivals and with their protégé the Zamorin, they successfully supported the raja of Cochin against these and thus gained a footing on the coast while taking over command of the sea. They were only forced out by the Dutch in the 17th century (although they still hold Goa further north, to this day), and the Dutch in turn were superseded by the British and the French, who settled respectively at Tellicherry and at Mahe, from which fortified places they fought each other for supremacy in the pepper trade for another two centuries.

In the 18th century, the Mohammedan rulers of Mysore descended on Kerala and, after forcibly converting a great number of its inhabitants to Islam, annexed large tracts of it. Tipu Sultan, however, the ally of Napolean, fell foul of the British East India Company, which eventually defeated him at Seringapatnam in 1792. British supremacy in Kerala dates from that year and a system of farming out revenue to the local rajas was instituted. It proved to be a mistaken method of collection, and was the cause of the serious rebellions of Kerala Varma, Raja of the Padinnara Kovilagam of Kottayam, the Pazhassi raja, otherwise known as Pychy raja, in 1797 and from 1800 to 1805. With their termination, the British took over direct administration of Malabar, while leaving Cochin and Travancore to that of their rajas. They were to keep it until 1947 when India was given her independence.

Two years later, the States of Travancore and Cochin were merged to form a United State under the Maharaja of Travancore. In 1953, France finally relinquished her hold on Mahe, and in 1957, the whole coastal region from South Canara to Cape Comorin became the State of *Kerala* which we know today. The name has been variously interpreted as meaning either "land of coconut trees" or "land of the Cheras", an ancient Hindu dynasty of south India.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

having children by them. The latter were born into the Nayar caste, and to all practical purposes were untouchables for their fathers. But, in fact, Nayars thus procreated were perfectly conscious of the high caste blood which flowed in their veins and which made them only slightly less important than their exalted sires. A feeling of close relation to the Brahmins was thus definitely generated in them, giving them the self-assurance and self-assertion in public affairs that distinguishes them from their fellow Indians to this day. Others, and especially Arabs, have also contracted *sambandham* unions with the Nayar women of Malabar. Such unions are equally possible with *marumakkathayam* Tiya women, and between members of the same endogamous caste, when regular marriage is not possible.

Although it appears to be a very loose way of setting up a household (there is no other ceremony than the possible offering of a piece of cloth by the man to the woman, and the relation can be broken off informally at any time), in actual fact there were, and still are, very few cases of *sambandham* unions not lasting. The main drawback seems to have been the feeling of frustration in the male partner that he was unable to do anything for, or leave anything to, his children. British legislation attempted to remedy this state of affairs by the Malabar Marriage Act IV of 1896 which provided for such unions to be registered and stipulated that when they were, they would be looked upon as regular, legal marriages entitling the "wife" and children to maintenance by the "husband" and father, and to inheritance of half his self-acquired property should he die intestate. Inheritance from father to son in matrilineal families has since been further legalized by the Madras *Marumakkathayam* Act of 1933, but its provisions really apply more specifically to the regular marriages of the *marumakkathayam* practising people. In accordance with them, the property of the *tarawads* can now be divided up between the members, if they so wish.

A specific custom of Kerala, which has never failed to intrigue outsiders, is still very much observed today, namely the ceremony of *tali-kettu-kalyanam*, or of the tying of the *tali*. The latter is a small piece of gold, through which a thread has been strung, and which is tied round the neck of a girl before she attains maturity. Speculation as to what is the significance, origin and function of this ritual has been rife over the years, but at least opinions do not seem to differ on the point that it represents some form of symbolic marriage, preceding and perhaps preparing the way for a real one, or for entry into a *sambandham* union

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully.

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change.

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State.

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people;

671 [585]

e) by mutual consent evidenced by a registered instrument attested by not less than two witnesses."

Art. 12: "A polyandrous marriage performed after this Act shall be void." [595]

Chapter III. Maintenance and Guardianship. Three articles.

Chapter IV. Succession.

Five articles on testamentary succession.

671 428

Art. 26: "For the purpose of succession there is no distinction between the self-acquired property and the ancestral property or between the property of a male and that of a female except as otherwise provided by this Act."

Eight articles on Intestate succession.

Art. 28: "Property in respect of which a Thiyya has died intestate devolves upon the wife or husband or upon those who are of the kindred of the deceased in this order and according to the rules herein prescribed."

Art. 29: "When the intestate had left more than one widow, the distribution of inheritance referred to in sections 30, 31, 32 and 33 shall be made as if there is only one widow, all the widows together taking equally one widow's share."

Art. 30. "When the intestate has left a widow, if he has also left a son, or lineal descendant of a son, a share equal to that of a son shall belong to the widow."

Eleven articles on distribution of intestate's property.

Art. 39, (b): "If some of them (lineal descendants) are his (the intestate) sons and others are his daughters, each daughter shall take a half of the share of a son if the intestate is a male, and if the intestate is a female all children shall take equally."

It should be remembered that this legislation is that of a former princely state which has ceased to exist as a separate unit. Today, since the coming into being of the State of Kerala, made up of Malabar, Mahe, Cochin and Travancore, this Act has been superseded by the provisions of the India Code in force now in the whole of the Indian Republic. In accordance with the stipulations of the Code, a larger share of inheritance is granted to daughters and widow than was formerly allowed by the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act. [648]

[PP 240-574 not Processed]

175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brahmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. A woman without [851] shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

13. Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595
without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564
maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nayres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851]
ing that there are always several men attached to one [604]
woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578]
term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tīpū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648]
since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind." †

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes * : 588 "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, [648] when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . . This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal 796 588 of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) [779] antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. 588 L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reason- 178 able doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, 174 and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

/For data on Forest Panchayats and their finances, see 26: Rao, AW1 India, Tables 21-24, pp. 214-218, category 116.

437 (2) The Traditional Economic System

423 The kanam tenure had significance as an institution which linked the system of payments in kind, found within the inland villages, to the [433] cash economy of the coastal towns. Traditionally, each village appears to have been self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. The high castes paid lower caste servants daily or thrice annually in paddy and the lower castes traded services and some goods with each other with paddy as their medium of exchange. Irava tenants paid their rents in paddy to Nayar kanakkar, who in turn paid a much smaller rent in paddy to the janmi.

Nayar men, however, though they lived mainly from the produce of their estates, were also paid in cash by the Raja in return for military service. [436] The use of money was otherwise confined mainly to the coast-towns and to overseas' trade with the Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, French and English in pepper and other commodities. This trade was largely carried on by the Muslims, who were originally, from the ninth century, converted from the lower Hindu castes by Arab [442] traders. Muslim middlemen obtained pepper from cultivators of inland and foothill villages in return for cloth obtained from overseas, or manufactured by Hindu castes of weavers in the towns. They traded the pepper for cash to Arabs [651] and Europeans. The royal lineage obtained revenue by several kinds of taxes levelled on this merchandise, and paid the Nayar armies from its coffers. The Nayars in turn made periodic kanam cash payments to Nambudiri and other

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were
[701] no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[203] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins, and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[437] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

563 The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20 per cent of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians, the most ancient and numerous group, may be descended from Persian Nestorians; they were trading on the coast at least by 525 A.D. (McCrindle, 1897: 119). Christians were and are concentrated in Travancore and Cochin. They received land grants near the ports and enjoyed virtual self-government provided they paid taxes to the kings (Logan, 1951, I: 260–270; III: cxxi–cxxvi). As landlords, tenants, and administrators—as well as traders—they ranked socially parallel to the Nayars and were served in the same manner by Hindu polluting castes and serfs. Their trade declined after the Arabs became dominant on the coast, and some of them began to serve in the royal armies along with Nayars. The Portuguese converted some Syrians to Roman Catholicism, but the converts still retained the Syriac rite. All Syrians were readily distinguishable from the lower-ranking Latin Catholics, converts to Catholicism from Portuguese times who were drawn from various polluting castes.

The Economic System

438 The principles of reciprocity and redistribution,[4] rather than of market trade, dominated the village economy until toward the mid-nineteenth century. In villages, castes were characterized by hereditary occupations and correspondingly by hereditary, differential rights in the produce of village lands (Logan, 1951, I: 110–112, 269, 270, 599–600, 623). The village landlord and the Nayar tenants were the main redistributive agents, collecting in goods from the lower orders and redistributing them in customary shares. In all village economic transactions, *households*, and not whole caste groups or individuals, were the units of interaction.

The village landlord's household "owned" almost all the land in the village. "Ownership" meant both more and less than modern Western landownership (Logan, 1951, I: 602–603). The landlord might not sell his land without the consent of the king or of a chief, and sale was restricted to families of appropriate caste. He might not evict his tenants, village servants, or serfs without their consent unless they committed grave crime (*ibid.*, I: 607). On the other hand, the landlord's ownership included judicial rights over the village population.

The landlord retained a portion of the land as his private domain for cultivation by his serfs. The rest was held by Nayar retainer households as non-cultivating tenants (*kānakkar*). The tenant's household

[4] For an analysis of the general operation of these principles in the Indian village economy, see Neale, 1957: 218–238.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

originally rendered a portion of the produce to the landlord and additionally paid tribute in kind at New Year and at the succession of a new landlord or a new tenant on the death of the old (*ibid.*, I: 605–614). In return for their hereditary land rights tenants owed military and personal services to the landlord or to his military representative. 471 592 566

Each Nayar tenant household, like the landlord, retained a portion of land for cultivation by its serfs. Serfs were attached to the plots on which they lived, took the house name of their masters and were held as ancestral property. The master supplied the serf with daily rice, building materials, a house site, and special gifts at life crises and festivals.

Each tenant household also gave some lands to cultivating subtenant households (*verumpāttamdar*) of the Tiyyar caste. According to Logan, the latter traditionally retained one-third of the net produce and surrendered the rest to their masters (*ibid.*, I: 583).

The Nayar servant castes and most of the polluting castes of village servants (astrologers, artisans, bow makers, basket makers, etc.) owed their main services to the landlord, the Nayar tenants, or both. Each family held the hereditary service right of a village or occasionally of a small group of adjacent villages. Village servants gave their services to the appropriate higher-caste households when required. In return they received from each patron household customary biennial shares of rice and other goods after the two harvests of the year. Each servant family held a house site and garden from the landlord by hereditary right and was provided by its various patrons with the materials (metal, wood, etc.) of its craft. 564 471

Among the higher polluting castes, most of the village servants (astrologers, artisans, washermen, barbers, etc.) simply exchanged services reciprocally without making gifts of grain. Within this range of castes, however, Tiyyars, as cultivators, were subsidiary agents of redistribution, for they received the services of almost all the village servant castes and made biennial gifts to them of grain. 564 437

The village was thus almost self-sufficient for food and the daily necessities of life. In addition, part of its produce in rice and coconuts went out in the form of annual tribute given by the landlord to his district chief. The chief in turn gave tribute to the king and in addition rendered succession fees and gifts at life-crisis rites (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii–ccxix; Ayyar, 1938: 270). [262] [651]

A large part of the king's revenue, however, came from taxes on overseas trade. Before 1500 the trade was in the hands of Arab merchants, who obtained pepper and other spices from inland land- 651 439

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

651 lords and tenants through indigenous Muslim middlemen. At that
439 time the middlemen appear to have paid the villagers directly in cloth, metals, and luxury goods. Sumptuary laws confined the use of many imported goods to Brahmans, Nayars, and merchants. Other
[431] strategic goods such as metals and cloth filtered down from the landlords and tenants to the lower castes in the form of customary gifts at festivals.

439 During the period of European trade (1500 to 1792) markets and cash transactions encroached further upon the subsistence economy of
436 villages. The kings prosecuted larger and larger wars and increasingly paid their Nayar soldiers in cash, even though they continued to muster them through the Nayars' "feudal lords."[5] As the pepper and coconut trade increased, new gardens came under cultivation and landlords and tenants often sold their spices for cash. The Nayar
[566] retainers seem to have received most of this cash from the towns, for as tenants they held the bulk of the village's garden lands as well as receiving their payments in war. From about 1550, therefore, landlords, who wished to maintain control of the economy, had to develop
436 some means of extracting money from their tenants. Cash payments
439 thus became a regular feature of the *kānam* tenure (Logan, 1951, I:
427 cxxxi). The tenant periodically advanced a cash sum to the landlord as a kind of forced loan, the interest on which was then set off against
178 the annual payment in kind. At the death of either landlord or tenant 13 per cent of the original sum was deducted from the loan as a succession fee. The tenant might then repay this amount in cash or revert to paying a larger share in kind. Later in the period cash renewal fees seem to have been exacted by landlords every twelve years. In some cases the tenant would prefer to surrender his land or to sell his right and move his family to another village. Sales of landlord rights, even (near the ports) to Europeans or Muslims, also
[425] increased. However, sale of either landlord or tenant rights remained disreputable, lengthy, and hedged about with legal restrictions until after the collapse of native rule (K. P. P. Menon, 1929: 309–310; Logan, 1951, I: 597 *et seq.*; II: cxxxv).

[171] [5] I use the term "feudal" here without precise definition. In many respects the political structure of the Central kingdoms was comparable with that of the
[631] stronger Western European principalities such as Flanders and Normandy in the second half of the eleventh century. There was centralized control of the judiciary, of armies, trade, and coinage, but within each principality subordinate lords retained minor judicial powers and owned domains and private armies (Stephenson, 1942: 80–92).

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

ual process of fission. This state of affairs was in harmony with the small amounts of land controlled by retainer property groups and with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to their land. The conditions of kānam tenure not only allowed for changes in the tenures of plots of land within one village, but even permitted segments of an expanding taravād to change their feudal allegiances and if necessary to hive off from their natal village. 613 592 423

The situation was different in the aristocratic lineages of royalty and district chiefs. By jenmam right they owned large domains which could support greater numbers of members. Their members also had a stake in the political office which they were reluctant to surrender. On the whole these lineages tended to cohere for longer periods than did those of retainers. Some of them today number over three hundred members and trace their descent back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When segments of these lineages did move away from their ancestral lands it was usually because they had been conquered and forced to vacate their territories and offices. [72]

In the beginning, when one of these aristocratic lineages rose to power, it did so as a small property group. It did so either (in the case of royals) through conquest or (in the case of chiefs) through being appointed to office by some royal power. When they acquired office these upstart property groups seem to have severed ties with their former lineages and clans and to have conferred on themselves a higher ritual rank as independent castes.

After a few generations such a property group might expand in numbers and separate out into segments. I lack data on the precise point at which aristocratic property groups segmented; it seems to have been always at a later point with them than with retainer Nayars. (Today, some royal and chiefly property groups have a time depth of eight or more generations and over a hundred members.) When fission did occur the segments moved into separate palaces, each taking a portion of the ancestral domain for its maintenance. The oldest man resident in each segment acted as kāranavan and managed its internal affairs. For a time at least, the political office remained vested in the oldest man of the lineage irrespective of branch. When he was able, he kept a tight hold over all the segments, deflecting part of their income to himself for the upkeep of his palace staff, private army, and the larger forces he mustered through his subordinate vassals in war. The office bearer also retained sole right to the customs dues on trade within his chiefdom or kingdom, and to the tribute from village headmen within his area of rule. 613 [65]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yules Marco Polo, page 374.

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

634
553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 **Village organisation and village life.**

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Náduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. [634]
622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Náduvizhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

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[622]
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1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

313 sold to purchasers for extraction of major forest produce but the extent of this is very limited in Kerala, Whereas for the whole of India about 75 per cent of major forest produce is extracted by the purchasers, in Kerala only about 15 per cent of forest is extracted by the purchasers directly, the rest being entrusted to departmental extraction.

[432] 4.14 The procedure in case of sale of timber and poles is to offer them first to the Government Departments and to sell only the surplus by open auction. The result is that while the Government Departments are able to obtain timber at reasonable negotiated rates, the trade obtains timber at very heavy rates.

4.15 In case of firewood, Messrs Forest Industries (Travancore) Ltd. (F.I.T.) have been given a concession for extraction of firewood for supply to M/s Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Ltd., Alwaye. The latter are now switching on to oil and, therefore, other uses shall have to be found for firewood extracted by the F.I.T. whose concession has still to run a number of years. Firewood supplies to the main cities come from the forest coupes which are sold to purchasers in auction after extraction of the timber. No area is managed purely for raising firewood as in some other States of India.

4.16 Unlike the major forest produce whose removal is done mainly through the Government agency, extraction of minor forest produce is mostly done through the [651] purchasers. As may be seen from Appendix 6 Government earned only Rs. 50,000 as revenue through sale of minor produce while it earned about Rs. 5 lakhs in the form of royalties from purchasers.

Silvicultural Systems

313 4.17 Kerala is unique in having working plans for all the Government owned 655 forest areas in the State. Since all the Government forests are managed under the latest scientific systems, there is hardly any danger of over-felling in the public sector forests.

4.18 With a wide variety of forests, both natural and artificial, the systems of silviculture practised are suited to the types. The Selection System[1] is the one that is being applied in all the evergreen forests and only the trees of little economic importance are extracted under the simple felling rules. The complex nature of the vegetation and difficulty of regeneration of evergreen species, together with the danger of heavy wild growth have caused these forests to be worked under the Selection System.

4.19 In the other timber forests clear-felling with natural regeneration, supplemented by artificial planting, is being undertaken. The climate and soil conditions are so favourable that there is generally no difficulty in obtaining natural regeneration. The only exception, and it is quite an important one, exists in case of the evergreen forests which are being worked more and more heavily as demand for new species arises in the market. Their regeneration is not keeping pace with the removals.

[1]. Under the Selection System trees are selected for felling uniformly all over the forest. Under simple felling rules patches of forests are completely cleared in rotation irrespective of age, type or growth of trees contained in that patch.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 313 647 two more Conservators of Forest, one to deal with general development works of the State and the other for the new plantations may be considered. It is also proposed that an additional Chief Conservator of Forests to cope with the heavy work may be appointed as soon as the tempo of development work has gained momentum, say, by the middle of the Third Plan period. The Territorial Divisional Forest Officers should each be given a gazetted assistant to deal with all the development works in their divisions. The present annual expenditure on Establishment amounts to Rs. 8.23 lakhs (1958-59). If the above suggestions are accepted there should be an increase of about 25 per cent. It is also expected that if the tempo of developments is maintained, higher amounts will be needed in the Fourth Plan. The establishment expenditure is, therefore, worked out as under :

Third Plan period	Rs. 10.29 lakhs annually.
Fourth Plan period	Rs. 10.97 lakhs annually.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

*433 313 655 651 4.61 The major part of investment during the coming decade will be on raising the various commercial plantations discussed above. Investment on other items is summarized in Table appearing under Para 4.53. The amount of Rs. 3 crores[1] which is expected to be spent during the Third Plan period on acquisition of private forests, does not appear in the investment figures since the amount is only in the nature of a monetary transfer.

4.62 As a result of the development programmes suggested above, output contributed by the forests may be envisaged to increase from the following sources during the coming decade :

(1) Sale of forest produce from areas clear-felled for teak plantations. This item will be quite substantial.

(2) Income from thinning of teak plantations.

(3) Income from bamboo and eta reed resources, which will start accruing by the end of the Third Plan period when all the flowered areas would have been regenerated.

(4) Income from other plantations would start accruing only towards the end of the coming decade or during the beginning of the Fifth Plan since gestation period before the plantations start maturing is rather long.

4.63 It is difficult to give an exact forecast but taking the above factors into account, the increase in income accruing from forestry during the coming decade is taken to be as follows. It is assumed that income at the end of the Second Plan, that is, during 1960-61 would be 10 per cent higher than that in 1955-56, in 1965-66 twenty per cent higher than that in 1955-56 and by 1970-71 it would be one and a half times the income in 1955-56. On this basis projections for State income from forestry would

[1] The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 3.75 crores for Forest Development which compares quite favourably with investment suggested by us. However, it has to be kept in mind that our figure does not include finances for acquiring private forests, which the State Plan has to provide for.

be as follows :

	Rs. crores	
1955-56	5.0	433*
1960-61	5.5	313
1965-66	6.0	655
1970-71	7.5	651

4.64 It will be noticed that in the earlier period income is projected to grow at a lower rate than towards the end of the period. This is naturally to be expected in view of the fact that gestation period for growth of forest potential is rather long and the effects of the development programmes will start becoming visible only towards the end of the Fourth Plan period and during the Fifth Plan period. During the Second and Third Plan periods rise in income is expected only from clear felling areas for teak plantations and intermediate felling in the older areas.

5.16 Chinese nets and stake-nets are the most important type of tackles used in the backwaters. There are about 1,180 Chinese nets and 5,400 stake-nets operating in the State. These nets are registered on payment of an annual licence fee assessed on them.

5.17 A large area of low lying paddy fields adjacent to the backwaters is used for prawn culture. The whole area is enclosed with earthern embankments (5 to 6 feet high) provided with sluice boxes for regulating the flow of water. Prawn culture in paddy fields is done on an extensive scale in Ernakulam and Trichur districts. Cultivation in these fields is restricted to a single crop lasting from July to September. The fishing operations in these fields extend from October upto the middle of April. Fishing is done with bag nets, scoop nets and drag nets. The fields are grouped into three classes on the basis of productivity. The average yields per square mile per annum from I, II and III Class are estimated at 1,080 lbs., 680 lbs. and 330 lbs. respectively. The area under the three classes are shown in Table 26.

5.18 About 80 per cent of the catches consist of prawns. On a modest estimate, the total production of prawns from these fields would be of the order of 4,000 tons. The rest of the catch consists of Mullets, Pearlspot, etc. Most of the prawns caught from the fields are cured and exported to the other States in India, Burma and Ceylon.

5.19 There are three brackish water fish farms in the State, one each at Mallapuram, Narakal and Ayiramthenga. The individual areas of these farms are 52.5, 42.5 and 22 acres respectively. An additional area of 28 acres is being converted into a farm at Ayiramthenga. Two more farms with a total area of 64 acres are also to be established.

River Fisheries

5.20 The river fisheries in Kerala are very poorly developed. Out of some 44 rivers traversing the State, only four, viz., Bharathapuzha, Periyar, Pamba and Beypore are more than 100 miles long. The more important fresh-water fish belong to the *Barbus* and Cat fish species.

5.21 There is no systematic fishing in the rivers and only a small number of fishermen are dependent on riverine fisheries. Fishing in the rivers is taken up as a hobby by the local people and the catches are utilized for domestic consumption. No data on production and the number of persons engaged are available in regard to river fisheries.

Culture Fisheries

5.22 There are a number of tanks, ponds and reservoirs in Kerala, covering an area of about 6,000 acres, However, the area suitable for fish culture is much less than this. A recent survey of culture fisheries shows that only about 260 acres out of a total area of 1,227 acres surveyed in Trivandrun, Quilon and Alleppey districts are suitable for fish culture.

*433 result in mutual advantage to both the States and optimum exploitation and utiliza-
377 tion of the water resources of the region as a whole. Kerala can thus give Madras
439 varying power through all the seasons of the year and effectively firm up the seasonal power potential of the State. This operational aspect has also to be kept in view while planning projects for an integrated operation and export of surplus power of Kerala to Madras. Hence, Kerala power at average kWh rates of Neyveli supply, is more advantageous to Madras than Neyveli power. It benefits Kerala also.

Rates for Sale of Power to Consumers within the State

*433 7.36 From the economic standpoint, the use to which power is put is just as im-
377 portant as its production. The two chief aspects of electricity consumption are: (i) Consumption of electricity as a factor in production in the field of industry, agriculture and traction. This can be termed "productive" power, or power in relation to productivity which activates the production and distribution circuits on which the increase of a country's wealth depends. (ii) Consumption of electricity for the direct, collective and individual needs of the people that is energy as a consumer good. This can be termed "non-productive" power.[1]

7.37 In Kerala, productive consumption (industrial power, irrigation and agricultural de-watering) formed about 85 per cent of the total in 1959-60 and non-productive power (domestic, light and small power commercial light, and small power public lighting and water works) formed the remaining 15 per cent. The domestic consumption alone came to about 10.7 per cent. The corresponding figures for all-India (1959-60) were 77.9 per cent (productive), 22.1 per cent (non-productive) and 11.1 per cent (domestic consumption alone). But this small percentage of non-productive consumption contributed much more than its reasonable share to the total revenues) from the sale of power.

*433 7.38 For ready comparison, the consumption of energy distributed by Kerala
377 State Electricity Board to its consumer within the State (i.e., excluding bulk supplies
651 to Distributing Licencees and to the neighbouring Madras State) and the revenue thereof are given in Table 36 for the year 1957-58. The statement is revealing.

[1] "Productive" power helps to raise the standard of living of the community while "non-productive" power rather serves to measure the standard achieved. The rate-fixing policy must take into account these two distinct categories of consumption. Generally speaking, the policy should be one of cheap "productive" power for such productive cycles as would lead to a rise in wages so that it would then become possible for "non-productive" power to be sold at normal rates. In fixing higher rates for "non-productive" consumption, the ultimate objective of raising the standard of living of the community as a whole should not be lost sight of. The rate itself should not be unduly high to deny the service altogether to the bulk of the community living in an electrified locality. To this end, the rate fixed for "non-productive" power should also take into account the capacity of the community to pay. One of the objects of a sound rate-fixing policy would be to maintain within a given community a reasonable relation between "productive" and "non-productive" power consumption. Both in productive and non-productive uses of elecrticity where power replaces labour, power consumption will rise in proportion to its cheapness as compared to the cost of labour. In other words, the potential expansion of power consumption in a region may to a certain extent, be measured by the ratio of labour costs to power costs in the area. A policy of power expansion, if the costs remain high in relation to the cost of labour, cannot, therefore, achieve all the desired beneficial results; lowering of power costs, therefore, becomes more imperative where labour is cheapest.

[Table 36, appearing on p. 299 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

Eleven per cent non-productive consumption contributes nearly 60 per cent of the total revenue. This is much more than its reasonable share. This amount of subsidy cannot be easily justified. Domestic consumption alone forms only a little over 7 per cent of the total consumption, contributes over 51 per cent of the total revenue from the sale of power. This is much too high a share.

7.39 There was a small, generally upward, revision of rates in December 1958, without materially altering the structure of the tariff. The above conclusions, therefore, still hold good.

7.40 Amongst the non-productive classes of load, item iv (Table 36) Public Water Works and Sewage Pumping is billed at "Industrial Rates" and classified as industrial loads for the purpose. In respect of item iii (Table 36) Public Lighting, the revised tariff of December, 1958 provides a rate of "15 nP per kWh for lamps for the first 6 hours of burning and 12 nP per unit for the remaining hours". This rectifies the high average rate per kWh in 1957-58, as seen in the above statement. The average unit rate per kWh of domestic consumption comes to as much as seven times the average selling rate of the total consumption through all categories of load. It is 15 times the average rate for productive consumption. The tariff revision of December, 1958 does not relieve this position. This is important. The structure of the domestic tariffs could induce optimum utilization of installed capacity with better load factor, but the domestic rates themselves have to be reduced substantially. In a State which leads the rest of the country in economic power generation, this should not be difficult. The "power surplus" position of the State can also enable the State to take effective steps to make cheap power (though costlier than productive power) available for domestic consumers extensively and may substantially raise the total domestic consumption to a higher level. In the light of the above observations, it is recommended that the State should review and revise its tariff policy for power sales.

POSSIBILITY OF POWER SHORTAGE

7.41 It is learnt that power shortage is adversely affecting some of the existing big industries which are heavily dependent upon adequate power supply for their full production. Besides, starting of new industries may be hampered unless adequate power supply is forthcoming, or at least, the present power shortage is removed.

7.42 A careful analysis of the power situation in Kerala shows that there will be no danger of a prolonged serious power gap. On the generation side, according to the present plans the Panniar Power Station with an installed capacity of 30,000 kW and the Sholayar Power Station with an installed capacity of 54,000 kW are expected to be commissioned in 1963 and 1964 respectively. Two of the six generating units of 50,000 kW each in the Sabarigiri (Pamba-Kakki) Power Station are also expected to be commissioned by the end of 1964 by which time the State will reach a very comfortable position in regard to power supply.

7.43 Any suggestion for setting up thermal power stations in the State to bridge the likely gaps in power supply will have to be examined in this context. As already pointed out, thermal power generation costs more, both in terms of the cost of genera-

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere ● 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

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406 The mhote too is seldom seen in these parts. The more common sorts of water-lifters are (1) an oval shaped bamboo-basket (costing about As. 2); (2) a wooden groove provided with a handle, costing about Re. 1; (3) and a frame-work consisting of two long bamboos, one small and another big in size balanced on a horizontal beam which is supported by two vertical poles; a picottah is attached to the small-sized bamboo and is drawn up and brought down by one or two persons standing opposite each other on two planks thrown across the middle of the well. The whole frame together with the picottah costs about Rs. 2. The oval shaped basket and the wooden groove are used to spread water from water courses and not from wells. Two persons, generally women, stand opposite each other on the side of a watercourse and pull the basket towards themselves by means of ropes tied round its 'ears' after filling it up with water; the extreme ease and facility with which they carry on the operations, often to the accompaniment of a snatch of song, is wonderful. The wooden groove is allowed to swing on a string and is moved to and fro by a person holding the handle.

651 The classes into which wet and dry lands are divided, the extent of each and the amount of assessment are subjoined.

Classes.	Wet lands.						Dry lands.					
	Single crop.				Double crop.				Single crop.			
	Area.		Assessment.				Area.		Assessment.			
	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.		ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.		ACS.	C.	RS.	A.	P.
I ..	35	65	116	7	9		320	74	1,527	5	5		301	48	261	11	3
II ...	4	56	15	10	9		59	72	210	6	3		12	69	3	12	8
III ...	16	0	36	0	7		39	73	114	6	0		212	60	77	5	7
IV ...	21	37	39	9	8		15	51	34	11	2		68	39	17	10	3
V ...	109	59	147	9	11		11	5	17	12	11		207	53	44	6	8
VI ...	18	6	34	10	10		1	24	3	2	5		56	49	3	13	8
VII ...	...		...				...		...				78	3	37	0	3

135 The selling prices of cultivable wet land in the village are approximately Class I Rs. 1,500, Class II Rs. 1,000, Class III Rs. 800 Class IV Rs. 500—600, Class V Rs. 500.

311 423 The land is classified according to tenure as follows:—

I. 'Pandaravaka Verumpattam' (Sirkar) non-favourable tenure.	Nilams (wet land) (A. 86·73). Parambas (dry land) (A. 210·88).	109 pattadars.
II. 'Pandaravaka Kanam' (Sirkar) favourable tenure.	Nilams (A. 2·19) ... Parambas (7 cents) ...	4 pattadars.
III. 'Puravaka' (outside Sirkar).	Nilams (A. 563·61) ... Parambas (A. 711·80) ...	54 pattadars.
IV. Inams (gift tenure).	Nilams (71 cents) ... Parambas (A. 14·47) ...	6 pattadars.

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423 The revenue paid to the State varies according to the nature of the tenure. It is only the "Pandaravaka verumpattam" lands 651 which pay the full pattam or share due to the State. The Pandaravaka verumpattamdars have full rights to the soil of the lands they hold and their rights remain undisturbed so long as they regularly pay the State revenue, but the rights to metals and minerals are reserved to the State.

In *Pandaravaka kanam*, the land is held on a lease in consideration of a sum of money supposed to have been advanced to the State, and consequently a certain amount is deducted from the State demand on account of interest on the amount advanced. Before the new settlement was made in 1905 it was the custom to renew the lease every twelve years on the renewal of which the kanamdar was to pay over 20 per cent of the kanam amount, plus half of the full pattam (rent) for one year and a fee of 5 per cent of the kanam amount or Rs. 3-2-0 (whichever is greater) for issuing a fresh renewal. But this practice is now done away with and the tenure is for all practical purposes the same as Pandaravaka verumpattam tenure with this difference only that from the assessment due thereon a deduction of one-third is made.

In Puravaka lands (literally lands which are outside) a third party called the Janmi is recognized as holding proprietorship and therefore entitled to share the produce with the cultivator and the Sirkar. The tenure is assessed by the Sirkar in the case of nilams at half the rates fixed for Pandaravaka verumpattam nilams and in the case of parambas at one-fourth.

Inams are personal grants or grants made in some cases for the performance of certain specified services in religious institutions, etc., and in others for services rendered on some previous occasion or for some other similar reasons either absolutely or on certain specified conditions. The deductions range from free assessment to one-third of the Pandaravaka verumpattam assessment.

In all these cases of tenure a royalty cess of six pies per rupee calculated on Pandaravaka verumpattam assessment is payable to the Sirkar.

427 The *Janmis* of Puravaka land let their land under different tenures, viz., verumpattam in which they make full assessment; 423 kanam and inam they treat as favourable, but the rates are not so fixed or settled as those of the Sirkar's tenures. The leases of the kanam * lands of the janmis are also renewed for twelve years, the janmi collecting certain dues from their tenants for the renewal of the same. The title of the tenant of such lands is precarious for the kanamdar can be evicted on the janmi paying back the kanam amount † at the end of the lease of twelve years. This state of affairs was unsatisfactory, and the State Government has recently passed a Bill called the "Cochin Tenancy Bill" of 1914, an extremely moderate measure indeed, passed in the teeth of much opposition from the Janmis. The Regulation intends "to make better provision for the payment of compensation for the improvements made by tenants, and provide for the speedy realization of rent and other customary dues, by investing the District

* [Kanam = lease. Kanamdars = leaseholders.—Ed.]

† I.e., the amount the kanamdar has deposited with the Janmi at the time of taking up the lease.

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423 kanomdars who live in the village also possess lands in the neighbouring villages. In the centre of the village a very sacred and [346] important temple is situated. It has existed for nearly a thousand years, and it is believed by all the people of Malabar that many miracles have from time to time happened there. Many rich devotees have granted lands to it, and it is now the most important landowner of the village, possessing the janmam right over nearly [651] 200 acres of land, all leased to kanomdars. A large part of the temple land is not taxed by the Government, but a low amount fixed by the Government is collected by the temple authorities for its maintenance. This kind of tax is called *Sarvamanyam*. The temple is now managed by the Court of Wards. It belonged to the Zamorin, who handed over his estate to the Court. The Zamorin is the head of a tarwâd* of about 300 members, being the oldest man. Hence when he succeeds he is too old to manage well.

427 It has been stated that the chief kanomdars excepting three cultivate only the small stips of lands that they occupy and leave 452 it to others to cultivate the rest of their lands. They do not follow any other occupation, but lead an idle life, collecting money from their tenants and lending their money to the poor on security of ornaments and other things. The tendency is for every man who has money to be a money-lender. The sowcars are money-lenders by profession, but every man who has money, instead of depositing it in a bank, lends it to others on high rates of interest. The landowner, the vakil, the official or any other class forms no exception to this rule. Only the traders use the bank.

427 There are 525 tenants not possessing kanom rights who hold land under kanomdars, and 54 agricultural workers having no land and not renting land. The largest tenant is a Tiyya occupying 80 acres.

Rents are paid both in money and in kind. The chief crop of the village is coconut, but nearly one-fourth of the area is under paddy cultivation. Rents of the coconut areas are paid in money, and those of paddy lands in kind.

651 *Land Revenue.*—Rs. 6,411-7-0. This is small because of the exemption of temple lands.

241 The paddy fields all give two crops per annum. When once a coconut is planted, it lasts for nearly 100 years.

412 *Implements.*—There are 542 ploughs in the village, all of the primitive type.

The other implements used are—

(1) the levelling board,

(2) a long stick for powdering the soil,

(3) a short iron instrument somewhat in the shape of a knife for sowing the seed and transplanting,

(4) a rather long handled mamoti, a broad plate of iron sharp at one end and joined to a big stick at another somewhat perpendicularly,

(5) sickles,

(6) big rods used for winnowing the paddy and for separating the grain from the straw,

[428]

* [i.e., a Navar family community, having inheritance in the female line. Such an estate is the joint property of all the *female* members of the family and their descendants, the male members of the family also having a right during their lives to support from the family estate, but not transmitting any right to their children.—Ed.]

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423 The desam contains 130 survey fields in all. The settlement
651 was first introduced in this desam in fasli 1313.

The following table shows the nature and extent of the holdings and revenue as given in the 'A' register of the village:—

Holdings and Revenue.

Fasli.	Occupied area. Wet. Extent.	Wet. Assessment.	Garden. Extent.	Garden. Assessment.	Dry. Extent.	Dry. Assessment.	Total. Extent.	Total. Assessment.	Deduct waste remitted. Extent.	Deduct waste remitted. Assessment.	Remainder charged. Actual cultivation.	Waste charged.	Total extent charged.	Assessment.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.			ACS.		ACS.	RS. A.
1313	445·27	2,226 5	209·43	502	197·16	157 14	851·86	2,886 3	...	...	851·86	...	851·86	2,886 3

Fasli—*cont.*	Second crop. Extent.	Second crop. Charge.	Miscellaneous revenue.	Total ryotwari demand excluding waste remitted.	Deduct remission other than waste already shown in column 11. Occasional remission other than for waste.	Other remissions and deductions.	Total.	Net demand for the year.	Amount collected within year. Arrears.	Current.
	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)
	ACS.	RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.	RS. A.	RS. A.		RS. A.
1313	8·96	13 11	96 5	2,996 3	...	851 12	851 12	2,144 7	...	2,144 7

312 The ryots mostly depend on the mercy of the monsoon for the watering of fields. But throughout the summer season beginning from the end of December to the end of July, watering is carried on from wells and tanks, especially in the case of garden cultivation. Tanks and wells are not sufficient and those existing are not deep enough and frequently dry up towards March.

241 The chief crops cultivated are coconut, arecanut, paddy, gingelly, pulses, horsegram, plantain and jack.

231 Pasturage is obtainable for the cattle on the unoccupied dry lands. Water for the cattle is obtained from channels, private tanks and wells.

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There is hardly any public tank. One stream (channel) flows along the northern boundary of the desam during rainy seasons when the fields become flooded. But its utility is limited since with the summer the whole channel is dried up. There are private wells in all gardens and sometimes in the fields of corn. But they are shallow for the most part and the water-supply is inadequate. The ryots who are wretchedly poor cannot afford to utilise modern progress in the field of well-boring, nor are they conversant with such developments. 312

There are woods and forests near the desam as we have before mentioned, but they are of no practical use to the people. The forest, which is outside the boundary limit of this desam, is under Government supervision and people are not allowed to cut trees. Other resources of the forest, moreover, are hardly taken advantage of, partly by the general apathy of the cultivator for improvement and partly by its being situated sufficiently far to dissuade them from incurring the necessary loss involved. At the same time it is in a way an influence to the ryots' detriment, for tigers, boars, etc., which the Akalanum and Mattur hills breed occasionally, make nocturnal depredations on the ryots' stock and corn fields. The peasantry are helpless against these enemies. 137 136

Occupation of land.—The private jenmam ryotwari holdings during the year of settlement (fasli 1313) are classified as follows :— 423 427 [651]

Pattadars paying	Number.			Extent.		Assessment.	
	Single	Joint.	Total.	ACS.	C.	RS.	A.
Re. 1 and less	2	...	2	...	50	1	8
Rs. 10 and less but over Re. 1	7	2	9	7	71	33	14
" 30 " " " 10 ...	3	2	5	18	21	96	7
" 50 " " " 30 ...	1	...	1	7	8	37	5
" 100 " " " 50 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 250 " " " 100 ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 500 " " " 250 ...	1	...	1	99	56	401	13
" 1,000 " " " 500 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Over 1,000 ...	1	...	1	718	80	2,315	4
Total ...	15	4	19	851	86	2,886	3

Out of 851·86 acres no less than 818·36 belong to the two jenmi landlords. There are no occupants of Government jenmam ryotwari land in the same year.

Almost all kanomdars are themselves cultivators. The two jenmis, who are Brahmans by caste, and nearly 10 other families

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241
463 toddy and jaggery and three carters who are mainly agriculturists.

651 The revenue for the year 1915-16 was Rs. 3,175-10-3. The assessment for fasli 1312 for the Amsam of Kothachira was Rs. 6,519-2-4. By settlement (fasli 1326) it is Rs. 11,228-7-0.

241 *Agriculture.*—We have mentioned elsewhere the names of the chief crops. Out of these, the two staple products are paddy and arecanut, the former being a field cultivation and the latter garden. The mainstay of the bulk of the population is arecanut. Every household of any worth is surrounded by an areca palm garden.

The method of cultivation pursued in both these is of an antiquated character.

245 1. *Arecanut.*—Mature fruits are selected for seeds. They are kept in pots and watered for one year. Next year they are planted and within a year and a half or so, they grow into young plants Then they are transplanted into the gardens where they have to be grown. They are planted in parallel lines, the distance from one another varying from two to three yards. The plants are at first placed in pits measuring a cubic yard. Some cow dung and ash manure are put, and a watering is given on alternate days in the summer. During the monsoon they are left to themselves. When the plants grow up into trees, the pit is filled up and a shallow basin round it made just to contain a few gallons of water. These are renewed every year in the beginning of summer, small channels are cut across the gardens to bring water to the root of every tree, water-lifts are erected and regular watering begun. This will continue until the advent of the monsoon.

243 2. *Paddy.*—On the first shower of the monsoon, fields are given a hasty ploughing and seeds are thrown. A fortnight of average showers helps healthy sprouting and the ryot prays for similar weather for another two fortnights to come. By this time, they have grown up into healthy plants. Between the second and third month of their growth, they are carefully unrooted and planted in plots prepared by ploughing for the purpose. Between the fifth and sixth month after sowing comes the harvest. If there is a second crop, the land is again prepared for sowing immediately after harvest and the whole process repeated. For this crop, the ryot depends on the north-east monsoon which gives two months of heavy rain from the middle of November to the middle of January. After this harvest the fields lie fallow for a period of two or three months.

651 A table given in the next page will show the areas under single
134 and double crop, different soils, and the nature of the assessments on each. (The information is taken from the village accounts.)
311 The assessment given herein is the revised one after the re-settlement.

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Classification and Assessment.

Description of soil.	Wet.						Garden.					Occupied dry.				
	Taram.	Whether single or double crop.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.	Taram.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.	Taram.	Rate per acre.	Area.	Assessment.	Jenma-bhogam.
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.			RS. A.	ACS. C.	RS. A.	
Red loam, VII-1 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	6 0	1 49	8 15	...	2	1 8	1 10	1 11	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	5 0	4 24	21 3	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-2 ...	2	1	5 0	8 97	44 14	..	3	5 0	0 75	3 12	...	3	1 0	52 46	52 10	...
	...	2	6 4	205 46	1,284 2	...	4	4 0	24 95	99 13	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	.	...	5	3 0	33 18	99 8	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2 0	73 71	147 5	...	...	...	...	...	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1 0	13 75	13 12	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-3 ...	3	1	4 0	33 76	135 1	...	5	3 0	15 67	46 14	...	4	2 12	11 394	85 7	...
	...	2	5 0	95 82	479 3	...	6	2 0	18 28	36 9	...	...	...	...	..	...
	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1 0	21 56	21 9	..	...	...	...	...	...
VII-4 ...	4	1	3 0	50 60	151 15	...	6	2 0	0 60	1 6	...	5	0 10	19 30	12 3	...
	...	2	3 12	10 57	39 10	...	7	1 0	0 80	0 13	...	...	...	...	...	...
VII-5 ...	5	1	2 0	33 29	66 12	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	0 8	2 62	1 5	...
	...	2	2 8	0 59	1 8	..	...	..	...	..	...	...	...	...		...
Red sand, VIII-3	4	2	3 12	6 21	23 4	...	7	1 0	0 55	0 9	...	5	0 10	6 28	4 0	...
VIII-4	...	...	...	...	...	..	...	..	...	...	...	6	0 8	1 26	0 10	...
Total ...	...	...	...	445 27	2,226 5	..	...	...	209 43	502 0	...	...	...	197 16	157 14	...

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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651 On registered double crop land, the charge for the second crop has been consolidated at one-quarter of the single crop assessment. For occasional second crop on land assessed as single crop, the charge will be one-half the single crop assessment.

231 The stock as ascertained by personal enquiry are as shown below. The account of the stock of Kothachira was not obtainable from the village officials, for it is lost. I have tried my best to make the statement complete and exhaustive. But this is a period of extreme fatality to the stock in these parts. Daily one or more are dying. In a single family there died twenty within forty-five days leaving only one or two pairs. The numbers are—

Bullocks	240	
Cows	403	
Buffaloes	287	
Young stock	374	under 4 years.
Goats	712	
[407] Ploughs	414	
Carts	5	
Oil mills	4	

A comparison with the figures for the census of 1899–1900 for the whole amsom of Kothachira (the three desams of Kothachira, Peringode and Mattur) shows an all-round decrease of about forty per cent. I believe the causes of this great reduction to be partly a succession of very bad seasons for stock, and partly selling off under pressure of poverty.

Cattle feeding.—Bullocks and working oxen and buffaloes, besides being left to graze on the unoccupied dry lands and on cultivable areas when they are lying fallow, are given straw and 'kanchi,' water mixed with the dusty part of rice and 'punac' or oil-cake. For cows and young stock only straw is given besides grazing. Goats are simply left to graze. Straw is given to the above working stock after they are housed in their sheds for the evening. The 'kanchi' water is given in the morning just before leading them into fields and in the afternoon after their work is over. They are led to be washed after field work. Bullocks and buffaloes are the working stock.

The breed.—The cattle are very second rate in their breed. The most healthy working oxen grow to a height of from three to three and a half feet and their strength is not half as much as the oxen employed by the firms of Madras. The cow is a pitiable thing ordinarily two to three feet high and milking on an average from a half to one Madras measure per day.* Comparison, it need hardly be said, with Madras cows is odious. They can be milked for only six months. The best come into milking again within a year, but many only within two years.

241 *Manure.*—Almost all the cattle dung is used for manure. One per
[237] cent perhaps goes for purposes of washing floors, etc. The cattle urine is allowed in some places to flow into the dung-pit, but no systematic attempt is anywhere made to utilize it to the best advantage. Besides this, burnt ashes and green manure are in common

* [A Madras measure is 62·5 fluid ounces = 3½ pints. A fair Madras cow in full milk yields about 3¼ Madras measures per day, i.e., 5 quarts.—Ed.]

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Less than Re. 1	54
From Re. 1 to Rs. 5	100
„ Rs. 5 to Rs. 10	49
„ Rs. 10 to Rs. 20	22
„ Rs. 20 to Rs. 30	10
„ Rs. 30 to Rs. 50	19
More than Rs. 50	4
	258

Many especially of those paying under Rs. 2 hold only the plots of ground in which their dwellings are erected.

Classification of holdings according to ownership. 423 651

Pattadars paying an assessment of	Number.	Extent.	Assessment.
		ACS.	RS. A. P.
I. Re. 1 and less	2	0·26	0 15 0
II. Over Re. 1 and up to Rs. 10 (inclusive).	22	28·04	95 8 0
III. „ Rs. 10 „ „ 30 „	7	26·44	129 6 0
IV. „ „ 30 „ „ 50 „	6	65·04	234 7 0
V. „ „ 50 „ „ 100 „	3	55·59	196 5 0
VI. „ „ 100 „ „ 250 „	2	106·97	301 4 0
VII. „ „ 250 „ „ 500 „	1	62·15	274 7 0
VIII. „ „ 500 „ „ 1,000 „	...	...	...
IX. Over Rs. 1,000	1	645·04	2,469 1 0

Thus the greater part of the cultivated land is owned by a single pattadar—a Nambudiripad, a very enlightened and sympathetic landlord who has a reputation for fairness and kind treatment. The majority of the other pattadars are also Nambudiris, very often holding the land as trustees of temples.

The following table shows the rate of assessment, area so assessed, with amount of assessment, of wet, dry and garden lands:— 311 651

—	I. Wet land.		II. Garden land.		III. Occupied dry land.		IV. Unoccupied dry land.	
	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.	ACS.	RS. A.
At Rs. 7-8 per acre.	108·49	813 11	...	..	...	...	...	...
„ 6-4 „	194·87	1,215 15	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 6-0 „	0·09	0 9	0·03	0 3	...	...	..	...
„ 5-0 „	109·06	542 11	2·28	11 6	...	...	...	...
„ 4-0 „	39·21	157 5	7·09	28 6	...	...	...	...
„ 3-12 „	7·69	28 15	...	...	...	...	...	...
„ 3-0 „	93·37	280 1	14·28	42 14	...	...	...	...
„ 2-0 „	128·00	256 13	36·43	72 14	3·23	6 9	43·53	87 0
„ 1-8 „	...	...	..	...	61·87	92 5	122·82	184 3
„ 1-0 „	...	...	49·48	49 14	98·84	99 0	288·66	288 11
„ 0-12 „	...	...	...	...	38·57	28 15	643·77	482 13
„ 0-10 „	...	...	...	...	3·42	2 3	148·42	92 12
Total	680·78	3,296 0	109·59	205 9	205·93	229 0	1,247·20	1,135 7

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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311 The assessment under IV. Unoccupied dry is the potential amount, i.e., it would be levied if the whole area were cultivated. 651 About one-third or one-half of it may have been at one time or another under cultivation, but the area cultivated in any single year is very small.

[427] Rents are generally paid in kind, though of recent years there is a tendency in some cases (e.g., when the tenant lives at a distance) to commute it for money at current market rates.

The village is assessed for land revenue at a permanent charge of Rs. 3,759-3-0, to which must be added (to obtain the total revenue demanded upon the village, for the year) the charges on the 'unoccupied dry land' actually under cultivation in the year. This last will vary from year to year; the possible maximum is above Rs. 1,000. There is a local cess of 1¼ anna in the rupee of kist levied by the Taluk Board for roads, etc.

241 *Agriculture—Area under principal crops.*—The area under this head varies from year to year according as more or less of the 311 unoccupied dry land is taken into cultivation. For the year ending March 1916, the following figures are given in the village accounts but they are less exact than they appear, being partly estimates by the village officials.

Paddy—First crop, 847·20 acres; second crop, 460·51 acres.			
Pulses and grains		122·47	acres.
Oil-seeds, gingelly		155·89	"
" castor		12·59	"
Spices, etc.		87·23	"
Fuel and timber trees...		63·00	"
Betel leaves		5·00	"
Vegetables and garden products made up of—			
Vegetables	59·41		
Plantains and bananas	29·57		
Coconuts	17·00		
Mangoes	23·00		
Arecanuts	9·00		
Jack fruits	8·00		
	——	145·98	

According to the 'A' Register the area of one crop wet land is 271 acres. In some years it appears that this area is smaller, because part of this is *potential* double-crop land, two crops can be raised on it under favourable conditions. But it may safely be said that some 150 acres of wet land yield only one crop. Such portion of the 'unoccupied dry' land which is cultivated in any year also yields but one crop—even that with difficulty, after lying fallow for one, two or more years.

The minimum available area of two-crop land is 409·73 acres. In some years (according to the weather and seasonal conditions) this may increase to some 525 acres. If irrigation could be extended more of the single crop area could be made to yield two crops.

243 Some fifteen to twenty-five acres may yield three crops, under favourable conditions.

All the wet land is utilized for paddy cultivation. Paddy is sown in May soon after the first rains. By the end of September or the beginning of October the first crop is harvested. The seed-

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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000 to free them from debt. Co-operation is worth trying. The Agricultural Loans Act might be made more accessible. The tenants need more protection in their holdings. *The burden of taxation must be lightened* and more equally distributed, so that the incidence of taxation may not be so heavy on the poorest class; the villagers are starving themselves to pay the taxes.* Any appearance of an improvement in the standard of living of the villagers is deceptive, being only on the surface and confined to the better classes. The condition of the Cherumas and other agricultural labourers is badly in need of improvement. The fundamental evil is poverty and debt.

The industrial position of the village must be strengthened. The existing industries (i.e., crafts) are languishing. To an able and enthusiastic industrialist there are further possibilities of profitable employment of capital and labour.

Garden cultivation can be extended, the cultivation of valuable commercial products like pepper, coconuts, etc., might be carried on on a larger scale on capitalistic lines. Plantain fibres, it is said, can be utilized for the manufacture of a kind of silk-like cloth, much in demand by certain classes, for certain purposes.

Bamboos abound and may be used in the manufacture of paper.

The cultivation of gingelly seed on dry lands might profitably be extended and the product crushed in the village oil machines worked by oxen. There seems to be scope for considerable development in this line. It is a question whether groundnuts and indigo cannot be introduced and cultivated in the village. The Agricultural Department might usefully depute one of its staff to make a tour of the district and examine the possibilities of extending and improving cultivation—of introducing new crops and an improved and more varied rotation of crops. *The quality and extension of village education is a serious and pressing problem.* The present system of elementary education is doing as much harm as good. Its first fruits are seen (in this village) in the unwillingness of the 'educated' boys to return to their old occupation; all sorts of vain notions and sentiments get into their heads and they are [738] learning bad habits. It is certain that the 'educated' village boy has a supreme contempt for his uneducated parents and others and puts on airs of superiority and refuses to work in the field. Some of the boys are becoming regular scamps, good-for-nothing, and up to all sorts of mischief. Education of this sort is the last thing in the world to destroy the estrangement between the literary or intellectual tendencies of the higher classes and the practical labour of everyday life and industry. In actual fact the vices of the existing state of things tend to be perpetuated. It is high time to find a remedy.

651

* [The taxes referred to are the very small quit-rents charged as land revenue, averaging less than Rs. 5 per acre for wet land which mostly yields two crops per annum, less than Rs. 2 per acre for garden land and less than Re. 1 per acre for dry land. Mr. Sundara Aiyar explains that the janmi shifts the burden of paying the land revenue on the kanomdar, and makes this stipulation in writing; the kanomdar in turn shifts it on to the working tenant, who is a tenant-at-will. Including the kist the working tenant pays 50 to 60 per cent of the gross produce to the kanomdar, the kanomdar pays to the janmi about one-quarter of what he receives in addition to the kist.—Ed.]

/For data on Forest Panchayats and their finances, see 26: Rao, AW1 India, Tables 21-24, pp. 214-218, category 116.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627 This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627 this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634 when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627 another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634 chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578 being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525] two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle-[652] wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankam*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423 to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427 in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178] the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821] a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782] people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. "Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . [763] after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

survey carried out in Kerala on the eve of the Second Plan period. According to this survey, 6.3 lakh persons, that is, 4.2 per cent of the total population were openly unemployed while another 15.2 lakhs (5.2% of the population) were under-employed. This is, indeed, a very high degree of unemployment when compared with the corresponding all-India proportion of 0.58 per cent for the openly unemployed and 6 per cent for the under-employed. 464

1.58 There is some evidence to show that the level of unemployment has been rising steeply over the past few decades. Between the Census of 1931 and that of 1951 the participation rate slumped down from 48 per cent to 36.1 per cent. Although the difference in concepts used in the two Census operations exaggerates the extent of decline, it does convey some idea of the fast deterioration in the unemployment situation over the years. 464 178

1.59 Unemployment on this scale is the outcome of a high rate of population growth, unaccompanied by economic growth at a correspondingly fast rate. In spite of a large section of the population being engaged in non-agricultural activities, the rate of expansion of employment opportunities in this sector has been very low, and the pressure on agricultural sector has been constantly increasing. In the 20 years, between 1931 and 1951, according to the Census data, the proportion of population dependent upon agriculture increased from 34.2 per cent to 53.8 per cent. 464 161

1.60 The approach to the problem of unemployment has got to be two-sided. Measures to curb the rate of growth of population form one aspect of the solution. The second and the more important weapon is to accelerate the pace of industrial development so as to diversify the pattern of growth and, thus, reduce an excessive dependence on the agricultural sector. It is with this aim in view that the following chapters attempt to assess the resources available and to explore the development possibilities in each sector of the economy during the coming decade. 433* 464 [128]

SOME RECENT TRENDS

1.61 Planned economic development, as in the rest of the country, was initiated in the State during the early years of the last decade. The First Plan of the State covered only the Travancore-Cochin region since Malabar was merged to from Kerala only after the end of the First Plan. The outlay for the First Plan was Rs. 30.03 crores. On a per capita basis the public sector outlay during the First Plan came to Rs. 32.2 per head (all-India Rs. 55). During the Second Plan, the reorganized State was allotted Rs. 87 crores. The total outlay came to about Rs. 97 crores if Central investment in the State be also included. On per capita basis, again, public sector outlay in Kerala was considerably behind the all-India figure (Kerala: Rs. 64 per head; all-India: Rs. 118). 433* 652

1.62 Year to year estimates of growth of the State Income are not available for the last decade. This lacuna makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of the Plans on the whole economy. However, a very rough estimate has been made for growth of the State Income between 1956 and 1961 and the estimates are given in the following table. 434

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

VEHICLE DENSITY

	Per mile of road	Per sq. mile	Per 100,000 Population
Kerala	2.14	1.54	146.6
West Bengal	1.20	0.92	111.1
India	1.20	0.32	104.0

493
171

Kerala comes up with the highest indices, but this is not surprising as the railway serves only certain limited areas and road transport has to serve the other areas.

8.19 Trivandrum and Calicut districts have the largest concentration of goods vehicles on the road ; Alleppey, Ernakulam, and Quilon figure next. As regards the stage carriages, Trivandrum district has the largest fleet ; Trichur, Ernakulam, and Calicut districts also account for large numbers of stage carriages but these are much smaller. The Coimbatore-Cochin route is saturated with goods traffic in cotton bales, fertilizers, planks, tea, tapioca, machinery, hardware, etc., particularly since the opening of the Mangalapuzha bridge replacing the Desom ferry. The traffic was expected to go up by about 50 per cent during 1961. Similarly the traffic between Calicut and Coimbatore, across the Palghat gap and between Calicut and Wynad (timber traffic) bound for destinations in Salem, Madras, Mysore, Tuticorin, etc., has been on the increase. As industrial developments presage considerable increase of traffic on these routes, problems of alignment, bridging, extra lanes, expressway sections, etc., may call for more investment and additional construction. 494

8.20 About 250 trucks are operating between Mysore and Kerala on inter-State routes. They are subject to the restriction that they may not operate on more than three important straight routes, not exceeding 300 miles in each State. Inter-State routing arrangements between Madras and Kerala are yet to be completed.

8.21 The business in goods transport in the State suffers from the preponderance of owner-operators of single trucks (1,717 operators). There are only five operators in the State who own more than 10 trucks. The predominance of the owner-operator of single trucks is likely to prevent the industry from obtaining the economies and advantages of enhanced efficiency resulting from better organization of road transport in the State. [422]

8.22 Among other features of the transport system special mention may be made of chronic over-loading of vehicles and the beginning of movement in truck-trailer combinations in order to circumvent difficulties arising from restrictions of weight over weak bridges and culverts. Study and analysis of road transport problems are rendered more difficult by the paucity of data regarding traffic, the absence of regular departmental road census of vehicles and traffic, etc. A limited degree of nationalization of goods transport by road has been introduced on the Cochin-Mannar route where 10 to 18 trucks carry tea from the estates to Cochin, and rice, manures and machinery from Cochin to the estates.

8.23 Despite an early start, the nationalized road passenger services have not made much headway. About 458 vehicles are on the road, covering 24.9 million miles annually, and carrying about 65.3 million passengers. The larger revenues resulting from increased traffic and higher fares,[1] have not improved the net profits of [652]

[1] The revenues rose by Rs. 31 lakhs.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and
499 bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on
491 roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and
652 Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

transport activities of the State. About 240,000 tons of imports and 310,000 tons of exports of the State are handled, mostly in stream, and carried to and from the port by the inland waterway system. The role of the port and of the inland waterway system as a feeder in the transport activity of the State is likely to grow along the lines outlined in a later section.

8.33 Studies made by the Intermediate Ports Committee show that Neendakara which is six miles north of Cochin, can, if developed, serve the industries in the Quilon-Kundara area to the extent of an annual traffic of 400,000 tons comprising cashewnuts, ilmenite, etc. Koilthottam, at present handling the ore traffic, may stabilize its present traffic. Industrial developments around Calicut, such as the rayon pulp industry expected to come up at Mavur, may push the traffic at that port to over half a million tons by 1971.[1]

8.34 Several improvements were made at the Port of Cochin. With continuing increase in the import of oil, two tanker berths had to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 17.4 lakhs at Ernakulam channel to ensure safety and quicker turn-round. The pipe-line leading to the shore installations was commissioned in 1956. Three of the four additional wharf berths provided with crane, railway track, transit sheds, warehouses, open stacking space and other facilities at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.96 crores are almost ready.

8.35 Total expenditure on the development of minor ports of the State was expected to be Rs. 22.6 lakhs in the Second Plan.

8.36 Pending more detailed information regarding actual investment expenditure between 1956-57 and 1960-61, it may be estimated that the investment in the State in the Second Plan on transport–railways, roads, bridges, buses, inland waterways and ports, was about Rs. 11.14 crores. It appears that in the first four years of the Plan the actual expenditure was about Rs. 7.18 crores, i.e., about 64.5 per cent of the financial allocations had been spent. In the Third Plan period and in the Fourth, every effort must be made to fulfil as nearly as possible the physical and financial targets, as transport arrangements must be ready in advance to receive the anticipated volume of traffic without creating bottlenecks.

AIR TRAFFIC

8.37 The airports at Trivandrum and Cochin are served daily by a clockwise and an anti-clockwise service touching (*a*) Madras, Trichy, Madurai, Trivandrum, Cochin and (*b*) Coimbatore, Bangalore, Madras and Cochin. Cochin is also served by a daily service from Bombay *via* Belgaum. About 400 passengers travel every month by each of these services. About 350 passengers travel from Cochin to Belgaum and Bombay every month and 70 between Bombay and Trivandrum *via* Cochin or Bangalore. The prospects of this traffic are being studied at present by the National Council

[1] For particulars of a detailed assesment of traffic prospects at Calicut, Beypore vide *Report of Traffic Survey of Beypore*, NCAER, 1962.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

TABLE 62

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EMIGRATION FROM AND IMMIGRATION TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

Year	Number of		Percentage of population		
	Immigrants	Emigrants	Immigrants	Emigrants	Balance
1901	82,025	16,346	2.18	0.43	1.75
1911	83,278	26,112	1.91	0.60	1.31
1921	88,603	29,025	1.78	0.58	1.20
1931	164,389	48,503	2.61	0.77	1.84
1951	206,823	205,816	2.23	2.22	0.01

SOURCE: *Census of India, 1951*, Travancore-Cochin, Part I A, Report.

TABLE 63

INVESTMENT DURING THE COMING DECADE (1960-61 to 1970-71)

433
652
454

Items	State sector (Rs. crores)	Centre and private (Rs. crores)	Total (Rs. crores)	Percentage share to total investment	Percentage share, All-India Third Plan
1. Agriculture	51.7	56.0	107.7	10.8	
2. Plantations	50.6	129.0	179.6	18.1	
3. Forests	5.7	..	5.7	0.6	20.8
4. Animal Husbandry	2.6	..	2.6	0.3	
5. Fisheries	2.5	8.3	10.8	1.1	
6. Minerals	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.1	
PRIMARY SECTOR	*113.6*	*193.7*	*307.3*	*30.9*	
7. Factory Industries	31.2	114.1	145.3	14.6	
8. Small Scale Sector	14.0	28.0	42.0	4.3	28.8
9. Non-factory Sector	..	18.6	18.6	1.9	
SECONDARY SECTOR	*45.2*	*160.7*	*205.9*	*20.8*	
10. Power	102.0	..	102.0	10.3	9.5
11. Transport	70.0	28.4	98.4	9.9	16.2
12. Social Services	65.0	100.8	165.8*	16.6	16.9
13. Inventories	15.0	60.0	75.0	7.5	7.8
14. Rural Public Works	40.0	..	40.0	4.0	
TERTIARY SECTOR	*292.0*	*189.2*	*481.2*	*48.3*	*50.4*
GRAND TOTAL	450.8	543.6	994.4	100.0	100.0
	+47.0	—47.0			
Loans from State Government to the Private Sector	497.8	496.6			

* Investment in social services has been derived from the Third Plan estimates (all-India) by assuming the same per capita investment as in all-India.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

433 per acre, while the same for paddy is only 40 :40 :30. It is very low for leguminous
241 crops—at 0 :20 :20 for pulses and 20 : 20 : 20 for groundnuts.[1] These dosages are not the optimum. These are just the average that may be considered adequate during a period of shortage of fertilizers. There are many farmers who apply as much as 80 lbs. of nitrogen per acre to rice while there are others who, on account of shortage of fertilizers apply only 15 lbs. per acre. Since fertilizer allocations are not made for individual crops, a dosage ratio of NPK 40 : 40 : 30 per acre may be considered as an average requirement for the State in the future. But in view of shortages in the country for phosphatic and potassic fertilizers, the dosage may be put at 40 : 20 : 15. The total annual requirements of crop fields on this basis would be 35,700 tons of nitrogen, 17,700 tons of P_2O_5 and 13,400 tons of K_2O.

2.47 In view of the peculiar soil conditions and reaction, attention will have to be paid to the correct choice of fertilizers. At present fertilizers are being used indiscriminately. For example, ammonium sulphate, the most popular fertilizer in the State, is being used even on high acidity soils. Such applications may do damage to the soil by increasing further the soil acidity. The selection of various types of fertilizers in the future should, therefore, be on rational and scientific basis, so that the fertilizers also help in correcting the soil deficiencies. Urea is, perhaps, eminently suited for Kerala. It is, however, not possible to make any specific suggestion on the requisite type of fertilizers for the State as adequate data on the performance of various types of fertilizers are not available. It is, therefore, suggested that a large number of trials should be conducted all over the State with a view to choosing the right type of fertilizer and dosages for various crops in different regions. The result of such trials should be made known to users through the extension machinery.

2.48 It is not possible to give a precise estimate of the increase in agricultural production from the proposed fertilizer consumption programme owing to difficulties in estimating the share of fertilizers for different crops. Knowledge about the rates of return from fertilizers for various crops, is also inadequate. Assuming, however, that roughly three-fourths of the proposed quantity is used for rice and other foodgrains, the additional production of cereals and pulses on the basis of available yardsticks may be expected to be 387,000 tons by 1970-71.

Irrigation

133 2.49 *Existing Position*: Irrigation resources of Kerala are very rich. In all, there are 44 rivers in the State. The run off of water from the west-flowing rivers is estimated to be of the order of 2,560,800 million cubic feet per annum, while that of east-flowing rivers is 196,000 million cubic feet.

241 2.50 The first irrigation project to be taken up in the State was the Kodayar
153 Extension Scheme which was completed by 1947. At the beginning of the First Plan

[1] Dosage for NPK (ratio in lbs. per acre for other crops) is

Tapioca	80 :80 :160	Ginger	50 :50 :100
Oilseeds	10 :20 : 20	Sugarcane	100 :80 :100
Cotton	50 :30 : 30	Fruits/ Vegetables	50 :50 :100

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

period, the State had three major irrigation projects, viz., Peechi and Chalakudy I, apart from the Kodayar Extension Scheme. During the First Plan, two more projects viz., Vazhani and Neyyar I were added to the list. At the time of the reorganization of States, Nanjinand area, served by the Kodayar Extension Scheme, got transferred to Madras but in return Kerala gained three projects through the annexation of Malabar area viz., Malampuzha, Walayar and Mangalam. During the Second Plan period, six more projects have been completed. By 1956-57 the total irrigated area had reached 8.29 lakh acres, that is, about 30 per cent of the net sown area under field crops.

2.51 Canals are the main source of irrigation in Kerala accounting for about 50 per cent of the gross irrigated area (Table 12). Tanks and wells irrigate 9.28 per cent and 3.49 per cent respectively of the gross irrigated area. One interesting feature about irrigation in Kerala is that irrigation from the 'other sources' accounts for a particularly high percentage of area irrigated, viz., 37 per cent. These other sources include hill streams, small diversion works, water pumped from streams and rivers, etc. These are quite numerous in Kerala on account of the high rainfall received in the State.

2.52 The main beneficiary from existing irrigation facilities is paddy, accounting for over two-thirds of the gross irrigated acreage. The remaining irrigated area is shared by other food and non-food crops. The exact breakdown is not available but it is believed that banana and coconut account for much of what is left.

2.53 The benefit accruing from the 13 irrigation works which had been taken up till the end of the Second Plan and their relative importance are given in the following table.[1]

Benefit	*Area benefiting* (acres)	*Percentage*
One new crop	55,314	20.11
New conversion to double cropped paddy	63,786	22.98
Stabilization of one crop	25,300	9.11
Stabilization of two crops	120,660	43.48
Drainage, flood control, dewatering, etc.	12,000	4.32
TOTAL	277,060	100.00

2.54 It can be seen from the above table that the largest extent of benefit is received from the stabilization of two crops. Conversion of fresh areas to cultivation of paddy as a result of the new irrigation facilities is only 22 per cent of the total area benefited. A large proportion of benefit in the form of stabilization of existing crops rather than in the form of double or triple cropping is due to the fact that Kerala gets assured rainfall both from the south-western as well as the north-eastern monsoon. There are thus very few patches of land which are not able to grow paddy due to the absence of rainfall.

2.55 In terms of additional output of foodgrains, however, the benefit from new conversions is much greater than from stabilization, as can be seen from the

[1] Based on figures supplied by the Department of Irrigation, Kerala.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 241 following table.

Benefit	*Additional output of food-grains per acre* (in tons)
One new crop	0.5
New conversion to double cropped paddy	1.0
Stabilization of one crop	0.1
Stabilization of two crops	0.2

On the basis of these co-efficients, increase in output contributed by the 13 projects comes to 129,636 tons, giving a weighted average of 0.47 tons of additional output of paddy per acre.

*433 24 ●653 2.56 *Future Development of Irrigation*: Due to a difficult and uneven terrain, the cost of digging canals and constructing dams is comparatively high in Kerala. The average capital cost per acre for irrigation from major and medium schemes is roughly Rs. 885 per acre as against the all-India average of roughly Rs. 500 per acre. The expensive nature of irrigation schemes and the high level of rainfall which Kerala receives, naturally set a limit to the development of irrigation works.

2.57 The proportion of new conversions out of the total area benefited is rather small. However, double and triple cropping can be made possible only by ensuring regular water supply through the irrigation schemes. Irrigation facilities are also essential for increased application of fertilizers to the second and third crops.

2.58 A Master Plan for the irrigation resources of Kerala was prepared by the Irrigation Branch of the Public Works Department. According to it, the additional irrigation potential available in the State is about 896,000 acres. Of this 822,000 acres would be for the existing area and only 74,000 acres for conversion of dry land to irrigated area. The cost of the above programme is estimated at Rs. 79.34 crores. Rice would be the main beneficiary from this irrigation programme. Additional annual production of rice from these schemes would be roughly 4.49 lakh tons valued at Rs. 17.9 crores. In addition, if other benefits such as raising the third crop of pulses and the extension of area under high value crops like coconut, sugarcane, banana, cotton, etc., are also taken into account, the benefits may amount to another Rs. 10.0 crores. This would give a capital output ratio of about 2.5.

2.59 In view of the particular conditions prevailing in Kerala, it seems desirable that a greater emphasis should be placed on minor rather than on major irrigation works. There is justification for adopting this point of view on a number of grounds. Major irrigation works are a necessity in those areas where vast areas of cultivable land can be opened up by construction of major irrigation projects. In Kerala, as pointed out above, the benefit lies mainly in providing irrigation facilities to those areas where one crop is already being raised. Since the size of investment required for major irrigation works is much larger is comparison to that required for minor work and capital resources are scarce, minor irrigation works are far more suitable for Kerala. The nature of terrain in Kerala also makes it difficult to lay a vast network of canals. Moreover, for major irrigation works, the State has to bear all the investment cost whereas minor irrigation works help in tapping localized investible resources available with the agriculturists.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

2.60 Minor irrigation works have other advantages as well. In the first place, the period of construction being much shorter than in the case of major works, the lag between investment and yield is comparatively short. Secondly, since the minor works are executed on a decentralized basis they have greater effectiveness in utilizing the pockets of surplus manpower. The problem of organizing manpower squads is likely to be less intractable. Thirdly, in Kerala there are a large number of irrigable tracts which do not occur in contiguous blocks. These scattered areas cannot get the canal water facilities provided by major irrigation dams but there are a number of streams which are conveniently situated for minor irrigation development.

433* 241 653

2.61 Keeping these points in view, it is suggested that during the coming decade it is not necessary to develop the full potential of 8.96 lakh acres through major irrigation projects. However, the State should try to implement the schemes which have been suggested by the Master Plan for inclusion during the Third and Fourth Plans. The list of these schemes is given in Table 15. These would benefit an area of 4.33 lakhs at an investment of Rs. 39.3 crores. On the basis of current yardsticks, additional output of foodgrains from these major irrigation schemes is expected to be 2.16 lakh tons. The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 11.23 crores for major irrigation. The balance of Rs. 28.1 crores will have to be invested during the Fourth Plan. These figures only indicate the rough order of magnitude and will have to be changed, if the cost estimates given in the Master Plan are revised after further investigation.

2.62 *Minor Irrigation*: A Minor Irrigation Team, which was appointed by the Committee on Plan projects has submitted its report on Kerala. This report reveals many interesting features regarding the scope for various types of scheme. Some of its important recommendations, which should be implemented expeditiously, are discussed below.

2.63 *Spring-fed Tanks*: There are a large number of spring-fed tanks in Kerala, but the tanks are exposed to dangers of silting, breaching by storm water and heavy evaporation losses. In order to obviate these difficulties, the streams should be tapped underground by means of open jointed pipe drains placed in a reverse filter, cutting across the springs, in preference to traditional tanks.

2.64 *Diversion Weirs and Channels*: Construction of such channels is feasible on a large scale as the Kerala rivers carry a good flow from May to February due to the two heavy monsoons. Moreover, waters from the hydro-projects, now being planned for construction in the mountains, could be diverted for irrigating the coastal plains by means of diversion works. Since most of the river beds are covered by paddy fields, any increase in the water level due to afflux above diversion weirs is resented by the people whose fields get submerged. Therefore, weirs with control gates ought to be provided.

2.65 *Lift Irrigation*: The topographical and other features of the State are eminently suited for the development of lift irrigation as there are a large number of small blocks of field located on the fringe of the rivers, spread all over the State. Another factor in favour of lift irrigation is the availability of cheap electric power. Implementation of an extended programme of lift irrigation would, therefore, be highly desirable even though the operational cost of these schemes is higher.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 241 653 2.66 *Surface Reservoirs*: Adequate provision should be made for silting capacity in tanks and reservoirs. In the case of small tanks at least about 20 per cent of the total capacity should be reserved for silting.

2.67 *Prevention of Ingress of Salt Water*: Large areas of cultivated land in Kerala are well below the mean sea level and are subject to flood by fresh water brought over by rivers in the monsoon season and salt water during other seasons. There is need for construction of suitable projects to prevent the onrush of salt water into the paddy fields. The scheme to dewater such areas should also form an important item in the minor irrigation programme.

2.68 No estimates are available for the likely area that could be irrigated from minor irrigation works. Nevertheless, it is considered to be quite substantial. It is learnt from discussions with the State Government authorities that the extent of such possibilities is around 300,000 acres. Of this, the share of lift irrigation and ground water utilization (wells, filter points, etc.) may be put at 100,000 acres. Lift irrigation and ground water utilization are works of a small size and, therefore, should be undertaken by the beneficiaries themselves with the help of Government aid.

2.69 In view of the emphasis laid on minor works, it is suggested that 200,000 acres of area (this also includes area benefited from flood control and drains) should be developed from minor irrigation sources. Of this, about half may be from lift irrigation and ground water sources. The average capital cost of providing minor irrigation would be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 1,000 per acre. Total investment for minor irrigation development schemes as suggested above would come to Rs. 20 crores. Of this Rs. 10 crores would be in the public sector and the rest will have to be provided by individual agriculturists.

2.70 The minor irrigation schemes proposed here would benefit not only rice, but also other crops such as arecanut, lemon grass and banana. For purpose of calculations it may be assumed that only half of proposed irrigation is used for rice. The additional production of rice on account of minor works would thus be about 50,000 tons annually by 1970-71.

Improved Agricultural Practices

*433 242 2.71 Agricultural practices in Kerala are relatively of advanced type. Rice, the principal food crop of the State, is cultivated quite intensively. Transplanting is practised all over the State, even under the submerged type of cultivation. In case of dry seed bed crops like tapioca, ginger, groundnut, etc., the farmers generally take care to see that interculture and earthing operations are satisfactorily done.

2.72 However, there is further scope for increasing crop yields by improving the agricultural practices and techniques. Improved practices such as scientific crop rotation by including a legume crop as against the existing practice of successive rice crops, deep ploughing, adequate plant protection, etc., can increase the yields to some extent.

2.73 With the proposed increase in irrigated area it would be possible to raise a third crop of pulses either of black gram or green gram in succession to two crops

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

But mere treatment of infected trees is not enough. The healthy trees lying side by side, or trees exposed to infection, should also be sprayed as a preventive measure. The proposed plant protection programme should cover the whole State in progressive stages by the end of the Fourth Plan. This would cost about Rs. 5 crores during the next 10 years, but a part of this may be recovered from the farmers as spraying charges. 433* 245 242

2.90 Coconut is mostly grown as an unirrigated crop. During the summer months they are drought-affected in many parts of the State and drought has a telling effect on the trees. It is found that under irrigated conditions, the trees regularly give higher yields and there is very little premature shedding of buttons. It is, therefore, suggested that the Department of Agriculture should start popularizing irrigation of coconut gardens. Filter point tube-wells and pumping sets would be suitable as means of irrigation and the State should arrange for loans on easy terms for their installation. 433* 245 241

2.91 The average economic life of a coconut tree is about 60 years. It is estimated that over 50 per cent of the trees in the State are over 50 years old and, therefore, in about 10 years, these trees would be past their economic life. Unless immediate steps are taken to replace the aged trees, the production of nuts after a few years is bound to decline in spite of all the measures suggested so far. A campaign should, therefore, be launched to replace old trees by fresh plantings.

2.92 There is not much scope for extending the area under coconut since most of the suitable area has already been brought under the crop. This is particularly so in the former Travancore-Cochin area. However, there is some possibility of raising new coconut plantations in the interior strip of Malabar along the foot of the western ghats. The Indian Central Coconut Committee estimates this area to be of the order of 100,000 acres. It is suggested that Government should make all efforts to bring this area under coconut cultivation. There are some difficulties in the way of bringing about the extension of area, for example, lack of adequate funds with the small farmers, and their preference for rubber plantations because they do not fall within the purview of the Land Ceiling Bill, etc. Some of these hurdles could be overcome if the State offers long term loans to intending farmers for the purpose of raising fresh plantations. Assuming that loans at the rate of Rs. 1,000 per acre are distributed, the total loan fund required to plant 100,000 acres during the next decade would be around Rs. 10 crores.

2.93. Production of quality seedlings from approved stock in large numbers is also necessary for the programme of under-planting and raising new plantations. The State nurseries, at present, have a capacity of 2.2 lakh seedlings a year. This capacity would not be enough to meet the future needs. It is suggested that the nursery capacity should be doubled during the Third Plan by starting 15 new Government nurseries. This would require an outlay of about Rs. 600,000 during the next two Plans. However, as even these would not be able to meet the anticipated demand, private nurseries may also be encouraged to produce quality seedlings in the different regions of Kerala. As a result of the improvements suggested above, the output of coconuts may be expected to double by 1970-71. 433* 245 654

*433 246 241 2.148 Manuring of arecanut gardens is grossly inadequate in Kerala. It is found that when the gardens are adequately manured and intercultured, the yields are high and there is much less of premature shedding. A combination of chemical (NPK) and organic manures has been found to give the best results. However, since arecanut is a tree crop like coconut, the benefit of manuring would accrue only from the third year of application of fertilizers. Most of the farmers are reluctant to wait for such a long time. Only cheap long term loans for manuring could bring a favourable change in attitude. In addition, as in the case of coconuts, a systematic replanting programme is also desirable.

*433 246 2.149 Knowledge regarding the scope for extension of area under arecanut is too meagre to hazard any accurate estimate of possible future planting. However, there is a feeling that the area can be increased by at least 50 per cent, most of which will be in the Malabar region. But irrigation facilities are a pre-requisite for any fresh planting. It is suggested that 25,000 acres of new areca plantations may be raised during the next 10 years. The investment required up to the bearing stage is about Rs. 1,500 per acre. Total investment on 25,000 acres of new plantation would, therefore, be Rs. 3.75 crores.

2.150 Care should, however, be taken to see that all new plantings are done with improved seedlings. In order to meet the increased seedling requirements, it is proposed that five more State nurseries, apart from the present five, should be started during the first half of the Third Plan. This would need an additional investment of about Rs. 125,000. The strength of private nurseries could also be increased from the present level of 120 to 300 by the end of the Third Plan. Development programme for arecanut can, however, succeed only if it is backed by an efficient plant protection drive since diseases and pests are very common in arecanut gardens.

CONCLUSIONS

*433 241 2.151 The plantation sector, as a whole, faces a multitude of problems in Kerala. Some of them are specific for particular crops such as devastating diseases in the case of coconut, arecanut and pepper. But many of the problems arising on account of inadequate replantation and under-plantation, low yield rates, lack of funds with growers for replantation and new plantations, inadequate supplies of inputs especially of fertilizers, wide fluctuations in prices and export markets are common to all crops. [654] The State and Central Governments as well as the respective commodity committees or Boards are earnestly taking appropriate measures to solve many of these difficulties. Measures such as the provision of technical guidance, long term and short term loans at easy terms for replanting and manuring, export promotion, market research, compulsory gardening, and supply of improved varieties of planting material, etc., have been in operation for quite some years. The effect of these efforts, however, has not been very significant owing to inadequate size of the programme. This is particularly so with regard to loans for planting, subsidies and fertilizer allocations. The State should help in procurement of the necessary credit facilities and fertilizers, especially those containing nitrogen. It is suggested that at least a minimum of 350,000 tons

But much of this increase is the consequence of a greater diversification in agricultural activities with a view to reducing unemployment and under-employment among family labour and raising the family income. Poultry-keeping has, of late, become very popular with the rural families and it is unusual to find families in the rural areas which do not rear at least a few laying birds. Kerala produced 137 million eggs (hen eggs—114 million; duck eggs—23 million) in 1951, and ranked fifth among the States in egg production. Production of eggs is now much higher and may be around 200 million. Kerala is also the biggest exporter of eggs. These are sent as far as Punjab in the north, Calcutta in the east and Bombay in the west and even to foreign countries, mainly Ceylon.

Low Productivity of Livestock

3.5 On an average a cow yields 330 lbs. of milk per year, a buffalo 619 lbs. and a goat 40 lbs. These yield rates compare very unfavourably with those for other parts of India (Table 16).[7] The low productivity of animals is partly due to the poor inherent breed characteristics and partly due to the conditions under which they are reared. The cattle found in Kerala are all of a non-descript type. They are small in size and build. They are stunted in growth. Buffalo in Kerala weighs about half of its counterpart in U.P. or Punjab. The same is true of other livestock too.

3.6 The livestock, especially the bovines, are reared under unwholesome conditions. They are under-fed. The bulk of the ration consists of roughages, mostly rice straw, and is grossly deficient in proteins and other protective properties. The livestock feed available in Kerala is also highly deficient in some of the important bone-building minerals such as calcium and phosphates. This is a direct consequence of a high rainfall which has leached off most of these minerals from the root zones of soils. In the absence of adequate phosphatic and calcium soil amendments, the crops grown in such soils are poor in these minerals. Lack of minerals has a telling effect on the health, build and general condition of the livestock of Kerala. The small size and build are important causes responsible for their low milk yield and poor work output.

3.7 Nutritional deficiencies lead to a number of serious consequences. Poor health results in low vitality and resistance to diseases as well as a low rate of nutritional utilization from feeds. All these factors are responsible for a low level of efficiency and other hazards such as a high rate of mortality and a low rate of fertility. However, realizing the reasons for low productivity, many enlightened farmers have taken to scientific rearing of livestock and have started adding concentrates, such as waste grains, oil cakes and mineral mixtures to the cattle feed. Credit for this goes to the State's Animal Husbandry Department which has been making special efforts to educate the peasantry on the need for adding mineral mixtures to the livestock feed. The Department has been distributing mineral mixtures to farmers at subsidized rates in order to popularize them.

3.8 In view of the very poor quality of livestock in the State there is an urgent need for developing animal husbandry in Kerala. Although animal husbandry

7 [Table 16, appearing on p. 282 of the text, has not been processed -- Analyst]

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 Although animal husbandry programmes do not create any significant increase in direct employment opportunities, 23 they do help in reducing the degree of unemployment situation within the family. [464] Moreover, some of the animal husbandry activities such as piggery, poultry-rearing, and bee-keeping need little investment to start with and are quick to yield returns.

3.9 Development of animal husbandry on commercial lines by individual rural families may not be possible without adequate State action. Aid should be given for implementing measures of improvement with a view to increasing the efficiency and productivity of the livestock. The aid could be given int he form of easy loans, development of marketing and processing facilities, sale of feed and fodder at reasonable prices, etc. These are discussed in the subsequent paragraphs separately for cattle and other livestock.

CATTLE DEVELOPMENT

*433 3.10 The output of milk from cattle and buffaloes as well as draught capacity can 231 be improved through a scientific breeding programme and the prevention and control 232 of diseases. As stated previously, cattle found in the State are of non-descript types. Unless they are imparted with high productivity genes, any amount of improvement in feeding and rearing will not be of much use beyond a particular stage. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate on improving the breed of cattle and buffaloes. There are two ways of tackling this problem: (i) selective breeding and (ii) mass upgrading.

3.11 The former is not feasible, as there may not be enough cattle to start with if rigid norms are employed for selection. There will also be the problem of finding suitable means of disposal of the useless cattle. The practical solution under these circumstances would be to resort to a scheme of mass upgrading according to which the local bulls are to be replaced with bulls of some outside breed, suited to local needs and conditions. To be really effective, the upgrading programme should be made to cover the entire State and should stretch over a span of at least four decades. During this period, no bulls, other than the approved ones, should be allowed to sire.

*433 3.12 The value of the upgrading programme was realized in Kerala a few decades 231 ago. The scheme was introduced on a large scale during the First Plan by starting 232 five Key Village Schemes. The number was raised to 14 in the Second Plan. It is estimated that by 1965-66, it would be possible to cover about a quarter of the 654 eligible milch cattle under the Key Village and Artificial Insemination Schemes. But even though the programme is well conceived and implemented, the NCAER team was left with the impression that the scheme had not made any significant impact in the improvement of cattle and buffalo breeds in the State. Apart from the inadequate coverage of the programme, non-elimination of the local or scrub bulls is a serious problem. For success and effectiveness of the upgrading programme, it is, therefore, necessary, first, to implement the programme intensively all over the State and secondly, competition from the local bulls should also be eliminated by compulsorily castrating all the males before they reach the fourth year of their life. These suggestions may be implemented during the Third Plan.

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INVESTMENT ESTIMATES

3.36 It is not possible to give the exact extent of investment that would be needed to implement the measures suggested here as the major part of investment would be in the nature of improvement in the rearing conditions, erection of broods, purchase of livestock, poultry, etc., which have to be undertaken by individual farmers themselves. The public sector component of total investment for the programmes suggested in the above pages comes to Rs. 2.7 crores. The major schemes for improvement of cattle, etc., and the likely public sector investment on these is given below:

	Rs. lakhs
Breeding programme	6.76
Veterinary aid	77.30
Poultry Extension Centres	35.75
Dairies (milk-processing units)	145.00
Egg powder factory	3.00
TOTAL	267.81

3.37 Assuming roughly that the proportion between private and public sector investment in the sphere of animal husbandry is the same as in the agricultural sector, private investment by farmers for improvement of livestock and poultry may be taken to be Rs. 3.5 crores. On this basis total investment, therefore, would add up to Rs. 6 crores during the coming decade.

3.38 As a result of the above schemes, it is estimated that milk production will go up by approximately 50 per cent while egg production may even double its Output of milk may, therefore, be expected to be 2·73 lakh tons and that of eggs 400 million by 1970-71. NCAER's population projections estimate the population of Kerala in 1970-71 to be 20.12 million. Consumption of milk by the end of the Fourth Plan is, therefore, likely to be about 2 ozs. per head, if the above measures are effectively implemented.

[text continues on p 67]

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313 be so regulated as not to disturb the present symbiosis between the plant species present. Intensive research is, therefore, urgently required to find ways and means [654] of inducing adequate regeneration of the evergreen forests. There are at present two research stations in the State at Malayathur and Nilambur. The location of a third station in the evergreen forest areas is recommended.

Eupatorium

137 4.25 A problem that has been engaging the attention of the Forest Department is that of the weed eupatorium. It got introduced into the State from Assam at the end of the Second World War by some ex-service men who had served in Assam. The weed has spread like wild fire throughout the State and has become a serious [65] menace. Recent research carried out by a biochemist in Trivandrum has found a use for this shrub in the manufacture of fertilizers. Further research may be carried out to find its fruitful uses.

Tribals

*433 162 464 4.26 A few tribes reside within the forest areas. They are allowed free grazing rights and privileges of cultivation, free of assessment. However, this does not provide them with a full-time occupation. On the other hand, it is not possible to arrange for their migration to midland or the coastal region because of the high pressure of [245] population which exists in these areas. It has, therefore, been suggested in this Report, that two labour colonies should be formed in grass land *sholas* where large scale planting of *Eucalyptus Grandis* is taking place. This labour force could later be employed in the proposed newsprint mills when they come up.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

*433 313 654 4.27 During the First Plan period there was no forest development scheme. A beginning in forest development programmes was made only during the Second Plan. An amount of Rs. 1.24 crores out of a total Plan outlay of Rs. 87 crores was earmarked for forest development plans in the Second Plan period. By the end of 1959, however, only Rs. 21.68 lakhs had been spent. The shortfall arose mainly on account of two items. The largest single item among forestry was acquisition of private forests in Malabar and for this Rs. 40.95 lakhs had been allotted. Due to procedural difficulties, this could not be undertaken and only Rs. 0.34 lakhs had been spent by the end of 1959. Secondly, although the progress of cashewnut afforestation programmes in terms of physical target has been statisfactory, as can be seen from Table 24, the cost of afforestation programmes at Rs. 24 lakhs was an over-estimate. Actual performance has been possible within Rs. 4.81 lakhs.

4.28 Table 24 gives the Plan provision and progress in execution of various schemes upto the end of 1959. Overall progress has been slow, except in the raising of plantations where the Department hopes to achieve all the targets. The slow progress

[Table 24, appearing on p. 287 of the text, has not been processed - Analyst]

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in the early years has been due to the fact that either the sanctions from the Government were received late or the staff was not appointed in time. The shortfall in performance during the Second Plan period emphasises the need for devoting greater attention to forest development programmes during the Third Plan period.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF FORESTRY

4.29 Forests are an important source of raw material for industry in Kerala. Their importance is brought out by the fact that forest-based industries are more predominant in the economy of Kerala compared to the position they occupy in the industrial structure of India as a whole.[1]

4.30 In view of the important position occupied by the forest-based industries in Kerala, the policy towards forest resources should aim at long-run enhancement of the forest potential so that an increasing surplus of raw materials could be made available to industry. Forest development policy in the State should, therefore, be guided by the following objectives :

(*i*) Utilization of resources as yet untapped.
(*ii*) Raising the long-run forest potential through:
  (*a*) acceleration of the process of conversion of poor deciduous forests into valuable teak and softwood plantations.
  (*b*) extensive reclamation of grasslands on the basis of experimental Eucalyptus plantings carried out during the Second Plan.
(*iii*) Incorporation of technical improvements in the methods of logging, etc., so that wastage could be reduced. These aspects are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Existing Potential

4.31 In Kerala, the existing potential of forest resources is being exploited comparatively much better than in many other States of India. Due to easy accessibility provided by the numerous rivers and roads, many of which serve the forests, extraction has been very much facilitated. The importance of the role of river transport in exploitation of forest wealth is shown by the fact that two big centres of forest produce, viz., Kallai and Chalakudy are both located by the side of rivers. Although the general picture as regards exploitation of existing resources is quite bright, some pockets still remain untapped. These are discussed below:

4.32 (*i*) *Bamboo Resources*: In spite of a large bamboo potential in the State, this source remains completely unutilized for industrial purposes. Out of the total available supply, about two-thirds is utilized for local requirements of construction, etc. The position regarding the quantum of surplus available is as follows.

[1] See Chapter on Industries.

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outturn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 177 50% [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [874] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

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the fishing industry, owns a boat-building yard, a workshop, a cold storage and refrigeration plant and runs a training centre. The fishing villages are thus being developed into what may be called Integrated Fishing Centres.

5.11 *Off-shore Fishing*: An attempt to introduce exploratory and commercial off-shore fishing operations from Cochin port was made by the Travancore-Cochin Government as early as in 1940. A Government sponsored private company operated three large-sized (65 feet to 90 feet) vessels for a time. But these operations proved abortive and were given up owing to lack of trained crew and absence of docking and repairing facilities. Thorough exploratory investigations have been on for the last few years, and at present deep-sea fishing is being carried on jointly by the Government of India and the Indo-Norwegian Project.

5.12 *Chank Fisheries*: With the transfer of some areas of Travancore-Cochin to Madras at the time of the reorganization of States, Kerala has lost some of its important chank fishing centres along the Kanyakumari coast, and only a few centres of lesser importance, Thekkay Kollencode, Poovar, Pulinkudi, Poonthura, Shankumugham and Veri are now left with the State. The right of collection of chanks is annually auctioned on royalty basis, preference being given to cooperatives. The number of chanks collected and the money realized by the cooperatives in 1957-58 and 1958-59 were 26,629 chanks (for Rs. 16,361) and 18,355 chanks (for Rs. 9,177.50) respectively.

Inland Fisheries

5.13 Estuaries, backwaters and adjacent low-lying fields, rivers and canals, ponds, tanks and reservoirs comprise the inland fisheries of Kerala. According to the State Fisheries Department, the total production from these sources is at present about 50,000 tons per annum. This represents only 20 per cent of the total fish production in the State. The inland fish production of Kerala, though much lower than that of West Bengal (12,000 tons), compares favourably with that of Madras (40,000 tons).

Estuaries and Backwater Fisheries

5.14 The more important rivers opening directly into the sea and having permanent link with it are the Periyar, Bharatpuzha, Beypore, Billiapatam and Korapuzha. Regular fishing in the estuaries is done only during the south-west monsoon period (end of May to beginning of August) when fishing activities in the sea, owing to rough weather, are almost at a standstill. The estuarine catches include such varieties as Mullets, Milk Fish, Prawns of different types and Horse Mackerel.

5.15 The backwaters of Kerala covering approximately an area of about 300 square miles, are the most important source of inland fish production. The main areas are Ashtamudy, the Kayamkulam and the Vembanad, all situated in the Southern part of the State. The production from estuaries and backwaters is estimated by the State Fisheries Department at about 46,000 tons per annum. Prawns constitute the bulk of the catch which comprises, in addition to Prawns, Mullets, Bekti, Horse Mackerel and Engraulis.

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*433 228 435 654 5.33 The introduction of about 1,600 mechanized boats during the next decade is not likely to subject Kerala's fishing grounds to undue pressure. A beginning may be made with 600 such boats during the Third Plan. The cost of a new mechanized boat (engine, fishing gear and equipment) would be about Rs. 29,000. It is desirable to continue with the present pattern of financial help to the fishermen for boats and gears in the form of loans and subsidies for some time to come.[1] A subsidized mechanized boat would cost about Rs. 19,000. This amount should be advanced to the fishermen by the Government as a long-term loan. On this basis, the total capital cost of putting 1,600 mechanized boats into operation during the next 10 years will be of the order of Rs. 4.64 crores (Rs. 1.76 crores as subsidy and Rs. 2.88 crores as loan). The consequential annual production is expected to be of the order of 30,000 tons by the end of the Third Plan, and 80,000 tons by the end of the Fourth Plan. The value of the additional production of 80,000 tons will be Rs. 2 crores.

*433 228 5.34 These mechanized boats should be operated from a select number of Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, each centre being provided with such basic facilities for the fishing industry as the supply of oils and lubricants, refrigeration, processing, etc. The establishment of a number of such Integrated Centres should be the utilimate aim. The Indo-Norwegian Project has already developed an Integrated Centre at Neendakara. About 15 of these centres may be established during the next two Plans. Among other places, Quilon, Alleppey, Cochin, Azhikode, Ponnani, Beypore, Tellichery, Cannanore and Balliapatam would provide good sites for developing such centres.

5.35 The introduction of 1,600 mechanized boats will create employment opportunities directly for about 6,400 fishermen. In order to obviate the unemployment situation, the Government may undertake a programme of supplying about 6,000 indigenous boats which will create employment for about 22,000 fishermen by the end of the Fourth Plan. The average cost of an indigenous boat with the necessary gear would be Rs. 2,000 (Rs. 1,000 for the craft and an equivalent amount for the gear). A subsidy of 25 per cent on the cost of the boat and another 33⅓ per cent on the cost of gear may be given to the fishermen. The total capital cost on 6,000 boats would be about Rs. 1.2 crores. The additional catch from these indigenous boats is expected to be of the order of 60,000 tons per annum by the end of 1970-71, valued at Rs. 1.5 crores.

5.36 The existing boats can increase their catches considerably if they are provided with better fishing gear. At present there are about 22,000 indigenous crafts in the coastal waters of Kerala. Initially, at least a third of these boats should be supplied with better gear. The cost of such a programme would be about Rs. 85 lakhs. At the present rate of subsidy of 33⅓ per cent, the Government's share in this cost will be Rs. 28 lakhs. An additional production of 25,000 tons of fish valued at Rs. 62.5 lakhs may be expected by the end of the Fourth Plan.

5.37 Thus, the development of coastal fisheries would entail a total investment of about Rs. 7 crores, of which Rs. 3 crores would be required during the Third Plan. As a result of this investment, an additional annual production of 80,000 tons valued

[1] A subsidy of 50 per cent is given on the cost of engine, 25 per cent on that of hull, and 33⅓ per cent on that of gear and tackle.

will be essential to provide a properly trained and experienced Fisheries Development Officer in overall charge of each Integrated Centre for coordinating its activities.

Training

5.57 At present there are three centres to train fishermen in the State. The training course which extends over six months aims mainly at training the fishermen in the operation, servicing and maintenance of marine engines, making of nets and tackles, improved fishing methods and the fundamentals of navigation.

5.58 These centres are located at Neendakara, Ernakulam, and Beypore. The first two centres can train 20 fishermen each in a batch, and the last can train 15. So far, 272 fishermen have been trained at the Ernakulam and Beypore centres (run by the Fisheries Department), of whom 150 are now actually employed in mechanized fishing. At the Neendakara centre, which is run by the Indo-Norwegian Project, 121 fishermen have undergone training so far.

5.59 The programme suggested for the next 10 years would require a crew of about 6,400. This would involve a huge training programme and entail a heavy burden on the State. Arrangements can at best be made to provide training facilities to about half the number. The rest can receive on-the-job training from the trained fishermen. As about 1,200 trained fishermen would be required by the end of the Third Plan, not only will the capacity of the existing training centres have to be increased but also at least five new centres will have to be established.

5.60 The operation of the proposed medium-sized boats will also require the services of trained skipper-cum-master fisherman. Either a special centre for training skippers should be established in the State, or the facilities at the Government of India Deep-Sea Fishing Stations at Bombay and other places should be expanded. For operating trawlers, the State Government should enlist the collaboration of foreign fishing companies in order to obtain along with the fishing vessels, the services of trained technical personnel. At the same time efforts should also be made to train Indian personnel in the various fields by appointing them as understudies to the foreign technicians or by sending them abroad. The training of Fisheries Development Officers, Marketing Officers and other high level technical staff can be arranged at the Institute of Fisheries Education, which is proposed to be started by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture. For training the middle and lower level staff, it is desirable to establish a Fisheries Training Institute in the State.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

5.61 A substantial part of investment will be on mechanization of boat craft and acquisition of trawlers for off-shore fishing. These two items alone will absorb Rs. 6.35 crores out of a total investment of Rs. 10.72 crores.[1] Details of investment on various items are given in Table 27. This does not include expenditure on deve-

[1] The outlay allocated for the Third Plan is Rs. 4.5 crores, which will leave a balance of Rs. 6.75 for the Fourth Plan, if suggestions made in this Report are to be implemented.

[Table 27, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed — Ed/yt]

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433 lopment of fishing harbours, landing and berthing facilities, rail transport, training, 654 welfare work, cooperatives, research, etc. A considerable part of the expenditure will 228 be in the form of loan to fishermen recoverable in course of time.

5.62 As a result of this programme the additional production of fish by the end of the Fourth Plan can be expected to be of the order of 200,800 tons per annum, valued at Rs. 5.26 crores. These programmes for fishing development would create additional employment opportunities for about 33,000 persons in Kerala during the next decade. This figure, however, does not include employment opportunities which would be created by the development of culture fisheries, marketing, net-making, transportation, supervision and training.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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351 useful for cookery are watered and grown in the compound itself; while during the rains also vegetables are grown, such as brinjals, lady's fingers, pumpkins, peas, etc. During summer the trees and vegetables in the compound are watered from the well which is a special feature of every house.

242 *Insect-pests.*—The *caterpillars* of certain moths ate away this year (1916) the tender blades of the paddy as soon as they cropped up from underground. This appeared at the beginning of the sowing season (May) and lasted for a week or two. Farmers here say that these have not appeared for years past. When I wrote to the Agricultural Superintendent of the State at Trichur he suggested the following remedy: "Dig a trench ½ foot wide by 1½ feet deep along the four sides of a field where these insects would fall in their travel from field to field, but would not be able to get out of it."

A kind of fly or flea is said to eat away the juice of the rice at the stalk of the paddy as soon as it reaches the milk stage.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Sore feet. The feet are well washed with hot water, and turpentine, teak-oil, or cashewnut oil is smeared in the sore; the animal is also made to stand in a muddy place into which the leaves of a certain tree are strewn.

Mouth disease. Pig-ghee or bear-ghee is smeared on the tongue.

Swelling in the belly. The animal without any apparent cause falls down and dies. No medicine is applied in such cases.

Malignant sore-throat and cow-pox are also common.

[654] An Agricultural Department for the State has been established recently at Trichur with a model farm attached to it. The present Superintendent is an England-returned Cochinite. Help is often derived from here, but the farmers themselves are shrewd in practical agriculture.

313 *Timber.*—Wood for fuel, implements, buildings, etc., is obtained from the neighbouring hills and forests. The taluk of Talapilli is full of forests especially on the eastern side. Nearly 43 per cent of the area of the State is forest and its timber is even exported to foreign parts. The Forest Department is a source of income to the State.

[482] Coolies carry faggots of fuel on their heads from the neighbouring hills for sale; sometimes the people get cart-loads; a decent [435] head-load now costs nearly 4 annas and a cart-load from Rs. 2-8-0 to Rs. 3; prices were much lower a few years back. A full head-load is divided into smaller bundles before being sold, and a woman may get six or eight annas for a bundle as heavy as she can carry.

Durable building materials are got from the forests and timber depots, but mango-planks, bamboos and jack-tree planks are also used.

342 *Houses.*—Houses are not built in rows. Every house is surrounded by a compound hedged round by bamboo. Such compounds are intersected by lanes. Rice-straw is used in thatching houses; tiles are replacing thatch but the majority of houses still are thatched. No terraced houses can be seen in these parts where the monsoon rains pour down with full force.

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313 sold to purchasers for extraction of major forest produce but the extent of this is very limited in Kerala, Whereas for the whole of India about 75 per cent of major forest produce is extracted by the purchasers, in Kerala only about 15 per cent of forest is extracted by the purchasers directly, the rest being entrusted to departmental extraction.

[432] 4.14 The procedure in case of sale of timber and poles is to offer them first to the Government Departments and to sell only the surplus by open auction. The result is that while the Government Departments are able to obtain timber at reasonable negotiated rates, the trade obtains timber at very heavy rates.

4.15 In case of firewood, Messrs Forest Industries (Travancore) Ltd. (F.I.T.) have been given a concession for extraction of firewood for supply to M/s Fertilizer and Chemicals (Travancore) Ltd., Alwaye. The latter are now switching on to oil and, therefore, other uses shall have to be found for firewood extracted by the F.I.T. whose concession has still to run a number of years. Firewood supplies to the main cities come from the forest coupes which are sold to purchasers in auction after extraction of the timber. No area is managed purely for raising firewood as in some other States of India.

4.16 Unlike the major forest produce whose removal is done mainly through the Government agency, extraction of minor forest produce is mostly done through the purchasers. As may be seen from Appendix 6 Government earned only Rs. 50,000 as [651] revenue through sale of minor produce while it earned about Rs. 5 lakhs in the form of royalties from purchasers.

Silvicultural Systems

313 4.17 Kerala is unique in having working plans for all the Government owned forest areas in the State. Since all the Government forests are managed under the 655 latest scientific systems, there is hardly any danger of over-felling in the public sector forests.

4.18 With a wide variety of forests, both natural and artificial, the systems of silviculture practised are suited to the types. The Selection System[1] is the one that is being applied in all the evergreen forests and only the trees of little economic importance are extracted under the simple felling rules. The complex nature of the vegetation and difficulty of regeneration of evergreen species, together with the danger of heavy wild growth have caused these forests to be worked under the Selection System.

4.19 In the other timber forests clear-felling with natural regeneration, supplemented by artificial planting, is being undertaken. The climate and soil conditions are so favourable that there is generally no difficulty in obtaining natural regeneration. The only exception, and it is quite an important one, exists in case of the evergreen forests which are being worked more and more heavily as demand for new species arises in the market. Their regeneration is not keeping pace with the removals.

[1]. Under the Selection System trees are selected for felling uniformly all over the forest. Under simple felling rules patches of forests are completely cleared in rotation irrespective of age, type or growth of trees contained in that patch.

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number of items of minor forest produce. It is, therefore, suggested that a proper survey of the forest areas should be conducted to assess the extent of minor forest products available in the State. This will bring out the raw material potentialities for the phyto-chemical industry as well as other small scale industries which could be based on the minor forest produce of the State. 433* 314

Raising the Long-run Forest Potential

4.38 There is not much scope in Kerala for extension of area under forests through afforestation programmes. There are already a number of competing claimants for land use. The proportion of area under protective vegetal cover, as discussed, is also quite adequate in Kerala. What is necessary is to minimize the extent of further in-roads into forest areas by clear felling for cultivation, etc. 433* 313 [311]

4.39 Having ruled out large scale afforestation as a means of improving the forest resources, the only other possible methods, to augment the forest pontential are improvement in forest management and raising of new commercial plantations. Forests under the jurisdiction of the Forest Department are already being managed on scientific lines. The primary need, therefore, is the acquisition of private forests so that the standards of management could be enforced uniformly throughout the State. [656]

COMMERCIAL PLANTATIONS

Teak

4.40 In addition to the existing 75,000 acres under teak, there are 640,000 additional acres of low quality deciduous forests which are suitable for conversion into the valuable teak plantations. This changeover will considerably improve productivity of the deciduous belt. About 9,000 to 10,000 acres can be taken up every year against 2,000 to 2,500 acres being planted annually at present. The technique of raising these plantations has been perfected in Kerala and the present agri-silvicultural method, whereby the plantations are raised free of any cost to the State, may be continued. 433* 245

Rosewood

4.41 Rosewood is in great demand by the furniture industry. Logs of over 72" girth are also exported, mostly to Italy. The supply is getting exhausted and it is desirable to replenish the stock by raising new plantations. The tree is slow growing. It is, therefore, proposed that it should generally be raised on the periphery of the teak plantations where it can be left to grow for 2 or 3 teak rotations. There should be no extra cost as the plantations are to be raised along with teak by the agri-silvicultural method. [439]

Softwood Plantations

4.42 As a result of the difficulties in the way of regeneration of evergreen forests, the softwood species grown in these forests are in short supply. By the end of the

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*433 313 647 two more Conservators of Forest, one to deal with general development works of the State and the other for the new plantations may be considered. It is also proposed that an additional Chief Conservator of Forests to cope with the heavy work may be appointed as soon as the tempo of development work has gained momentum, say, by the middle of the Third Plan period. The Territorial Divisional Forest Officers should each be given a gazetted assistant to deal with all the development works in their divisions. The present annual expenditure on Establishment amounts to Rs. 8.23 lakhs (1958-59). If the above suggestions are accepted there should be an increase of about 25 per cent. It is also expected that if the tempo of developments is maintained, higher amounts will be needed in the Fourth Plan. The establishment expenditure is, therefore, worked out as under :

Third Plan period	Rs. 10.29 lakhs annually.
Fourth Plan period	Rs. 10.97 lakhs annually.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

*433 313 655 651 4.61 The major part of investment during the coming decade will be on raising the various commercial plantations discussed above. Investment on other items is summarized in Table appearing under Para 4.53. The amount of Rs. 3 crores[1] which is expected to be spent during the Third Plan period on acquisition of private forests, does not appear in the investment figures since the amount is only in the nature of a monetary transfer.

4.62 As a result of the development programmes suggested above, output contributed by the forests may be envisaged to increase from the following sources during the coming decade :

(1) Sale of forest produce from areas clear-felled for teak plantations. This item will be quite substantial.

(2) Income from thinning of teak plantations.

(3) Income from bamboo and eta reed resources, which will start accruing by the end of the Third Plan period when all the flowered areas would have been regenerated.

(4) Income from other plantations would start accruing only towards the end of the coming decade or during the beginning of the Fifth Plan since gestation period before the plantations start maturing is rather long.

4.63 It is difficult to give an exact forecast but taking the above factors into account, the increase in income accruing from forestry during the coming decade is taken to be as follows. It is assumed that income at the end of the Second Plan, that is, during 1960-61 would be 10 per cent higher than that in 1955-56, in 1965-66 twenty per cent higher than that in 1955-56 and by 1970-71 it would be one and a half times the income in 1955-56. On this basis projections for State income from forestry would

[1] The Third Plan has allotted Rs. 3.75 crores for Forest Development which compares quite favourably with investment suggested by us. However, it has to be kept in mind that our figure does not include finances for acquiring private forests, which the State Plan has to provide for.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

be as follows :

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	Rs. crores
1955-56	5.0
1960-61	5.5
1965-66	6.0
1970-71	7.5

4.64 It will be noticed that in the earlier period income is projected to grow at a lower rate than towards the end of the period. This is naturally to be expected in view of the fact that gestation period for growth of forest potential is rather long and the effects of the development programmes will start becoming visible only towards the end of the Fourth Plan period and during the Fifth Plan period. During the Second and Third Plan periods rise in income is expected only from clear felling areas for teak plantations and intermediate felling in the older areas.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 organizational and physical. Most of the fish markets lack such facilities as adequate
442 supply of water, drainage, proper flooring, wire screen, etc. Clean and hygienic con-
443 ditions for the sale of fish should be created in all the consumption centres. A number of retail and wholesale fish markets should be built at all the major consumption centres. Twenty of these markets may be a good target for the next decade. Provision of fish storage facilities, by way of small refrigerated cabinets is also necessary in retail marketing. The capital cost for building these new markets and providing the storage cabinets would be about Rs. 20 lakhs of which Rs. 8 lakhs may be under the Third Plan. In order to ensure reasonable return to the fishermen it is imperative that cooperative marketing of fish should be expanded as much as possible.

Servicing of Marine Engines

*433 5.53 The programme envisaged for mechanized fishing will call for adequate
504 servicing and overhauling facilities. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres, where most of the mechanized boats will be concentrated, should have properly equipped servicing stations. At least three such stations may be established by the end of the Third Plan, and another five by the end of the Fourth Plan. Together, the capital cost of these eight service stations will be about Rs. 4 lakhs.

Cooperatives

226 5.54 Fishermen's cooperatives in Kerala are not well developed. Most of the
474 societies are credit societies. Only three cooperative societies are engaged in the manufacture of nets and two in the marketing of fish. Recently some Producer Cooperative Societies have been organized under the auspices of the Fisheries Department. Nets, boats, etc., are owned by these societies and the members carry on fishing on a cooperative basis.

*433 5.55 Simultaneously with the development of fisheries in the next decade, the
226 fisheries cooperative should also be strengthened. The aim should be to bring the
474 majority of the fishermen within the cooperative fold. The Integrated Fisheries Development Centres should all be organized on a cooperative basis, covering all aspects of the industry.

Staff

*433 5.56 The Fisheries Directorate appears to be adequately staffed for the work it has
228 to deal with at present. However, the implementation of the expanded programme suggested in this report will not only entail a considerable strengthening of the existing
647 staff, but also require certain new categories of technical personnel. It will be espe-
655 cially necessary to provide an adequate staff to man the mechanized boats and the technical services necessary to operate the boats. A number of training centres should be opened to train the fishermen in the art of mechanized fishing. In addition, each of the Integrated Fisheries Centres should have a trained Marketing Assistant to assist the fishermen and their Cooperatives in organizing the marketing of their catches. It

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 317 6.10 The present method of working these sands is haphazard and extremely short-sighted. The dunes are getting exhausted while the washings are dependent on a good monsoon. A better method would be to work the sand bar itself. This would also be in the interests of (*i*) conservation and (*ii*) ensuring a regular supply of raw sand independent of the vagaries of nature. Even if working of the sand bar suggested above is not taken up now, back filling of pools with sand tailings from mineral sand companies would prove beneficial. It would lead to building up of sand rich in heavy minerals, other than ilmenite. At present the tailings which contain 80 per cent of the original rutile and all the sillimanite and zircon, are dumped into the sea.

317 328 471 655 6.11 The extraction of ilmenite is done by the mineral sand companies at Chavara. Till recently there were four units, namely, two units belonging to the Travancore Minerals, one to F.X. Pereira Minerals and one to Hopkins and Williams. These concerns were all under private ownership till 1945. Realizing the strategic importance of these sands, the Travancore State assumed control of the sand deposits during that year ; and the mineral concerns continued to work as agents on behalf of the State. A few years later, however, the Travancore Minerals (1951) and F.X. Pereira Minerals (1956) were taken over by the State Government and run directly as State enterprises.

*433 317 328 471 6.12 Hopkins and Williams, however, continued in private hands till 1959. By this time some difficulties cropped up with labour. The firm had also accumulated vast arrears of royalty to the tune of Rs. 28 lakhs. At this stage the management decided to close down the unit. In the interim period their export contracts had also lapsed. As a result of all these developments, there are two mineral concerns at present operating three units, whose total capacity is 1,60,000 tons. In view of the reduced foreign demand for Indian ilmenite, closure of Hopkins and Williams has not created any serious problem.

*433 317 328 461 6.13 The output per man per shift works out to 0.41 ton at the Travancore Minerals Plant and 0.40 ton in the F.X. Pereira unit ; whereas in the Hopkins and and Williams plant, now closed, the output per man per shift was around one ton. This was partly due to a better layout of the machine. In the existing plants much effort and material is lost in transportation from one unit to another. In addition, excessive labour appears to be employed in the plant of the Travancore Minerals (P) Ltd.

*433 317 328 6.14 The production of ilmenite rose from 216,000 tons in 1950, to a peak of 314,000 tons in 1956. Since then it has been fairly steady between 270,000 and 290,000 tons. The value has also been going up from Rs. 33 lakhs in 1950 to Rs. 170 lakhs in 1959. The present price is Rs. 60 per ton.

317 328 386 6.15 Ilmenite is mainly used in the manufacture of TiO_2 (titanium) white pigment. TiO_2 is used in various other industries like paper, delustrant in rayons, rubber compositions, plastics, printing inks, cosmetics, etc. Titanium metal is not widely used mainly because of its high cost of production.

*[433] 6.16 Only a very small portion of the production of ilmenite is consumed within the State in the manufacture of TiO_2. The Travancore Titanium Products Ltd., Trivandrum, utilize about 3,000 tons of this mineral. This plant is expanding its capacity to 10 tons a day by 1961, and will then require 6,000 tons of ilmenite. The

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 the extensive horizontal spread of this horizon, mining operations are capable of con-
317 siderable lateral expansion.

[655] 6.34 The china-clay from Quilon and Trivandrum districts is mostly consumed within the State by the Government-run ceramic factory at Kundara and the other privately owned ceramic factories, as well as by the rubber, paper, insecticide and [439] cement (for white cement) industries in the State. A few hundred tons are supplied to consumers in the neighbouring States and a small quantity is also (75 tons in 1959 and 44 tons during Jan.—August 1960) exported to Ceylon. The crockery and sanitaryware plants in the State consume about 1,900 tons of refined clay and another 1,700 tons are used by the insecticide, rubber and paper factories in the State. The china-clay produced from Cannanore district is mostly exported to other parts of India.

6.35 It is worth noting here that India imports textile grade china-clay. Import figures for 1956 and 1957 are 7,282 tons and 4,354 tons respectively. The State could very well fill this gap particularly in view of the excellent quality of the material it possesses. Increase in output to meet this demand should be undertaken from the Quilon district, where large reserves are available.

6.36 Demand for china-clay (in terms of crude material)[1] is likely to be as under by 1965-66:

	(Tons)
For ceramics, inclusive of insulators	9,000
For the rubber, paper and insecticide industries	10,000
For the textile industry	15,000
For white cement manufacture	12,000

6.37 During the period 1966–71, china-clay requirements are likely to go up still further as a result of setting up of another high tension insulator factory and increase in demand from the paper, textile and insecticide industries, and are estimated to reach 70,000 tons in terms of unwashed clay by 1970-71. To meet this rise in demand, mining in the public sector at Kundara can be expanded to produce an additional 13,500 tons by 1965-66. This would hardly involve any mechanization. Along with this, the capacity of the washing plant will have to be increased to 30 tons a day. The expansion of mining operations and installation of additional washing capacity proposed would roughly involve a capital outlay of Rs. 5 lakhs.

6.38 Reopening and development of the mines at Chathanoor should also be considered at a rate of exploitation of 22,000 tons of crude clay per year. A washing plant with a capacity of 30 tons a day would be required at this mine. This mine and washing plant may be operated in the private sector. The capital outlay required would be of the order of Rs. 5 lakhs and the mine and washing plant would together provide employment for 310 persons.

6.39 In order to produce an anticipated 70,000 tons per year by 1970-71, representing an increase of 24,000 tons a year over the Third Plan period, a further expansion of mining operations and additional washing capacity of the extent of 20 tons a day will have to be considered either at Kundara or Chathanoor. The additional

[1] Refined china-clay is roughly one-third the weight of crude china-clay.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 377 into a useful commodity. If this is done, it is possible to visualize that from 1965 onwards the State can be made the seat of bulk hydro-power generation not only for meeting the requirements of its own development programmes, but also for export to neighbouring areas in the southern zone. During the coming decade activities in connection with power development should, therefore, be geared mainly to the need of achieving this objective.

Prior to the Plans

*433 377 655 7.5 The beginning of an extensive power supply system, utilizing hydro-power resources of the State, was first initiated with the establishment of the hydro-electric power station at Pallivasal in 1940. During the years of the Second World War the power system registered significant progress as a result of increased industrial activity in the State. Just prior to 1951, the State had developed a total installed capacity of about 33 MW, of which 14 per cent was in diesel stations and the rest in hydel projects. A 66 KV transmission system covered the State and power was distributed to about 28,000 consumers in 1958 towns and villages.

First Plan Period

7.6 Out of a total Plan provision of Rs. 30.03 crores, the largest share (Rs. 11.4 crores) was allotted to the development of power. Four hydro-electric projects viz., Sengulam Project, the Poringalkuthu Project I Stage, Poringalkuthu Project II Stage and the Nariamangalam Project, were taken up. During the First Plan period, the Mattupatty Dam (of the Pallivasal Project) with a storage capacity of 1,900 million cubic feet was constructed for augmenting the summer flow to the Pallivasal hydel station. The installed capacity of the station itself was raised to 37.5 MW providing for an effective generating capacity of the order of 32.5 MW. The Sangulam Project was commissioned in 1954 with an installed capacity of 48 MW. The Poringalkuthu Project, I Stage, was almost complete by 1956, and the remaining two projects were taken up for execution only during the last year of the First Plan. By 1956, the generating capacity had risen from 28.5 MW in 1951 to 85 MW, and the energy generated from 151 million units to 350 million units. Besides this, the transmission network was further expanded and 744 villages were electrified. An additional 51,456 consumers were connected to the system.

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Second Plan Period

7.7 The share of power was quite large in the Second Plan allocations. Out of the total outlay of Rs. 87 crores, the allotment for power development alone was Rs. 23.45 crores.

7.8 The total expenditure on power was made up of Rs. 11.40 crores for hydro

II: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AWII Kerala AWII

electric projects, Rs. 4.82 crores for extension of transmission lines and Rs. 7.23 crores for rural electrification-cum-distribution schemes. The physical targets aimed at under the Second Plan were as follows.

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A. Additional Generating Capacity		
(i) Poringalkuthu, I Stage		24 MW
(ii) Poringalkuthu, II Stage		8 ,,
(iii) Neriamangalam scheme		45 ,,
(iv) Sholayar project		54 ,,
(v) Panniar project		30 ,,
	TOTAL	*161 MW*
B. Transmission Lines and Sub-stations		
(i) 110 KV lines		388 circuit miles
(ii) 66 KV lines		43 circuit miles
(iii) 110 KV sub-station		4 nos.
(iv) 66 KV sub-station		6 nos.
C. Rural Electrification and Distribution Schemes		
(i) Villages to be electrified		1,344 nos.
(ii) Additional consumers to be served		105,260 nos.

7.9 The capital investment in the Second Plan, till the end of the year 1959, was nearly Rs. 18.75 crores. Almost all the essential items of plant and equipment had to be imported for working the power schemes included in the Second Plan. The foreign exchange component of the cost is of the order of 45 per cent. The difficulties experienced with regard to the availability of foreign exchange during the early years of the Second Plan affected the progress of the planned hydro-electric schemes in Kerala. Further, pending a decision on the riparian rights of Kerala and Madras regarding the waters of Poringalkuthu and Sholayar, the execution of Sholayar hydel scheme had been delayed. Only the Poringalkuthu II Stage extension could be completed by the end of the Second Plan. The first two units of the Neriamangalam scheme, having a total capacity of 30 MW, were also installed. In consequence, as against a much higher target that is, 246.5 MW, the total installed capacity in the system reached only 147.5 MW as shown by the breakdown below in the table :

INSTALLED CAPACITY IN MW

Name of Station	*At the end of the First Plan (By March 1956)*	*Addition during the Second Plan (1956-61)*	*Total (By March 1961)*
Pallivasal	37.5	Nil	37.5
Sengulam	48	Nil	48.0
Poringalkuthu I Stage	—	24	24.0
Poringalkuthu II Stage	—	8	8.0
Neriamangalam	—	30	30.0
TOTAL	*85.5*	*62*	*147.5*

7.10 Owing to non-commissioning of the Panniar and Sholayar projects, sufficient water was not available for running the machines to their rated capacity either at Poringalkuthu or Neriamangalam. Consequently, by the end of the Second Plan,

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

*433 377 effective capacity was only around 84.5 MW. This will rise sharply with the execution of Panniar and Sholayar schemes during the early years of the Third Plan.

655 7.11 The position at the end of the Second Plan was as follows :—

Transmission, Distribution and Rural Electrification schemes had made good progress. The works which were completed include:

(i) the 110 KV Sengulam-Pallom-Kundra double circuit transmission lines and the 110 KV sub-stations at these places;

(ii) the 110 KV Neriamangalam-Alwaye-FACT double circuit transmission lines;

(iii) the 110 KV Sholayar-Poringalkuthu double circuit transmission lines;

(iv) the 66 KV single circuit line from Viyyur and Palghat; and

(v) the 66 KV sub-station at Peermade, Thiruvalla, Alleppey and Vythilla and 33 sub-stations at Karumagappally.

Besides a carrier communication system linking all the generating and receiving stations and the headquarters of the State Electricity Board was completed and taken into service. In the sphere of rural electrification, the benefit of electricity was further [365] extended to 1,003 centres, additional 97,662 consumers were connected to the system and 57,282 street lights were installed in various parts of the State.

GENERATION AND UTILIZATION OF ELECTRICITY

*433 377 7.12 Table 33[2] summarizes the progress of electric power generation and utilization in the State of Kerala during the period 1954-55 to 1958-59. Some of the characteristics are worth noting. Of the total available electrical energy, about 20 per cent is lost in transmission and distribution or used for power station auxiliaries (all India 17.5%). Of the rest, as could be expected, industries are the most important consumers. They account for about 65 per cent of total electricity consumption in the State, the comparable proportion in the country being 50-55 per cent. Next in order of importance is domestic lighting which absorbs about 6.5 to 8 per cent (all India about 10%). The proportion of power used for irrigation has varied between 2 and 4 per cent of the total. Pumping out of water from the water-logged areas of Kuttanad is one of the main source of utilization of electricity in the sphere of irrigation.

7.13 Apart from these, two other important points may be noted : (i) Practically all the energy generated (97-98%) is from the hydro-electric power stations. This is in marked contrast to the pattern of power generation in the rest of India where roughly 55 per cent of electricity is from thermal sources. However, unlike the rest of India where it is necessary to have thermal stations to stabilize supply of power throughout the year, in Kerala because of an exceptionally well distributed rainfall and consequently assured supply of water over the different seasons, there is no such necessity and (ii) It is significant that the load factor has been steadily increasing during the recent years. The units generated annually per kW of installed capacity reached a figure of 4,400 during 1958-59 from 3,200 in 1954-55, that is, the load factor increased from 37 per cent to 46 per cent. Additional demand for power since 1954 has been met, almost entirely, by more intensive utilization of the existing capacity.

[2] [Table 33 appearing on p. 292 of the text, has not been processed — Analyst]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[16] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[70] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

582
* [564] endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."

The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where
[837] she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed. [201]
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

19th century. In this connection, I was much interested in studying court records and various documents, including *the Nayar Regulation II, 1925, Travancore*, and *the Malabar Marumakkathayam Act of 1933*, which legally marked the end of the functional Nayar *tarwad* system. Actual partition of an individual *tarwad* occured earlier, or later, than these acts.[1] However the present discussion is concerned mainly with the internal situation of the *tarwad* as it disintegrated, the discussion of external factors and causes of the disintegration of the *tarwad* are omitted.

The process of the disintegration of the *tarwad* can be summarized in terms of the essential elements which constitute the functional body of a *tarwad:*

A. members of a matrilinial lineage exclusively
B. co-residential (domestic) unit
C. property owning unit
D. headed by the *karanavan*
E. Ceremonial unit.

In the disintegration of the *tarwad*, the group loses these elements gradually. The element which is lost first seems to be *B*. A population which exceeds the limit of the accomodation of a *tarwad* building, results in residential separation of small segments of a matrilineal group who have the same grandmother, or grand-grandmother, called *tawari*. Such a group, residing in a separate household, in the course of time tends to develop as a temporal economic unit. Though the ancestral property is held in common by all members of the *tarwad* together, the residential sub-group would become a semi-independent productive and consumption unit: the income would not be pooled into the *tarwad* but consumed by the members of each group. Hence the function of the *karanavan* as the head of the *tarwad*, the property group, becomes incomplete.

At the same time, when the residential unit becomes smaller, it would give chances for the inclusion of spouses and the element A would be shaken. The cohabitation of wife and husband leads to the inclusion of nonmatrilineal members in a matrilineal residential group. These factors bring on economic and psychological confusion in the duties and obligations of a *tarwad* member. Thus, by the destruction of elements *A*, *B*, and *C*, the status of the *karanavan* becomes ambiguous. There occur various disputes between the *karanavan* and other members on the rights of the *tarwad* property.

This situation is enhanced by the fact that an increase of members who have an independent income without depending on the *tarwad* property, form an independent household with his wife and children. This situation makes it difficult to maintain the *tarwad* as a property unit, and also infringes the function of the *karanavan*. In fact the actual contribution of the father who was not the legal guardian of his children is significant in the failure of the role of the *karanavan* for the matrilineal members. Thus at last a *tarwad* has no alternative

1 A report of my study on these legal documents, including materials given in this paper, was published in Japanese: "On the disintegration of the Nayar *tarwad*," *Memoirs of the Institute for Oriental Culture*, University of Tokyo, Vol. 14, pp. 1–131, 1958.

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134 units. Actual cost is borne by the beneficiaries because the State recovers it by easy
185 instalments. The average cost of soil conservation is Rs. 150 per acre. The total cost of conserving one million acres at an average rate of Rs. 150 per acre would be Rs. 1.5 crores per year assuming that the programme is evenly phased. Soil conser-
[464] vation work is also very labour intensive and the proposed programme would give continuous employment to about 17,500 persons over the next 10-year period.

Related Aspects

*433 2.79 For full effectiveness, the development programme for agriculture, as
449 suggested above, would need a larger extension organization than that which was set up in 1953. It is expected to cover the whole of the State by the middle of the Third Plan period. The extension work at present is not intensive enough. The number of extension workers is too few to be really effective; the staff capacity needs to be augmented. In this connection the Agriculture Personnel Committee has recommended that the work in charge of a village level worker should be reduced by half. The Committee has also made suggestions on other aspects such as training and education, etc., of extension workers. The State Government may examine these proposals with a view to implementation as early as possible.

Marketing

*433 2.80 The small cultivators generally experience great difficulty in disposing of
442 their produce at reasonable prices. In case of some commodities like ginger, pepper
438 and arecanut, the difference between the price received by producers and that paid by consumers is as high as 100 per cent. In addition, none of the commodities except lemon grass is properly graded and this leads to serious consequences from the point of view of export markets. Marketing, processing and grading facilities should be developed so that both the producers as well as the consumers are benefited. In
[656] this context, as recommended by the Directorate of Marketing and Inspection, all the 41 wholesale markets in the State should be regulated. At present only four are regulated.

Agricultural Credit

*433 2.81 The average level of earning of farmers being rather low, most of them
452 require credit facilities for making improvements in their land. According to a survey, conducted in 1960 by the Bureau of Economic Studies, 89 per cent of the farmers need credit of some type. It also reveals that 82 per cent of the farmers need short term credit while medium and long term credit are needed by 56 and 34 per cent of farmers respectively. On the basis of the findings of the survey, the annual agricultural credit needs for the whole State may be put at 32.8 crores, of which Rs. 18.67 crores would be in the nature of short term credit, Rs. 6.74 crores medium term credit and Rs. 6.5 crores long term credit. The garden crops would account for Rs. 21.6 crores and paddy Rs. 11.2 crores.

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who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

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Tiyas

well as the unmarried women and girls lived in the house. The women who had married out had left and were living with the families of their husbands. What struck me was the considerable number of unmarried boys and girls relatively advanced in age who were still at home. Tiyas, I was told, marry late, usually after puberty, which is exceptional in India.

It will be noticed that polyandry was only practised in the elder generations. Not a single case occurs among the younger people. The reason for this is that the Thiyya Makkathayam Act of 1940 made polyandry illegal in Cochin, and nobody was thus at liberty to marry in this way any longer. Property, which was undivided so far, would be divided, Velu told us, when he and his brothers and his wife had died. This was in accordance with the new legislation, and all the children, girls included, would have a share. The boys, however, would be allotted double portions. Thus for their children by the two marriages, if the girls were not married by then, there would be thirteen shares, of which the boys would get the four first.

Velu assured me that formerly they were polyandrous in his caste so that the property should not be divided up. It kept the brothers together, they did not get involved in the quarrels of their wives, it was not necessary to split up into separate families, and thus was a very good system. Times, however, had changed, he said and now because there was a law forbidding polyandry, there was no longer any reason to keep what they owned undivided. He seemed to think that the old way of doing things had its advantages, especially in the possibility of bringing in another woman, if this were desirable and the brothers agreed to it (as he and his younger brothers had done), without being obliged to separate and start splinter households as had now become necessary. When I questioned him as to how they would keep going now that the economy of an undivided polyandrous household was no longer possible, he replied that it would oblige them to turn coolies, cut laterite, plough for others, carry on petty trade and emigrate to the towns.

On the 2nd of November 1949, I went again to Cochin accompanied by an interpreter. We drove into the Tallapilli taluk of the northern part of that state, and visited a village near Kunnamkulam, called Perumpillav (big jack fruit tree). The people living here called themselves "Ezhuvas", but, in accordance with recent Cochin legislation, they were assimilated to Tiyas or Thiyyas as the local spelling has it. (Article 5, paragraph i of the Thiyya *Makkathayam* Act of 1940 states that "Thiyya included *Ezhuva*, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such.")

We went first to the house of some rich Tiyas, in which we had been told that there were three elderly men living in polyandry. It was a large mansion standing in a well-kept compound, and we met one of the members of the older generation as well as a young man. When we asked them about their polyandry, they both shook their heads and protested that we had been "misinformed". Nobody in their family practised this marital custom, they said, although they admitted that the previous generation had done so. Since there was nothing we could do about it, and it would be useless to argue with such people, we went on. However, from the next house that we reached, we heard that what we had previously been told was correct and that these men did not tell us the truth. Because they were well off, they liked to play up at being "progressive", we heard, and therefore denied their polyandry which was nevertheless a fact.

The two tumbled-down, thatched houses which we next visited, stood in a very small compound in which plantain and coconut trees grew. Two old men, one very bald, and an aged lady, her flat bosoms hanging down dismally on her bare chest, came out to greet us. They were very hospitable and kind, and offered us fresh coconut milk from a nut, to drink. The younger of the two men, Raman, aged sixty five, volunteered to give us any information that we wished to obtain from him.

He told us that he and his two elder brothers, Shangu and Mundon, had been married to Chaki, the white haired old lady, for fifty years. Shangu, the eldest, had now been dead for three years, but Mundon, three years his junior, was alive at just seventy one. He was the other man, with the bald head. They lived in the larger of the two thatched houses. Kandapan, their third son, who was married to Lakshmi and had a small boy three years old, lived in the smaller house. They had only been married for four years, since "the last renewal".

This remark, it seemed, was an allusion to the rent. The latter consisted of a *kurikanam* lease, for which they paid three rupees a year (or the equivalent in bananas, they said), and a renewal fee of six rupees every twelve years. They had paid the latter four years ago, and it had gone to their *janmi*, a Nambudri Brahmin whose *illam* was called Granghat *illam*. By profession they were toddy tappers, but since the introduction of prohibition in Madras State, they had been deprived of their livelihood. It seemed that there was an inner belt of some miles within Cochin territory in which the distilling and sale of liquor was prohibited in order to prevent smuggling over the border, and that they, since their house was situated ten miles inland, were affected by this

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"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 881
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vêlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vêlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vêlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vêlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vêlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pân-supâri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vêlans. They are also given a small amount of money,
rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tâluks, the Vêlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tâluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 585
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
656

585 therein laid down, it shall have the incidence of a legal
217 marriage; that is to say, the wife and children shall
656 be entitled to maintenance by the husband or father, respectively, and to succeed to half his self-acquired
[586] property, if he dies intestate; while the parties to such a sambandham cannot register a second sambandham during its continuance, that is, until it is terminated by death or by a formal application for divorce in the Civil
585 Courts. The total number of sambandhams registered
187 under the Act has, however, been infinitesimal, and the
656 reason for this is, admittedly, the reluctance of the men to fetter their liberty to terminate sambandham at will by such restrictions as the necessity for formal divorce, or to undertake the burdensome responsibility of a legal obligation to maintain their wife and offspring. If, as the evidence recorded by the Malabar Marriage Commission tended to show, 'a marriage law in North Malabar, and throughout the greater part of South Malabar, would merely legalise what is the prevailing custom,' it is hard to see why there has been such a disinclination to lend to that custom the dignity of legal sanction." * The following applications to register sambandhams under the Act were received from 1897 to 1904:—

—	Nayars.	Tiyans.	Others.	Total.
1897	28	6	2	36
1898	8	2	4	14
1899	8	2	4	14
1900	8	..	9	17
1901	3	...	1	4
1902	...	...	...	...
1903	2	...	...	2
Total ...	57	10	20	87

* Gazetteer of Malabar.

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

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the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the Infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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large estates. The small holdings, as explained before, are not economical and have low yields. It is, therefore, necessary to make adequate safeguards against the creation of small units.

2.116 Moreover, care should be taken to see that all future plantings are done with improved clones. This can be much better ensured if departmental planting and working of the estates by Forest Department is undertaken instead of leasing the land under Government ownership to individual growers. It may be assumed that out of 3 lakh acres of proposed plantations, 2 lakh acres would be under Government management and the rest would be planted by private growers. The programme may be phased at the rate of 30,000 acres per year. The total investment for the whole programme would thus be Rs. 75 crores.

2.117 In well-managed estates, the trees begin to yield after seven years. Assuming that the new plantings yield at an average rate of 700 lbs. of rubber per acre, the output of rubber from these would increase progressively from 9,380 tons to 37,520 tons in 1971. Full results from the proposed 3 million acres of new plantings would be visible only from 1978 onwards at the rate of additional 93,800 tons per annum.

Pepper

2.118 The cultivation of pepper in India is almost entirely concentrated in this State which produces over 95 per cent of the country's total output. During 1958 India produced about 27,000 tons of pepper, approximately 45 per cent of the overall world production. Before World War II, Indonesia was the leading producer and exporter of pepper, but since then India has assumed that role. Between 1939 and 1951 production of pepper in the country increased by 16 per cent.

2.119 Large scale cultivation of pepper is confined only to the submountain tracts on or below the Western Ghats. It is also grown in the plains but as a protected garden crop in the compounds of houses and not as a plantation crop. Pepper is a perennial climbing crop and lasts for 20 to 30 years. There are on an average 300 to 400 standards (pepper bushes) per acre. On an average, each standard under plantation conditions yields 1 to 2 lbs.; but it is not uncommon to find standards in house compounds yielding even 40 to 50 lbs.

2.120 As in the case of coconut, it is difficult to arrive at a correct estimate of the area under pepper. The estimate prepared by the Directorate of Statistics in Kerala is of the order of 224,658 acres for 1957-58. Of this, Malabar region accounted for 136,854 acres and the rest were in Travancore-Cochin area. The output of pepper during the same year was 26,020 tons in the whole of Kerala, of which the share of Malabar region was 42 per cent. Malabar with over 60 per cent of the area under pepper produces only 42 per cent of the output.

2.121 Per acre yield was the highest in Alleppey and Quilon (402 lbs. per acre) followed by the districts of Trichur, Ernakulam, Trivandrum and Kottayam (375 to 381 lbs. per acre). Malabar region has comparatively very low yields (180 lbs. per acre). This may, perhaps, be due to cultivation of pepper in Malabar on extensive rather than on intensive lines.

464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 128 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 659 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemployment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

162 464 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column 1 of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference betweent labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [871] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix I to Chapter I.

[see p. 311, category 116 -- Analysis]

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TABLE 4

SECTORAL EMPLOYMENT AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY IN KERALA (1955-56)

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433
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171

	Working force			Net value added per worker (Rs.)	
	Kerala		India	Kerala	India
	Lakhs*	Per cent	Per cent		
1. Primary Sector	27.6	54.9	71.8	625	411
2. Secondary Sector	9.7 (100%)	19.3	9.4	539	1,294
(a) Factory Enterprises	1.7 (17.5%)	..	..	1,059	2,500
(b) Non-factory Enterprises	7.8 (80.4%)	..	..	415	915
(c) Mining	0.2 (2.1%)	..	..	..	..
3. Tertiary Sector	13.0	25.8	18.8	975.4	1,249
TOTAL	50.3	100.00	100.00	700.00	651.00

* Recently, the Statistics Department of the Government of Kerala conducted an Integrated Sample Survey. According to this estimate of total employment in Kerala during 1957-58 was 46.3 lakhs. The difference between these estimates and the one given above are obviously due to difference in the concepts used. The concepts used here are based on classification adopted in the 1951 Census. For the purpose of this report figures based on the Census data are being used. Since Techno-Economic Surveys of other States have also used Census data for calculation of working force, the uniformity provided by this data possesses the advantage that it allows inter-State comparisons. The alternative estimates of employment structure in Kerala, as revealed by the Integrated Sample Survey are given below:

659
128
162
464
433

	(In lakhs)
1. Primary Sector	24.5
2. Secondary Sector	9.4
(a) Mining	0.5
(b) Factory	1.5
(c) Non-factory	7.4
3. Tertiary Sector	12.4
TOTAL	46.3

721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 701 664 The power of the king to command his Nayar retainers was checked by periodic assemblies of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

692 681 Within the kingdom, justice was administered at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully.

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change.

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State.

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people;

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

"Europeanism" further enhanced its influence in Malabar with the 177 introduction of new industries and capitalistic enterprise. The coconut, 438 cashew nut and coir industries employ thousands today and have created amongst the people an even greater dependence on the fluctuations of world prices than in the days of the pepper trade. Weaving, tile factories (such as the one founded by the Basel Mission), saw-mills, match factories and metal industries have given many people a new outlook on life which they could never have had in the old days, and has profoundly changed their traditional concepts. Prohibition introduced by [656] the Congress Party Government, with its consequent forbidding of the [293] ancient profession of toddy tapping, has thrown many Tiyas out of [564] work, obliging them to seek their livelihood elsewhere, and modifying for this reason the traditional structure of their economy and family life.

Greater and better medical facilities, as well as a growth in industrial 177 productivity, have brought about a correspondingly sharp rise in the 433 population, so much so, indeed, that today Kerala ranks first in density [161] to the square mile out of the whole of India. Agricultural prosperity has unfortunately not kept pace with this advance, making it often difficult for everyone to obtain food, especially when the monsoon fails, as it often does in the latter part of the year. Foodstuffs, especially [439] grain, have thus to be imported from outside, and when this is not [464] sufficient, many seek work in other parts of the world, leaving their [167] families for years at a time, to emigrate and hire themselves out as labourers in Ceylon, Singapore, and the Malay Federation.

It is not surprising, under the circumstances, that the old order in 177 Kerala has crumbled. Of the rajas and maharajas of old, none are any 631 longer in positions of responsibility, those of Cochin and Travancore having also been made destitute by the recent re-arrangement of States in India. The Nambudri Brahmins are, perhaps, those who, because of 177 their priestly character, continue more than anyone else, to lead the 564 ancient, traditional life. Many of them, however, have gone in for the [491] new enterprises, and if they do not always themselves own and direct them, they have invested funds in them. The younger members of the *illams* appear to be increasingly dissatisfied with their lot, and do not seem prepared to accept the old imperatives of occupation and succession. It may not, after all be just a coincidence that the Communist [665] Party Government now in power in Kerala is headed by a Nambudri Brahmin.

The Nayar caste is no doubt the one that has been the hardest hit by the sweeping changes brought about by altered conditions. But its

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
Kerala AWII

217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

624 *Village administration.*—There is no panchayat. There seems to be scope for one, and educated men are not wanting. The general administration of the village is in the hands of the village munsif or adhikari, who is assisted by the karnam. The adhikari represents the Government in all matters. The village 625 officers can send for the police from the nearest police station— 674 4 miles away. There is no regular police quartered in the village. But there is no need for any. The villagers are not prone to criminal acts and nuisances are not committed. The villagers are terribly afraid of the police too. Above the village officers is the Tahsildar of the taluk, who checks all their acts. Occasionally the Tahsildar or his deputy pays a visit to the village and is warmly welcomed by the prominent landlords. Revenue Inspectors and Land Records Tahsildars also visit the village to verify and check the village accounts. There has been no serious crime of any sort within recent years. Petty thefts are occasionally heard of particularly when corn is very dear and many of the poor actually starve.

691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 Theoretically, office-bearing lineages were supposed to cohere for-
178 ever, the officer being the eldest man of the lineage regardless of branch. In fact, if the lineage continued to expand, some other development would occur within a few generations. What its pattern might be depended on the economic and political circumstances of the times. One pattern was for the political office itself to become divided between the segments some time after they had divided their private domain. The head of each segment would then become ruler in his own right over a portion of the original territory, either (in the case of royals) as an independent small king, or (in the case of district chiefs) as a small chief independent of the rest of his lineage but still owing nominal allegiance to the original king of the kingdom as a whole. This type of fission of offices took place in areas and periods in which for some reason trade was declining, customs dues were running low, and neither king nor chiefs could muster enough extra wealth to fight wars which would maintain them in full political control. This
613 process went on apace from the fifteenth century to the end of the
178 seventeenth both in Kolattunad and in Travancore, the northernmost
175 and southernmost kingdoms of Kerala. They had been powerful
648 kingdoms for a period, with the help of Chinese traders, but declined in the fifteenth century after the Chinese trade collapsed and the Arabs built up Calicut. After 1500, different trading powers supported the smaller chiefs of these areas in trade wars against each other, so that these kingdoms remained weak and disunited until the second quarter of the eighteenth century. During this period segments of the royal lineages in both kingdoms carved up much of each kingdom into virtually independent chiefdoms. Within each of these in turn, the lineages of formerly subordinate Nayar chiefs tended also to break into segments, each retaining control over four or five villages. Early in the eighteenth century the British and French each tried to consolidate North Malabar by allying themselves with different local powers, but their struggles were temporarily eclipsed by invasions from Bednur to the north and later, in the 1760's, from Mysore in the east. In Travancore the process of disintegration persisted until the British obtained a trade monopoly and, in the 1730's, helped the king to reconquer his kingdom once and for all and to establish a bureaucratic form of rule (Innes, 1908: 55–75; Pillai, 1940: 266–466; K. M. Panikkar, 1931: chap. V).

613 The other course of development was for one branch of a ruling
669 lineage to seize the office and most of the private domains and, temporarily or permanently, exclude or banish the others. This process

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the 613
ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and 669
shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade.
Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the
period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth 175
century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups.
The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, sup- 613
ported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and 669
made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 648
they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed
them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656
the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches,
and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. In-
stead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they
should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt
from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between
Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin.
The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch,
and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600.
The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the
Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machina-
tions, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* be-
tween branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship,
supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient
funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thir- 613
teenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly
expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed
it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the
Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no [635]
dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to
say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of [726]
one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because
throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help [648]
of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and,
except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control
and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the
kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid- 635
eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were 578
usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men;
[827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

592 few juniors avail themselves of this right, which
602 is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals
671 of obedience and trust towards elders of the
taravad.

592 Even traditionally, however, both junior men
602 and women were often consulted in the manage-
695 ment of property. If a dispute arose between
421 segments within the group, it was common for
appeal to be made to an arbitrator outside the
lineage, and a settlement reached and embodied
in a document called a karar, which legally bound
all adult members. Such a settlement was likely
in the case of a very old karanavan who decided
to retire in favour of the second man. In a
wealthy taravad he might then by common con-
sent be allotted a small house and pension for
the duration of his life. In desavari and naduvari
taravads, karars were sometimes made to allot
separate houses with lands for the maintenance
of each of the old women of the group (often the
karanavan's own sisters) to live on with their
children and grandchildren. All lands continued
to be managed by the karanavan, but he paid a
sum of paddy from her allotted lands each year
to the senior woman of each segment. If one
sibling group in a taravad contained only broth-
ers, a karar was sometimes made to allot to
them a separate house with lands for the dura-
tion of their lives; this then reverted to the group
as a whole after their deaths. Karars are how-
ever common only in village headmen's, chiefly
or royal taravads: too little property is usually
592 involved in the taravads of retainer Nayars.
602 Here effective management is commonly divided

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 riage tie. Often, the particular persons who officiated as enangar did
592 not happen to be currently having marital relations with any member of that house. This inter-group relationship of ceremonial obligation fitted the fact that particular marital ties were too transient and slender to carry the normal obligations of affinity.

Prerequisites of the Kinship System of Commoners

595 It is not definitely known how the institutions of group marriage and
175 linked lineages arose among Central Kerala Nayars. In 1518 Barbosa, writing of the Nayars of Calicut, stated of group marriage: "And it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (Dames, 1921: 124). Similarly João de Barros wrote at about the same period: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain king to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike
[671] service whensoever the king calls upon them" (*ibid.*: 241). Whether or not group marriage was instituted by a particular royal edict, we know that once it had begun it was enforceable by the laws of the Central kingdoms. Thus, according to at least one authority, a chief could compel a woman to receive as marital partners any of her en-
[613] angar who wished to visit her (K. Kannan Nair, 1908: 186). The rights and duties of enangar in the administration of caste law were also sanctioned by the chief and, ultimately, by the king.

595 Considerable literary evidence suggests that a form of group mar-
175 riage similar to that of Central Kerala existed among Nayars in at
184 least some of the chiefdoms of the kingdom of Travancore in Southern Kerala. K. M. Panikkar, it is true, has argued that Travancore Nayar women were never polyandrous (1918: 270–271). Other Malabari writers, however, responding to Panikkar's statement, have argued convincingly that they were (Aiyappan, 1932*a*, 1932*b*, 1934; Iyer, 1932). K. P. Padmanabha Menon, in particular, supports the view that traditionally Nayar women in both Central and Southern Kerala were "held in common, every woman belonging to all the members of the tribe, and resistance to any of them was severely punished." In support he quotes two early statements concerning the chiefdom of Venmani, with its capital of Kartigapally, in North Travancore. Thus the Portuguese Archbishop Menezes in the mid-sixteenth century reported that "the king of Kartigapally enacted that in his kingdom any Nair was at liberty to be free with any woman of the caste high or low, and that he could kill a woman, with impunity, if she refuses

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

423 613 429 591 the wife's taravād was near his own he might divide his time between his own ancestral house and the private house he had built for his wife and her descendants on her ancestral estate.

Although this was contrary to customary law, some men also man-
613 aged to give jenmam land outright to a wife and her matrilineal de-
431 scendants, thus founding a new branch taravād through the wife.
423 This practice greatly increased in the nineteenth century, when new gardens were continually being developed on former waste land and when land became freely marketable. In 1896, indeed, a law was
[671] finally passed enabling a man's wife and children to inherit half of
[428] his self-acquired intestate property (Malabar Marriage Act, 1896). Occasional gifts of land to the wife and her descendants were, however, known long before the British period, although they were against the law. At the political level, kings and chiefs occasionally gave large domains, together with the office of chief or village head-
[634] man, to their wives' matrilineal descendants. The chiefships of both
[635] Nileswaram and Kadattunad are said to have been formed in this way by gifts from Kolattiri kings before the fourteenth century; both later became virtually independent kingdoms (Logan, 1951, I: 343; Ayyar, 1938: 4). Many smaller territories and political offices were similarly bequeathed during the period of European trade. On a smaller scale, the kāranavan of a Nambiar taravād sometimes managed to take out a portion of the fallow jenmam land of his own taravād, cultivate it, and give it to his wife and her descendants.
[578] Naturally, such gifts, which were in no sense a part of acknowledged
[627] lawful custom, led to disputes with the donor's matrilineal kin and sometimes, in the next generation, to feuds between lineages.

Gifts of land or improvements by a man to his wife's descendants
613 led to the existence of branch property groups, called *tāvari-taravāds*,
431 within the main property group. After the donor's death the wife's
423 kāranavan might manage such a small estate on behalf of her branch, retaining the income separately for her and her children. More com-
592 monly, the donor's eldest son became the kāranavan of the tāvari property, while the branch also continued to receive its ancestral dues out of the property of the taravād as a whole. When a stirpital division of the whole taravād occurred, this branch might claim both its separate estate and its share of the ancestral property. If the donor had been a chief and the gift was large, the branch to which it was given might, however, choose to leave its taravād without taking a share of the ancestral estate and to found a new taravād home on its new land. Tāvari-taravāds were, however, rare among commoners

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

643 rights. Thus did these *kúttams* (assemblies) exercise a whole- 646 some influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his deci- [688] sions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste 623 disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 681 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 564 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There [671] was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

177 595 Because of the profound cultural changes which have fundamentally modified the social and economic structure of Kerala society, it can be said that polyandry is on the decline in that part of the world. Circumstances no longer favour the marriage of many men to one woman, and the custom is not only being abandoned as useless, but those who, by tradition, should follow it, look upon it with abhorrence and with growing disgust. To those who have practised it so long, as something good and moral, it has become, nowadays, something barbarous, primitive an unworthy of them: times have changed and it simply is not done any longer.

ADDENDUM

●671 *Act XVII of 1115, the Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act, passed by His Highness the Maharaja of Cochin on the 18th day of Kumbham 1115, corresponding to the 1st day of March 1940.*

C.V. Iyyu, former Member of the legislative Assembly of Cochin State, told me on the 27th of October, 1949, that he was on the Commission which in 1937-38 drafted the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act of 1940. The majority of the members of the Commission were Tiyas (Thiyyas) and the initiative of the enactment was due to V. K. Krishnan Kutti, M.L.A., *wakil* of Trichur, himself a Tiya. The Act is thus a Tiya legislative reform and not a foreign one. This would explain the fact that it is observed. I hear that the idea is a result of the education and progress of the Tiya community, which now ranks as one of the most accomplished in Kerala.

Some of the main provisions of the Act are given here below. They are those that concern definition of the name Thiyya, of an heir's sex in doubtful cases, acceptable forms of the marriage solemnity, prohibition of polyandry (art. 12), succession both testamentary and intestate:

Chapter I. Five articles.

[101 569 938] Art. 5, (i): "Thiyya includes Ezhuva, Chova, Billava, Marayan, Thandan and others recognized as such." It adds: "When owing to any physical defect or deformity, it is not possible to ascertain the sex of any of the heirs of an intestate, such heirs shall, for the purpose of this Act, be regarded as female."

Chapter II. Marriage and its Dissolution. Thirteen articles.

[585] Art. 6: "Conjugal union may be openly solemnized in any of the following ways:

a) by the tying of the Mangalya Sutram
b) by the presentation of cloth to the female by the male
c) by exchange of rings
d) by mutual garlanding, and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

671 [585]

e) by mutual consent evidenced by a registered instrument attested by not less than two witnesses."

Art. 12: "A polyandrous marriage performed after this Act shall be void." [595]

Chapter III. Maintenance and Guardianship. Three articles.

Chapter IV. Succession.

Five articles on testamentary succession.

Art. 26: "For the purpose of succession there is no distinction between the self-acquired property and the ancestral property or between the property of a male and that of a female except as otherwise provided by this Act." 671 428

Eight articles on Intestate succession.

Art. 28: "Property in respect of which a Thiyya has died intestate devolves upon the wife or husband or upon those who are of the kindred of the deceased in this order and according to the rules herein prescribed."

Art. 29: "When the intestate had left more than one widow, the distribution of inheritance referred to in sections 30, 31, 32 and 33 shall be made as if there is only one widow, all the widows together taking equally one widow's share."

Art. 30. "When the intestate has left a widow, if he has also left a son, or lineal descendant of a son, a share equal to that of a son shall belong to the widow."

Eleven articles on distribution of intestate's property.

Art. 39, (b): "If some of them (lineal descendants) are his (the intestate) sons and others are his daughters, each daughter shall take a half of the share of a son if the intestate is a male, and if the intestate is a female all children shall take equally."

It should be remembered that this legislation is that of a former princely state which has ceased to exist as a separate unit. Today, since the coming into being of the State of Kerala, made up of Malabar, Mahe, Cochin and Travancore, this Act has been superseded by the provisions of the India Code in force now in the whole of the Indian Republic. In accordance with the stipulations of the Code, a larger share of inheritance is granted to daughters and widow than was formerly allowed by the Cochin *Makkathayam* Thiyya Act. [648]

[PP 240-509 not Processed]

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
[778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts
[764] cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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754 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic
789 hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan.
754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who
564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there-
[262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing
[673] children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

bringing them up as their own. The belief that they will steal children helps to some extent to make them dreaded as well as abhorred, but it is as skilled professors of black magic that they are really feared. Ôḍi is the name of the cult, and those who follow it, Parayans as a rule, are able to do many wonderful things. The ordeals to be gone through by the apprentice in the Ôḍi cult are rather trying. Some are so utterly filthy and abominable, eating human excreta being a detail, that even amongst the Parayans, themselves dirty to a degree and accustomed to anything but a high class diet, very few are able to undergo them. Many try, and are unable to proceed. But the man who has gone through them all is a terror. He can make himself invisible, and he can turn himself at will into any animal in order to accomplish his desires. There occurs now and then the death of a woman—a Nâyar or other—enceinte for the first time, the fœtus having been removed for use in black magic.*

754 564 [673] 754 564 795

The Parayan magician, or Ôḍiyan as he is sometimes called, being a pastmaster in Ôḍi, is credited with power to render himself invisible, using such a fœtus; and even without it, he may force a woman to leave her house at midnight and meet him. There would seem to be some connection, however obscure, with hypnotism and this latter. The Parayan, who turns himself into a bullock, in such guise, circumambulates a house thrice; then, still by means of magic, he compels a certain woman of the household to come out to him. If we follow up popular belief, we find that the Nâyar woman so drawn out of her house is bound to die within three days. But as it is well in a description of this kind, to proceed by illustration when possible, I will quote an authenticated story of a woman having been compelled to leave her house by night. The "walking the dæsil" by the bullock, one of those imaginative performances difficult to account for in human belief, must be left out of the story as no one is said to have seen it.

754

A Nâyar noticed that, for some days, his wife, who was (contrary to the usual custom, as we have seen it to be) living in his house, appeared to be under some occult influence; and under a premonition that something was

* Not very long ago there was a case of this kind, not far from Palghat, and not only was the fœtus removed but a wisp of straw was substituted in its place; apparently with an idea that, if the space were filled up somehow, the wretched woman would not die!

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

744 Inspector the outbreak of any epidemic. He makes tours in the villages; the two vaccinators in the taluk are under him. These vaccinators have to make tours in the taluk according to a programme previously laid down by the Sanitary Inspector. Public wells, tanks, cremation grounds, markets, cart-stands, etc., are also under his supervision. All towns which have no town-councils (and our town has not) are under health-officers, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon acting as the Health Officer. He attends to lighting.

625 *Police.*—Police administration is under a Sub-Inspector who has constables under him. He is under a Divisional Inspector (of whom there are three in the State) with a Superintendent of Police above him. There is, as a rule, one Sub-Magistrate for each taluk.

674 The official figures for the detection of crime are available only for a division of which there are three (A, B and C) in the State, and not for a village. The figures for the C Division, in which my village lies, are as follows:—

Cases.						Persons.						Property.					
1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.		
Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.
												RS.	RS.		RS.	RS.	
165	143	86·6	56	77	80·2	240	192	80	149	91	61	3,762	1,146	30·46	4,372	2,208	50·50

178 *History and Prospects of the village.*—I see no signs of economic improvement in the past; nor is there much deterioration worth speaking about. There has been, however, an increase in population in recent times. There has been no diversity of occupation. The same routine of paddy cultivation goes on with the old primitive tools and implements. Much capital is not invested even for agricultural improvements for the excellent reason that the small landholders who form the majority cannot afford to experiment on a grand scale, and the few big landholders are sleeping partners distributing their holdings to small men for rent. Nevertheless there are opportunities for economic improvement. The establishment of co-operative credit societies is an urgent need. An "Agricultural Society" consisting of members of the occupation could be conveniently started to diffuse modern scientific ideas in agriculture by distributing pamphlets in the vernacular and discussing questions of importance. A little more attention could be given to the rearing of agricultural stock and the use of agricultural implements. As irrigation does not depend for the most part upon wells in our parts, there is no use in multiplying them.

[454]

454 People buy land because land is the best form of investment

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

construction made of woven palm leaves and thatched, and we interviewed two men: Raman, aged fifty seven, and his eldest son, Kutikrishnan, who was thirty five. The name of the household and *tarawad* was Perinkulam. 595* [342] [614]

Kutikrishnan told us that he had two fathers, Raman, who was with us that day, and Shangu, a younger one, aged fifty five, who was absent. All his fathers' sisters, and there had been three of them, had died in infancy. His mother was called Lakshmi and was fifty; I was unable to ascertain the name of the *tarawad* from which she came. Kutikrishnan's wife bore the same name as his mother and he had had three boys and a girl by her. Only the daughter was alive, as the sons had all died of what he described as "convulsions". 595* 601 [165]

I asked why, if the fathers had been polyandrous, the second generation was not so too. Informant 1 attributed it to times having changed and "civilization spreading". By this he meant that people did not wear their hair tied in the typical Kerala top-knot on one side of the forehead any longer and had also taken to growing moustaches; he said, too, that it was the women now who objected to having more than one husband. In some marriage agreements, it was specified, he said, that the daughter of the house would only be given to one man. It was particularly in wealthy families that this was taking place, because they could afford it. Raman, informant 2, when consulted as to what he thought of these new ways, said that they were bad, but what could be done about them? In olden days, it was always said that polyandry was good because: "Where four breasts cannot agree, two heads can", meaning that the women cannot live in peace together while the men can. Nowadays, the young people did not seem to understand this, and the result was that property was split up between sons and life made harder for them. 595* 178 [302] [675]

When I came to make out the genealogy of the family, I found that in spite of all this talk about new-fangled ways, Amini, Kutikrishnan's sister was married polyandrously to three brothers of a *tarawad* called Warode. It was significant, however, that both informants disclaimed any knowledge of the names of the brothers of the elder husband, Narayan. Later, I heard that although Madhavan, a younger brother of informant 1, aged eighteeen, had not been publicly married to his sister-in-law, Lakshmi, he was known to share her with his brother in the old, traditional polyandrous way. The genealogy is given in Table 13. 595* 601

The carpenter sub-caste of the Kammalans, Raman told us, have exogamous *tarawads* and *kiriyams*. They too, while observing the rule strictly for the *makkathayam tarawad*, are not so careful about it in the 569 614 582

[Text Continues on P. 201]

721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 701 664 The power of the king to command his Nayar retainers was checked by periodic assemblies of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

682 681 Within the kingdom, justice was administered at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

692 shrine and temporary ostracism were the chief
681 punishments, but at least among Iravas, grave offenders were sometimes excommunicated with the consent of the janmi and sold in slavery to
623 Arab traders. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages, who met
[582] chiefly at marriages and funerals. In all of these castes, the local group of the assembly, while not strictly endogamous, was the group within which the majority of marriages took place.

631 Among retainer-Nayars, the local group might
692 comprise either one large desam, or a group of
681 two to four adjacent desams when these were occupied by retainer Nayars of the same subcaste. Such an area was called a tara in South Malabar and a kara in Cochin, the assembly, a tara-koottam or kara-yogam. The assembly comprised the headmen of all Nayar property-groups who met to settle intra-caste disputes, adjudicate in trials of offences against caste law and arrange the public ceremonies of their common Bhagavadi temple. Offences such as wrongful interdining with low caste men, small debts, thefts and adultery with women of the lower polluting castes were punished by fines paid to [34] the Bhagavadi temple, or in grave cases by excommunication, and sale into slaver. Similarly intra-caste offences were settled among desavaris within an assembly of the nad, and among nadavaris within an assembly of the kingdom. The local Nayar assembly also had power to arbitrate in disputes and offences against the village at large among the lower castes. Some

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[564] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

613 range. The rule of exogamy, and the sense of close kinship which bound members of a lineage meant that the local subcaste group of the kara (whether this comprised one or more lineages) was divided into a small number of compact groups. At assemblies the members separated out into lineage groupings. Only the legal heads (karanavans) of property-groups attended such assemblies, and within each lineage these tended to defer to each other on the basis of age, spokesmanship being left to the eldest man(also sometimes called a karanavan) of the lineage as a whole.

613 Though it owned no property in common, the
•681 lineage was in some contexts a corporate group in the sense of having legal responsibility for its members' acts. If some member of a lineage broke a caste law, for example by dining or fornicating with a low caste person or failing to pay dues to the temple, his whole lineage was temporarily ostracized by the assembly until it called him to book. [42] His property-group must then pay a fine (prayaschittam) to the assembly and he must go through a rite of purification before his lineage could be readmitted to caste. In cases of grave offence such as fornication with a Paraya woman, his lineage was during British rule ostracized until he had been excommunicated from lineage and caste and his funeral rites performed; during native rule until he had been executed by order of the chief of the king.

613 In other ways, the lineage held itself respon-
628 sible for disputes entered into by its members.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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613 564 765 783 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

613 776 794 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members [782] propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power [588] to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was [842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the [753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of [626] caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, [784] she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 681 564 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was [692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge [623] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 681 564 [784]

castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

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The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

613 his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the prop-
592 erty group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor
681 on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new
[687] district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village
headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with
[703] property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

613 The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was con-
592 ferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority
of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior
681 members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal
692 punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

613 It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de*
592 *facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior
men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable
681 that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of
692 officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their prop-
703 erty groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

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rights. Thus did these *kúttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers and Brahmans in administering it. All caste disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on them in former times:—When any member of a low-caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

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175 The
564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days
during which every method of torture known to the keepers of
the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued
in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore
that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty
person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into
a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted
guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form
of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not
confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a
mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrap-
ped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was
guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of
alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom
seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a
cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68–69.

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nád*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désa vázhi.

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castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

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The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

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of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

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The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. [628]

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kārana-* [694]
van. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kārana-*
van's misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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Nayar

to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

RELIGION.

It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and women can scarcely wear less than they do in compatibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under [178]
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for [201]
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. . . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise."

175 868 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is

175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Nayar

175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat * that the Nāyars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nāyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sanskrit Nāyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.

† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.

‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

796 In some families, after
the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

613 no other personal relationship can override this:
593 both sexes have their permanent home with the mother throughout her life and accord her unfailing [70] reverence and affection. From this bond issues the unity of the sibling group, (9) particularly the strong tie between brother and sister which emotionally reflects the dependence of men on their mothers. With the elder sister as with the mother a man has an intimate relationship of reverence mingled with easy familiarity: the two may sit together and discuss affairs of their kin-group, and the sister early accords her brother the right to discipline her children. With her elder brother, as with her maternal uncle, after her puberty, a woman must maintain a formal etiquette of partial avoidance: she may not sit before him speak to him unasked, or be alone in a room or a house with him. Only if she gravely offends against traditional morality, he may traditionally beat her even after puberty, for a Nayar woman owes the same obedience to all older matrilineal kinsmen as a collectivity as does a woman of the patrilineal castes to her father and later her
[684] husband. Incest with the younger sister or classificatory sister or sister's daughter is a most heinous crime, formerly punishable by death, and in modern times by total ostracism by the caste and lineage. It does however occasionally take place and is evidently recognized as a temptation under matrilocal residence, hence the formal etiquette imposed to counter it.
592 In a traditional taravad, therefore, women form the core of the group: men stand on the

595 Traditionally, the visiting lover placed his wea-
833 pons outside the door as a warning to other men that he was within. My informants reported that more recently, until the end of the nineteenth century in some villages, if two lovers of a woman called on the same night the one who came last slept outside on the verandah. Usually the regular lovers of a woman (who might not be from the same lineage) knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

595 It is difficult to decide from the evidence whether this instution of combined polyandrous and polygynous mating can strictly be regarded as "marriage" in any usual sense of the term. Personally, I prefer the word "marriage" for the ritual marriage of talikettukalyanam (which old English speaking Nayars even today state to have been "the real marriage"), because it gave ceremonial recognition, to a stable relationship of perpetual hereditary affinal kinship between lineages in the local group. Moreover, although exclusive sexual rights in the woman were given up at once at the "divorce", the observance of death [74] pollution by the woman and her children indicates that in some sense the relationship was thought to continue for life.

595 However, the evidence suggests that post-
684 puberty liaisons too were perhaps not entirely
851 promiscuous; moreover, the more permanent of them at all events were attended by ceremonial obligations. First, liaisons were strictly limited to men of the appropriate "good" castes: sex unions with men of lower caste were categorically forbidden and for women, punishable

595 by immediate death. For this reason it was
684 necessary, when a woman became pregnant, for
685 her to be able to name one or more lovers of appropriate subcaste who might have fathered the child. These men must then acknowledge their responsibility by paying the expenses of delivery (petta chilavu - clothing, rice and vegetables) to the barber-midwife who attended at births. If no appropriate lover came forward to do so, the woman was deemed to have cohabited with a low caste man and was excommunicated. Even today, a girl who becomes pregnant before the (modern) marriage ceremony is easily exculpated if she can name a Nayar or higher caste lover who will pay her deliver expenses. She is then by old custom tacitly regarded as having been married to him, and if he chooses not to visit her again, has little difficulty in finding a second husband. If however no expenses are paid, she is assumed to have had relations with a low caste man, a Christian or a Muslim, and though excommunication is not now effectual, she falls into social disgrace. She is unlikely henceforth to find a Nayar husband, and her household may find difficulty in marrying away other girls of her generation

595 In addition to the delivery expenses, a Nayar
586 of the local subcaste group who entered into a relationship with a girl was expected to present her with a loincloth on the first night of visiting her. Thereafter, if he continued to visit her, he must make customary gifts of clothing, [75] bathing- and hair-oil, and vegetables, at Onam, Vishu and Tiruvadhira, (10) the three main

581 outside on the verandah before he comes to visit
595 her.

These statements however again require some modification in the case of hypergamous unions. In recent years at all events, a powerful Nambudiri or royal landowner might occasionally force his attentions on a Nayar woman, whose family would be unlikely to oppose him. In two cases I even heard of Nambudiris who had succeeded in carrying on a liaison with a dead Nayar wife's younger sister, though this is contrary to Nayar rules of mating and led to unhappiness and strong covert [77] disapproval among the woman's kinsmen. In general, however, the traditional picture of Nayar marriage is one in which women voluntarily seek the favours of men: rape, for example, is a crime
684 apparently unheard of among them. Certainly, cases are recorded of the dismissal of a higher caste man by a Nayar woman.

613 Combined polyandrous and polygynous mating
595 had a function in maintaining the unity of the
572 lineage. It seems that in every matrilineal system one basic conflict is inherent, namely the conflict between a man's ties to his natal kin on the one hand and to his kin by marriage and procreation on the other. In the Nayar system in this area, the conflict was resolved by almost completely eliminating the claims of the father and his kin. Polyandry and polygyny, combined, minimized the rights of the husband and father, and dispersed their roles between a number of men. This preserved the unity of the lineage, by preventing the close attachment of men to

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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613 681 564 [784]

castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

613 681 684 564

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

613 682 [696]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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604 613 561 578 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 561 578 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy rctained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work. [429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her [684] caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 584 595 178 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became customary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter. In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities. [861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

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duels as well as illegal battles between lineages seem to have been fought chiefly to vindicate a kinwoman from the unproven charge of cohabitation with a man of low caste, or to protect her from any form of obscene slander. Such approved forms of aggression against Nayars of other lineages may have provided outlets for a brother's sexual jealousy, which he might show only covertly toward his sister's socially recognized husbands. If, on the other hand, a woman were finally judged guilty of sexual relations with a man of low caste, the law permitted her brothers to vent their jealous fury by putting her and her lover to death.

BROTHERS

The relationship between brothers had much in common with that between a man and his sister's son. Age rank was of the greatest significance: even twins, or classificatory brothers born on the same day, were mutually ranked in terms of birth order, the elder preceding the younger in succession to the kāranavanship. Brothers near in age played together in early childhood, but toward adolescence their behavior became formalized to the point of partial avoidance. The elder might command the junior to do small tasks for him. A much older brother might inflict corporal punishment within the limits set by the kāranavan's authority. In general, a man's etiquette in the presence of his brother was the same as that shown to the mother's brother. A man whose elder brother was also his kāranavan treated him with even greater respect and when possible avoided his presence.

The social distance required between brothers must have been made possible by the fact that they were often absent from home, and that, when home, they had little need to coöperate in work. In modern times a man who resides with his elder brother or mother's brother usually works independently outside the taravād, spends much time in his wife's house, and restricts his intercourse with his senior to mealtimes and to formal consultations concerning their property. Unfortunately we do not know what, if any, was the structure of authority or the division of functions between brothers who traditionally fought together in war.

Great rivalry was admitted to exist in the relationship between brothers. They were thought of as bound to the taravād through their mother and sisters, rather than directly to each other. At the same time, sons of the same mother could be expected to support each other in conflicts with children of the mother's sister, while both sibling groups might experience a common resentment of their maternal uncles' authority. In broader contexts, the men of a property

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this
[431] again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obligation. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the
586 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
613 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or
[839] village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[564] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

000 574 [593] [604] taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, observed rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions—during their periods of co-residence.

591 582 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, [illegible]2). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often [593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a [764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] [848] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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585 684 848

and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

593 [591]

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

[264] [844] [613] [431]

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

[595]

586

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

587

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

[858]

593 184 858 [613]

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine 628
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste 688
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the 564
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear 684
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the 682
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the 564
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible 421
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in 476
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members 629
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were 626
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 613
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this 694
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former 787
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts 782
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is 184
clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

591
184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion, suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not 585 be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635] usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâduvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

564 Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
631 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
613 were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*, appointed by the Raja or the *nâduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701] gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *taravâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the 582
divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the 586
family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adul- [684]
tery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, [689]
who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, 586
who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families [578]
and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. [684]
Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her [626]
status in society.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during 843
her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the [787]
astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of [824]
the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing east-
wards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is neces- [301]
sary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand [593]
ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his [411]
left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

Pulikudi.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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rights. Thus did these *kúttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

643

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste 623 disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 681 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There 564 was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custo[illegible] fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the ca[illegible] and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 ● them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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175 The
564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days
during which every method of torture known to the keepers of
the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued
in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore
that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty
person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into
a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted
guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form
of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not
confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a
mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrap-
ped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was
guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of
alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom
seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a
cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

494 the services, which have declined from Rs. 23.8 lakhs in 1956-57 to Rs. 17.4 lakhs
652 in 1959-60.

8.24 The allotments during the Second Plan for the construction of roads and
499 bridges were Rs. 2.146 crores and Rs. 1.932 crores respectively. The expenditure on
491 roads and bridges in the first four years of the Plan amounted to Rs. 2.871 crores and
652 Rs. 1.041 crores. The expenditure on maintenance in the three years 1956–59 was about Rs. 2.956 crores. The achievement in respect of road construction, improvement and upgrading and construction of major bridges lagged seriously behind targets in the fourth year of the Second Plan.

8.25 The Central Government's expenditure on the construction and improvement of national highways was as follows:

1958-59	Actual	Rs. 11 lakhs
1959-60	Revised Estimate	Rs. 32 lakhs
1960-61	Budget Estimate	Rs. 55 lakhs

493 8.26 The number of buses and trucks rose sharply in the State during the four
494 years of the Second Plan; but particulars are lacking regarding the amount of public or private investment on vehicles. The nationalized passenger services planned to add 460 buses to the fleet, 300 for rehabilitation and new 160 for operating on a stretch of 400 miles of roads. If achieved, this would involve an investment of the order of Rs. 2 crores. Between 1956-57 and 1958-59 the capital at charge rose by Rs. 78.4 lakhs only.

THE INLAND WATERWAYS

487 8.27 The inland waterways of the State comprise: (*a*) the west coast canal system, stretching continuously except for a land-locked break between Azhikkal and Badagara (29.5 miles) a distance of over 347 miles from Trivandrum to Hosdurg; (*b*) cross canals, 387 miles long, mostly in the south of the State serving the commercial region in the midlands, and about 521 navigable miles in its various rivers. The Ashtamudi and Vembanad lakes provide extensive navigation facilities for traffic to and from Alleppey, Kottayam, Quilon and Cochin.

8.28 The waterways present a variety of problems though none of them are insuperable. These should be tackled systematically as the waterways promise superior economic advantages. Natural limitations arise from weather and rainfall; most rivers are navigable upto their middle reaches only during the period of the monsoons. In many places they are narrow and shallow (e.g., on the Trivandrum-
487 Quilon route). Dredging is often insufficient and even the dredgers are unsuitable
503 for dredging the narrow sections. Tugging services are required in hazardous areas, e.g., Pathiramanal-Munroe light area in the Vembanad lake. Bridges are often low, as in Varkala and on the Trivandrum-Quilon route, and they do not permit operation, particularly of passenger boats. Landing places have not been provided in many
505 places, and where they are, they are not maintained in proper condition for use. A
[688] great drawback of water transport is insecurity and pilferage of the cargo. The

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [482] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [572] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year.
574 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob-
[593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions
[604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of
this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two
582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger
the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a
613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together,
591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often
[593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although
they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early
[763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal an-
cestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively
[586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and
[764] sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a
woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed
in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their
[431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, im-
portant distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal
kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing
to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part
of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship
(sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's
sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant.
[686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to
him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the
husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out
with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for
a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been
consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially con-
ducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received
into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his
wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom
[848] kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after
divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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613 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason
687 against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge
627 him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth
[178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction
613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis-
627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor
835
837

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, housework, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding. 613 462 [296] [243]

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Although their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mistress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast. 613 566 357

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kāranavans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law. 613 592 [692]

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries. [423]

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally responsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the taravād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and 613 592 681 [687]

his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the property group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was conferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their property groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and pleasure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws of the country.

Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuosity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest
corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings
were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949,1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine 628
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste 688
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the 564
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear 684
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the 682
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the 564
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective responsibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 626
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or 783
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible 421
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in 476
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. 628

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. 694
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former 787
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts 782
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed
[825] that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be
776 remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out
825 of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles
[231] seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

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182 Internal structure of the caste.
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Caste assigns to each individual his profession or calling; and when once the system is handed down from father to son, and from generation to generation, it is found impossible for any person or his descendants to change for any other the condition of life which the law assigns to him. The most far-sighted and prudent men in ancient times probably found such an institution to be the only means for maintaining a system of civilisation amongst a people endowed with the peculiar characteristics of the Hindus.

The important principle which guided all ancient legislators was, that no man in the commonwealth should be left without work. At the same time, they knew that the people were indolent by nature. They were further aware of the fact that, unless every individual was duly provided with some work, for which he might be best fited, the social fabric must necessarily fall to pieces. The law-givers therefore established durable and inviolable rules for the different castes constituting
[626] the Hindu race, the violation of which brings divine displeasure, and meets with severe punishment both in this world
● [688] and in the world to come.

It is some such guiding principle that is involved in the
564 division of the Nayars into various sub-castes. In Kerala the
174 Brahmans seem to have been instrumental in the formation of castes to some extent; for, it is found that some castes have to do services in temples to Brahmans. Distinct professional
[463] groups in the tribal organisations may have existed there before the advent of these people, who probably found it easy to make a ready adjustment of the social groups, and thought it advisable to assign to them well defined occupations. Therefore, the original institution of the caste system does not merit any serious condemnation.

Some are of opinion that it is not quite correct to say that the Nayars are a caste, and that it would be better to call them a tribe, as Bhattacharya has done in his 'Castes and
[114] Sects'. I am however inclined to think that the name is not quite appropriate, and that they do form a caste of people, known as Malayali Sudras.

564 In regard to subdivisions, there is no uniformity. So numerous and varied are they in Cochin, Malabar, and Travancore, that titles of distinction that have been conferred upon

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the
585 Marriage customs. Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity,[1] and the omission or neglect of it
[688] will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered
[182] a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *káranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of
[787] the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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rights. Thus did these *kuttams* (assemblies) exercise a wholesome influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramánis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his decisions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban [688] is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste 623 disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 681 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 564 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There [671] was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does not account for the superstition against crossing water, which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a complete military organisation among the Sudras 634
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désuvázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nad*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désa vázhi.

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Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

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622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364 There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

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217 text-books and general literature. Most Nayar families have Malayalam translations of the Ramayana, etc., which they read during the midday rest from work, i.e., one member of the house who can read, reads aloud to others. There cannot be more than a hundred Malayalam books. The Brahman ladies own a few song books and story books in Tamil.

624 *Village administration.*—There is no panchayat. There seems to be scope for one, and educated men are not wanting. The general administration of the village is in the hands of the village munsif or adhikari, who is assisted by the karnam. The adhikari represents the Government in all matters. The village 625 officers can send for the police from the nearest police station— 674 4 miles away. There is no regular police quartered in the village. But there is no need for any. The villagers are not prone to criminal acts and nuisances are not committed. The villagers are terribly afraid of the police too. Above the village officers is the Tahsildar of the taluk, who checks all their acts. Occasionally the Tahsildar or his deputy pays a visit to the village and is warmly welcomed by the prominent landlords. Revenue Inspectors and Land Records Tahsildars also visit the village to verify and check the village accounts. There has been no serious crime of any sort within recent years. Petty thefts are occasionally heard of particularly when corn is very dear and many of the poor actually starve.

691 Of late there is a growing tendency towards litigation, especially among half-educated people. Most of the cases are civil causes involving small sums of property. The object may be to recover unpaid debts, long arrears of rent, etc., or to establish claims to property where such are disputed. Most litigation has relation to the possession or tenancy of land and other property rights. [627] The chief landlords have a power—resting upon their position, dignity and tradition—of settling small civil disputes between their tenants. The tenants dare not transgress their wishes. So arbitration by the janmi may settle many disputes, especially civil ones. Many cases are also settled amicably by the intervention of respectable and trustworthy persons of the village. The village munsif has jurisdiction in petty cases. But in all these cases the tendency is to resort more and more to the courts. But persons who have experience of them complain of the worries of litigation, even if successful in the end. This is a strong restraining influence.

178 *History and prospects of village.*—There seems to be clear evidence of economic deterioration, though in some respects there 511 is slight improvement. Thus, many families which were once well-to-do have been reduced to abject poverty or very adverse circumstances. It is inconceivable that this is due, in all or most cases, to individual folly or vices. There is not a proportionate increase of persons of the well-to-do classes when compared with other classes. The head "others" in the Census report is steadily growing, while the numbers of landholders and labourers (i.e., agricultural workers) are decreasing.* This, in a village where

* [This is chiefly due to a change in the system of classification.—Ed.]

721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 The power of the king to command his Nayar
701 retainers was checked by periodic assemblies
664 of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

692 Within the kingdom, justice was administered
681 at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

692 shrine and temporary ostracism were the chief
681 punishments, but at least among Iravas, grave offenders were sometimes excommunicated with the consent of the janmi and sold in slavery to
623 Arab traders. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages, who met
[585] chiefly at marriages and funerals. In all of these castes, the local group of the assembly, while not strictly endogamous, was the group within which the majority of marriages took place.

631 Among retainer-Nayars, the local group might
692 comprise either one large desam, or a group of
681 two to four adjacent desams when these were occupied by retainer Nayars of the same subcaste. Such an area was called a tara in South Malabar and a kara in Cochin, the assembly, a tara-koottam or kara-yogam. The assembly comprised the headmen of all Nayar property-groups who met to settle intra-caste disputes, adjudicate in trials of offences against caste law, and arrange the public ceremonies of their common Bhagavadi temple. Offences such as wrongful interdining with low caste men, small debts, thefts and adultery with women of the lower polluting castes were punished by fines paid to [34] the Bhagavadi temple, or in grave cases by excommunication, and sale into slaver. Similarly intra-caste offences were settled among desavaris within an assembly of the nad, and among nadavaris within an assembly of the kingdom. The local Nayar assembly also had power to arbitrate in disputes and offences against the village at large among the lower castes. Some

631 cases were carried voluntarily by low caste
692 disputants of different castes to the Nayar ass-
681 embly, but this might also step in by forces in disputes which threatened the peace of the village. Punishments included beatings and fines
[564] to the temple. However, Nayars and Nambudiris had also the power of life and death over their serfs and might have these killed without recourse to a higher authority. Any Nayar had, for example, the right to spear at sight a Pulaya who accidentally touched him, refused to recede from his approach, or insulted a Nayar woman.

681 In the castes above the serfs, grave crimes
692 were carried to the court of the king. Murder, sacrilege, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, and theft from a man of "good" caste, were punishable by death. Brahmans and women, however, were never officially put to death. Brahmans were excommunicated by their own assemblies, women were sold into slavery with the Arabs. If, however, a Nayar woman fornicated with a man of lower caste (an offence legally punishable by excommunication and slavery) it is recorded that in fact her own brothers, with the tacit consent of [35] the ruler, would themselves spear her to death. The death sentence for men of the polluting castes was impalement, for Nayars, spearing, and for Muslims, hanging. Unsolved civil disputes between high caste men and Muslims were tried in the royal court by ordeal, usually of boiling oil.

564 It is interesting to notice that the higher the
571 caste, the wider the field of social relations.
631 For the serfs and lower polluting castes, this

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701 702 634 564 castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and 726 the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use [411] after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized [177] (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

726 Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the 177 Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic [436] feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

564 Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each 692 local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with [681] members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders [567] were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then be- [439] came the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

564 Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the 621 Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This [692] area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; [623] we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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or *kara-yōgam* (Logan, 1951, I: 87–88, 132–133). The functions of intra-caste administration of the Nayar assembly are discussed later in connection with the lineage.

The village headman, assisted by representatives from the Nayar retainers, judged small civil cases concerning debt, petty theft, or trespass. He appropriated the fines in these cases (Munro, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 288). Individual Nayars also arbitrated in small civil disputes carried voluntarily to them by disputants within their own or the lower castes. Serfs came directly under the jurisdiction of their Nayar or Brāhman masters, who had the power of life and death over them.

In the castes above the serfs, larger civil disputes and grave crimes were judged in the court of either chief or king. Chiefs' (*nāduvaris'*) judicial powers varied with the size of their armies, but feudatory princes (*svarūpis*) retained complete judicial rights with power over life and death (Ayyar, 1938: 272). So also did the Brahman managers of temple estates, although they called upon some local chief to carry out their judgments. Murder, sacrilege, treason, the wounding of a cow or of a Brahman, indecent assault of a woman, and grave theft from a man of "good" caste were generally punishable by death (*ibid.*: 282). Brahmans and women, however, were never officially executed by order of the king. All offenses among Brahmans were tried by an assembly of the Brahman neighborhood, which, with the local ruler's approval, might excommunicate the offender. If a woman of any caste above serfs was convicted of a capital offense the king had the right to sell her into slavery.

The higher the cast, the wider the field of social relations. Among the serfs and the higher polluting castes this was confined to a group of adjacent villages. Among temple servants, village headmen, and retainer Nayars (apart from their excursions in war) the field of social relations was the chiefdom. Among chiefs and royalty it was the kingdom, and among Brahmans, Kerala.

Hypergamy in the Upper Castes

Each of the castes below Nayar temple menials was endogamous, as is usual in the caste system throughout India. But among the higher "clean" castes the integration of political offices and of the larger territorial units was strengthened by hypergamous marriages. By hypergamy I mean the marriage of a woman of lower caste to a man of higher caste.

In discussing hypergamy it is necessary to explain the descent

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613 were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The
[592] reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

613 However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be
592 forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmenta-
768 tion within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which
[614] had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

613 In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the
[578] households of the disputants and were normally settled through ap-
[692] peal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

[614] As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations
[834] were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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in her care particular daily tasks in connection with cooking, house- 613
work, the pounding of paddy, and the tending of small children. The 462
minimal unit of one woman and her own children, although having a special solidarity emotionally, was given very little recognition in the division of work. Women cooked communally in the kitchen, bathed [296]
and washed their own and any children's clothes in company in the bathing pool, and at the harvests moved in household groups to the [243]
fields to help the serf women of their families in cutting paddy. Nayar women's agricultural work, however, was subsidiary and they took no part in the more arduous tasks of transplanting and weeding.

The women of a Nayar retainer lineage also owed services to women 613
of the landlord household to which their lineage was attached. Al- 566
though their lower-caste rank prevented them from touching their mis- 357
tress or entering her kitchen, they swept the house, accompanied its womenfolk to their bathing pool, and did various household chores. The landlord household normally chose three or four favorites from among the lineages attached to them to perform these services, but women of any retainer household might be summoned during the special preparations for a feast.

Authority and Responsibility Property groups, rather than lineages, 613
were the main legal units within the local caste group. Their kārana- 592
vans formed the neighborhood assembly. Within the assembly, a [692]
kāranavan acted on behalf of his property group in managing the Nayar temple, settling small civil disputes in his own and lower castes, and adjudicating in cases of offense against Nayar religious law.

A kāranavan also represented his property group in its relations with its feudal lord and with higher authorities of the kingdom. We have [423]
seen that the property group and not the lineage held land on tenure from its landlord, and that although a lineage was attached to a landlord by hereditary right, the landlord conducted all economic transactions separately with the head of each property group within it. Similarly, each kāranavan was required to represent his own property group in ceremonial attendance on his village landlord, the chief of his district, or (if he were a direct vassal of the royal lineage) his king, at religious festivals associated with the temples of these dignitaries.

On behalf of his property group, a kāranavan was held legally re- 613
sponsible for his juniors in most types of legal offense. He paid their 592
fines from taravād funds if they were found guilty of petty theft or 681
debt before the village headman or the chief. If a member of the tara- [687]
vād was convicted in the royal court of treason, his kāranavan and

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613 his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the prop-
592 erty group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor
681 on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new
[687] district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village
headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with
[703] property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

613 The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was con-
592 ferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority
681 of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior
members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal
692 punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

613 It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de*
592 *facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior
681 men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable
692 that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of
703 officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their property groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members [629]
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. [694]
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* [833] ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover [431] customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was [843] obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low- [851] caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been [431] licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. 851 Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their 601 lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the 564 house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her [613] children.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony 613 shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. 588 This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by [881] her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of 621 villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co- 564 operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollu- [692] tions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. 613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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643 rights. Thus did these *kuttams* (assemblies) exercise a whole- 646 some influence, and act as a powerful check upon the rulers and ministers of the middle ages.[1] They also dealt with wider questions of castes and other matters affecting the welfare of the people. In former times there were also minor councils 623 of *Pramdnis* or leaders of the people in every *Desam* exercising similar social functions. A survival of this system even now exists in every village, and their deliberations and decisions upon social matters and caste disputes have great weight. In important matters such as the outcasting of a member of the caste, etc., His Highness the Raja who has always been the [643] social as well as the political head of the State would deliberate [692] upon them with the help of the Brahman *vaidiks*, and his deci- [688] sions become final. The individual who is placed under a ban is prohibited from entering any temple, bathing in the public tanks, and is, in short, ostracised.

Administration of justice.

The Rajas were in former times the fountain of all justice, 643 but were assisted by *Karyakkars* or ministers 692 and Brahmans in administering it. All caste disputes and offences were left to the caste assemblies to deal 623 with, while civil disputes were either left to the arbitration of 681 the caste assemblies or of three or four prominent men. There 564 was no written code, but the punishments assigned by custom [671] fitted the crimes, and they varied with the status of the caste and of the person. The nobles enjoyed the privilege of freedom from confinement. The Brahmans and women were never put to death; the former were punished for grave offences by loss of caste and banishment, and the latter by being sold as slaves. The punishment of death was reserved for such heinous [688] offences as sacrilege, the wilful murder of a Brahman or a cow. The following is a summary of the account given by 175 Duarte Barbosa, pp. 116—117, regarding the methods of dealing 564 with criminals and the nature of the punishments inflicted on 685 them in former times:—When any member of a low caste committed robbery about which a complaint had been made to the king or the governor, orders were issued for his apprehension, and if he was caught and he confessed his guilt, he was generally impaled. His head was severed, and the body being placed on its back, the arms and legs were fastened with ropes to four posts, while the multitude to show their contempt spat upon it. If, however, the malefactor was a Moor, he was beheaded. The

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 76-77.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Ucharal is the date on which all agricultural leases should expire, and demand for surrender of property should not be made at any other time, but the courts, by a liberal interpretation, have extended the term up to the day of *Vishu*. Special *Ucharal* festivals are held at Cherpulasseri in the Walluvanad Taluk and near Shoranur, at which straw models of cattle are taken in procession to the temples of Bhagavati.

241
425
[692]
[184]

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556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

morning and evening and also in the leisure hours of the noon. 538
I have often noted with interest the way in which even apparently illiterate people discuss among themselves the philosophy of life as preached in the Hindu sastras.

Village administration.—Panchayats were only introduced into 623
the State in 1913. His Highness granted it as one of his boons during the celebration of his sixtieth birthday. "It is also my wish to revive, in commemoration of this occasion, the old village panchayat system which, I trust, will give facilities to the people to settle several matters of each village easily and quickly amongst themselves and give them some training in the art of self-government. It may also afford them better opportunities of representing their wants and grievances to the Darbar." With this Proclamation of His Highness the Raja begins the definition of the constitution and powers of the Village Panchayat Regulation.

Constitution.—Five members of whom the chief village officer of a revenue village (called locally "Parvathiakaran") is an ex-officio member. The rest are now nominated. It meets at least once a month.

POWERS.

I. *Administrative.*—(1) Maintenance and repairs of all minor irrigation works (i.e., works which do not require professional skill) below the cost of Rs. 500.

(2) Maintenance of road avenues.
(3) Maintenance of water-sheds.
(4) Prevention of epidemic diseases.
(5) Clearing and repairing of public wells and tanks.
(6) Formation of Co-operative Credit Societies.
(7) Improvement of public lanes and canals.

II. *Judicial.*—Civil disputes up to Rs. 50 with or without the 692
consent of the parties, and up to Rs. 200 with the consent of the parties.

The judicial portion of the Regulation is still in abeyance and has not been brought into force in any panchayat in the State.

Even the administrative portion is applied only in three places 623
in the taluk, since the rest have not sufficiently responded to the scheme. Watakancheri is still without a panchayat, though it is the headquarters of the taluk.

For executive work every taluk is under the direct administra- 631
tive supervision of a Tahsildar (Revenue officer) who is also the Chief Treasury Officer. Until recently he was also a Magistrate, but this function is definitely taken away from him. Below him are Revenue Inspectors and village officers. The taluk in question, which has 74 villages, has 4 Revenue officers and more than 30 village officers. Watakancheri with an adjoining village is under a "Parvathiakaran" who collects the revenue and who has a clerk under him. This "Parvathiakaran" is paid Rs. 12 per month and his clerk Rs. 9. The revenue inspector supervises the survey work and collection work, and checks the village accounts. There are also a Munsif's Court and a Magistrate's Court in the [692]
village for the settlement of civil and criminal disputes.

Each taluk in the State has, as a rule, one Sanitary Inspector. 744
The village officers should bring to the notice of the Sanitary

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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for Brahmans as a whole, and the performance of *puja* during one month in a year. 476

The two elected administrators spend the money as explained above, keep the accounts, and are responsible for the whole income. This organization is seen throughout the Brahman community in Malabar. It may be regarded as a survival of the village communal organization, the political functions of which disappeared with the advent of British rule. 794

The lower classes have appointed a family to settle caste questions and questions of excommunication, adultery, etc., and this family has been exercising this power from time immemorial. The family still holds the power and the verdict which the headman of the family pronounces about such questions is tacitly accepted by all. 692

Religious festivals are performed by the temple, and the temple *in practice* belongs to the Zamorin. It is managed by the Court of Wards at the present time, along with the Zamorin's estate. The income of the temple is the offerings of the devotees who chiefly come from distant places. The festivals which the temple performs will in a year cost more than Rs. 2,000. In addition offerings to the temple from the village itself will amount to more than Rs. 3,000. 794

The above statements of indebtedness, communal income, etc., are based on careful inquiry with well-known persons and the village munsif, and are given in round numbers as accurately as possible.

Sanitary condition.—Malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox and consumption are absent from the village. 164

The ordinary diseases of the village are fever, dysentery, elephantiasis and such like diseases. Infantile mortality is high. Out of 156 deaths 87 are infant deaths. The deaths are high among the poor, particularly the Hindu poor. It may be people cannot afford to bring up their children decently. The mothers must work for the maintenance of the family before many days have passed after child-birth. I know of a Tiyya family in which seven out of eleven children born died before they were three years old. Moreover they cannot afford medical help and they implore God to help them and resort to quack doctors. The prevalence of early marriage may be cited as one of the causes for physical deterioration. But the most potent cause especially in the case of the higher classes is the ignorance of the mothers. Domestic hygiene is a sealed book for them. Their habits are not quite sanitary. [515]

There are no venomous snakes.

There is a hospital very near the village. But the chief medical help is from the native doctors who practise privately. There are two great medical experts in the native system but there are also a large number of quacks. The experts have a tremendous business but the quacks do some injury too. 759

Wearing unclean * cloths, not keeping the house neat, using the same plate for food for the whole family, are some of the insanitary habits of the poor and the lower classes. But the higher classes are very neat and Malabar is famous for its neatness. People bathe every day. 515

* [I.e., unclean according to the Malabar standard of cleanliness, which is very high. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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622 initiate everything for the village, but the final sanction of his proposals rests with the Collector.

631 Above the village munsif is the Revenue Inspector who looks after the work of four or five village headmen. He has revenue functions only. For other purposes the Magistrate is the immediate superior of the *adhigari*. Next comes the Tahsildar, then the Sub-Collector, then the Collector.

692 Criminal cases are tried by the Magistrate. The Civil and Criminal Courts are situated in the village itself.

A story is told in the village that a poor agricultural man was asked by another, when the Collector had come to the village in one of his tours, whether the Collector or the *adhigari* was the superior officer. He replied, "I don't know, but the *adhigari* is richer, since he receives money yearly from us." The adhigari's *pay* is only Rs. 7 per mensem.*

The jurisdiction of the adhigari with regard to the criminal cases lies only in cases of petty thefts and nuisances, and in civil matters when the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50.

Panchayat.—There is a judicial panchayat for civil cases in which the amount under dispute does not exceed Rs. 50, or Rs. 200 if both the parties agree. This was introduced three years ago as a tentative measure, but it has proved a success in spite of its drawbacks. The jurisdiction of the panchayat courts extends to four or five villages; and the personnel of the court is a non-official president nominated by the Government and the adhigaris of the villages. Nearly 500 civil suits of a minor character were tried last year. The introduction of this system in small cases has caused enormous saving to the parties since the expenditure is small. There is no necessity for a stamped paper, etc. This institution is an advance in the right direction, but the personnel needs change, since they are all the Government representatives and consequently the people have no part to play in the constitution of the court.

364 There is no administration of sanitation. It is left to take care of itself. In theory there is a rule that the roads must be swept once a day and some coolies are appointed for the purpose, but the work is practically neglected on account of lack of supervision.

625 There is a Sub-Inspector of Police and under him a head constable and constables. The people can easily get the help of the police.

691 A large percentage of population is engaged in litigation. There are three reasons:—(1) The Muhammadans are addicted to litigation with regard to the partition of their property. In fact no partition takes place without having recourse to courts. (2) The peculiarity of land tenure has been already described. (3) The indebtedness of the poor and their inability to pay. The result is the majority of the population are litigants.

627 Sometimes compromises are arranged by a gentleman in whom both the parties have faith. There is no compromise committee for the purpose, but the people fearing the expenses of the law courts sometimes settle matters among themselves by means of a third person. Such cases are rare.

[* The point of this story is that, in the Madras Presidency the Collector is the chief District officer. The Collector of Malabar, for example, rules over a population of close on three million people, subject to the Government in Madras.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

565 into 64 gramams (caste areas), within each of
631 which a Nambudiri assembly composed of the
623 oldest members of the patrilineal extended families of the area met periodically to arrange public ceremonies and tried cases of offence against caste laws. Within each gramam, the Nambu-
[564] diris were divided into ranked subcastes according to their wealth and ritual functions; these,
565 however, need not concern us here. Over the
631 whole area, a dignitary known as the Aravan-
693 cheri Tamburakkal, [12] who resided in Travancore, was universally acknowledged as the ritual and administrative leader of the Nambudiris. This high priest was accorded the right to crown the kings of both Calicut and Cochin, though these rulers were traditionally at enmity. His jurisdiction in matters of the religious law governing social relations between castes, was acknowledged throughout the area. The field of social relations of the Nambudiris was thus the whole of Kerala.

565 The ritual prestige of Nambudiris was sup-
596 ported by their wealth: each patrilineal extended family owned the land in at least one village, and in addition local groups of family heads managed lands owned by important Brahman temples in each kingdom. The Nambudiris had a patrilineal
[611] descent system of a peculiar type described below.

565 Below the Nambudiris in ritual rank came the
613 royal matrilineal lineages of Calicut, Walluva-
631 nad and Cochin. Though undoubtedly Nayar in origin and general culture, each of these lineages considered itself superior in ritual rank to its

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vltil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

588 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives
182 of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars,
564 so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambūdiri landlords, the *nāduvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surro-
184 gate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'.
182 The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste,
787 who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might
604 tie the *tāli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before
184 the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste
182 it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tāli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kāranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kāranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tāli*, and the role of the barber as one
588 intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood
305 by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for
759 Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are mid-
582 wives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by
693 name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in
584 some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions
793 and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-
782 broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he
783 makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members [628]
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions.

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. [694]
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

592 602 671 few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust towards elders of the taravad.

592 602 695 421 Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of property. If a dispute arose between segments within the group, it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator outside the lineage, and a settlement reached and embodied in a document called a karar, which legally bound all adult members. Such a settlement was likely in the case of a very old karanavan who decided to retire in favour of the second man. In a wealthy taravad he might then by common consent be allotted a small house and pension for the duration of his life. In desavari and naduvari taravads, karars were sometimes made to allot separate houses with lands for the maintenance of each of the old women of the group (often the karanavan's own sisters) to live on with their children and grandchildren. All lands continued to be managed by the karanavan, but he paid a sum of paddy from her allotted lands each year to the senior woman of each segment. If one sibling group in a taravad contained only brothers, a karar was sometimes made to allot to them a separate house with lands for the duration of their lives; this then reverted to the group as a whole after their deaths. Karars are however common only in village headmen's, chiefly or royal taravads: too little property is usually 592 involved in the taravads of retainer Nayars. 602 Here effective management is commonly divided

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

175 The
564 stolen property went to the ruler of the State. If the stolen pro-
685 perty was discovered after the escape of the thief, it was returned
[643] to the owner after a certain number of days, and a fourth part
[425] was appropriated by the State. If, however, a thief refused to
[695] confess his guilt, he was confined for a period of eight days during which every method of torture known to the keepers of the prisons was tried to extort his confession. If he continued in reiterating his innocence, it was left to the accuser to elect
695 whether he should be let off or forced to undergo trial by ordeal.
175 In the latter case, on an auspicious day, the accused would be
685 allowed to bathe and recite his daily prayers, after which he was
564 conducted to the idol in the temple. Before the idol he swore that he had not committed the theft nor did he know the guilty person, and plunged his two fingers up to the middle joint into a caldron of boiling oil. If he was burnt, he was accounted guilty of the crime; if unhurt, he was liberated. Another form of proving the guilt or innocence of a prisoner who would not confess his crime, was to make him thrust his hand into a mantle in which a sacred and poisonous snake had been wrapped and force him to lift it out. If he was bitten, he was guilty. A third form was the wading through a tank full of alligators before a pagoda at Palliport, fifteen miles north of
175 Cochin, and if he survived he was considered innocent."[1] Con-
686 cerning the procedure against the debtors, a curious custom seems to have prevailed, which is thus described by *Varthema*:—

"Let us suppose the case that some one has to pay me twenty-five ducats, and the debtor promises me to pay them many times and does not pay them. I, not being willing to wait any longer, nor to give him any indulgence, shall take a green branch in my hand, shall go softly behind the debtor, and with the said branch shall draw a circle on the ground surrounding him; and if I can enclose him in a circle, shall say to him these words three times: 'I command you by the head of the Brahmans and the king that you do not depart hence, until you have paid me and satisfied me as much as I ought to have from thee,' and he will satisfy me or truly he will die without any other guard, and should he quit the said circle, the king will put him to death."

175 "It has been already said, that the nobles enjoyed ex-
564 emption and privileges, and that they could not be taken and
681 put in irons; but if a noble were to rob or kill any one or a cow or to sleep with a woman of low caste or of the Brahmans

1. Letters from Malabar by J. C. Visscher, pages 68-69.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 681 564 [784]

castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

613 681 684 564

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

613 682 [696]

565 without the direction of the chief. Usually, a
622 janmi family remained in situ over many gener-
423 ations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

621 Traditional villages are classifiable therefore
631 as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly;
565 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas,
644 a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of
701] Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes
[264] disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31]of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

702 military leader (Asan) appointed by the chief.
[857] Each desam had its gymnasium (kalari) into which all retainer-Nayar boys were inducted at the age of seven. Their training in gymnastics and swordsmanship lasted nine years, after which they received their arms at the hand of the king
701 and were accorded the title of Nayar. After this age every able-bodied Nayar man was perpetually in military training until he reached the age of retirement or until he was obliged to succeed to the headship of his matrilineal property-group
[541] and retire to manage its lands. In peacetime, mock fights were organized between Nayars of adjacent villages or of adjacent nads, and jousting was conducted at the court for the entertain-
726 ment of the royal family. In war, the Nayars
[714] fought naked: their arms were the sword, bow, lance and the bow and arrow, though gunpowder was also used, at least by the more important Rajas. Battles between enemy kingdoms appear to have been stylized. Not more than 10,000 men were commonly brought into the field at one time, and severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Nambudiri emissaries who, if fighting became intense, entered the battle field and arbitrated between its leaders. [32] If however the king or a chief were slain, his subjects must fight to the death until their honour was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side. The aim of such
721 battles appears to have been solely to gain control over the military power of nads of adjacent kingdoms, together with certain payments of tribute by conquered chieftains, and also to gain

721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 The power of the king to command his Nayar
701 retainers was checked by periodic assemblies
664 of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

692 Within the kingdom, justice was administered
681 at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

613 their children in other lineages. The separa-
592 tion of the ritual marriage (the tali-rite) from
595 actual cohabitation (sambandham, initiated without religious rites) underlined the necessity to the lineage of marriage and procreation, and the exclusion of the individual husband and father from a legally and socially significant role in relation to it.

594 It is clear therefore that whatever name we
592 give to the traditional marital relationship
566 among Nayars, the elementary family, contrary to the view of Murdock (11), did not exist as an economic, legal or ceremonial unit among them. This circumstance, which is perhaps unique in the world, was evidently made possible by their specialized role as one caste group in a larger society in which, in general, marriage and the elementary family were institutionalized. First, the Nayar system could probably not have come about in any but a leisure class supported by the labour of tenants and serfs. Because of this, young Nayar men need give economic [78] support neither to their wives nor to their sisters. Women were the people who sat at home on the land; their maintenance was assured by the payment of rents from low caste tenants and the labour of serfs, and it was necessary to have only one old man living with them to manage
701 their financial affairs. The feudal relationships
585 of the caste system thus freed all able-bodied men for their occupation as a mobile militia. In explaining their peculiar marriage relationships, I am inclined to emphasize the military organization even more than the **status of Nayars**

595
101 as a leisure class, since leisure classes without polyandry are common all over India.

The Nayars themselves appear to have recognized a connection between their occupation as a militia and the custom of plural marriages by which men were prevented from forming permanent attachments to wife and children. Barbosa, writing of plural marriages, reports that "it is said that the kings made this law, in order that the Nayars should not be covetous and should not abandon the king's service" (p. 124). Similarly Joao de Barros, writing in the early sixteenth century, says: "They say that this (polyandry) is a very ancient law among them, and that it springs from the wish of a certain prince to relieve the men of the burden of maintaining sons, and leave them ready for warlike service to which they are bound whensoever the king calls upon them." (12)

Nayar marriage may thus perhaps be seen as comparable to other military institutions, for example the age sets of bachelors among the Masai (Merker, 1904, pp. 82-3) or the age regiments of the Zulus (Bryant, 1929, pp. 124, 642-7) in the reign of Shaka. In both these societies those groups of the population organized for warfare were prevented from forming attachments to wives and children. Shaka achieved this among the Zulus by compelling men of the age regiments [79] under 35 to 40 to remain (at least in theory) celibate. Among the Masai, a soldier might form as many connections as he wished, and promiscuous intercourse was encouraged between men of the bachelor age sets

595 and girls of suitable age. But only older men
701 were permitted to marry and form a household with their wives and children.

The similarity between systems like the Masai and the Nayar system is that in those groups of the population organized for warfare, male sexuality was divorced from the upbringing of children, which among Nayars took place within the lineage and concerned only lineage members. Among the Masai this freeing of a man's sexual life from the responsibilities of child-rearing concerned only certain age-groups of men, while in Calicut and Cochin it applied to the total male population of one caste.

595 The extent to which Nayar kinship was in-
701 fluenced by their relation to the land and by the
566 military organization becomes clearer when we
184 compare the kinship system in Calicut and Cochin with that of Nayars in the northern kingdoms of Kolattunad, Kottayam and Kadattunad, north of the Kora River which formed the northern boundary of the Calicut kingdom at the height of the Zamorin's power.

Apart from the narrow coastal belt, the country in north Malabar was rocky and mountainous, and comprised much waste land and virgin forest. Perhaps because of this, the sparsely populated northern kingdom never achieved the degree of political centralization found in the central kingdom. Government was ostensibly by nadavaris owing a tenuous allegiance to their Rajas. In fact, however, in all these kingdoms chiefs perpetually rebelled against their Raja and shook off his power for long periods, while

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage: infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

613 segments lifted out of their group on to separate
644 estates. The jointly owned land of the royal lin-
423 eage, in Ernaq, was managed by the sixth man karanavan after the fashion of an ordinary Na-
[701] yar property-group. As among Nayars, younger men of the lineage were trained as soldiers and fought in the Raja's wars.

However, it also happened that during these centuries, the Zamorin's lineage did not greatly increase in numbers. Indeed, in the 18th century it was obliged to save itself from extinction by adopting three girls from the royal lineage of Nileswaram in South Canara, north of Kerala. In 1792, the Zamorin was conquered by the British and, along with other rulers of what became Malabar District, retired from political office as the head of a large landowning lineage. The British to compensate the royal lineages gave them political pensions, payable in cash sums annually to each male and female. Shortly afterwards, the Zamorin's [90] lineage began to increase in size, and by the mid-nineteenth century had partitioned into three property-groups, Pudiya (New) Tavari which lives in a village in the modern Calicut division of Malabar District, Padinyare (West) Tavari, also in Calicut, and Kirakke (East) Tavari in Ernad Division. Pudiya Tavari has this century partitioned into three new property-groups. The extensive lands of each group are managed by their separate karanavans. The five sthanams with their landed estates are still occupied by the five eldest members of the lineage, who in addition receive their political pensions independently of the rest.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[701] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or carried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[505] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the
[726] heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The difficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized ir-
651 rigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Pandya, appears to have grown powerful on the basis of trade with Rome. Like Chola and Pandya, it was a Tamil kingdom; Malayalam, the modern language of Kerala, did not diverge from Tamil until about the tenth century (Sastri, 1955: 400). It is clear from the Tamil literature of the Sangam period that the basic features of Kerala's division of labor, caste system and village organization, must have developed during or before the Chera period (*ibid.*: 110–140). The three South Indian kingdoms temporarily disintegrated in the late third century, probably as a result of a sharp decline in Roman trade.

There is no mention of any matrilineal caste like the Nayars in the Chera kingdom. When and whence they came is uncertain. The most plausible suggestion is that during the Chera period they were a matrilineal hill tribe occupying the Ghats under chiefs who owed a tenuous allegiance to the Chera kings. They may have descended to the Kerala plains as invading barbarians about the fourth century, when the Chera kingdom collapsed (Ayyar, 1938: 43). Little is known of Kerala between the Chera period and the thirteenth century. All or a part of it passed under the rule of a succession of viceroys (Perumals) from various South Indian kingdoms to the east of the Ghats. The date of the last Perumal is quite uncertain. Many writers concur in placing him in the early ninth century, but he may possibly have lived as late as the thirteenth. Nayar chiefs and Nayar soldiers are first mentioned in three copperplate inscriptions, tentatively dated late seventh, mid-eighth, and early ninth centuries. The inscriptions record grants of land and judicial privileges on the coast to settlements of Jewish and Syrian Christian traders (Logan, 1887, I: 265). The grants were made by rulers of Kerala, presumably Perumals, and were witnessed by Nayar chiefs of Venad, Ernad, Walluvanad, and Palghat. All these districts were famous Nayar chiefdoms in the later periods and persisted until the eighteenth century. The plates suggest that Nayar chiefs with private armies had emerged as vassals of the Perumals at least by the ninth century. By the mid-thirteenth century, at the latest, the greater Nayar chiefs had become independent small kings, and the Perumals had disappeared.

Chinese had resumed trade with Kerala sometime in the Perumal period, and in the thirteenth century this trade greatly expanded under the empire of Kubla Khan. Concomitantly, two coastal Nayar chiefdoms with strategic ports expanded into small kingdoms by conquering the surrounding inland chiefdoms and monopolizing their trade. In the north was the Kolattiri kingdom centered about Mount Eli, and in the south the kingdom of Travancore or Venad, centered

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

621 in a small palace and the head of it would fulfil the roles both of
564 chief and of village headman. In other villages the land formed part
471 of the estate of some large temple. These estates, called *sankētams*,
613 were managed by assemblies of Nambudiris who held complete judi-
[622] cial rights over the lower-caste population. Finally, in yet other vil-
lages the land was owned by the matrilineage of a hereditary Nayar village headman (*dēsavari*) originally appointed by the king or by the chief of the district. The Nayar village headmen were drawn from castes ritually lower than those of their district chiefs. In Walluvaned and Calicut village headmen were usually drawn from the Kiriattil Nayar caste. The corresponding caste in Cochin was called Vellayma Nayars.

The landowning families in all of these villages were called *jenmis*. The eldest man of the extended family, whether patrilineal or matrilineal, had legal guardianship of his own family and, in another sense, of the village lands and inhabitants. He sanctioned marriages in all the castes, managed the land devoted to village temples, and paid the temple servants from its produce. A landlord family could not sell its land without the consent of the king and it usually remained on its site over many generations.

621 Villages were classifiable therefore as Brahman, temple, royal,
564 chiefly, and Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas a group of vil-
lages of the same type might be adjacent to one another. In each village, subordinate to the landlord in ritual rank and administrative power, lived members of one or other caste of Nayar retainers or
[178] vassals. In modern times these castes have tended to combine as a single caste of "high-class Nayars," so that their former roles are difficult to determine. So far as I could discover they were as follows.

564 First, a caste called Kiriattil Nayars in Calicut and Vellayma Nayars
in Cochin. Most village headmen's lineages were originally drawn
[622] from this caste, but after they had assumed office these lineages iso-
[613] lated themselves as a separate sub-caste of higher rank than ordinary Kiriattils. Ordinary Kiriattils appear to have been usually retainers in villages commanded by Nayar village headmen.

Second, a caste called Purattu Charna Nayars ("outdoor retainers") in Calicut. Its members usually lived in villages owned by a district
[701] chief or by the royal lineage. A special, higher-ranking subdivision of the caste called Pariccha Menons ("leaders of the shield") formed the Zamorin's private army and lived on royal land near Calicut.

Third, a caste called Agattu Charna Nayars ("indoor retainers") in Calicut. They also seem to have lived mainly in royal or chiefly vil-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

701 702 634 564 castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and 726 the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use [411] after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized [177] (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

726 177 Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic [436] feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

564 692 Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with [681] members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders [567] were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then be- [439] came the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

564 621 Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This [692] area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; [623] we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts,
241 and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

595 Leaving aside the problem of origins, however, what I would argue
182 is that the *specific* form of group marriage evolved among Central
Kerala Nayars in the period of the native kingdoms was particularly
● 701 adapted to their military organization, which in turn was made pos-
[566] sible by the existence of the lower castes of sub-tenants and serfs. The work of the tenants and serfs absolved Nayar men from the duty of maintaining the women and children of either their natal or their conjugal units by their own productive activities. It set free most of these men for a lifetime of military service; in each matrilineal group only one old man was needed at home to organize the work of the household's retainers. Given matrilineal descent and inheritance, and given the mobility of men and the absence of male economic obligations to kinswomen, there was no reason why either men or women should restrict themselves to particular spouses. There was also, as the early European writers realized, a positive value for the kingdom in their not doing so, for plural marriages discouraged soldiers from forming deep attachments to particular wives and children, and encouraged them to focus their loyalty on military leaders and on the matrilineal groups through which they were recruited. At the same time, plural marriages provided the soldiers with ready comforts and a night's lodging both in their own villages and in other villages of the kingdom through which they might pass. Whether or not chiefs regularly enforced indiscriminate mating among Nayar women of their districts in order to strengthen their soldiers' allegiances, a system of group marriage involving optional multiple alliances certainly fitted the way of life of a landed militia, already (for historical reasons) organized into matrilineal descent groups. A close connection between
[178] group marriage and the military organization is further suggested in that, after the British had disbanded the armies in about 1800, although matrilineal descent persisted for over a century, group marriage rapidly died out. Within about thirty years monogamous marriage in Central Kerala, and monogamous or restricted, fraternally polyandrous marriage in Travancore, had become common, and fathers had assumed a definite role in the upbringing of their children.

Kinship in the Aristocratic Matrilineal Castes

THE LINEAGE

613 Among the retainer Nayars a household whose membership rose above
592 about thirty tended to divide its property between its segments when
423 the senior males who had spanned the segments were dead. Correspondingly, lineages and clans of retainer Nayars went through a grad-

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

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marks that "When a high-caste Nayar becomes ripe, he turns into a king."

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Low productivity and poor communications perhaps made the exaction of tribute more difficult than in Central Kerala, and this fact, plus the uncertain nature of trade, made the local rulers perennially short of funds. This is probably the reason why, although they were trained for warfare in gymnasia in their villages, Nayars were not regularly conscripted into a national army. Instead, they merely fought sporadically on behalf of local chiefs. Further, chiefs and village headmen were insufficiently strong to bring all the land under their control. Their domains were larger than those of Nayar commoners, but most commoner Nayar property groups were independent small landlords in their own right within their villages. Since they were not full-time warriors and since in many areas they had no serfs, Nayar commoners also did part of their own cultivation on their small estates. Part of their land, however, they leased to Tiyyar tenants as in Central Kerala. The polluting castes of village servants had the same rights and spatial distribution as in Central Kerala. In general, the economic processes of reciprocity and redistribution in villages proceeded in a comparable manner.

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As independent warrior-cultivators, the Nayar commoners were not divided into separate castes of retainers owing allegiance as vassals and *kānam* tenants to different kinds of lords. Most villages were nominally under Nayar village headmen. In villages of the Kottayam and Kadattunad kingdoms, both the headman's lineage and those of the Nayar commoners belonged to a large caste called Nambiars, who appear to have intermarried throughout the kingdom. Although of the same general caste as commoners, and not forbidden by religious law from intermarrying equally with commoners, Nambiar village headmen's lineages tended, however, to intermarry only with each other or to take wives only from the commoners, occasionally giving their own women in marriage to chiefs or Brahmans. Chiefs claimed a higher caste rank as Samantan Nambiars, and royalty as Kshattriyas. These aristocratic lineages conducted hypergamous marriages with each other and with Nambudiris as in Central Kerela.

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Judicial processes were somewhat less centralized than in the Central kingdoms. At least in theory, grave crimes and civil disputes in urban centers seem to have been tried in royal courts, but most civil disputes inland were apparently tried by local chiefs. Under the chiefs, caste assemblies of neighborhoods took care of crimes against religious law as in the Central kingdoms. Murder among Nayars

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3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

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THE PROPERTY GROUP

The property group, a segment of the lineage, was among Nambiar commoners of roughly the same size and internal composition as among the Nayar retainers of Central Kerala. Its members jointly owned both movable and immovable property in the same manner. Its kāranavan managed the estate, had legal guardianship over members, and was legally responsible for them to the local caste assembly and to the chief. All Nayar property groups appear to have owned some [427] garden and rice lands as *jenmis*. In addition some leased land on kānam tenure from chiefs, royalty, or Brahmans if any were present in their village. A property group whose membership was expanding might bring under cultivation waste land belonging to the chief on a tenure known as *kurikānam*. The tenant had the right of occupancy for twelve years without paying rent; he then paid an annual share of produce to the landlord. The improvements he made (trees, houses, etc.) were his own and he could not be evicted without compensation for them.

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Residence was ideally *avunculocal*. Plural marriages for women were forbidden, and a man normally brought his wife to live with him on his matrilineal estate for the duration of the marriage. This mode of residence was apparently related to population density and to the sexual division of labor. Some duolocal marriages did exist between partners living in nearby houses in the same village. However, houses and villages were so scattered that most men would have had difficulty in maintaining a visiting relationship with a wife. Matrilocal [701] residence was also disadvantageous because men did much of the work of cultivation on their own estates, were required to defend their estates against invaders, and were mobilized by the chiefs in war on the basis of property-group membership. A few junior men lived matrilocally for short periods, but the kāranavan and most of the adult men lived on their own estates.

613 592 [596]

In the relatively small property groups of commoners, the dwelling group was thus often an avunculocal extended family. It would comprise a group of brothers, their wives and immature children, their adult sisters' sons, and the wives and small children of these men. Divorced or widowed women born into the property group also had the right of permanent residence there, and married women born into it might return to live there for several weeks or months when they wished.

In the larger property groups of some commoners, village headmen, and chiefs, the main ancestral house might be reserved for

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

591 matrilocally in a home with the wife's mother and sometimes with
178 others of her older matrilineal kin. Twenty-six couples (49 per cent)
592 lived neolocally in a house provided by the husband and containing no natal kin of either husband or wife. Of these 26 neolocally resident couples, 6 (11 per cent) lived in a house which the husband had inherited from his dead father; 3 (6 per cent of the total) lived in a house which the husband had obtained from his taravād; 14 (26 per cent) lived in a house newly built by the husband for his wife.

594 These figures may be contrasted with the modern picture in a
613 Central Kerala village, where the marketability of land and labor
178 have also brought about a partial disintegration of matrilineal descent groups and an emergence of the elementary family as a residential
595 and economic unit. Both in Central and in North Kerala, moreover,
656 marriage has been compulsorily monogamous since the 1930's, men
178 have been legally obliged to maintain their wives and children, and the whole of man's private intestate property has passed to his mother,
428 wife, and children at his death (Madras *Marumakkattāyam* Act, 1933; Cochin Nayar Act, 1938; Nair, 1941: 306). In addition, it has now be-
421 come legally possible for the members of a taravād to divide their
613 matrilineal ancestral property on a per capita basis. Once the an-
178 cestral property has been divided into individual shares in this way it becomes private property in law and is heritable in the same manner as are self-acquisitions. Both in Central and North Kerala, therefore, economic change and resultant modern laws have combined to break down traditional matrilineal descent groups.

425 In Central Kerala, however, population is denser and there has
178 been less waste land available for individual cultivation. Over the
464 past hundred years, therefore, when individual men have acquired private plots, it has more often been through purchase of already
[160] cultivated land than through cultivation of virgin land. Further,
[170] Nayar men in Central Kerala, having been a professional militia, tended after the disbanding of their armies either to remain non-cultivating owners and tenants or where possible to move into new forms of salaried employment. Central Kerala today is more urbanized than is North Kerala, so that a much greater proportion of Nayars have salaried work in factories, as clerks, as government servants, as schoolteachers, or in the armed services. Many are unemployed and merely live from their ancestral lands. Particularly among retainer Nayars, who are relatively poor, men have amassed less self-acquired
423 land than was possible for Nayar cultivators in North Kerala. More-
178 over, because Nayar men are often not themselves the cultivators of

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P.185]

THE NÂYARS OF MALABAR.*

IT is likely that some of the gentle readers of this monograph are not familiar with "The Lusiad," the epic poem of Luis de Camoens, the restless soldier-poet who sailed with a detachment of the Portuguese for the West Coast of India in 1553. Voltaire, who is not given to redundant praise of anybody, styles him the Portuguese Virgil. At any rate he has written a fine epic, and from it I will quote a few lines concerning the Nâyars, with whom he came in personal contact three and-a-half centuries ago.

> "Polias the labouring lower clans are named;
> "By the proud *Nayres* the noble rank is claimed;
> "The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> "The warrior's plumes their haughty brows adorn;
> "The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right,
> "Their left arm wields the target in the fight;
> "Of danger scornful, ever armed they stand
> "Around the king, a stern barbarian band." †

A former Governor of Bombay, Johnathan Duncan by name, who visited Malabar in 1792–3, has anticipated me in quoting some of these lines, and with regard to them he observes: "These lines . . . . . contain a good description of a Nâyar, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders." ‡

701 564 [411]

The Nâyars, the Nareæ of Pilny, (Nat. Hist. VI, 21), were the swordsmen, the military caste of the west coast of India. There are some small sects or castes intervening, but broadly speaking the Nâyars rank after the Nambûtiris in Malabar, and they occupy the same position in the Native States of Cochin and Travancore.

* The first article of this series was in Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, where the Nambûtiri Brahmans of Malabar were described.

† Mickle's Translation, London, 1798.

‡ Logan's "Manual of Malabar," page 137.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank.

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction.

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand.

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp.

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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stand on the terrace, assumes the sword and shakes it, men rush forth from the crowd at the west temple gate only to be impaled on the spears of the guardsmen who relieve each other from day to day. The turns for this duty are specifically mentioned in the chronicle thus: 'on the day the golden ornaments are begun to be used the body-guard consists of the thirty thousand; of Ellaya Vakkayil Vellōdi (and his men) the second day, of Netiyiruppu,* Mūttarāti Tirumulpād (and his men) the third day of Ittatūrnād,† Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fourth day, of Ērnād Mūnāmkūr,‡ Nambiyātiri Tirumulpād (and his men) the fifth day, of Ērnād,§ Elankur Nambiyāttiri Tirumalpād (and his men) the sixth day, and of the ten thousand,‖ the Calicut Talachanna Nāyar and Ērnād Mēnon the seventh day.'

[701]

"The chronicle is silent as to the turns for this duty on the eighth, ninth and tenth days. On the eleventh day, before the assembly broke up and after the final assault of the *Chāvers* had been delivered, the *Ernad Elankur Nambiyātiri Tirumalpad* (the Zamorin next in succession) and the *Tirumanisseri Nambūtiri* were conveyed in palanquins to the eastern end of the narrow palisaded lane, and thence they advanced on foot, prostrating themselves four times towards the Zamorin, once at the eastern end of the lane, twice in the middle, and once at the foot of the terraces. And after due permission was obtained they took their places on the Zamorin's right hand.

"After this, so the chronicle runs, it was the duty of the men who have formed the body guard to march up with music and pomp to make obeisance. On this occasion, however, a large portion of the body-guard seems to have been displeased, for they left without fulfilling this duty, and this story corroborates in a marked way the facts already set forth (page 132) regarding the independence and important political influence possessed by the Nāyars as a body.

"The *Ernād Menon* and the *Calicut Talachanna Nāyar* with their followers were the only chiefs who made obeisance in due form to the Zamorin on this occasion, and possibly by the time of the next festival (1695 A.D.), of which Hamilton wrote, the dissatisfaction might have increased among his followers and the Zamorin's life even may have been endangered

* The fifth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
† The fourth Prince of the Zamorin's family.
‡ The third Prince of the Zamorin's family.
§ The second Prince and heir apparent of the Zamorin's family.
‖ The ten thousand of Pōlanād, the district round about Calicut, formed the Zamorin's own immediate body-guard—Conf. the account contained in the *Kēralolpatti* of how these men were originally selected – Chapter III, section (*a*).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukada, Attikurusi (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambûdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former
178 landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambûdiri *genitors*, and boast
that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

Part II. The Nayar *Tali*-Rite in North Malabar

131 North Malabar lies north of the Kora River, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys.
[635] This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land
extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is
631 true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was
never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nâdûvaris*
[628] fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers
as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nâd*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars
were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nâdûvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the
Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nâdûvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived,
employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves
Samantan Nambiars. Nambûdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especi-
ally since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore.
Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages
as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower
polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their
washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead
[701] they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566] most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar
Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their
613 father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
his *tavarâd* property under the direction of his *kâranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kâranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kâranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
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8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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the Mamalukes of Egypt.[1] Camoens, the Milton of Portugal, described them in these lines :—

> "By the proud Nāyars noble rank is claimed ;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn,
> The shining falchion brandished in the right,
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight."

As a matter of fact, the Nāyars as a military aristocracy have been famous ever since Marco Polo travelled in Asia.

"In this region of Malabar," says Gaspar Correa, writing on the three voyages of da Gama,[2] "the race of Gentlemen is called Nairs who are people of war. They are people who are very refined in blood and customs and separated from all other people. So much do they value themselves that no one of them ever turned a Moor."

"Of these Malabars there are two manner of people (the one is) Noblemen called Nāyars which are soldiers and do only weare and handle arms and the other is the common people called Polayas. The Nayros must [in all places] where they go or stand weare such arms as are appointed for them and alwaies be ready at the King's commandement. . . . . .

"As these Nayros go in the streets they cry po! po! which is to say take heed I come, stand out of the way."[3]

Historical circumstances have also had their share in the abundance of material which foreigners have left with regard to the Nāyars. Malabar was the seat of Arabic trade, and the Portuguese first landed at Calicut. During the hundred and fifty years of Portuguese power in India they had dealings mostly with the Zamorin of Calicut, the Rajah of Cochin, and the Deva Narayana, Rajah of Prakaud. That was the land from which spices came, and the Portuguese, therefore, were interested in the petty politics of these principalities. The Dutch, who followed then, also had their main interest on the mainland of India centred on Cochin, and in the first beginnings of English commerce, also, Malabar had a share. Apart from these a number of observant travellers has visited the seaboard of Malabar.

But though material of a kind is, therefore, abundant, it is found on closer examination to be unscientific and unreliable. The Nāyar Society of the eighteenth century, or an age previous to that, cannot be reconstructed from the observations of either Duarte Barbosa or Vinschar. An accurate and scientific description of the state of society prevalent before European contact is possible only after a thorough and searching study of Nāyar literature. Camoens' description of the Nāyars as scorning the toils of culture is not true. Malayalam has an extensive

[1] Had they (the French aristocracy) been like the Mamalukes of Egypt or Nāyars of the coast of Malabar. (*French Revolution*, p. 148, World's Classics.)

[2] *Voyages of Vasco da Gama*, Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 185.

[3] *Voyage of Linschoten to the East Indies*, translation of 1598. Edited by Hakluyt Soc., vol. i, p. 278 *et seq.*

634 He[1] had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 [874] bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 701 874 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 874 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*, [346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 541 701 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained, even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 794 [346] The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community. The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these [631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 [121] In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[1] [i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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174 not borne out either by any Sanskrit authority or Dravidian traditions;[1] but certain legends refer to conflicts between them and the Hindu colonists of later times, and these are said to have been led by Parasurama, and the Nagas from Pätäla whom they found in possession of the country.[2] The latter were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kshatriyas or warriors who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmans, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle in which victory alternated with defeat. These internecine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally gave birth to a military aristocracy called the Nayars.[3]

● 701 The Nayars of ancient times formed the chief militia in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, and their valour and other fighting qualities evoked the admiration of foreigners, and inspired even the restless Portuguese poet Cameons, who described them in the following apt lines:—

The military character of the Nayars.

> Poliar the labouring clans were named;
> By the proud Nayars the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandished in the right;
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight.

175 One of the earliest accounts of the Nayars is found in the 701 writings of Duarte Barbosa, who described them as men of noble descent, who had to be armed as knights by the king or lord with whom they lived, and who could not call themselves Nayars until they had been so equipped as to bear arms. They were generally sent to school at the age of seven to learn all [868] manner of athletic feats and to enable them to use their weapons.[4] Their sinews and joints were so stretched and [147] anointed with the *oyle sesamus* by skillful fellows called "Panicars," who were captains in war, that they became very light and nimble; and could "wind and twine their bodies" as if they had no bones. They cast themselves backwards and forwards, high and low, to the astonishment of the beholders, and the delight in their weapon was so great that they

1. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, Introduction, page 107.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, page 107.
3. Primitive Folk, page 107.
4. A description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar by Duarte Barbosa, page 128—129.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers and his peculiar weapon is an instrument with a thin but very broad blade hooked towards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet' or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies,

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien,

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disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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Thus did the Nayars as a warlike race play a very important part in the history of *Kerala* during the middle ages. Their weapons and modes of fighting thereafter underwent many changes under the influence of the Portuguese and the Dutch, who introduced western arms and tactics into the then existing art of war, when also the Nayars proved equal to the occasion. Labourdanais, who distinguished himself in the storming of the little town of Mahe, bore the brunt of many a Nayar onslaught, and had therefore opportunities of forming a just estimate of their work. Major Munro, who was instrumental in the storming of that little town in 1761, met the Nayar troops in the field, and thus described their mode of fighting: "One may as well look for the needle in a bottle of hay as any of them in the day-time, they lurking behind the sand-banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the fort, when they appear like bees out in the month of June besides which they point their guns well and fire them also." Dr. Buchanan, who under the orders of Lord Wellesley journeyed through Mysore, Malabar and Canara, spoke of them in the same strain. When Hyder Ali invaded Malabar, they committed terrible havoc on the Mysoreans. "The Nayars are the military class of Malabar," writes Col. Wilkes, who was struck with their pluck and agility. "They are perhaps not exceeded by any nation on earth in their high spirit of independence, but like all persons stimulated by that spirit without the direction of discipline, their efforts are uncertain, capricious and desultory." The last event in which they showed their military valour was in the rebellion of the Pychee Raja of Kurumbranad. With the fall of the Portuguese and the Dutch, and the conquest and annexation of Malabar by the English East India Company, the Nayars have almost lost their warlike characteristics, through successive generations of peace and have now become attached to the land. Even writing in 1855, Captain Drury contrasts the Nayar's effeminate disposition with the martial valour of his forefathers. He does not bear transplantation. He now prefers a quiet swing in the verandah or a lounge under a tree, chewing betel. Unlike his ancestor, he is becoming more and more domesticated. The Nayar population has greatly increased and a large majority of them are not very affluent; and among these physical deterioration is noticeable.

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595 564 responsibility to support their wives and children from their [184] family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathúyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one [178] man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 701 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of 83 a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

174 595 European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue,

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or if he ate and drank in the house of a low caste-man or spoke 564
ill of the king, and if any one of these were established in his 681
own words, the king would call three or four honorable gentlemen and have him put to death. After he was dead, they laid him on his back, to place the king's warrant on his breast. If he was left dead in the country, the dead was so exposed as a prey to vultures and dogs. If he was put to death in the city, the dead body was allowed to be removed either as a mark of favour, or on payment of fine, by the citizens with the king's permission. If, on the other hand, he commits any other offence, he would be dealt with in the same way as any criminal already described."

Cruel as the administration of justice might appear to be 69
in ancient times, many early writers bear testimony to the fact 181
that private property was as secure in the fourteenth century as it is to-day, and that security and justice were firmly established in the land. Varthema was impressed with the honesty of the inhabitants; and the favourable testimony of the previous writers was confirmed by Pyrard-De-Laval, a Frenchman, who remarked that justice was well administered and awarded gratuitously. These systems have been completely forgotten [178] and given place to the institution of regular courts, where justice is administered in accordance with the principles of British jurisprudence.

Feudalism in the Cochin State.

From the earliest times, even perhaps before the Aryan 701
immigration, there appears to have been a com- 634
plete military organisation among the Sudras 621
of Malabar. The country was divided into *Nádu*, or principalities, and the smallest territorial unit in it was a *Désam* (or village) presided over by a *Désavázhi* (ruler of a *Désam*). Each of the *Désams* and *Nádu* was designated by the allotted quota of Nayars it was required to put into the field. The names of these divisions, even after the long lapse of time, have not been forgotten. The authority of the chiefs of these military divi- [428] sions, large and small, was hereditary in their respective families and they had appropriate titles of distinction. They were not always in attendance on the Raja's person. If not required on particular State duties or religious services, they were called out for offensive or defensive warfare.

A chief was not considered a *Náduvázhi* (ruler of a *Nád*), who had not at least a hundred soldiers attached to him, and one with less than that number was called a Désa vázhi.

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634 553 were conferred upon the people. These were, in brief, the rights and privileges[1] of the feudal chieftains of old.

621 **Village organisation and village life.**

The question regarding the existence in ancient times of a village organisation in the Cochin State, as in Malabar, is somewhat unsettled. Some are of opinion that the village communities of the east coast have no counterpart in the west, and that there were no regular villages; while others state that the organisation of the country for agrarian, civil, social, and administrative purposes was the ordinary type closely allied to the Tamil nationalities, the cradle of its races, languages, and institutions: and that it rested on the village system in its truest and simplest form. The earliest social organisation was apparently based upon the family group into which the various tribes or castes divided themselves, each with its more or less well defined territorial limits. The Brahmans were grouped in *grámams* and the Nayars in *thards* or *chéris*. The old territorial unit was a *désam* presided over by *Désavázhi* or *Jenmidar*, and a number of *désams* constituted a *nád* ruled over by a *Náduvazhi* or local chieftain who was subject to the Raja. [634]

622 The rights and privileges of the *Désavázhi* were: (1) the direction of the religious ceremonies of the village pagodas, (2) the management of the village pagoda lands and servants, (3) the control of marriages and other ceremonies in the village, and (4) the superintendence of all offences of the *désam* or village. He had besides the civil direction of the religious and military affairs of the villages. The same head-man was a *Désavázhi* or *Jenmi* according as he exercised all or only the first two functions in the village. The *Náduvázhi* was the military chief of his *nád* who was bound to attend the Raja and to march wherever he was directed with all the fighting men of his territory under the control of *Désavázhis* of their respective villages. In time of peace he collected the ordinary and extra revenue, and was helped by one or two accountants. Thus an old typical village was one which consisted of the houses of the military class of Nayars and of those of other low castes, the members of which, like the medieval guilds, were bound together by the ties of common interests, rendering to one another reciprocal services for a share of the village produce, and for the protection which they enjoyed. The village in

634 [622] [701] [451] [651] 621 [564]

1. Malabar and Its Folk, pages 108-127.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: ". . . and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4/5 (no date) 1909
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snake-bite, the Nāyādis wear a brass toe-ring. And, when engaged in catching rats in their holes, they wear round the wrist a snake-shaped metal ring, to render them safe against snakes which may be concealed in the hole.

The Nāyādis who live within the jurisdiction of the Kavalapāra Nāyar near Shoranūr wear the kuḍumi (front lock of hair), as there are no Māppillas (Muhammadans) to molest them. The Kavalapara Nāyar was at one time an important chief, and directed all Nambutiri jenmis (landlords) who held land within his jurisdiction to bind themselves not to let the land to Māppillas. Nāyādis of other parts are not allowed by the Māppillas to wear the kudumi, and, if they do so, they are taken for Parayans and professional sorcerers, and beaten.

Some Nayādis have become converts to Christianity, others to Muhammadanism, and maintain themselves by begging for alms from Muhammadans. They are called Thoppyitta (cap-wearing) Nāyādis.

The priest of the Nāyādis is called Mūppan. His appointment is hereditary, and he enquires into all matters affecting the community, and can excommunicate a guilty person.*

Average height, 155 cm.; nasal index, 86.

Nāyar.—"The Nāyars," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "are a Dravidian caste, or rather a community, for we find several distinct elements with totally different occupations among the people who call themselves by this title. The original Nāyars were undoubtedly a military body, holding lands and serving as a militia, but the present Nāyar caste includes persons who, by hereditary

* This note is based mainly on articles by Mr. S. Appadorai Aiyar and Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyar.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

101 occupation, are traders, artisans, oilmongers, palanquin-
174 bearers, and even barbers and washermen. The fact
564 seems to be that successive waves of immigration brought
[701] from the Canarese and Tamil countries different castes
[463] and different tribes; and these, settling down in the country, adopted the customs and manners, and assumed the caste names of the more respectable of the commu-
101 nity that surrounded them. This process of assimilation
564 is going on even yet. Chettis of Coimbatore, for example, who settled in Palghât and Valluvanâd within living memory, have developed by this time into
[551] Nâyars. In the census schedules we find instances in which the males of a house affix the term Nâyar to their names, while the names of the females end in Chettichi. Gollas entering the country from the north have similarly, in course of time, assumed Nâyar customs and manners,
643 and are now styled Nâyars. Again the râjahs and
564 chieftains of the country sometimes raised individuals or classes who had rendered them meritorious service to the rank of Nâyars. These men were thereafter styled Nâyars, but formed a separate sub-division with little or no communion with the rest of the Nâyar class, until at least, after the lapse of generations, when their origin was forgotten. Nâyar may thus at present be considered to be a term almost as wide and general as Sûdra."

173 According to the Brâhman tradition, the Nâyar
564 caste is the result of union between the Nambûdris with Dêva, Gandharva and Rakshasa women introduced by Parasurâma; and this tradition embodies the undoubted fact that the caste by its practice of hypergamy has had a very large infusion of Aryan blood. In origin the Nâyars were probably a race of Dravidian immigrants, who were amongst the first invaders of Malabar, and as conquerors assumed the position of the governing and

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land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood 173
combined with the physical peculiarities of the country 564
would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars 175
as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that 564
"in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom 701
in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn [868]
the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their [186]
Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And. Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

> 'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
> By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

175
564 went on to observe: 'These lines, and especially the two
701 last, contain a good description of a Nayr, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in
[411] their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders' (Asiatic Re-
726 searches, V. 10, 18). M. Mahé de la Bourdonnais, who
175 had some experience of their fighting qualities in the field,
564 thus described them: 'Les Nairs sont de grands hom-
701 mes basanés, légers, et vigoureux: Ils n'ont pas d'autre profession que celle des armes, et seraient de fort bons soldats, s'ils étiaent disciplinés: mais ils combattent sans ordre, ils prennent la fuite dès qu'on les serre de près avec quelque supèriorité; pourtant, s'ils se voient pressés avec vigueur et qu'ils se croient en danger, ils reviennent à la charge, et ne se rendent jamais' (M. Esquer, Essai sur les Castes dans l'Inde, page 181). Finally, the only British General of any note—Sir Hector Munro—who had ever to face the Nāyars in the field, thus wrote of their modes of fighting:—

'One may as well look for a needle in a Bottle of Hay as any of them in the daytime, they being lurking behind sand banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the Fort, and then they appear like bees out in the month of June.' 'Besides which,' he continued, 'they point their guns well, and fire them well also' (Tellicherry Factory Diary, March, 1761). They were, in short, brave light troops, excellent in skirmishing, but their organization into small bodies with discordant interests unfitted them to repel any serious invasion by an enemy even moderately well organised. Among other strange Malayāli customs, Sheikh

Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, 726
his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in rava- 175
ging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their 564
vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that 701
which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, 643
upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. 796
A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, 762
and some three or four hundred persons came of their 175
own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

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175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
184 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

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* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation, Hakluyt Society, 1866.

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175
to murder him, which is looked upon as a very innocent 564
action, and for which no complaint is ever made. It is 683
true that the pariahs have one day in the year when all [567]
the Nairs they can touch become their slaves, but the [527]
Nairs take such precautions to keep out of the way at the time, that an accident of that kind seldom happens." It is further recorded by Buchanan * that "the whole of these Nairs formed the militia of Malayala, directed by the Namburis and governed by the Rajahs. Their chief 564
delight is in arms, but they are more inclined to use them 701
for assassination or surprise, than in the open field. Their submission to their superiors was great, but they exacted deference from those under them with a cruelty and arrogance, rarely practised but among Hindus in their state of independence. A Nair was expected to 564
instantly cut down a Tiar or Mucuai, who presumed to 683
defile him by touching his person; and a similar fate [567]
awaited a slave, who did not turn out of the road as a Nair passed."

Nâyar is commonly said to be derived from the Sans- 101
krit Nâyaka, a leader, and to be cognate with Naik, and 174
Nayudu or Naidu. In this connection, Mr. L. Moore [127]
writes † that "if a reference is made to the Anglo-Indian Glossary (Hobson-Jobson) by Yule and Burnell, it will be found that the term Naik or Nayakan, and the word Nayar are derived from the same Sanskrit original, and there is a considerable amount of evidence to show that the Nayars of Malabar are closely connected by origin with the Nayakans of Vijayanagar.‡ Xavier, writing in 1542 to 1544, makes frequent references to men whom he calls Badages, who are said to have been

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar, 1807.
† Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd ed., 1905.
‡ *Vide* R. Sewell. A Forgotten Empire (Vijayanagar), 1900.

631 [175] [623] working of temples and charitable institutions connected therewith. As Venad was divided into eighteen districts in ancient days, there might have been altogether eighteen six hundred in the country. The Nāduvazhis possessed considerable authority in all social matters, and possessed enough lands to be cultivated by their Kudiyans. A feudal basis was laid for the whole organisation. Large numbers served as soldiers in times of war, and cultivated their lands when the country was quiet. In modern times, none of them take to military service in Travancore, except those employed as sepoys in the Nāyar Brigade."

[701] Concerning the organisation of the Nāyars, Mr. Logan writes that they were, "until the British occupied the country, the militia of the district (Malabar). This name implies that they were the 'leaders' of the people. Originally they seem to have been organised into six hundreds, and each six hundred seems to have had assigned to it the protection of all the people in a nād or country. The nād was in turn split up into taras, a Dravidian word signifying originally a foundation, the foundation of a house, hence applied collectively to a street, as in Tamil teru, in Telugu teruvu, and in Canarese and Tulu teravu. The tara was the Nāyar territorial unit of organisation for civil purposes, and was governed by representatives of the caste, who were styled Kāranavar or elders. The six hundred was probably composed exclusively of those Karanavar or elders, who were in some parts called Mukhyastans (chief men) or Madhyastans (mediators), or Pramānis (chief men), and there seem to have been four families of them to each tara, so that the nād must have originally consisted of one hundred and fifty taras. This tara organisation of the protector caste played a most important

seems to have been reserved specially for them. It 631
would be well worth the study of persons acquainted with other districts of the Presidency to ascertain whether somewhat similar functions to these (protection and supervision) did not originally appertain to the Kāvalgars of Tamil districts and the Kāpus in the Telugu country, for both of these words seem to have come from the same root as the Malayālam kānam. And it is significant that the Tamil word now used for proprietorship in the soil is kāni-yātchi, to which word the late Mr. F. W. Ellis in his paper on Mirasi Rights assigned a similar derivation."

The occupation of the Nāyars is described by Mr. N. 463
Subramani Aiyar as "comprising all kinds of worldly pursuits. So late as the end of the eighteenth century, [701]
there were with the then Mahārāja of Travancore a hundred thousand soldiers, consisting of Nāyars and Chovas, armed with arrows, spears, swords and battle-axes. The chief occupation of the Nāyars is agriculture. [241]
Cultivation of a slipshod, time-honoured type is the forte of the Nāyar, for which he has always found time from times of old, though engaged in other occupations as well. In the Velakali, a kind of mock fight, which [526]
is one of the items of the utasom programme in every [292]
important temple in Malabar, the dress worn by the Nāyars is supposed to be their ancient military costume. Even now, among the Nāyars who form the Mahārāja's [241]
own Brigade, agriculture, to which they are enabled to attend during all their off-duty days, goes largely to supplement their monthly pay. Various other occupations, all equally necessary for society, have been, according to the Kēralavaḷasakrama, assigned to the Nāyars, and would seem to have determined their original sub-divisions. They are domestic servants in Brāhman [357]

(3) Traditional Political Administration

642 The "middle class" non-military Nayars, the
565 Nayar servant castes of menials, all the lower polluting castes, and the serfs, were excluded from the administrative system of the kingdom. Above these castes, the "good" castes formed two hierarchies, the one concerned with the public ritual of the state, and the other with secular administration. The first hierarchy comprised Nambudiris and temple servants; the second, royalty, chiefs and Nayar retainers. Nambudiris were largely outside the legal system of the kingdom; temple servants, though subject to it, took no part in its administration. Political organization was in the hands of the Nayars, their chiefs, and their royal lineage.

643 While responsible for maintaining traditional
701 unwritten law and custom (mamool) among the
631 several castes, the kings were concerned chiefly with amassing soldiers for their armies. Though in each kingdom the royal lineage owned the land in many villages as its private estate, its strength was estimated not in territory but in numbers of Nayar soldiers. Each nad and each desam was classified according to the number of Nayar men it could customarily muster for war; records[31]of these were kept by the
702 Nayar clerks of the palaces. The chief duty of each naduvari was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his nad for military exercises, and in time of war to lead them to battle with the king himself at their head. Within the nad military training was organized on a village basis, sometimes by the Nayar desavari, or, in those villages without a Nayar headman, by a Nayar

702 military leader (Asan) appointed by the chief.
[857] Each desam had its gymnasium (kalari) into which all retainer-Nayar boys were inducted at the age of seven. Their training in gymnastics and swordsmanship lasted nine years, after which they received their arms at the hand of the king
701 and were accorded the title of Nayar. After this age every able-bodied Nayar man was perpetually in military training until he reached the age of retirement or until he was obliged to succeed to the headship of his matrilineal property-group
[541] and retire to manage its lands. In peacetime, mock fights were organized between Nayars of adjacent villages or of adjacent nads, and jousting was conducted at the court for the entertain-
726 ment of the royal family. In war, the Nayars
[714] fought naked: their arms were the sword, bow, lance and the bow and arrow, though gunpowder was also used, at least by the more important Rajas. Battles between enemy kingdoms appear to have been stylized. Not more than 10,000 men were commonly brought into the field at one time, and severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Nambudiri emissaries who, if fighting became intense, entered the battle field and arbitrated between its leaders. [32] If however the king or a chief were slain, his subjects must fight to the death until their honour was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side. The aim of such
721 battles appears to have been solely to gain control over the military power of nads of adjacent kingdoms, together with certain payments of tribute by conquered chieftains, and also to gain

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
241 ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts, and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

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564 tioned were called "high," "good," or "clean" castes. They lived in
[361] a separate portion of the village around the temples and the landlord's establishment, with each house in its own fenced garden. Except for the servant Nayars all might enter either Brahman or Nayar temples. Within this group, lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of rules of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet. Equal interdining took place only between caste fellows, but members of lower castes might *receive* food from higher-caste hosts. In ritual terms these castes thus formed the upper ranks of society, although only the Nayar retainers and those above them were economically and socially aristocrats. Nambudiris and two small castes of their temple servants were patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal.

101 I have designated as "Nayars" all the castes which bear this title
121 today. They are not a unitary group but a named category of castes.
564 Traditionally, the title Nayar seems not to have been extended to all these castes. Before 1498 the military Nayars or retainer Nayars were called Lokar (Ayyar, 1938: 32). What the other matrilineal castes were called is not known. "Nayar" was not then a caste name
[703] but a title conferred by the king on lineages whose members had won special military honor. The Portuguese called all the soldiers "Nayars" and during the period of European trade it seems to have come into use as a title held by all the military castes. Some Nayars say that the temple menial castes and the matrilineal castes of washermen and barbers usurped the title only during British rule, in order to raise their status. The higher temple-servant castes, although matrilineal, never adopted the title because they ranked above the military Nayars and had honorable titles of their own. This paper primarily concerns the Nayar military retainers, their village headmen, chiefs, and royalty.

THE HIGHER POLLUTING CASTES

564 The high castes were the religious and secular aristocrats and their
162 personal servants. In many respects the polluting castes lived a sepa-
621 rate social life, being located in a different part of the village. They included, in order of rank, Tiyyars (called Iravas in Cochin), who were palm-wine makers and tenant farmers, with twenty to forty households per village; Kanisans or astrologers, with one to three households per village; the artisan castes of blacksmiths, goldsmiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers, and stonemasons (who ranked equally), each with one to three houses per village; low-caste washermen and barbers (who ranked equally), each with one to five houses per vil-

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his whole property group might be put to death. Conversely, the property group as a whole was rewarded for extraordinary military valor on the part of one of its members. In a period of conquest of a new district, the king sometimes removed from office recalcitrant village headmen or even chiefs of the enemy side and replaced them with property groups from among his own following. Again, when a soldier died fighting with exceptional bravery, his chief sometimes rewarded his property group with a plot of land held on a special military tenure, under unusually favorable terms.

As we have seen, the property group had the prime responsibility for an individual convicted by the neighborhood assembly of offense against the religious laws of caste.

The kāranavan's day-to-day authority over his juniors was conferred upon him by his feudal lord, backed by the judicial authority of the king. He had the right to command and discipline all junior members. In cases of extreme disobedience he might inflict corporal punishment on the women or children, or cause a junior man of the taravād to do this. He seems to have had the right temporarily to expel from the household and to deny maintenance to junior men who insulted or disobeyed him. As manager of the estate he also had disciplinary rights over the taravād's tenants. In serious matters the tenants had recourse to the village headman, perhaps to the chief, but their own master settled minor disputes among them and fined them for small offenses. In law a kāranavan appears to have had complete rights of life and death over his property group's serfs. A very few cases are recorded of his exercising it to the full. More common are the stories of extraordinary loyalty between serf and master, especially of serfs who died fighting to defend their lords' homes. Their spirits were rewarded with a place in the taravād's ancestral shrine.

It is clear that whatever his *de jure* authority, the kāranavan's *de facto* authority was greater over women and children than over junior men, who were often absent on military service. It seems probable that at these times soldiers came under the direct legal control of officers of the kingdom and that in at least some contexts their property groups were not held responsible for them. We know for example that if a Nayar soldier murdered another he was tried in the court of the king or of a feudatory prince and, if convicted, was executed promptly by four or five of his peers, presumably without his property group being consulted or punished. Thieves caught within the boundaries of coastal towns seem to have been similarly dealt with (Barbosa, 1518, quoted in Ayyar, 1938: 284–286). It may be that their

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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property groups were held legally responsible for Nayar men only when they committed high treason or when they became engaged in disputes and offenses within the neighborhood of their birth.

It seems probable that the kāranavan's powers over his juniors and over their property were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule (Aiyar, 1922: 33–132). It is not clear whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the taravād; during British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a kāranavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside in favor of his immediate junior. An inefficient kāranavan could moreover be forced by the court to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure. Since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin, all kāranavans have been legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members once a year, as provided in the Madras Marumakkattayam (Matriliny) Act, 1933, and the Cochin Nayar Act, 1938. However, few juniors avail themselves of this right, which is evidently repugnant to the traditional ideals of obedience and trust toward elders of the taravād.

Even traditionally, however, both junior men and women were often consulted in the management of the group's affairs. If a dispute arose between minimal segments of the taravād it was common for appeal to be made to an arbitrator of the caste from outside the lineage. The settlement agreed upon would be embodied in a document called a *kārār*, which legally bound all adult members. In large taravāds the allocation of separate houses and sometimes even of separate land to each segment was usually embodied in a kārār. All land continued to be managed by the kāranavan, but he paid a sum of paddy each year to the senior woman of each household from the land allotted to her segment.

Kārārs were, however, common only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal property groups. Too little property was usually involved in the case of retainer Nayars, among whom effective daily management was divided between the kāranavan and the oldest woman. As we have seen, the former carried out all formal transactions outside the group, controlled the estate *in toto*, and disciplined men and boys. The latter organized feminine tasks and held more informal authority over women and small children. When the kāranavan was the son or younger brother of the eldest woman, management usually ran particularly smoothly. The oldest woman might indeed be *de facto* head

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

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2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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[541] and retire to manage its lands. In peacetime, mock fights were organized between Nayars of adjacent villages or of adjacent nads, and jousting was conducted at the court for the entertain-
126 ment of the royal family. In war, the Nayars
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military element in Malabar. The opponents who faced each other with the sariravadi or quarter staff, stood 30 feet apart, and, as if under the same stimulus, each kicked one leg high in the air, a la cancan, gave several lively bounds in the air, held their staff horizontally in front with outstretched arms, came down *slowly* on the haunches, placed the staff on the ground, bent over and touched it with the forehead. With a sudden bound they were again on their feet, and after some preliminary pirouetting went for each other tooth and nail. 526

The sword play which one sees during festive ceremonies, a marriage or the like, done by the hereditary retainers who fight imaginary foes and destroy and vanquish opponents with much contortion of body, always indulge in much of this preliminary overture to their performance. There is always, by way of preliminary, a high kick in the air, followed by squatting on the haunches, bounding high, turning, twisting, pirouetting, and all the time swinging the sword unceasingly. above, below, behind the back, under the arm or legs—in ever so many impossible ways.

Nâyar swords and shields are figured in the illustration. The shields are made of wood covered with leather, usually coloured bright red. Within the boss are some hard seeds, or metal balls loose in a small space, so that there is a jingling sound like that of the small bells on the ankles of the dancer, when the shield is oscillated or shaken in the hand. The swords are those which were used ordinarily for fighting. There are also swords of many patterns for processional and other purposes, more or less ornamented about the handle and half way up the blade; but the one which is figured will suffice to show what the Nâyar fighting sword was like. The smaller shields are now used in play. 714 411 [531]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers and his peculiar weapon is an instrument with a thin but very broad blade hooked towards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet' or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies,

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien,

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

THE NAYAR WARRIORS OF ANCIENT TIMES

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714
411
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[facing p. 5]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

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721 temporary ritual privileges in the important Nambudiri-managed temples of alien kingdoms. Several times rights in such a temple were obtained by an alien ruler, and held for a period of years at the cost of repeated battles with the king within whose territory the temple stood.

643 The power of the king to command his Nayar
701 retainers was checked by periodic assemblies
664 of Nayars (koottams). If the king's foreign policy were disfavoured by the Nayars of a particular nad, or if their own chief failed to pay them promptly, the village military leaders, with some of their followers, assembled in a body called a nad koottam and threatened to defect to some alien ruler. This occasionally happened: cases are recorded of the defection of a whole nad from one ruler to another. Similarly within the desam, small assemblies called desa-koottams might force their policy on their local leader or stage a strike until they compelled him to pay them their dues.

692 Within the kingdom, justice was administered
681 at several levels. First, each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of adult men to punish offences against caste law [33] and to arbitrate in small civil disputes within the caste. For the larger castes of Iravas and Pulayas the local caste group was the village: married men met periodically to arrange public ceremonies of their caste and punish offenders. These comprised chiefly wrongful interdining, small debts, thefts and assaults within the caste, and intra-caste adultery. Fines for the upkeep of the caste

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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237 (called varatties) and used as fuel to supplement firewood, by the poorer classes, who go about picking the stray deposits of cattle-dung in the by-ways and streets. Perhaps a small percentage of cattle-dung is wasted. Yet it is the most important manure and an acre of land uses 100 to 150 baskets of it.

Cattle urine is not used, except by Brahman ladies to a very small extent, in growing kitchen vegetables in their backyards.

The refuse of goat-pens and of fowls (which are kept in most low-class and Nayar houses), as well as bone dust, is used in small quantities for growing garden vegetables.

241 All sorts of green manure are used. About fifty to seventy-five bales of green stuff are used on one acre of land. But green manure is not grown; it is obtained from the neighbouring woods, and the shrubby undergrowth which is commonly found on almost every hillside and in the compounds of houses.

Wood-ash is commonly used, especially in garden cultivation.

Salt is used in coconut plantations.

Chemical manures are unknown in the village.

Garden cultivation is an important item, and very profitable too, though it is not yet carried on very extensively. About 110 acres of land are used for this purpose. Water is obtained mostly from wells, of which there is one or more in every garden. The chief products are coconuts (selling at Rs. 3 to Rs. 5 per 100), arecanuts used for chewing, etc. (Rs. 1½ to Rs. 2 per 1,000), plantains or bananas (Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 per 1,000), jack-fruits (2 to 6 annas each), mangoes, yams and various kitchen vegetables like pumpkins, brinjals, etc. These are cultivated in almost all gardens. Pepper and ginger, betel leaves and turmeric, are also cultivated in all good gardens. Pepper is very valuable and gives a good profit.

[722] Coconuts being largely exported in the form of copra, have fallen 50 per cent in price, through shortage of freight, during the war. This has entailed great hardship on the large classes of coconut growers and workers in the Malabar Coast, this village suffering with the rest.

242 *Insect-pests.*—A kind of beetle sometimes does great damage to the crops—especially the new paddy crops and plantains. Small birds also carry away grains of corn. The usual method of combating them is to keep watch in the fields and drive them off—a very tedious and difficult operation. No help is got from the Agricultural Department, of whose very existence the village is unaware.

232 *Cattle diseases.*—Hoof disease is the commonest and most dangerous. Kerosene oil mixed with lamp black is the popular remedy. There is another disease—a sort of suffocation. A cholera-like disease is also heard of, accompanied by bleeding, etc. Snake-poisoning is another danger, a bite on the nose being supposed to be fatal. The villagers have their traditional methods of combating these. Charms and incantations are used to supplement medicine. No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural Department.

313 *Wood* is obtained from the neighbouring forests, as well as from the clusters of trees in the village. Building timber is often

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132 nearer to the sea (Innes, 1908: 270). The temperature varies from 70° to 90° and humidity is always high. Unlike most of the great king-
[133] doms of India, Kerala had no single great river and no extensive, cen-
[241] trally organized irrigation system. Instead, her cultivated crops and lush vegetation depended on the heavy rainfall and numerous small rivers and streams by means of which small-scale irrigation was easily possible to groups of families.

132 Further, the heavy rainfall, seasonal floods, and hilly terrain made
49 communications difficult until modern times. Before the partial con-
[648] quest of Kerala by Mysoreans from the northeast in 1766, there were no roads, wheeled vehicles, or pack animals. The kings maintained
[701] small cavalry forces only in the coast towns, traveled in palanquins,
[203] and employed runners to carry messages to their vassal chiefs. Goods
[482] were dragged downstream by elephants, transported in boats, or car-
[505] ried on the backs of men. Armies moved slowly; local nobles some-
[726] times rebelled against their rulers but warfare was abandoned in the heavy southwest monsoon season from May to September. The dif-
651 ficulty of communications and the lack of a centrally organized irrigation system may have been connected with the fact that Kerala had no regular land tax until the 1730's (*ibid.*: 308). Instead, the revenues of her rulers came from tribute in kind supplied by subordinate nobles, and from taxes levied upon overseas trade (Logan, 1951, II: ccxviii; Innes, 1908: 307–308).

439 In spite of the overseas trade, most of Kerala's villages were tra-
472 ditionally self-sufficient for the basic necessities of life. Quantities of manufactured goods were brought to Kerala's ports from other parts
563 of India for shipment to the Middle East, but indigenous crafts such as weaving, metalwork, pottery, and basketry remained simple and served local needs. Kerala thus had no large urban castes of craftsmen and no indigenous merchant castes, but only immigrant communities of Syrian Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and, later, European merchants and Hindu merchants from other kingdoms of India, all concentrated in the coastal towns. The limited nature of trade and crafts and the comparative self-sufficiency of village life also help to account for the relatively decentralized political structure.

History

175 Little is known of Kerala until the first century A.D. It then formed part of the kingdom of Chera, whose capital was probably east of the Ghats at Karur on the Kaveri River in the modern Trichinopoly dis-
[439] trict. Chera, like its companion South Indian kingdoms, Chola and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes 564
two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants."

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied 564
in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, 564
and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or different sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, [628] [726]
soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain.

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages 621
of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property 613
groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the 564
king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet 566
paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure 471
was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran.* In most villages the men of 427
retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar,* a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs.

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristo- 564
cratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, 794
nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They

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European trade shook the foundations of the caste system in other ways. Ports grew larger, and within them European merchants employed Christian converts, artisans, and runaway serfs. Near the ports, serfs sometimes became slaves, being torn from their ancestral lands and sold or hired for cash.

Nevertheless, until the introduction of steam power in the second half of the nineteenth century, the technology and over-all economy of Kerala did not change very radically. Trade was still limited to surplus crops, luxury goods, and metals. Inland villages remained largely self-sufficient, with the lower castes excluded from cash transactions. Upward mobility was virtually confined to Muslims, Christians, and the Hindu aristocrats above the rank of Nayar retainers. It seems to have been this lack of basic change in the technology which allowed the persistence of a strict, hereditary rank order in villages and, within each homogeneous local caste group, of kinship as the main organizing principle.

War and Law

The traditional period was one of perpetual wars between adjacent kingdoms, interrupted only in the rainy seasons. A royal lineage's strength lay in its monopoly of gunpowder, coinage, and customs dues, its ability to use foreign and Muslim ships for naval warfare, and its control of the royal domains both as a source of produce and of Nayar retainers as soldiers. Through its superior wealth and military power a royal lineage could force feudatory princes and vassal nobles to muster soldiers throughout the kingdom in periods of large-scale war. Each district and each village was classified according to the number of Nayar soldiers it could customarily muster for war. In the Zamorin's kingdom the strength of royal feudatories varied between 18,000 and 1,000 Nayars; of Nayar chiefs, between 5,000 and 100; of village headmen, between about 100 and 25 (Ayyar, 1938: 278). Records of the muster of each feudatory were kept by the Nayar clerks of the palace. The primary duty of each chief was to assemble regularly the soldiers of his district for military exercises at the capital, and in time of war to lead them to battle, with the king himself at their head. Within the district military training was organized on a village basis. This might be done by a Nayar village headman, by the chief himself, or, in Brahman villages, by a Nayar military leader (Asan) who acted for the chief or the king. All Nayar boys of the retainer, village headmen, and chiefly and royal

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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castes seem to have received a military training, although some, especially of the Agattu Charna caste, later became clerks (Dames, 1921: 18–19; A. Gray, 1887, I: 412–413).

The Nayars' traditional arms were the sword, shield, lance, and the bow and arrow, although gunpowder came into increasing use after the Portuguese arrived. Before 1500 battles were highly stylized (cf. C. A. Menon, 1911: 56; Ayyar, 1938: 118, 171). Not more than 10,000 were commonly brought into the field at one time. Severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Brahman emissaries who, if fighting became intense, might enter the field and arbitrate between the leaders. If, however, the king or a chief were slain, his personal vassals had to fight to the death or until their honor was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side (Logan, 1951, I: 138).

Later, with the introduction of cannon and fortresses by the Europeans, battles became more frequent and devastating. The Zamorin mustered a total force of between 50,000 and 60,000 at various times in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries against the ruler of Cochin (Ayyar, 1938: 169, 182). The kings had to rely increasingly on paying their soldiers in cash rather than on sporadic feudal levies. Permanent conquest and the control of rich lands also became a more urgent aim of the kings as the overseas trade expanded. But the Nayar techniques of fighting and their code of honor persisted until British times.

Within each kingdom, law was administered at several levels. Each local caste group had its own periodic assembly of household heads to judge crimes (which were also sins) against the caste's religious laws. These included wrongful interdining and sexual relations with members of other castes. The chief punishments were fines for the upkeep of the caste shrine and temporary ostracism. Grave offenders were excommunicated with the consent of the chief. They then became the property of either king or chief and were sold as slaves to foreign traders. In the larger castes such as Tiyyars or Pulayas the local caste group was often contained within the village. The smaller castes of village servants each had their own assemblies extending over a group of adjacent villages.

Among retainer Nayars the local caste group might comprise the Nayars of one caste within one village, within a section of a large village, or within a group of two to four adjacent small villages. This area was called a *tara* in the Calicut kingdom and a *kara* in Cochin; we shall call it a neighborhood. Its assembly was called a *tara-kūttam*

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts,
241 and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they
[701] were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

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took place in areas and periods where one trading power was in the ascendant and wished to support a strong ruler with taxes, arms, and shipping, and through him to gain a monopoly of the pepper trade. Such maneuvers went on continually in the Cochin lineage during the period of European trade. In the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century the Cochin lineage disintegrated into five property groups. The Zamorins to the north, who were expanding with Arab aid, supported the Mutta ("Elder") branch, installed its head as king, and made him feudatory to Calicut. When the Portuguese arrived in 1500 they took up the cause of the Elaya ("Younger") branch, installed them as kings, and ousted the Elder branch and the Zamorin. By 1656 the Younger branch was dying out, as were the three other branches, and only the Elder branch had members available for adoption. Instead of allowing the king to adopt from the Elder branch as they should by custom have done, the Portuguese forced him to adopt from an unrelated lineage, the Rajas of Bettem, who ruled between Cochin and Calicut and who had just defected to the side of Cochin. The Elder branch then sought the help of the Zamorin and the Dutch, and defeated the Cochin Raja and the Portuguese in the war of 1600. The Dutch ousted the Portuguese from Cochin port and installed the Elder branch as their protégés on the throne. Despite such machinations, the Cochin kingdom never became permanently *divided* between branches of the royal lineage, because the office of kingship, supported by one or another merchant power, retained sufficient funds, equipment, and men to restore control over the whole.

The Zamorin's lineage was unusual in that from at least the thirteenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries it apparently did not greatly expand in numbers or divide into separate property groups. Indeed it several times almost died out and in 1705 had to adopt from the Nileswaram lineage, an offshoot of Kolattiri. There were therefore no dynastic wars in Calicut. Even had there been, however, it is safe to say that they would always have culminated in the supremacy of one branch and not in division of the kingdom. This was because throughout the period the Calicut port remained great. With the help of one trading power after another the kingship remained strong and, except for border losses, was able to maintain central judicial control and a system of differentiated political offices within the heart of the kingdom.

Within the Calicut kingdom, which was the strongest until the mid-eighteenth century, dynastic disputes among the district chiefs were usually settled by the king. Succession to district chiefship and to vil-

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634 613 Succession to district chiefship and to vil-
635 lage headships had to be ratified by the king and he could if necessary dispossess disaffected branches and exclude them from office.
622 This was true in the heart of the kingdom. Between Calicut and
726 Cochin, the Zamorins' perpetual enemy, lay several small chiefdoms ruled by formerly independent Kshattriya lineages owing only a tenuous allegiance to one or the other side. In the perennial wars between Calicut and Cochin disaffected branches of these lineages frequently changed sides.

622 Village headmen's lineages, again, had their successions confirmed
635 by the chief or king to whom they owed immediate allegiance. When
634 a property group divided into segments, the tendency seems to have
613 been for the branch having the senior member to retain the ancestral house, the office, and most of the village domain. The king or chief sometimes installed a discarded branch of such a lineage in a vacant office elsewhere, if the office-bearing lineage of that village had died out. His power to do this rested on the fact that an office-bearing lineage which was dying out could not adopt without the consent of the officer of next higher rank. Lopped branches of village headmen's lineages which lost their domains and office seem to have reverted in time to the caste rank of retainer Nayars.

613 In most of the royal lineages and many of the chiefly lineages there
554 existed the institution of *sthānams*. These were titles carrying separate estates and sometimes subordinate political offices for the men next in seniority to the ruler, irrespective of branch. The Zamorin's lineage had five sthānams. The first was the Zamorin who had palaces at Calicut and Ponnani. Second came a *sthāni* (title holder) who ruled as chief of Nedunganad, a large chiefdom near the southern boundary whose former ruler had been conquered and executed. The third sthāni regularly patrolled the southern frontier with an army. The fourth and fifth had no political offices but lived on separate estates. The rest of the lineage occupied one or more palaces in Calicut. When a sthāni died, those next below him in age rank all moved up one place. The ruling lineages of Kdattunad, Walluvanad, and Palghat each had five sthānis and many of the lesser chiefs had two or three. Cochin had no sthānis other than the king, but originally the eldest male of the lineage retired into celibacy while the second ruled as
[648] king. When the Portuguese came they abolished this rule and installed the king themselves.

[182] When a ruling lineage was financially and militarily strong, sthānams strengthened its rule and helped it to cohere for a longer time than it might otherwise have done. They lifted the senior men out of their

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

persuaded themselves, that no nation could handle it with 175
such skill and dexterity.[1] Such trained young men became 701
the guards of some king or lord, and so faithful and obedient were they, that they had no hesitation to die for him when required. They were the greatest and worst enemies of the 648
Portuguese, and did a great deal of mischief to them by sea. 175
Some of them had a naked rapier or cutlass in their right hand 411
and a great target in their left, made of light wood, some again were armed with bows and venomous arrows upon their [714]
shoulders; and while moving about, they made a great noise by knocking the hilt of the rapier against the target in order that they might be heard. Others carried long pikes, some pecus with the match readily lighted, and had the best locks that could be found in all Europe. They knew how to use them, and the Portuguese had no advantage over them. Wherever they went, they carried their arms both by day and night.[2]

"They went into battle almost naked, threw javelin with 175
equal address backward and forward, and drew the bow with 726
such skill that their second shaft often split the first. Their extraordinary agility made them the terror of every combat in forest or jungle. On the smallest provocation they prepared themselves for death, and having done so, one would hold his ground against a hundred. Those attached to the person of [701]
the prince made it a point of honour not to survive him."[3]

Their military dress and mode of fighting.

"The military dress of the Nayar is a pair of short drawers 175
and his peculiar weapon is an instrument 411
with a thin but very broad blade hooked towards the edge like a bill-hook or gardener's [714]
knife, and about the length of a Roman sword. The hooked instrument, the inseparable companion of the Nayar whenever he quits his dwelling on business, pleasure or for war, has no scabbard, and is usually grasped by the right hand as an ornamental appendage during the time of peace and used for destruction in war. When the Nayar employs his 'musquet' or his bow, the weapon already described is fixed in an instant by means of a catch in the waist belt, with the flat part of the blade diagonally across his back; and it can be

1. Johnstone in his relations of the most famous kingdom in the world, 1611.

2. Voyages of Linschoten to the East Indies,

3. Graul Reise nach Ost Indien,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

175
564 went on to observe: 'These lines, and especially the two
701 last, contain a good description of a Nayr, who walks along, holding up his naked sword with the same kind of unconcern as travellers in other countries carry in
[411] their hands a cane or walking staff. I have observed others of them have it fastened to their back, the hilt being stuck in their waist band, and the blade rising up and glittering between their shoulders' (Asiatic Re-
726 searches, V. 10, 18). M. Mahé de la Bourdonnais, who
175 had some experience of their fighting qualities in the field,
564 thus described them: 'Les Nairs sont de grands hom-
701 mes basanés, légers, et vigoureux: Ils n'ont pas d'autre profession que celle des armes, et seraient de fort bons soldats, s'ils étiaent disciplinés: mais ils combattent sans ordre, ils prennent la fuite dès qu'on les serre de près avec quelque supèriorité; pourtant, s'ils se voient pressés avec vigueur et qu'ils se croient en danger, ils reviennent à la charge, et ne se rendent jamais' (M. Esquer, Essai sur les Castes dans l'Inde, page 181). Finally, the only British General of any note—Sir Hector Munro—who had ever to face the Nāyars in the field, thus wrote of their modes of fighting:—

'One may as well look for a needle in a Bottle of Hay as any of them in the daytime, they being lurking behind sand banks and bushes, except when we are marching towards the Fort, and then they appear like bees out in the month of June.' 'Besides which,' he continued, 'they point their guns well, and fire them well also' (Tellicherry Factory Diary, March, 1761). They were, in short, brave light troops, excellent in skirmishing, but their organization into small bodies with discordant interests unfitted them to repel any serious invasion by an enemy even moderately well organised. Among other strange Malayāli customs, Sheikh

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in ravaging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

726 175 564 701 643 796 762 175

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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ual process of fission. This state of affairs was in harmony with the small amounts of land controlled by retainer property groups and with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to their land. The conditions of kānam tenure not only allowed for changes in the tenures of plots of land within one village, but even permitted segments of an expanding taravād to change their feudal allegiances and if necessary to hive off from their natal village.

The situation was different in the aristocratic lineages of royalty and district chiefs. By jenmam right they owned large domains which could support greater numbers of members. Their members also had a stake in the political office which they were reluctant to surrender. On the whole these lineages tended to cohere for longer periods than did those of retainers. Some of them today number over three hundred members and trace their descent back to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. When segments of these lineages did move away from their ancestral lands it was usually because they had been conquered and forced to vacate their territories and offices.

In the beginning, when one of these aristocratic lineages rose to power, it did so as a small property group. It did so either (in the case of royals) through conquest or (in the case of chiefs) through being appointed to office by some royal power. When they acquired office these upstart property groups seem to have severed ties with their former lineages and clans and to have conferred on themselves a higher ritual rank as independent castes.

After a few generations such a property group might expand in numbers and separate out into segments. I lack data on the precise point at which aristocratic property groups segmented; it seems to have been always at a later point with them than with retainer Nayars. (Today, some royal and chiefly property groups have a time depth of eight or more generations and over a hundred members.) When fission did occur the segments moved into separate palaces, each taking a portion of the ancestral domain for its maintenance. The oldest man resident in each segment acted as kāranavan and managed its internal affairs. For a time at least, the political office remained vested in the oldest man of the lineage irrespective of branch. When he was able, he kept a tight hold over all the segments, deflecting part of their income to himself for the upkeep of his palace staff, private army, and the larger forces he mustered through his subordinate vassals in war. The office bearer also retained sole right to the customs dues on trade within his chiefdom or kingdom, and to the tribute from village headmen within his area of rule.

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Nambūdiri Brahm
Tamil AW16
Tanjore Brahmans

father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Nambūdiri Brah-
mans

769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
182 this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
626 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans
Kammalans

*595 so, but that they would not tell me. He was twenty five when he took
60 his fathers' sisters' daughter, Janeki, to be his wife.
582 I found Kali difficult to interview. She was old, very old by Indian
*595 and Kerala standards, and quite plainly showed her displeasure at being
60 bothered. Consequently I went over to asking Paragnoden for the in-
115 formation that I wanted, but he seemed extraordinarily ignorant and lazy. Finally, it was from a neighbour who was called in, that most of what I learned was gathered. It is from what these combined informants told me, and from what my guide and interpreter knew about the family, that I was able to piece the genealogy together. It will be found in Tables 9 and 10 herewith. I have been obliged to put it on two tables because of the size of the first generation.

*595 On Table 9, Vali and Lakshmi are shown. Now deceased, they were
601 sisters of the five brothers. They live to be fifty and fifty three respectively. Personal names and *tarawad* names were not always known by the informants, and in these cases, I have been obliged to put in interrogation marks – except where a *tarawad* is qualified as being one from the village of Palappuram, for this at least gives a geographical location.
582 It is to be noted in Table 9 how advanced in age* are some of the un-
●732 married young people, but then Thandans do marry late in Kerala, differing in this from other parts of India. The congenital idiot, Narayan, son of Paragnoden, was at his father's side during the interview.

*595 This completed my general study of Thandan and Tiya (Thiyya) polyandry. However, before this date occurred, I had already started visiting Kammalan houses to find out what the polyandry of this caste of artisans was like.

On the 12th of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi in the Walluvanad taluk, near the borders of Palghat taluk, to interview the Tiyas I had seen there ten years before. I was accompanied by two interpreters and a guide. We were not successful in finding the Tiya family we sought, as it had moved elsewhere in the intervening years, but we found a blacksmith living on the same bit of property, as I have already reported
*595 earlier (see p. 178). Before I give an account of this family's polyandry,
564 however, I would like to describe that of a household of goldsmiths,
[326] living close by, as, hierarchally, these craftsmen come before their fellow blacksmiths in the Kammalan caste.

In the language of Kerala, Malayalam, they are called *Tatham* (see p. 173) and they are among those who are said to have gone to Ceylon
[361] in the days of the Perumals. They are not a wealthy group of people, and this became apparent at once when we entered their compound near

*[i.e. 22, 20, 12 & 10 yrs. old -- Analyst]
[Text Continues On P. 194]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give 564 sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, 613 and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they 588 proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing [586] of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the [533] Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtain- [171] ing in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be [735] said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is repre- [184] sented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same [824] plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They [415] are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," [113] Vol. II., 6 (1891).

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796 the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he
777 happens to fix his eyes upon on this, particular morning. According to Nair and even general Hindu Mythology there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance ashes, firewood, oil and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as, reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold and such like ones on the morning of the next New Year. Whereas wholesome and favourable consequences can be produced by the sight of auspicious objects like those just enumerated. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sight-worthy objects on the New Year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known, in native phraseology, as a *kani*. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A Grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed clothe, some "unprofitably gay" flowers of the *Konna* tree, a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps filled with cocoanut oil "clear as diamond sparks" are kept intensely burning and a small plank of wood or some other seat is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house and takes them blindfolded so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the Kani. The members are seated one after another in the seat and are then and not till then asked to open their eyes and carefully look at this Kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers which they have bought
[735] and stored for the occasion. The Kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the carelessly confused noise of the crackers the morning breaks and preparations are begun for the morning
[264] meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice-kanji with a
[262] grand appendage of other eatable substances and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on grand scales.

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342
556 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
[769] between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
[778] women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
[735] and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
[782] of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot afford to make these images, substitute simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside and offered.

The entrance is at C.

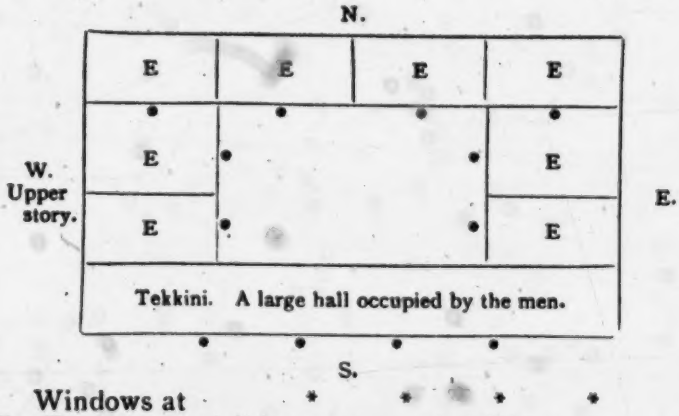

Windows at
E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably, there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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[351]

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremony the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *tâli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkâkkarappan* temple and tie the *tâli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahâdévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpâd is the *tâli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *tâli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tâlikettu kalyânam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tâlikettu*

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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres.

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans.

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres.

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers.

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha.

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one.

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
[574] day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During
[536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

342 [823] west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlapura or four-556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

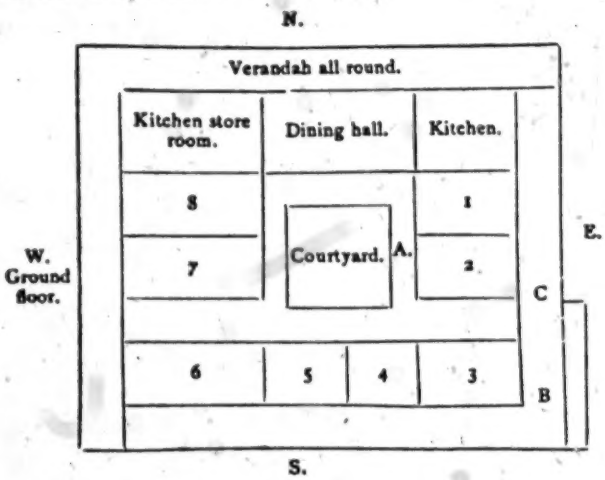

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

afford to have these images made, substitute a stone. [532] Offerings are made to these images, or to the stones at [613] every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, [735] and the bird is then taken inside and offered. The [782] entrance is at C.

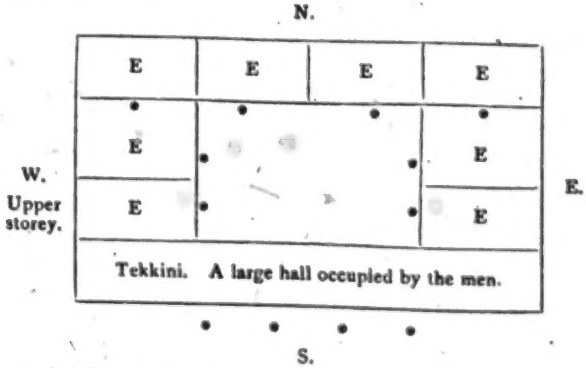

There are windows at * * *. E are rooms occupied by women and children. It may be noticed that the [513] apartment where the men sleep has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral [351] ceremonies, that a house is supposed to have a court-yard, and, of course, it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nālapura is the proper form of house, for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the 342 ordinary Nāyar's house that one sees all over Malabar.

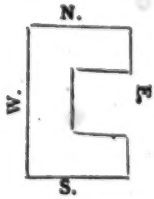

The ordinary house is roughly of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper storey. There are no doors, and only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep at one end, women [513] at the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

296 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil [791] and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

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241 leads to the tree fruiting within two or three years, instead of four or five. The leaves that fall from the trees in gardens are used as green manure in the paddy fields and coconut gardens. No such thing as growing green manure is known. No wood or forest is near so that the people may bring the leaves.

242 In fact very little manuring takes place in the village. What is actually done in the cultivation of chief crops is to plough the land. Every year much is drawn from the soil, and nothing is returned to it. I have stated above that lands which returned Rs. 1,000 a year do not now return more than Rs. 400 or 500. The two most potent causes for this deterioration are the system of land tenure and the absence of manuring. Perhaps the second is the result of the first, but I think the want of agricultural knowledge is the cause of the want of manuring and scientific cultivation.

372 *Wood and fuel.*—The outer cover of the coconut, the leaves of the same, mango trunks, serve for fuel for the whole village, and they are obtained in plenty, but the price is rising with the general rise of prices.

[313] Wood for implements, building, etc., is obtained from Cochin State, brought in carts drawn by oxen or buffaloes.

342 *The village—Houses.*—For buildings granite is obtained from a place four miles distant, mortar is prepared in the village, mud
361 from the village itself, tiles from different places, the least distant being twenty miles away, for thatch the leaves of the coconut are used, iron things are bought in the bazaar. The houses in the village are all isolated from one another. Every part of the village is inhabited except the paddy fields. However, at the present day traders have a tendency to build their houses as near the road as possible and form streets. The people also have a tendency to live as near the temple as possible, and this has resulted in the formation of four streets, surrounding the temple on all the four sides. These streets form also the bazaar of the village. There are here about 100 houses.

361 The lands adjacent to the temple are occupied by Brahmans and Nayars. Any other place can be occupied by any family. The
571 houses of the low castes, high castes, and of other religions are intermingled. The same garden may be occupied by Muhammadans, Hindus and Christians, and they all live very amicably as if they belonged to one and the same religion.

735 The Pariahs, whose families are only three in number, occupy certain portions of the land of a big landlord. The landlord gives the Pariahs free houses and a certain allowance a month. He thinks it incumbent upon him to protect and maintain them. Their huts, though small, are yet tidy and neat. The allowance that was freely given them has now become a right. They follow certain industries and go to rich men's houses to beg twice a month, and they are given a certain quantity of rice.

342 There are 977 thatched houses, 313 tiled houses, no terraced houses.

286 *Crafts and industries.*—There are seven families of weavers consisting of 39 members, i.e., 14 men, 12 women, 13 children under fifteen years. They have been in the village from times long past. They weave a cloth 1 foot wide, 1¼ yards long, and this is used as undercloth. They also at times weave a cloth ¾ or 1

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563 other work demanding skill or strength is mainly done by them.
463 They handle tools better than the Hindus. A strong Muhammadan coolie will carry sacks of grain of 8 paras weighing 160 lb. a distance of two miles half a dozen times in a day, a Hindu coolie will carry only half a sack.

462 *Women's work.*—In the better class families, especially the Brahman and higher Nayar families, women confine themselves to household business and looking after the children. Among the lower castes they work for their living. They help the men in agricultural work, such as transplanting seedlings, sowing, reaping and threshing. Rice husking is their special occupation, they also carry paddy from place to place on their heads. They are paid less than the men, three edangalis where men get four or five. Children also help in agricultural work and in looking after cattle, sheep and goats. Cheruma women work just like the men and get about the same wages. Some Nayar women go out to work in Brahman families.

435 Rice is the staple food, either by itself or in the form of kanji
[262] (a sort of watery gruel). Its price depends on that of paddy. The price of paddy is lowest after the first harvest in September, being 2 to 2½ paras (ten edangalis = one para) for one rupee. In about two months the price rises, and paddy sells at about 1¾ paras for a rupee. With the second harvest in December or January the price again falls, but rises gradually till July or August to its maximum height and grain is only 1·5 to 1·8 paras for a rupee. Towards the end of June 1916 it was only 1·6 for a rupee. Price fluctuations are greater or less according to weather conditions and outside demand. In August 1917 the price was 1·3 paras per rupee, and prices were still rising.

454 Not more than 5 per cent, or 20 families, mostly of the higher classes, have made savings.

Very little money is invested in agricultural or industrial capital of the productive kind except the ordinary farming stock. Some persons (foolishly) invest their money in Kanom land the value of which largely depends on the goodwill of the landlord. Few are rich enough to buy land in absolute ownership.

Savings bank accounts are unknown. No one apparently has any.

426 Loans to neighbours is a popular and common way of utilizing savings, especially loans to agriculturists for short periods on high interest, 12 to 24 per cent. Even higher interest is obtained by speculative loans on grain. Thus before harvest a poor peasant may borrow grain for a month, repaying 102 or 102½ measures for 100 measures borrowed.

301 Most saving families possess some jewellery and other movable
454 goods worth about one-eighth to half of their total capital, an obvious attraction to thieves in former years. The amount of jewellery is deceptive as a test of prosperity.

454 Savings are utilized also for the purchase of houses, gardens, and increased consumption. Under this head should also be mentioned small investments in what are called 'Kuris' (chit-funds).

426 The majority of the villagers are in debt, for smaller or larger
735 amounts. During certain seasons of the year many families

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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actually go without the needed food and keep body and soul together as best they can. Well may economists and others speak of the power of resistance of the Indian peasant, his power of doing without! I wish I had some photographs of the living skeletons who call forth this praise!! But they are proud; they will never tell you the whole story. The village schoolmasters tell me that boys do not attend school regularly (though it is free) owing to actual starvation, cold hunger takes away all appetite for study. There are practically very few who do not owe something to the village money-lenders. Tenants are always in arrears with their rents; they sometimes even consume the grain reserved for seed. Villagers come begging for small loans just to tide over difficulties from day to day. The high rate of interest includes a large percentage of insurance for risk. Debts vary from a few rupees to hundreds. Exact information is not available. 426 735

Causes of indebtedness.—Poverty is of course the chief cause; other causes are want of suitable work, especially for women of the lower classes, the low rate of wages, due in its turn to inefficiency and weakness in bargaining, which exist side by side with improvident habits of the labourers, who are as a rule ignorant (though intelligent) and stoic; the growth of population without a proportionate increase in agricultural products and foodstuffs; the high, almost ruinous rates of interest, often as high as 36 per cent, which are both a cause and a result of poverty; an all round rise in prices, especially in foodstuffs; fast living and improvident habits among the richer—though this is rare—due to the desire to better their standard of life in response to western influences coming from cities. The Brahmans borrow largely to educate their sons and to marry their daughters. General extravagance is however unknown especially in food and dress. Many of the poorer villagers beg you to give them a meal or one of your old used up cloths.

Only a very small percentage, not more than 10 per cent, of the debtors have liberated themselves from debt. The tendency is for a perpetuation of debts. Debt is driving many villagers to other and distant places. When they have earned a small sum they return, but are soon forced into their old state. Of course provident habits do not always exist.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

There is no communal income of any sort in the village.

Selling prices of land.—Owing to the prestige and social importance of landownership, the landowning class never sell their lands even for good prices unless driven to it by necessity. This raises the price of land. The rights of ownership peculiar to Malabar, known as janmam, are very complete and thorough and not ordinarily found in ryotwari areas. Janmam land yields very low rates of interest on the price paid for it; prices are so high, having risen 25 to 50 per cent in recent times. Janmam land is usually let out on lease, usually for twelve years renewable at the option of the owner, if the due renewal fees are paid. Even Kanom tenure rights have risen in value, though they depend so much on the good will of the landlord, the tenants having no legal protection against eviction, or arbitrary enhancement of rents. Kanom lands 435 423

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Tiyas

regulation. They said that they were starving and that they had had nothing to eat that morning. When I asked them how they would solve their problem, they replied that it was better that I "did not ask". Evil times had befallen them in their old age, and they really did not know what they could do about it; they might hire themselves out as labourers, if they were not so old and feeble. They agreed with me that the increase in population in Kerala over the years had made the difficulty of feeding so many people increasingly great.

Their two elder sons, called Ayapakuti and Pangha, lived polyandrously, I heard, some few miles away, on a bit of land which their fathers had given them fourteen years ago, in the fifth year of their marriage and after the birth of their fourth child. The common wife, Paru, was now alone with the thirty five year old second son, as the elder had died two years ago, also at the age of thirty five. It seemed that Kandapan had originally been part of the polyandrous household but that, tiring of living in this way, he had found a wife for himself, Lakshmi, with whom he had returned to the parental house to live, after the last renewal of the lease, four years ago.

With the old folk and Kandapan's family, was also Kunyu, a daughter, twenty five years old and divorced ten years ago. She had been married at the age of fourteen to Velahu, a man eighteen years her senior. She was childless and had not remarried. She lived in the larger house with her parents.

I took photographs of the family and a group picture of them can be seen in Fig. 10. I also made their genealogy, which is attached herewith in Table 6. I stayed on and discussed various problems with these people for part of the afternoon (having provided for them to have lunch in the meantime, which was most welcome to them in their starved condition). They told me that even if polyandry was now prohibited since the Act passed in 1940, it had been dying out for some years in any case. The legislation – of which they really had no idea at all – was only the confirmation and the consecration of a *de facto* state of affairs. Concerning the inheritance of girls in Tiya families, I may mention that, since the passing of the Act, property would have to be divided. Girls would also get their share which would be half that of the boys; they would pass it on to their own children and, since they were *makkathayam*, it would become merged with that of the latter's fathers. If there were no boys and only girls in the household, its property would cease to exist after the girls had been married off, for each of them would take her part away in accordance with the above.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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000 to free them from debt. Co-operation is worth trying. The Agricultural Loans Act might be made more accessible. The tenants need more protection in their holdings. *The burden of taxation must be lightened* and more equally distributed, so that the incidence of taxation may not be so heavy on the poorest class; the villagers are starving themselves to pay the taxes.* Any appearance of an improvement in the standard of living of the villagers is deceptive, being only on the surface and confined to the better classes. The condition of the Cherumas and other agricultural labourers is badly in need of improvement. The fundamental evil is poverty and debt.

The industrial position of the village must be strengthened. The existing industries (i.e., crafts) are languishing. To an able and enthusiastic industrialist there are further possibilities of profitable employment of capital and labour.

Garden cultivation can be extended, the cultivation of valuable commercial products like pepper, coconuts, etc., might be carried on on a larger scale on capitalistic lines. Plantain fibres, it is said, can be utilized for the manufacture of a kind of silk-like cloth, much in demand by certain classes, for certain purposes.

Bamboos abound and may be used in the manufacture of paper.

The cultivation of gingelly seed on dry lands might profitably be extended and the product crushed in the village oil machines worked by oxen. There seems to be scope for considerable development in this line. It is a question whether groundnuts and indigo cannot be introduced and cultivated in the village. The Agricultural Department might usefully depute one of its staff to make a tour of the district and examine the possibilities of extending and improving cultivation—of introducing new crops and an improved and more varied rotation of crops. *The quality and extension of village education is a serious and pressing problem.* The present system of elementary education is doing as much harm as good. Its first fruits are seen (in this village) in the unwillingness of the 'educated' boys to return to their old occupation; all sorts of vain notions and sentiments get into their heads and they are [738] learning bad habits. It is certain that the 'educated' village boy has a supreme contempt for his uneducated parents and others and puts on airs of superiority and refuses to work in the field. Some of the boys are becoming regular scamps, good-for-nothing, and up to all sorts of mischief. Education of this sort is the last thing in the world to destroy the estrangement between the literary or intellectual tendencies of the higher classes and the practical labour of everyday life and industry. In actual fact the vices of the existing state of things tend to be perpetuated. It is high time to find a remedy.

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151 * [The taxes referred to are the very small quit-rents charged as land revenue, averaging less than Rs. 5 per acre for wet land which mostly yields two crops per annum, less than Rs. 2 per acre for garden land and less than Re. 1 per acre for dry land. Mr. Sundara Aiyar explains that the janmi shifts the burden of paying the land revenue on the kanomdar, and makes this stipulation in writing; the kanomdar in turn shifts it on to the working tenant, who is a tenant-at-will. Including the kist the working tenant pays 50 to 60 per cent of the gross produce to the kanomdar, the kanomdar pays to the janmi about one-quarter of what he receives in addition to the kist.—Ed.]

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

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165

COMPARATIVE POSITION OF BIRTH AND DEATH RATES

		Average birth rate per year per 1,000 persons	*Average death rate per year per 1,000 persons*
1941-51	All-India	41.3	24.9
	Kerala	38.2	19.9
1951-56	All-India	41	25
	Kerala	38	17

SOURCE: NCEAR calculations based on Census data and corrected birth and death registration data.

1.18 In fact comparative data for the different States shows that the death rate in Kerala is the lowest in the whole of India. The death rate is lowest in Kerala, presumably because of the generally high standard of hygiene of the people of this area. The erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin had long followed a progressive policy in the field of providing public amenities such as medical facilities, sanitation, etc. Since the standards of literacy as well as the average level of intelligence are fairly high in Kerala, with a more vigorous family planning programme it should be possible to bring down the birth rate within a shorter span of time than in many other parts of India.

[244]

Rural-Urban Breakdown

162 1.19 Only 13.5 per cent of Kerala's population lived in urban areas against 17.38 per cent of all-India, according to the Census of 1951. This difference seems to have narrowed down during the last decade, the proportion of urban population in Kerala having risen to 15.03 per cent by 1961, while it rose to only 17.84 per cent for the whole of India.[1]

361 1.20 The villages in Kerala are unique in size. According to the Census of 1951 as high as 13 per cent of villages had a population exceeding 5,000 persons against only 0.38 per cent of such villages in the whole of India. However, there are some redeeming features which prevent the countryside from presenting an appearance of over-congestion. The villages in Kerala are of a different type than is usual in the rest of India. The homesteads are generally not clustered together but are dotted almost all over the countryside. This spread out of population keeps living conditions healthy and clean in the rural areas.

STATE INCOME, OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND LABOUR PRODUCTIVITY

434 1.21 The State income of Kerala in 1955-56 has been estimated at Rs. 351.6 crores[2] at the current prices (Table 3). This is roughly 3.4 per cent of the National Income of India (Rs. 9,980 crores) for the same year. For an area which is only

[1] It may be noted that this is only a broad conclusion as the definitions of urban areas in Census of 1951 and of 1961 are not identical.

[2] *See* Appendix 2 for details.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the Infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

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morning and evening and also in the leisure hours of the noon. I have often noted with interest the way in which even apparently illiterate people discuss among themselves the philosophy of life as preached in the Hindu sastras.

623

Village administration.—Panchayats were only introduced into the State in 1913. His Highness granted it as one of his boons during the celebration of his sixtieth birthday. "It is also my wish to revive, in commemoration of this occasion, the old village panchayat system which, I trust, will give facilities to the people to settle several matters of each village easily and quickly amongst themselves and give them some training in the art of self-government. It may also afford them better opportunities of representing their wants and grievances to the Darbar." With this Proclamation of His Highness the Raja begins the definition of the constitution and powers of the Village Panchayat Regulation.

Constitution.—Five members of whom the chief village officer of a revenue village (called locally "Parvathiakaran") is an ex-officio member. The rest are now nominated. It meets at least once a month.

POWERS.

I. *Administrative.*—(1) Maintenance and repairs of all minor irrigation works (i.e., works which do not require professional skill) below the cost of Rs. 500.

(2) Maintenance of road avenues.
(3) Maintenance of water-sheds.
(4) Prevention of epidemic diseases.
(5) Clearing and repairing of public wells and tanks.
(6) Formation of Co-operative Credit Societies.
(7) Improvement of public lanes and canals.

692

II. *Judicial.*—Civil disputes up to Rs. 50 with or without the consent of the parties, and up to Rs. 200 with the consent of the parties.

The judicial portion of the Regulation is still in abeyance and has not been brought into force in any panchayat in the State.

623

Even the administrative portion is applied only in three places in the taluk, since the rest have not sufficiently responded to the scheme. Watakancheri is still without a panchayat, though it is the headquarters of the taluk.

631

For executive work every taluk is under the direct administrative supervision of a Tahsildar (Revenue officer) who is also the Chief Treasury Officer. Until recently he was also a Magistrate, but this function is definitely taken away from him. Below him are Revenue Inspectors and village officers. The taluk in question, which has 74 villages, has 4 Revenue officers and more than 30 village officers. Watakancheri with an adjoining village is under a "Parvathiakaran" who collects the revenue and who has a clerk under him. This "Parvathiakaran" is paid Rs. 12 per month and his clerk Rs. 9. The revenue inspector supervises the survey work and collection work, and checks the village accounts. There are also a Munsif's Court and a Magistrate's Court in the village for the settlement of civil and criminal disputes. [692]

744

Each taluk in the State has, as a rule, one Sanitary Inspector. The village officers should bring to the notice of the Sanitary

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744 Inspector the outbreak of any epidemic. He makes tours in the villages; the two vaccinators in the taluk are under him. These vaccinators have to make tours in the taluk according to a programme previously laid down by the Sanitary Inspector. Public wells, tanks, cremation grounds, markets, cart-stands, etc., are also under his supervision. All towns which have no town-councils (and our town has not) are under health-officers, the Sub-Assistant Surgeon acting as the Health Officer. He attends to lighting.

625 *Police.*—Police administration is under a Sub-Inspector who has constables under him. He is under a Divisional Inspector (of whom there are three in the State) with a Superintendent of Police above him. There is, as a rule, one Sub-Magistrate for each taluk.

674 The official figures for the detection of crime are available only for a division of which there are three (A, B and C) in the State, and not for a village. The figures for the C Division, in which my village lies, are as follows:—

Cases.						Persons.						Property.					
1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.			1913-14.			1914-15.		
Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Charged.	Detected.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Tried.	Committed.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.	Lost.	Recovered.	Per cent.
												RS.	RS.		RS.	RS.	
165	143	86·6	96	77	80·2	240	192	80	149	91	61	3,762	1,146	30·46	4,372	2,208	50·50

178 *History and Prospects of the village.*—I see no signs of economic improvement in the past; nor is there much deterioration worth speaking about. There has been, however, an increase in population in recent times. There has been no diversity of occupation. The same routine of paddy cultivation goes on with the old primitive tools and implements. Much capital is not invested even for agricultural improvements for the excellent reason that the small landholders who form the majority cannot afford to experiment on a grand scale, and the few big landholders are sleeping partners distributing their holdings to small men for rent. Nevertheless there are opportunities for economic improvement. The establishment of co-operative credit societies is an urgent need. An "Agricultural Society" consisting of members of the occupation could be conveniently started to diffuse modern scientific ideas in agriculture by distributing pamphlets in the vernacular and discussing questions of importance. A little more attention could be given to the rearing of agricultural stock and the use of agricultural implements. As irrigation does not depend for the most part upon wells in our parts, there is no use in multiplying them.

[454]

454 People buy land because land is the best form of investment

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Nayar

775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and
755 it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 37.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca.1900)1915
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*141 *564 In four the nasal point was somewhat elevated. Slight prognathism with projecting teeth was observed in one individual, an unhealthy person.

Figure.—Seventy-one per cent. of the subjects were noted as "slight," 29 per cent. as "medium" and of those but two individuals are put down as "sturdily built."

*142 *564 *Hair.*—In three individuals hairiness was conspicuously apparent, there being hair nearly all over the body, and in one of these the hair in the small of the back was so thick that in my notes it is described as "like a bush."

On the head.—In nearly 80 per cent. of the subjects the hair on the head was "plentiful and wavy"; in a few of these it was "very thick," while in the remaining 20 per cent. it was "moderate." In no case was it noted as "thin" or "slight." The number of subjects in which growth of hair on the cheeks was noted was one-fifth of the whole.

On the chest.—In nearly a quarter, the hair on the chest was noted as "thick."

On the arms.—In most cases it varied from "very slight" to "moderate." Rarely "thick."

On the legs.—In nearly half it was "moderately thick" to "thick"; in the remainder, slight to moderate.

Colour of the skin.—It should have been noticed before that the colour of the face of the ordinary Malayali is invariably lighter than that of the body; possibly from the prevailing custom of using the umbrella. Malabar is for the most part shaded by trees and palms, and its peoples have not that disregard for the sun's javelins which we see in the country to the eastward. No one [293] starts on a journey, and rarely leaves his house, without [179] his umbrella—the thing of cadjan now being by degrees replaced by the cheap umbrella of European manufacture. The labourer working in the field, the fisherman 292 in his boat on the sea, the boat-man on the backwater, 751 all wear a large umbrella-like hat. Women always carry an umbrella out of doors; or, as in North Malabar, an umbrella hat-like thing which seems to be a curious survival of the custom of wearing an umbrella hat, is carried. This is, apparently, an ordinary umbrella hat, but the central part, which appears to be made to fit the head, as in the ordinary umbrella hat, is too small by half to fit any head, and this hat-like umbrella is carried in the hand to shield the head from the sun and the face

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man. 292 751

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the colour types being pressed against the skin. 142 564*

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of ornament, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic. 301 564* [304]

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye. [189]

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably not far from the general average. 141 564* [157]

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

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[1] *Cultes*, p. 37.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi. 213

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc. 624

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated. [751]

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously. 625

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature. 674

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words. 691

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year. [692]

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past. 174 [103]

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those 178

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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175 411 disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

704 714 411 Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella [293] [643] formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the 726 704 other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same [465] [701] course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

701 643 The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even [784] in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family [752] of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
776 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
794 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrol-
[588] oger might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
826 lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of
[784] caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence
681 is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
564 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[823] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the
[753] taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [776] [753]
impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the taravād might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men 796
might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and 769
called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will 613
and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* 773
where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by 787
the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious [796]
possession is still more common among the lower castes. [784]

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities 769
associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma* 776
devī). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always 782
thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief 613
deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in [346]
common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its [784]
own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the [753]
taravād goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding
or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men
alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an
intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or
failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with
its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barren-
ness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be [346]
housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building
formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then
be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to
the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated
with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more
ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are
the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives
of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its 769
members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, 626
the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, 782
failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retri- 613
bution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to
preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan*
who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of
his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who
died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small
offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult
may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular,
a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death
may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation.
One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retri-
bution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* [57?]
adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the [429]

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a
washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local
[794] government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[613] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
613
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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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825 171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes. 753 Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison, 825 are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for 171 snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship 782 at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent 778 search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes 825 unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a 778 Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him 796 and left them in their present abode. He however promised to [173] return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

length was 5 cm. or over. In one individual the iliac 141
bone was much higher at the right side than on the left. 564*

Face.—A few individuals were noted thus—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Nasal point slightly elevated. Helix of ear very thin; the Darwin's point in the centre of the curve on the left and high up on the right.

(2) Deep nasal notch. Chin receding. Lips thick.

(3) Slight nasal notch. Supraciliary arches developed at outer edges. Chin recedes.

(4) Supraciliary arches and glabella in one marked ridge. Nasal point somewhat raised. Nasal notch.

(5) Very deep nasal notch. Very wide and thick eyebrows.

Figure.—More than half are marked as slight—a few of them "very slight"; the rest "medium." None "stout."

Hair.—As a rule, to which exceptions are very few, 142
hair on the head is thick and wavy: curly in the case of 564*
one individual. The hair of a man of 70 was noted as "very thin and grey." A man of 31 also had hair which was "thin and grey," but he was exceptional. The growth of hair on the cheeks—whiskers—was observed in almost every subject.

Hair on the chest.—The average is "moderate."

On the arms.—The growth of hair in half of the subjects was "slight to very slight"; in the other half, "moderate to thick."

On the legs.—It was noted as "moderate" to "thick" in more than three-fourths of those examined; in a few, "slight."

The growth of hair of a few individuals is here specified—

(1) Aged 54. Hair on the head moderately thick and grey. Hair on the face white. Growth of hair on the cheeks. Hair all over chest grey. Very long thick hair on the back. Hair on the legs and arms thick.

(2) Aged 36. Hair on the head moderately thick and wavy. Glossy black. On chest and middle line of abdomen, moderate. On the arms and legs moderately [302]
thick. Shaves the head (except the crown), face, chest, abdomen, wrists and hands, about every 15 days.

(3) Aged 28. Hair on the head thick and wavy. Growth of hair on cheeks; on the chin it is very thick. On the chest, moderate; on the arms, very slight; on the legs, thick. Does not shave his chest, as doing so [302]
would make him weak; on the other hand, if he does [753]
not shave his head and face, he will become sick. [826]

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their
825 powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends
776 also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâî Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777]
bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [753]
has business everywhere relieving people from their [761]
oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

588 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house
[564] and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad,
[793] a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bride-
588 groom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house
833 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times
178 when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi
782 took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger)
787 Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to
793 the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar
[831] village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the
[753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She
[782] is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last
[834] night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

588 The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music.
[783] On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then
[264] fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

588 In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At
184 the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with
595 other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological
[765] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover
[783] and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word
[851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achan* (originally

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

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775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it [776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these [754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death, 753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this 776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally [754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the [787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of 775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so [751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from 755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 37.

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, [789] the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which

Agricultural ceremonies.

[787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [753] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 771 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 778 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a 825 woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [841] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [782] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to [532] re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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775 [881] [846] [789] [782] time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings. Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* [787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 782 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machinations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to [776] [791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil [783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire). [789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 346 775 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons, the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil [753] Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments [796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat- [793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and [791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 225 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pújas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

595 613 577 [593] 595 764 613

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

595 754 613 593 [154] [586]

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of
564 the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

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in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
518 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft, however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

769 The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad,
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and
152 submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[25] and the initiation rites[26] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection. 789 842 [834]

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning. 789 [755] [825]

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man. 754 [791] [564]

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain [115]

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Sriparamêsvaranûm Sri Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâi Ezhunellumpôl Sri

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâi Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, [777]
all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [753]
bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [761]
has business everywhere relieving people from their oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

754 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic
789 hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan.
754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who
564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there-
[262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have
[673] heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

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bringing them up as their own. The belief that they will steal children helps to some extent to make them dreaded as well as abhorred, but it is as skilled professors of black magic that they are really feared. Ôḍi is the name of the cult, and those who follow it, Parayans as a rule, are able to do many wonderful things. The ordeals to be gone through by the apprentice in the Ôḍi cult are rather trying. Some are so utterly filthy and abominable, eating human excreta being a detail, that even amongst the Parayans, themselves dirty to a degree and accustomed to anything but a high class diet, very few are able to undergo them. Many try, and are unable to proceed. But the man who has gone through them all is a terror. He can make himself invisible, and he can turn himself at will into any animal in order to accomplish his desires. There occurs now and then the death of a woman—a Nâyar or other—enceinte for the first time, the fœtus having been removed for use in black magic.*

754 564 [673] 754 564 795

The Parayan magician, or Ôḍiyan as he is sometimes called, being a pastmaster in Ôḍi, is credited with power to render himself invisible, using such a fœtus; and even without it, he may force a woman to leave her house at midnight and meet him. There would seem to be some connection, however obscure, with hypnotism and this latter. The Parayan, who turns himself into a bullock, in such guise, circumambulates a house thrice; then, still by means of magic, he compels a certain woman of the household to come out to him. If we follow up popular belief, we find that the Nâyar woman so drawn out of her house is bound to die within three days. But as it is well in a description of this kind, to proceed by illustration when possible, I will quote an authenticated story of a woman having been compelled to leave her house by night. The "walking the dæsil" by the bullock, one of those imaginative performances difficult to account for in human belief, must be left out of the story as no one is said to have seen it.

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A Nâyar noticed that, for some days, his wife, who was (contrary to the usual custom, as we have seen it to be) living in his house, appeared to be under some occult influence; and under a premonition that something was

* Not very long ago there was a case of this kind, not far from Palghat, and not only was the fœtus removed but a wisp of straw was substituted in its place; apparently with an idea that, if the space were filled up somehow, the wretched woman would not die!

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754 going to happen he slept across the doorway, so that she could not without waking him leave the house. The door was closed and fastened, he sleeping *inside*. In the early hours of the morning he awoke, and, fearing something unpleasant had taken place as the door was open, he called his brother who was sleeping upstairs. Together they searched for the woman, and found her lying outside in the yard, unconscious. When she recovered her senses, she said that for some nights previous she felt as if she was being called outside, and she tried hard to resist the impulse to go out of the house into the night. At last she could resist no longer and, altogether against her will, unfastened the door and went out. What happened then she knew not. There was neither removal of a fœtus nor death in this case. Such is the story. It is quite possible that stories of the kind are inculcated by wary husbands to keep the women indoors and prevent their being crowned with horns. At any rate the story is one of the kind such as every Nâyar [364] believes. It is, I may say, quite plainly to be seen that, when the Nâyar constructs his house, he takes care that there are certain conveniences, so that the women need never leave the house at night. My narrator was a native gentleman in a position of authority, living at the scene of this strange story when the events related in it occurred not long ago. The persons were named, but I did not question them, as there is much objection to speak of such things to a stranger.

754 795 564 *The Ôḍi cult.*—The Parayan adepts in the magic Ôḍi cult are to some extent hereditary functionaries.* They form one of those hierarchies, common enough in this country, of which Europeans know so little; of which the people themselves know but little as nothing connected with them or with their system is written. It is custom pure and simple—custom which is the most difficult of all to approach and define within accuracy. We will put down what is known, in the way of popular belief of course, as may be free from error.

Those who belong to it, born into it so to speak, go through a certain novitiate, not easy; but those who wish to join it from outside the fraternity of the cult are required to *prove* themselves worthy to join it; and it is their trials as novices, terrifying and utterly filthy, which

* For much of this which follows I am indebted to Mr. U. Balakrishna Nâyar, who has kindly obtained for me matter which is in a general way, unobtainable to the European.

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are truly difficult. Members of the brotherhood are 754
bound to secrecy by solemn oaths, and the secrets of 795
their craft are not allowed lightly to pass to any out- 564
sider. A member of the brotherhood may have one or more disciples or apprentices who are in the first place bound to strict obedience. These apprentices fill vacancies in the brotherhood.

He who would be a member of the Ôḍi cult falls at the feet of him whom he would have as master, and begs for initiation into the mysteries. The master tries to dissuade him, but the would-be Ôḍiyan persists; and then, when assent is given, comes the trial. He follows his master to a lonely place by night. The master disappears in mist, and then re-appears as some terrible beast, now standing still, now rushing furiously towards the novice as if to tear him in pieces. If he stands still and unperturbed the novice is considered to have fulfilled *that* test. He is then required to pass the night alone in the forest, which he is made to believe is peopled with strange beings howling horribly. When he has satisfied the master that he is not afraid, he is subjected to other tests, and he is eventually accepted as a novice. He is introduced formally to the brotherhood on a certain selected day, when, having invited them to a feast, pûja is made to the dread spirit worshipped by them—Nîli of Kallaḍikôd or Kallaḍikôd Nîli, as she is called (Kallaḍikôd is the *place* name), through whose aid the Ôḍiyan works his devilment. Flesh and liquor are consumed, and the novice is taught how to procure the magical *Pilla thilum* (infant oil).

The principal ingredient to be used in preparing this is a fœtus of some 6 or 7 months' growth. The Ôḍiyan fixes his eye on some woman, who may be of any caste other than his own, in her first pregnancy. Then, on a selected day, usually a Friday, he proceeds to her house at midnight, provided, that is, he meets with no inauspicious omen on the way. I am not sure what omens are auspicious or the contrary; but at any rate the Ôḍiyan [787]
returns home should he meet with an omen which is unfavourable, and starts out again some other night. Transforming himself into a dog, a bullock, a cat or some other quadruped, he walks thrice round the house, shaking vigorously a cocoanut-shell containing *gurusi*, a compound of turmeric water, lime and other substances, the colour of which is red. The woman whose appearance is desired comes out. She cannot help herself. If locked in she bangs her head against the wall, and yells

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754
795 until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like
564 a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood—vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment.
[824] A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

776 A regular working magician tells us something more
789 of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

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magic. Fortunately, by the kindness of Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, these blanks have been filled up in the translation which he has obtained for me—from *one who knows.* 789 212

I will give here an excerpt from it, which is fairly representative of the sympathetic side of magic such as is common in Malabar. It is not, I think, concerned with sympathetic or symbolic magic exclusively, as, unless I am much mistaken, an evil spirit is here also invoked. It is within the domain of black magic, in which, I think, an evil spirit is always made to help if not to work the evil. 754 212

It describes how to cause certain pains in the body of another. A mantram is written (here, I think, an evil spirit is called up, though such does not appear to be said), on the stem of the kâitha plant. The stem should be the length of eight fingers. A figure representing the person to be injured is (also) drawn on the stem. A hole is bored to represent the navel. The mantram is repeated, and at each repetition a certain thorn (kâra mollu) is fixed into the limbs of the figure. The name of the person and of the star under which he was born are written on a piece of cadjan leaf, which is stuck into the hole representing the navel. The thorns are stuck in 21 times; that is, removed and replaced 21 times. Two magic circles are drawn below the nipple on the figure. The stem is then hung up in the smoke of the kitchen. A pot of toddy and some other accessories are procured, and with these certain rites are performed by the warlock. When he has concluded them, he moves three steps backwards. He shouts aloud thrice, fixing in again the thorns, thinking all the while of the particular mischief with which he would afflict the person to be injured.

When all this has been done, the person whose figure has been drawn on the stem and pricked with thorns, feels pain as if *he* were being pricked with thorns.

The grandha describes also how an enemy may be stuck dumb. The head of a dark coloured fowl is cut off. The head is then split, and a piece of cadjan on which are written a mantram, the name of the person to be injured, and the name of the star under which he was born, is stuck into the split head which is then sewn up, taking care to stitch the tongue to the beak. The head is then inserted in a certain fruit, which, after being tied up with a withe of a certain creeper nine spans in length, is deposited under the enemy's gateway. [825]

In it, too, we are told how to win over a man, or a quarrelsome husband; how to quiet refractory cows which

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754 object to be milked; how to cure a headache; to prevent
812 bad dreams, and so on.

N.B.—A mantram must be spoken, breathed, whispered with extreme accuracy. There must be no omission or false accent. Anything of the kind, or wrong pronunciation, destroys its efficacy at once.

FAMOUS MAGICIANS OF MALABAR.

791 We will close this chapter on magic which, though painfully inadequate, is already rather too long for its purpose, by mention of some of the famous workers in the art. Those who are familiar with the west coast will at once recall to mind the names of three Brâhman families whose scions are famed throughout the land as possessors of stores of magic, and at the same time—so interwoven is magic with religion!—revered for their saintliness. The eldest member of one of these is said to be "an honoured guest throughout the length and breadth of Kêrala; and on certain State occasions in Trevandrum and elsewhere, his presence is indispensable." A well-known tradition relates how that magic came, so to speak, into the family. (It is not necessary to give the family name, even though it is a household word on the west coast).

773 Long ago in the days of the Perumals, a Brâhman and
791 his friend were belated in the Yakshi paramba (*yakshi*—
776 female demon, *paramba*—garden) near Trichur.* The place was dreary; nothing but palms around. Suddenly they were accosted by lovely damsels who asked them to pass the night under their roof, and soon they were lodged in a sumptuous house, each in a separate chamber. But in the night, the damsels who had, *Lorelei* fashion, attracted the travellers, resumed their demoniacal forms and ate the Brâhman. His friend they could not touch as he had on his person a grandha sacred to Bhagavati; but in the morning he found himself perched on the top of a palm tree underneath which lay the bones of his friend, the Brâhman.

The Brahman's widow gave birth to a son soon after the strange death of her husband. When the boy was eleven years of age, she related to him how he had been made fatherless. He vowed vengeance on the Yakshis and Gandharvas (male demons) and, like a sensible boy, set about preparation for his life-task. It was not long before he had mastered the Vedas and all learning, and having done so he retired to the jungle, where he was

* To this day people avoid this place at night.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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789 magician was called in to prepare one of these. Placing
791 an ordinary style and a small sheet of copper in a box, he closed it. Presently a noise was heard inside the box; and in a few moments a sound as of the style falling. The box was opened and magic figures were found to be inscribed on the copper sheet. The lady wears the talisman now! The magician must have been in a favourable mood on the occasion, as he is said to have given an additional performance on his own account. When he had placed the style and the tiny sheet of copper in the box, taking two young cocoanuts in his hands, he kept on throwing them in the air and catching them. "What will you have in each?" he asked. "Honey in one and boiled milk in the other" was the answer. Of course these were found in the cocoanuts when they were opened by the magician, but it was somewhat gross of the Nâyar gentleman to test the quality of the milk by turning it into curds the next
[493] day. Wonderful stories are told of this man who used to be seen at night carried in a mancheel by invisible bearers, whose weary chant could be heard, but whose bodily presence was beyond the reach of human eye.

791 The last and the chief of this trio is the once famous Kandeth Nayar who departed this life about a hundred
[782] years ago. Every one knows about the Kandeth Nayar, and any one now-a-days who wants to injure another invokes his aid, and resorts to his tomb to fulfil his vow. I understand that sacrifices at his tomb are common, and that his power reaches from the land of shades in almost the same strength as when he lived.

791 The rather incoherent way in which the terms
754 warlock, magician, have been used seems to demand some explanation. Strictly speaking, the Parayan Ôdiyan is the only warlock. Magician is scarcely the correct term for the ordinary worker in magic. Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible to avoid a somewhat indiscriminate use of these terms on account of the way in which the functions of the warlock, the magician, the astrologer, and even the priest are really interwoven one with the other. The professed magician is often also the warlock and *vice versâ*. The vernacular word, which is as catholic as that which stands for "Religion," is "mantravâdi"—mantram man; he who is sought every day of the year by hundreds of the people of Kêrala, to relieve them of their physical troubles and infirmities, to cure their cattle, to injure their enemies, aye, even to destroy them.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be
[754] noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cultes*, p. 37.

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[787] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week : [262] [828]

> "*Ezāzcha Kulichalum*
> *Vyāzcha Kulikkarutu.*"

784 777 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this : "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiat- [782]
ed by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ances- 769
tors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worship-ped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors [532]
are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789]
and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754]
Brahmans also share.

Serpent worship.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and 825
other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

105 also have to be paid for, if they do not wish to be summarily evicted by
427 a land owner who simply tolerates their settling down on his land. This is an ordinary lease, like a *verumpattam*, but is called a *kudiyiruppu*.

Tenants were formerly at a great disadvantage vis a vis the *janmi*, as the latter was at liberty to evict them on the slightest pretext. The Malabar Tenancy Act of 1930, by protecting the tenant, and restricting the cases in which eviction is possible (such as the non-payment of rent for instance, or necessity for the land owner to have some land to cultivate himself), especially of the *kanamdar*, has made this a thing of the past. Dissatisfaction with the existing conditions of land ownership and
[423] land-tenure continues, however, and the present tendency goes so far as
[464] to want to protect the interests of the *verumpattam* tenants to the detriment of the *kanamdars* and *janmis* and even, in the last resort as we shall see, of the landless, agrarian labourers who constitute the vast army of the Kerala agrarian proletariat.

105 It is difficult to generalize about the distribution of agricultural roles
423 and interests among the various castes and communities in the state. Schematically, it can be said, however, that generally Nambudri Brah-
564 mins are *janmis*, since, as mythology has it, Parasu Raman gave them the land in perpetual enjoyment. Commenting on this, one of my interpreters assured me that this was not mere idle belief. It was a fact, giving the Brahmins an unequivocal title to the land, in spite of there being "no legal document" confirming them in their ownership. Many Nayars, including Kshattriyas such as the rajas of Cochin and Travancore, Samantans such as the Zamorin, and some Tiyas and Moplas, are also owners of large tracts of land.

105 *Kanamdars* are usually recruited among the well-to-do Nayars and
564 Tiyas, but also among the big Mopla families. Other Moslems are
[429] *verumpattam* tenants, as are the majority of the Tiyas. These of course
[423] used to follow their traditional profession of *toddy* (fermented palm
[463] juice) tapping, but with the introduction of prohibition in the former Madras State, they have had to give it up, and mainly hire themselves
[464] out as labourers. Others who have always hired themselves out in this way, as an immemorial caste occupation, are the Cherumas and Pulayas, some free, but the vast majority tied to the land. Many Moplas, also, have no other means of subsistance.

105 The aboriginals in Kerala continue their wild life of beggars, food-
563 gatherers or primitive forest-clearers and agriculturalists. Some are ad-
463 dicted to witchcraft as are also members of some of the artisan castes,
454 and their activities give Kerala a strange, mysterious atmosphere of imponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [827].
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of
564 the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
787 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are
[782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778] yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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796
776 round by south to the westward, and leaving the enclosure proceeds to a certain banyan tree under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 50 yards are the nine
796 564 men of the Tîyan caste, mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate—*larger* than the plates used when encircling the fire pit—on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents on this occasion as well as before is called talapôli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tîyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapôli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of "devil dancers" garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these "devil dancers" who (never ceasing his gyrations, mad-like gestures and contortions), presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air. [755] The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment.

The procession passes through the temple yard, the enclosure, from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tîyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let us note here as we go along the curious distribution of this rice which is heaped in the fire pit. Two-thirds of it go to the four Tîyans carrying the Pû (flower) kalasams and one-third to the five who carried the Jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy, and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is the measure of rice and the measure of paddy covered with plaintain leaves as before, beside them

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular
825 and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the
776 subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

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The *Santâna gópâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection. 789 842 [834]

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning. 789 [755] [825]

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man. 754 [791] [564]

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain [115]

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Srîparamêsvaranûm Srî Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâî Ezhunellumpôl Srî

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâî Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777]
bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [753]
has business everywhere relieving people from their oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every [761]
Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

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775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*oranda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
● 755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Orpheus*, p. 37.

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ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion 755
and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has [532]
a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, [373]
sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come [535]
before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and the devil is supposed to have been cast out.

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," that they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into [775]
girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endear- 776
ment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god. He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place

[1] Note; the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[787] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The
[755] entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week : [262] [821]

> "*Ṛaṭṭscha Kulichalum*
> *Vyāṭṭscha Kulikkarutu.*"

784 777 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this : "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Gráma-dévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

838 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[18] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
●755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

796 788 776 536 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 796 564 788 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

788 trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in
796 the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a shar-
782 pened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion
796 all the more revolting. One other higher and more
788 acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing
755 mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious
782 disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in
788 the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the
796 homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani
[776] day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykutta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a strenuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom [643] of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778] yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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[1] Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 86.

[2] Elliot & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113

[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.

[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.

[5] Hodson : *The Naithais*, 110.

588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdûvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 588 305 759 582 The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

693 584 793 782 783

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

who do still live matrimonially in this way. From a certain Musad (low-caste Nambudri Brahmin practising surgery) whom I met in Shoranur and who was introduced to me as someone well informed because, owing to his profession, he had access where others could not go, I heard that in the very closed Court circles of Cochin and Travancore polyandry of the old type is still practised by Nayar ladies, who consort with wealthy Tamil Brahmins and Pillais from the east coast. It would naturally have been far beyond the bounds of possibility for me personally to investigate the truthfulness of this allegation, and therefore it can only be given here for what it is worth.

Thandans and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin practise polyandry of the fraternal type, and none other. They are *makkathayam*, and a regular wedding ceremony is usual in their case. Cross-cousin marriage, in which a woman marries her father's sister's son, her *machchunan* and all his brothers, is preferred if not compulsory. The ceremony is performed at the bride's house, after the preliminary exchange of bride-price and dowry have taken place between the two families involved, and consists of the girl and her bridegrooms being seated in a row and fed ritually on *kanji* (rice porridge) and coconut milk. The honeymoon of the newly wed also takes place at the home of the wife, her husbands going to her either each in turn or in a body. Later residence of the family is patrilocal.

Most Thandans and Tiyas of central Kerala used to be toddy tappers, as I have mentioned earlier (p. 172). This occupation, they say, they brought from Ceylon, from where they are reputed to have originated; they also profess to have brought from there the coconut palm tree and the practice of fraternal polyandry. The tradition is closely linked to that of the Kammalans whom I shall describe next, and there does seem to be some evidence of close ties with the great island to the south. To this day, many Thandans and Tiyas emigrate temporarily to Ceylon as labourers, and it is said, although the etymology may be fanciful as some authors insist, that Tiya is derived from *dvipa*, "island" in Sanskrit.

I found Thandan and Tiya polyandry quite active still in Walluvanad and in north Cochin. I had been led to believe that it was fast dying out and that only very few practised it any longer. But this was not my impression, especially in the taluk of south Malabar. In north Cochin, a recent enactment known as Act XVII of 1115 The Cochin Makkathayam Thiyya Act of 1940, had made polyandry illegal in future, and it is true that nine years after the coming into existence of the new legislation, only the older people still practised the ancient form of marriage.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year
[868] old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph
[126] the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the vil-
614 lage. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance
[428] was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house
*595 was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve
[429] annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway
564 station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our
759 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake
771 worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

[Text continues on P. 214]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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796 beat the drums according to their 'science' for two or three hours. The figure of the God or Goddess is taken on the back of the middle elephant in the row. There is a display of fireworks at night.

794 A few temples in the village are managed by private people or Janmis, usually Nambudri Brahmans. Such temples have landed property managed by these Janmis who generally make use of the profits. Recently the Government has been trying to encroach upon the temple properties in its capacity of *melkoyma*; this is very much resented by the Nambudri Jánmis.

The common people as a rule have no part or lot in temple management or expenditure.

426 *State loans.*—Only one person in the village has borrowed from the Government a loan of Rs. 400 to be paid back in ten instalments of Rs. 40 each with interest at 5 per cent. The small landholders do not approach the Government for help; the mediocre landholders rent their land to others; while the few big ones have money of their own if they want to make any improvement. The fact is that agriculture is routine work with many people; no permanent improvements are thought of by the majority.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Plague and tuberculosis are not heard of. Malaria only affects those who resort for agricultural purposes to the foot of the hills four or five miles east from the village. Attacks of cholera frequently occur among the local Muhammadans, who are as a rule quite insanitary, poor, living in low and ill-ventilated thatched huts or hovels; one is sick of the stinking smell when one approaches their huts. The local Christians, though equally poor, are better in this respect. The houses of most of the Brahmans and the majority of the Nayars are decent. The hovels of the lower castes and working men again are poor and insanitary. [36] As the houses are not built in rows, but separate, each having a compound big or small, epidemic diseases such as small-pox when they come at all are easily avoided. But the case is different in the quarters of the Muhammadans and Christians, who build their houses in streets.

The chief endemic diseases are fever, rheumatism, attacks of bile.

759 There are plenty of snakes in the village everywhere. One sometimes hears of deaths caused by snake-bites. There are however a few who pretend to cure snake-bites by incantations aided by medicines.

There is a Government free dispensary established in the 'town' where the Apothecary is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. But most people resort to native (ayurvedic) physicians or vaidyans. Ayurveda, or the Hindu science of medicine, makes use of vegetable drugs both in the raw and dried state. The physician comes to your house and prescribes a certain mixture according to the directions laid down in his code which he has committed to memory in the form of verses. The drugs can be got from the market, or from a neighbouring hill, or even from one's own compound.

This science is handed down from father to son in certain families in Malabar who form even now some of the most distinguished native physicians in Malabar. Even in a petty village

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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there will be a specialist for diseases of children, an eye specialist, an ordinary vaidyan who cures all common diseases, and a *mantravati* (hymn-chanter) who pretends to cure diseases by chanting certain hymns within himself, and who is believed in by the masses. There is also a *visha-vaidyan*, or expert in curing snake-bite, in some villages. 759

The Sub-Assistant Surgeons in charge of Government hospitals are, I am afraid, affected by red tape and carelessness born of security of employment and income.

In rural parts especially I am pained to note that their treatment is getting discredited, for the apothecaries take little pains to know the exact nature of the diseases of the poor persons who resort to the hospital and to prescribe proper medicines for the same. There are of course noble exceptions to this, but it is deplorable that there should be any irregularities at all in this most humane of all charities. The native vaidyans, on the other hand, have a local interest, their families living in the village for generations together and they are very keen to keep up their reputations; while the Government Surgeon is a bird of passage, who comes and goes, none of the villagers knowing whence or whither.

Malayalis, as a rule, are very clean, most of them bathe twice a day; their clothes are kept neat and clean. But there is much scope for the spread of modern ideas on sanitation in very many fields. At child-birth the mother is usually kept in the worst possible room in the house. Children too might be brought up in a more sanitary environment; the education of females on these matters is a very crying necessity. It is also deplorable that Brahmans are gradually neglecting the morning-bath and exercise on which their ancestors insisted. The local Muhammadans are extremely insanitary. They are filthy, their children are filthy, their habits too are filthy. 515

The habit of keeping the stock very near the house should be avoided. Again except in well-to-do Nayar families kitchens are in the houses; they should be in a different building.

Among the Brahmans, a girl has to be married before the age of puberty, generally 12. Among no other caste is this compulsory, though a few people, including the Indian Christians, marry their girls before puberty. These Christians are generally converts from low caste * Hindus, and change of religion has not changed their custom in this respect. 582 [797]

The local Muhammadans do not, as in the east of the peninsula, observe purdah; their women freely talk to any person, work for others as coolies and stir abroad. Most of them are converts from low caste Hindus, and so there is no fanaticism, nor such strict observance of the rules of Islam as elsewhere. Nayar ladies are quite free, and among them descent in the female line (Marumakkattayam) prevails. Brahman ladies (not Nambudris) can go out, and be seen by others, but they are subject to their husbands and are not allowed to speak to Brahman men, and Brahman men are not allowed to speak with the women. A newly married Brahman bride is neither allowed to see nor to speak to her husband until she actually joins her husband after the nuptials. But these 562

* [M. L. K. Anandakrishna Ayyar, Cochin State Anthropologist, informs me that the Syrian Christians of Cochin are mainly the descendants of converts from *high* caste Hindus.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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for Brahmans as a whole, and the performance of *puja* during one month in a year. 476

The two elected administrators spend the money as explained above, keep the accounts, and are responsible for the whole income. This organization is seen throughout the Brahman community in Malabar. It may be regarded as a survival of the village communal organization, the political functions of which disappeared with the advent of British rule. 794

The lower classes have appointed a family to settle caste questions and questions of excommunication, adultery, etc., and this family has been exercising this power from time immemorial. The family still holds the power and the verdict which the headman of the family pronounces about such questions is tacitly accepted by all. 692

Religious festivals are performed by the temple, and the temple *in practice* belongs to the Zamorin. It is managed by the Court of Wards at the present time, along with the Zamorin's estate. The income of the temple is the offerings of the devotees who chiefly come from distant places. The festivals which the temple performs will in a year cost more than Rs. 2,000. In addition offerings to the temple from the village itself will amount to more than Rs. 3,000. 794

The above statements of indebtedness, communal income, etc., are based on careful inquiry with well-known persons and the village munsif, and are given in round numbers as accurately as possible.

Sanitary condition.—Malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox and consumption are absent from the village. 164

The ordinary diseases of the village are fever, dysentery, elephantiasis and such like diseases. Infantile mortality is high. Out of 156 deaths 87 are infant deaths. The deaths are high among the poor, particularly the Hindu poor. It may be people cannot afford to bring up their children decently. The mothers must work for the maintenance of the family before many days have passed after child-birth. I know of a Tiyya family in which seven out of eleven children born died before they were three years old. Moreover they cannot afford medical help and they implore God to help them and resort to quack doctors. The prevalence of early marriage may be cited as one of the causes for physical deterioration. But the most potent cause especially in the case of the higher classes is the ignorance of the mothers. Domestic hygiene is a sealed book for them. Their habits are not quite sanitary. [515]

There are no venomous snakes.

There is a hospital very near the village. But the chief medical help is from the native doctors who practise privately. There are two great medical experts in the native system but there are also a large number of quacks. The experts have a tremendous business but the quacks do some injury too. 759

Wearing unclean * cloths, not keeping the house neat, using the same plate for food for the whole family, are some of the insanitary habits of the poor and the lower classes. But the higher classes are very neat and Malabar is famous for its neatness. People bathe every day. 515

* [I.e., unclean according to the Malabar standard of cleanliness, which is very high, —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry. The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the
435 land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

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mans

769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
182 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact
626 fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

● 76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead,
564 and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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Nambūdiri Brahmans

 76

his forebears. Thereafter he offers rice balls and other oblations in a *śrāddham* ceremony on each anniversary of the death. 184 564

Many of these customs are of long standing among the Nāyars. Barbosa[18] reported in 1518 that Nāyar royalty observed *dīkṣā* for the dead in the same manner as Nambūdiris. Sheikh Zein-ud-Deen[19] recorded the custom for commoner Nāyars in 1579. Linschoten[20] reported in 1598 that Nāyars normally cremated their dead. Today, Nāyar death and anniversary rites are almost identical in form with those of Nambūdiris. During the period of death pollution they employ a lower matrilineal caste to instruct them in the rites. (In Cochin, Chīdigans fulfill this function; in South Malabar, Attikūrssis; and in North Malabar, Mārārs.) The same caste assists Nambūdiri Brahmans to prepare the ritual materials for their funerals, and has clearly transmitted the Brahmanical rites to the Nāyars. Similarly, at the end of the death pollution on the sixteenth day, during the *dīkṣā* period, and on anniversary days, Nāyars are instructed in their oblations by a priest of a degraded subcaste of Brahmans. (This subcaste is the Elayads in Cochin and South Malabar and the Nambidis in North Malabar.) A few peculiarly non-Brahmanical rites do, however, survive. In Kottayam, poorer Nāyars among commoners customarily bury their dead.[21] In both areas those who burn the dead bury the bones and ashes in a pot under a jack-fruit tree outside the ancestral house near the ancestor shrine. Some leave the bones there permanently and consider that the ghost remains near the bones and the ancestral house. Others dig up the bones after the period of mourning, dispose of half of them in a sacred river, and return the other half to the grave. The bones of *kāranavans* are sometimes placed on an open platform under a jack-fruit tree, to which food offerings are made on days of propitiation. Other rites spring from the Nāyar view that the ghost requires appeasement rather than mere assistance to another world. Brahmans, for example, pour holy water into the mouth of a dying man to purify him for entry into the world of ancestors. Old-fashioned Nāyars offer rice gruel as a last act of appeasement. [613]

Even the Sanskritic rites are in fact so adapted to Nāyar requirements that they carry a quite different emphasis of meaning from that associated with them by Brahmans. First, the role-structure of the rites is, of course, completely adapted to the descent system. A Nambūdiri deceased's chief mourner is his or her eldest son, or, if there is no Nambūdiri son, the eldest brother's son. A Nāyar woman's chief mourner is her eldest son; that of a man, the man next junior to him in the property group. But all males of the *taravād* junior to the deceased make subsidiary *bali* offerings to him in the period of pollution. Brahman spouses observe mourning and death pollution for each other. Nāyar spouses traditionally observe no mourning or pollution for each other, for they belong to different *taravāds* and have no mutual legal obligations. If a Nāyar dies in a wife's house, his body must traditionally be returned to his *taravād* for cremation. Shortly before or after the death of her husband, a woman goes to view his body for the last time. She is then ceremonially conducted out of the house on the north side—the side opposite to that from which the god of death arrives. She is returned to her natal home, and after this she may never reenter her dead husband's house. In Cochin, where men traditionally had no obligations to their children, a child did not observe death pollution for his genitor. But in North Malabar, where children have an intimate relationship with the father in avunculoçal residence during childhood, a man's sons make offerings for him during death pollution, and the eldest son is second-in-command to the chief mourner at the cremation. The [591]

76 184 564 613

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâî Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srl Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777]
bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [753]
has business everywhere relieving people from their [761]
oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 A W11 Kerala A W11
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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" 635 published in 1744, writes :—

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold [762] erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his [574] nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his [766] own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a 635 religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid 178 aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end 527 of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively."

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar [114] Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district.

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's 635 story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this 527 festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have

family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627
This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627
this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634
when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627
another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634
chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578
being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525]
two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652]
wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankâm*) of the chief-
tain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423
to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427
in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178]
the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821]
a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

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* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782]
people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol.
"Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . [762]
after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—
"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in ravaging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

726 175 564 701 643 796 762 175

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
1909 . . AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. 175 868

. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise." 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. 574 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob- [593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions [604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two 582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often [593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and [764] sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his [848] wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

5·Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778]
yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

REFERENCES

[1] Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 88.

[2] Ibbetson & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113

[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.

[4] Dubois & Beauchamp : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.

[5] Hodson : *The Meiteis*, 110.

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste." 844 [352] [564]

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. 763 613 [823] 764 613 [824] [354]

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is [766] [351]

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil. [515]

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while [757] the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, removes deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah-
825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykatta Pisáchus*
539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre-
[643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning. 824 539

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those of children under two or three years of age as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. 764 [766]. 763 [778] [823]

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon) 764 [824] [804]

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

764 importance that the whole pyre burns at once. The
613 greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's taravād who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or grounds round every Nāyar's house). The eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation.
[763] It should be said that, on the news of a death, the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the taravād go and bathe, they remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead body has been placed. A small image representing the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done, the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses. When the
764 cremation has been done by night, the duty of sēshakriya
782 (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun
775 the next day between 10 and 11 A.M., and is done on
613 seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11, and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the taravād younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from

The spirits of those who
have committed suicide, or met death by any violent 766
means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome 775
to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering
miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they [782]
are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman
priests are called in, and appease them by means of
tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and
ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it."

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting 764
features in the death ceremonies as performed by the 184
Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre 613
are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each [564]
carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members
of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the
southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are
lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the south-
wards without looking round. Close to the northern
end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground,
and tied together with a cloth, over which water is
poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to
the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu
carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home
without looking round. They pass to the northern side
of the house under an arch made by two men standing
east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at
the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under
the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the
pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali
ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These
are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain.
Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all,
and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre."

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted 763
in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 184

763 184 [778] moments of a dying person are really very trying. All members (male and female), junior to the dying person, pour into his or her mouth drops of Ganges or other holy water or conjee (rice) water in token of their last tribute of regard. Before the person breathes his last, he or she is removed to the bare floor, as it is considered sacrilegious to allow the last breath to escape while lying on the bed, and in a room with a ceiling, which last is supposed to obstruct the free passage of the breath. The names of gods, or sacred texts are loudly dinned into his or her ears, so that the person may quit this world with the recollections of God serving as a passport to heaven. The forehead, breast, and the joints especially are besmeared with holy ashes, so as to prevent the messengers of death from tightly tying those parts when they carry away the person. Soon 764 184 after the last breath, the dead body is removed to some open place in the house, covered from top to toe with a washed cloth, and deposited on the bare floor with the head towards the south, the region of the God of death. A lighted lamp is placed near the head, and other lights are placed all round the corpse. A mango tree is cut, or other firewood is collected, and a funeral pyre is constructed in the south-eastern corner of a compound or garden known as the corner of Agni, which is always reserved as a cemetery for the burning or burial of the dead. All male members, generally junior, bathe, and, without wiping their head or body, they remove the corpse to the yard in front of the house, and place it on a plantain leaf. It is nominally anointed with oil, and bathed in water. Ashes and sandal are again smeared on the forehead and joints. The old cloth is removed, and the body is covered with a new unwashed cloth or a piece of silk. A little gold or silver, or small coins are put into the

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[183] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet,

593 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village headmen have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation
[778] ground, while at another corner is a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts
[764] cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognize the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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614 tion they entered for fifteen days into a condition of ritual pollution.
764 They might not eat with nor touch other Nayars, enter the temple or
844 other houses, bathe in the public bathing pools of their caste, or eat
783 meat or salt. Death pollution, and to a milder degree birth pollution, cut off the clan from participation in the social life of the caste. It isolated the members as a group set apart in a special and dangerous ritual condition, who had to observe taboos for their own and each others' safety. Its observance stressed the kinship connection of clansmen and marked their common concern on the occasion of an increase or decrease in their membership. Only those clansmen living within the neighborhood, however, were obliged to attend a funeral or visit a house of birth. Beyond these observances clansmen had only loosely defined rights of hospitality in each other's homes. As far as I am aware they never assembled as an organized group.

614 In time a clan might divide into two or more clans by the common consent of its members. The decision to separate depended both on geographical distance and on distance of relationship. If a segment of the core unit moved into an adjacent neighborhood its members might maintain clanship with the parent lineage for several hundred years thereafter. If they moved to a distant part of the district (say, fifteen miles away) their grandchildren might sever the connection. Severing clanship was called "cutting the pollution bond." Representatives of the branches met and decided not to inform each other of future deaths in their respective groups. Usually the outlying branch would soon afterward adopt the name of the oldest ancestral house site in its own vicinity as its clan name. Exogamy was theoretically preserved as long as matrilineal ties were remembered—usually, about three generations after the division.

Beyond the neighborhood, clan ties had no legal or economic concomitants and were relatively unimportant, their claims being subordinated to those of lineage, village, neighborhood, district, and kingdom.

THE LINEAGE

613 A lineage comprised those members of a clan living in one Nayar neighborhood, and it operated within the legal and social framework of this unit. As we have noted, the retainer Nayars of a neighborhood were of the same caste. They interdined and intermarried freely and the neighborhood was their unit of caste administration. A neighborhood might comprise the retainer Nayars of one village or of two or three adjacent villages, or occasionally Nayars of only part of a large village (e.g., a royal village) in which more than one caste of

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
789 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[753] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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Central Kerala Nayar

In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce the intensity of marital ties for the sake of the unity of taravād, village, and kingdom. Good men were men who devoted themselves first to the service of their feudal lords, and second to the welfare of their taravāds. Weak and immoral men were men who became inveigled by their wives and their children, so that they tried to make unnecessary gifts to their wives and neglected their taravāds. An ideal kāranavan was one who broke off his marital ties in old age and devoted his energies solely to his sisters' children. Institutional recognition of emotional attachments between spouses was reduced to a minimum. If a man by accident died in his wife's house his body was immediately brought home for cremation by his lineage kin. After a man's death his current wives were permitted to come and view his corpse. They were then ceremonially conducted out from the north side of the house—the side opposite to that from which the god of death had come. They must not look back at the house of death and they might never visit it again. They and their children took no part in the funeral or the subsequent anniversary rites nor did they observe death pollution.

In spite of the institutional precautions, undoubtedly some men formed strong emotional attachments to particular wives and their children. The institution of sorcery came into play at this point (Gough, 1958). Among Nayars, sorcery was practiced mainly against affines; it was ineffectual within the lineage. It was believed to be practiced most by junior members of a taravād against the matrilineal kin of their kāranavan's wife. The reason was that if he were particularly attached to a wife, the juniors of a kāranavan might fear that he would transfer to her gifts and cash which belonged legally to his taravād. They could not make their complaint in law, for the kāranavan was their legal representative. Instead, they are said to have secretly engaged low-caste practitioners to recite spells and make offerings to some minor malevolent deity with the object of bringing sickness upon the wife or her kin. If they suspected such evil doing, the members of the wife's taravād might in turn hire a "good" practitioner of their own who would appeal to some other deity to return the misfortune to the senders. It is clear that Nayars did hire "good" practitioners to perform countermagic against affines; whether in fact they hired evil practitioners to perform sorcery in the first place is uncertain. At all events the institution of sorcery provided a covert outlet for interpersonal hostilities between affines which could find no expression in open conflicts between their groups as a whole. The result of the hostilities was often termination of the

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North Kerala Nayar

000 taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. 574 Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, ob- [593] served rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions [604] —during their periods of co-residence.

591 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two 582 brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often [593] reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a [764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his [848] wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore,
[613] children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted
out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never
184 polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal
and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live
on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children
occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but
593 their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they
reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal
obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals,
to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction
in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he
often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[28] and the initiation rites[30] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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Funeral and *śrāddham* rites persist in a fuller form, but these, too, are often curtailed. This is especially the case in *taravāds* which have lost their ancestral wealth. Rice balls are sometimes offered only on the two last days of the pollution period. Only close kin, and not the whole Nāyar community, are invited to the sixteenth day feast. Often no *dīkṣā* is observed at all. Alternatively, twelve sets of *dīkṣā* rites, for the twelve months of the year of mourning, may be performed in succession on the sixteenth day. Often the bones are not taken to a sacred river. If they are taken, it may be believed that the ghost is thenceforth appeased and that no further *śrāddham* or ancestral rites are required.

The role-structure of death rites has also changed. In most households only immediate younger brothers and maternal nephews, or the own children of a deceased woman, take part in the offerings, instead of the whole *taravād* as heretofore. On the other hand, women, as well as men, now offer rice balls to the ghosts of their parents or matrilineal elders. This reflects a change in the legal status of women, and the fact that women are now the legal heads of many recently partitioned households. In elementary family households, spouses now frequently observe death pollution for one another. At the same time, each may now even refuse to attend the funerals of matrilineal kin. Both in Cochin and Kottayam, the son of a man now often replaces the matrilineal heir as chief mourner, especially if he has inherited his father's property. Nāyars indeed say that "the rites go with the property." If there are disputes over the property, sons and nephews may dispute the right to perform the ceremonies, feeling that their performance gives the chief mourner the right of inheritance. Some men perform rites for both father and mother's brother; others, for neither, if neither bequeathed wealth. The beliefs which accompany funeral and *śrāddham* rites have also suffered attrition. In general, the belief that death rites are performed solely to give rest to the spirit is triumphing over the belief in the necessity to propitiate punitive ghosts. On the other hand, the Nāyars do not dwell on the traditional Brahmanical belief in the tortures of hell which await unpropitiated souls. Many state that they now disbelieve in any form of afterlife. These perform rites only as a mark of respect for and commemoration of the dead. A very few refuse to observe death pollution or to perform funeral rites at all. One educated Nāyar, for example—a medical doctor—stated that on the deaths of his parents he would merely cremate their bodies and invite a few like-minded friends to a meal to commemorate them.

Analysis. Behind these changes lie several separable though related kinds of change in Nāyar social structure and culture. With regard to changes in the cults of dead kinsfolk, the collapse of the *taravād* as a legal and economic corporation is of major importance. With the loss of collective legal responsibility which this entails goes a loss of the sense of collective moral responsibility. Nāyars who are no longer legally responsible for one another, who no longer share land, a common house, and a common destiny, no longer think it probable that their misdemeanors can bring misfortune to each other.

The collapse of the *taravād* is also, of course, accompanied by a total change in the relationships between matrilineal kin. Mother's brothers whose property is divided from that of their nephews no longer have authority over them. Indeed, the mother's brother is now often absent in his wife's house when a child is growing up and exerts no discipline over him. In any case the change which takes place in matrilineal relationships after a modern division of property is very marked. One man whose *taravād*

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113 G. Roheim, *Psychoanalysis and Anthropology* (New York, 1950), pp. 134, 135, 432; F. L. K. Hsu, *Under the Ancestors' Shadow* (New York, 1948), pp. 240-243; Mead, 1949, pp. 40-41; J. W. M. Whiting and I. L. Child, *Child Training and Personality* (New Haven, 1953), pp. 263-304.

[12] Nāyar *Kāranavans* are of course not ancestors in the strict sense. However, I use this term for convenience as they fulfill roles similar to those of ancestors in many patrilineal societies.

[13] For an account of Īrava social organization and culture, see A. Aiyappan, *Iravas* and *Culture Change*, Bull. Madras Govt. Mus., 5 (1945).

[14] M. N. Srinivas, *Religion and Society Among the Coorgs* (Oxford, 1952), pp. 158-165.

[15] For a brief account of Tamil Brahman kinship, see E. K. Gough, "Brahman Kinship in a Tamil Village," *American Anthropologist*, XVIII, (1956), 826-853.

[16] See, e.g., Thurston, V (1909), 152-240.

[17] Fortes, 1949, p. 235.

[18] H. E. J. Stanley, trans., Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century* (Hakluyt, 1886), p. 15.

[19] R. Rowlandson, trans., Sheikh Zein-ud-deen, *Tohfut ul Mujahideen*. An Offering to Warriors Who Shall Fight in Defence of Religion Against Infidels (Hakluyt, 1883), p. 63.

[20] A. C. Burnell, trans., *The Voyage of John Hughyen Van Linschoten to the East Indies* (From the Old English Translation of 1598) (Hakluyt, 1885), p. 284.

[764] [21] All castes on the southwest coast bury or cremate the dead in the southwest corner of the ancestral garden. This custom contrasts with that of Hindus in the eastern districts, who burn or bury the dead on communal sites, each owned jointly by a caste community, outside the residential area of the village.

[566] [22] The castes of agricultural serfs are absent in Kottayam, agricultural labor being done by Īrava tenants or by the Nāyars themselves.

[23] This form of propitiation of alien ghosts in Kottayam is called a *teyyam tira*. It closely resembles the *kāranava tirē* of the neighboring Coorgs (Srinivas, 1952, pp. 158-165.) In Coorg, however, lower caste officiants impersonate the Coorg *taravād's* own ancestors. In Malabar, lower caste propitiants impersonate only alien ghosts attached to the Nāyar *taravād*.

[113] [24] Witchcraft (*odi*), a witch (*odiyan*). For a more detailed account of witchcraft, see Thurston, VI (1909), 36-41, 122-127.

[25] M. Gluckman, *Rituals of Rebellion in South-East Africa* (Manchester, 1954).

[26] Gluckman, *The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies. Social Structure*, M. Fortes, ed. (Oxford, 1949), pp. 145-167.

[114] [642] [27] All of these statements apply to conditions in 1947-9. I observed no major changes in ritual activities during a brief revisit in 1952. The Malabar Coast, as the newly formed State of Kerala, elected a Communist government in April 1957, and I have little information on conditions after that date.

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564 should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst
837 the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

581 The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

585 The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem
764 to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see
182 relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than elsewhere. [421] The desire to maintain property within the family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 583
connected with the marital connexion will now be [123] attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

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613 in the larger houses), and, if there is not, is taken to the
[351] front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandalwood paste and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is then done what is called the Potavekkuka ceremony or placing new cotton cloths (kóti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the (deceased's) Taravâd followed by all the other members, also sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse when being
[184] taken to the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried (well covered in the cloths) by hand. In either
[804] case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed there is done another ceremony called Para Virakkuka (filling up pâras—a pâra is a measure nearly as big as a gallon). All adult male members of the Taravâd take part in it under the direction of a man of the Atikkurissi clan (who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisite all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit). It consists in filling up three pâra measures with paddy, and one edangâli ($\frac{1}{10}$ of a pâra) with raw rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a (burning) lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela villâku. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end, one in the middle; on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased, tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist, and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist a piece of iron, generally a

* The eldest male member of the Malabar Taravâd is called the Kâranavan, as noted already (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1); all male members, brothers, nephews and so on, who are junior to him are called Anandravans of the Taravâd.

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the in- [561] variable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the [532] deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the [782] deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and [515] gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
821 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[776] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
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[804] * Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherila: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who are junior to the deceased. They

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APPENDIX A.

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The account of the funeral ceremonies which has been given is not, of course, full and accurate as regards all the clans; but it is precise as regards one, and suffices for the present to give a clear idea of the ceremonies as performed by all. There are many interesting features in the ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil clan. Want of space forbids more than the briefest mention of some of these.

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Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the Taravâd thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are well lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the Taravâd prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the Enangru carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round.

They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men, standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled.

After this is done the "kodali karma" ceremony, using the spade, the axe and a big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all; and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre.

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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tâli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tâli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tâli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawâd*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tâli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawâd* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the gukâmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

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themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sont rigoureusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Tarundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 787 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Dīksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts One's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
417 tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
343 Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old
342 order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
787 ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
764 ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning.

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those of children under two or three years of age as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed.

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon)

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764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be- 613 764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses. 613 764 [532]

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chíthayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prúnan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brahman sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 765 782 613 824 826 764 774 [789] [775] 782

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned carefully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 824 765 613

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on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782] juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824] waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564]
of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764] lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825] woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824] Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828] superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613] pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
766 preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
351 is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
184 the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
804 virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
564 nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
782 rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghī (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravād. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the taravād, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

764 613 [824] [782] [823] [561]

* The eldest male member of the taravād is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravād.

764 importance that the whole pyre burns at once. The
613 greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's taravād who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or grounds round every Nāyar's house). The eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation.
[763] It should be said that, on the news of a death, the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the taravād go and bathe, they remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead body has been placed. A small image representing the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done, the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses. When the
764 cremation has been done by night, the duty of sēshakriya
782 (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun
775 the next day between 10 and 11 A.M., and is done on
613 seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11, and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the taravād younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from

the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

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They kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandal paste, and leaves of the cherūla, the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making the offerings. The half boiled rice is made into balls (pindam), and each one present takes one of these in his right hand, and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and leaf is gently tapped with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed, and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing. The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and the piece of iron in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

The spirits of those who have committed suicide, or met death by any violent 766 means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome 775 to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they [782] are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman priests are called in, and appease them by means of tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it."

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting 764 features in the death ceremonies as performed by the 184 Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre 613 are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each [564] carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round. They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all, and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre."

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted 763 in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 184

763 184 [778] moments of a dying person are really very trying. All members (male and female), junior to the dying person, pour into his or her mouth drops of Ganges or other holy water or conjee (rice) water in token of their last tribute of regard. Before the person breathes his last, he or she is removed to the bare floor, as it is considered sacrilegious to allow the last breath to escape while lying on the bed, and in a room with a ceiling, which last is supposed to obstruct the free passage of the breath. The names of gods, or sacred texts are loudly dinned into his or her ears, so that the person may quit this world with the recollections of God serving as a passport to heaven. The forehead, breast, and the joints especially are besmeared with holy ashes, so as to prevent the messengers of death from tightly tying those parts when they carry away the person. Soon
● 764 184 after the last breath, the dead body is removed to some open place in the house, covered from top to toe with a washed cloth, and deposited on the bare floor with the head towards the south, the region of the God of death. A lighted lamp is placed near the head, and other lights are placed all round the corpse. A mango tree is cut, or other firewood is collected, and a funeral pyre is constructed in the south-eastern corner of a compound or garden known as the corner of Agni, which is always reserved as a cemetery for the burning or burial of the dead. All male members, generally junior, bathe, and, without wiping their head or body, they remove the corpse to the yard in front of the house, and place it on a plantain leaf. It is nominally anointed with oil, and bathed in water. Ashes and sandal are again smeared on the forehead and joints. The old cloth is removed, and the body is covered with a new unwashed cloth or a piece of silk. A little gold or silver, or small coins are put into the

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

121 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with
551 the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 In view of the great number of communities that have remained
171 untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman,
121 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and
593 inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated
[604] at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's
[764] funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con-
121 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the
593 rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com-
764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar
[604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p.
[171] 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

121 There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil-
593 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa-
605 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the
121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of
602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea-
171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy:
812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort,
771 Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.
[601] Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts
[764] cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave
[553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the
[588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month,
[881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony
[843] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the
[769] subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead members of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar
[765] also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the
[783] fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides
[885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

564 613 588 [184] [586] [765] [783] of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 585 [588] The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 184 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804] * Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ¼ a pint.

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824 765 782 613

to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who are junior to the deceased. They

[764] [607]

824 765 782 613 [775] [825] [231] place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 613 574 783 [824] When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] [431] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 613 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

[783] Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

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the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5.s boundaries

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîkṣha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [604] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears [302] the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the deceased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîkṣha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for 765 the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîkṣha is one of festivity. After the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bali.

796 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one
778 who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included,
788 resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west
782 corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows
[765] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a
[302] year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the
[776] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

[See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

588 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house
[564] and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad,
[793] a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bride-
588 groom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house
833 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times
178 when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabita-
tion would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been
required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is
indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a
[married] woman').

588 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi
782 took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger)
787 Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to
793 the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by
hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy,
coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following
which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then
donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the
power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.)
Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping
his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host
kâranavan that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his
insignia were removed.

796 Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar
[831] village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol
of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's
sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the
[753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She
is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar
[782] rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last
[834] night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must
observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music.
588 On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand,
[783] they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage
house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then
[264] fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received
clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At
588 the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides,
184 though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with
595 other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride-
groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never
visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological
[765] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally
observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover
[783] and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual
father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word
[851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achan* (originally

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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Aṟan (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurusis (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of
585 Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bride-grooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each [606] husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honey-moon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564] [587]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

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This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

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Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

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The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

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Tiyyar

with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *taravâd* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*preêham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *idli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *taravâd*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [783] [783] [769]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

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the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which 588
was given to them the first day.

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it 174
has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has 182
been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. 588
The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families.

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the ex- [851]
penses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian [595]
evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous.

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be [765]
remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is [171]
well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 782 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintégration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration*.

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *tâli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *táli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkákkarappan* temple and tie the *táli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahádévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpád is the *táli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *tâli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *táli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tálikettu kalyánam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tálikettu*

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks 613
round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on 764
the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made [532]
out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the 765 782
second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the 613
family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chíthayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the 824
belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in 826
the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. 764 774
When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brah- [789]
man sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the [775]
palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 782

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned care- 824
fully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 765
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surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

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During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawad* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawad*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawad*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyaham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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765 613 [782] and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when [825] clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawâd* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawâd*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

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105 563 [795] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [784] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [784] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [765] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield 564
before them.

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakketam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tāli-kettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, [783] and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water [793] from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution.

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at [765] the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family.

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu [797] recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled.

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825] it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the 613
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [769]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [775]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, [787]
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784] [834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun- [834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [722] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

796 788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949,1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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825
171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes.
825 Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison,
171 are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for
782 snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship
778 at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes
825 unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a
778 Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him
796 and left them in their present abode. He however promised to
[173] return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [782]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their
825 powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends
776 also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence
[753] which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

CUSTOMS, GAMES, FESTIVALS, ETC.

Hamilton in his "New Account of the East Indies" published in 1744, writes :— 635

"It was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin, then the local potentate) to reign but twelve years and no longer. If he died before his term was expired it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast, he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is proclaimed throughout his dominion, at the end of twelve years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain, and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through 30, or 40,000 of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds to him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened and the tent pitched near Ponnany (Ponani) a seaport of his about 16 leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and after they had killed and wounded many were themselves killed. One of the *Desperadoes* had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age, that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent and made a stroke at his majesty's head and had certainly dispatched him, if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head, had not marred the blow; but before he could make another, he was killed by the guards; and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet. I chanced to come that time along the coast and heard the guns for two or three days and nights successively." [762] [574] [766] 635 178 527

Here must be made an excerpt from the "Malabar Manual" as its author Mr. Logan, while Collector (chief administrative officer) of Malabar, made excellent use of his opportunities to delve into the ancient archives of the district. [114]

"The *Kêrala Mâhâtmya* so far corroborates Hamilton's story, that it declares the king used to be deposed at this festival, but there is no mention of self-immolation. although it is quite possible the deposed kings may have 635 527

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

●766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 782 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Ishuvens, Vol. I, page 313.

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore 824
transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one 539
of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning.

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those 764
of children under two or three years of age [766].
as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point 763
of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, [778]
they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the [823]
water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed.

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed 764
from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at [824]
the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon) [804]

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765 613 and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed [782] spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when [825] clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett.
"When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
[182] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [554] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral-commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

The spirits of those who
have committed suicide, or met death by any violent 766
means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome 775
to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering
miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they [782]
are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman
priests are called in, and appease them by means of
tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and
ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it."

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting 764
features in the death ceremonies as performed by the 184
Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre 613
are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each [564]
carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members
of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the
southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are
lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the south-
wards without looking round. Close to the northern
end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground,
and tied together with a cloth, over which water is
poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to
the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu
carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home
without looking round. They pass to the northern side
of the house under an arch made by two men standing
east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at
the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under
the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the
pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali
ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These
are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain.
Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all,
and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre."

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted 763
in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 184

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar 301 789
wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be 304
favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore [177]
by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women [564]
of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. 776
Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of [532]
these have granite representations, or at least such [778]
emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met [775]
with accidental death, and girls who have died before [766]
their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic [791]
amulets are attached to the waist by members of both [789]
sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits [782]
are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

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613 were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The [592] reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

613 However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be 592 forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmenta- ●768 tion within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which [614] had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

613 In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels [578] between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the households of the disputants and were normally settled through ap- [692] peal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

[614] As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its [834] members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

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the lineage they were legally mandatory. The local caste assembly, with the backing of royal or chiefly authority, could take action against offenders. Intra-lineage incest was indeed a crime punishable by death. As a matter of courtesy, lineage members extended appropriate kinship terms to one another.

Unless it was declining in numbers and had shrunk to the proportions of a single household, the lineage was not an economic unit. Its members did not jointly own an estate and did not coöperate in the production or distribution of goods. These functions accrued to the small segment of a lineage occupying a single homestead, which I call a property group. Lineage kin *were* the residual heirs of a property group which died out. However, such reversion of property was rare. A property group which had no childbearing women usually adopted one or more girls from some other branch of the lineage in order to perpetuate itself.

A "commoner" lineage had no headman. Its oldest man commanded special respect but he had no legal authority over the lineage as a whole. The office of headman of the lineage existed only in village headmen's, chiefly, and royal lineages. Here the political office was theoretically vested in the eldest man of the lineage, irrespective of branch. These lineages had a somewhat different structure, discussed below.

The members of a lineage engaged in coöperative activities at two major life crises: the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, and the funeral of a member, followed by offerings to the departed spirit on the fifteenth and sixteenth days after the death.

Both of these occasions involved the caste assembly of the neighborhood and the institution of linked lineages or *enangar*. The caste assembly comprised the eldest men (*kāranavar*) of all the property groups. It met periodically on a mound (tara) near the Bhagavadi temple of the neighborhood to manage the temple's affairs. It also judged offenses against the religious laws of the caste.

Each lineage was linked by hereditary ties of ceremonial coöperation to two or three other lineages of the neighborhood. These linkages were reciprocal but not exclusive. For example, lineage A might have as enangar B, C, and D, whereas B might have A, E, and F, and so on. A chain of such relationships therefore linked all lineages of the neighborhood.

The enangar were partners who offered help in a ceremonial manner at all major life crises. They stood as formal links between the lineage and the total neighborhood group, which was called the *enangu*. In

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
591 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never
613 polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but
613 their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi.* There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis.* The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli: "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yules Marco Polo, page 374.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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[Marayil Tarwad]

613 The story goes back to the early 19th century. Prabaty Amma who came to visit a
193 temple in Ernaklum, met a young Nayar man. Soon after they were fallen in love, and married. The name of this young man was Narayana Panikkar, who was a district officer in Palgat, and later became the *karanavan* of his *tarwad*. By the right of the *karanavan*, he took his wife to his *tarwad*.

613 Thirty years after their marriage, Narayana Panikkar died. According to the law of
193 the Nayar, his wife and children had to leave from his *tarwad* at the moment of his death.
591 Prabaty Amma accompanied with her children left his *tarwad*, but she did not return to her natal *tarwad*, Mullasseri. Instead, she decided to reside in the house which had been
● 968 built by her husband for her as a gift. She named this *tarwad* Marayil, thus she and her children became independent from Mullasseri *tarwad*. It was said in this time, her mother's *tarwad*, Mullasseri, was so full with her matrilineal kin, hence she preferred to reside in this new house with her sons and daughters. This house is at present occupied by E. group. At the establishment of this new *tarwad*, I think, she must have had some land, or managing rights in farming land, given by her natal *tarwad* or by her husband as a gift, but I failed to discover the economic basis on which this *tarwad* life had been carried on.

613 Thus established, the new *tarwad* grew bigger in the course of time. In 1898,
175 the increase of its members led to the first residential partition into two groups, as already stated. It was twenty years after the marriage of the granddaughter of Prabaty Amma, *12* and her daughter *29* who was born in 1888, was ten years old, and *39* is said to have been born in this *tarwad* around this year. From these data, it can be assumed that all members from *1* to *39* of Marayil *tarwad* lived in this *tarwad* building together. The situation of the members of this old *tarwad* before the partition in 1898 is as follows.

613 Married members of this *tarwad* mostly practiced "visiting marriage" (see
591 Diagram, the majority of male members were visiting husbands). Seventeen
593 out of twenty-three cases of marriages in the second and the third generations, took a visiting form. Five cases who did not practice "visiging marriage" were
182 younger ones of the third generation, whose ages are almost equal to those of the older members of the fourth generation. In the fourth generation, the cases
175 of the visiting marriages decreased to four out of nineteen cases. These facts reveal that the residential pattern became more neolocal than duolocal during the fourth generation: by this time many had already established independent households in which they lived with their wife and children, having an independent income. These members are shown by ▲ in the Diagram.

A more careful examination of this Diagram, reveals that this tendency had already started in the third generation, as appeared in the case of the husband of *12*, Nando Pillai. He had used to visit his wife for twenty years after his marriage. He was a brilliant and successful man who had an important post in the palace of the Cochin Maharaja, which allowed him to accumulate considerable wealth. He made a new *tarwad* building for his sisters as their *karanavan*, and again in 1898 he built a new beautiful *tarwad* with a big garden, where he himself lived with his wife and children, thus making his wife independent from her *tarwad*. This house is at present occupied by the C group.

613 Then Marayil *tarwad* already suffering from over population, stimulated
591 by this event, split into two groups: one was the *tawari* of eldest daughter of
175 Prabaty Amma, another was that of the second and third daughters. The latter
182

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their ex-
treme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual sexual promiscuity within the caste, and minimal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus Complex [59] which caused men to fear and propitiate the phallic representatives of their fathers, and women to have fantasies about "possession" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfortunately snake worship is now practically extinct; I never saw it, and found present-day informants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic, dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility of the father, which must have been experienced by Nayar children since they slept, and do today, in the mother's room till age four or five and have opportunity to witness parental intercourse, would be repressed before latency and leave its mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about the father which could be translated into the cultural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods. Such archaic representations contrast with the less distorted ones of male forbears of the taravad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
● 769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

592 devoted to dead karanavans' spirits, opening off
769 the inner courtyard, contains a number of small
778 wooden stools on which the spirits are believed to come and sit. In those branches of the taravad which have remained in situ for many generations, retaining [60] an old ancestral house while collateral segments hived off into new ones (6), the ancestor shrine contains many stools, placed in order and named with the names of the karanavans going back to the first of the segment or of the lineage as a whole. In newer houses built by segments which have recently left the parent house there may be only one or two, starting with the stool of the man who built the house and was its first karanavan. (7) Offerings of cooked good, with delicacies of the kind most enjoyed by the recipient during his lifetime, are made before each stool by the living karanavan, in the presence of all members, twice annually on the new moon days of April-
592 May and October-November. The spirits of
769 dead karanavans are thought of as vindictive and
152 fearsome, ever prone to take offence against living members who fail in any of the details of ritual performances and general care of the taravad house and lands which are their duty, and to vent hostility on them out of all proportion to their offence. They are placated with fear and reverence but without affection. Their character contrasts with that of the patrilineal ancestral spirits of Tamil Brahmans, who are thought of as harmless, straving, lonely, pitiful beings who must be given food to sustain them in the life in the world of the dead. This

592 difference in the character of ancestral spirits
●769 probably relates to the fact that among Nayars,
152 hostility to the mother's brother, the karanavan and all older men, though curbed by strict rules of etiquette and [61] social distance, is often either fully conscious or dealt with by projection: the mother's brother may be thought of as persecuting and his discipline strongly resented, though loyalty to the mother and the group prevents a man from openly venting his aggression. Among Brahmans, aggressive impulses against the father, elder brothers and other older men are deeply repressed; such older male figures are thought of a protective and nurturant, and inner opposition to them arouses much guilt. Perhaps because of this, their spirits are also harmless, and what is projected in beliefs about them is rather the individual's own oral dependency longings.

592 The propitiation only of heads of the property-
769 groups, by the living head on behalf of all members, underlines the corporate character of the group. Brahmans instead propitiate each man his own line of recent patrilineal forbears - father, paternal grandfather and great-grandfather and their wives - thus emphasizing the strength of the asymmetrical interpersonal tie between father and son, at the expense of the
592 solidarity of the patrilineal group. Among Na-
602 yars, interpersonal relations between men of the matrilineal group are neither structurally strong nor emotionally intense: men are bound to the group and incidentally to each other by their primary ties to women (mother and sisters); rivalry between them is acute and they are kept

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave
[553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the
[588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month,
[881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to
[843] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the
[769] subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead members of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar
[765] also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the
[783] fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides
[885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking
for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and
other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should
offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting
to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious
laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the
interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death
must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of
her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of
impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [776]
impious son. [753]

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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WOMAN-DAUGHTER

593 A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's [868] intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and [864] physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household re- [769] sponsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was ex- [843] pected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, how- [606] ever, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she [586] had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious [578] mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

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took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' children, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was responsible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste, in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural matters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

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obligations to their children and a strong affective bond with them. The *Karanavān* of their lineage segment was however the authority in important matters.

Both in Kottayam and in Cochin, Nāyar women were occasionally married to men of the highest, patrilineal caste of Nambūdiri Brahmans. Children of such unions were Nāyars, and rules of ritual pollution maintained distance between them and their higher caste fathers. The Nambūdiri father might not eat with his wife and children, and might not touch them during the daytime while in a state of ritual purity. Only the eldest son of a Nambūdiri house might marry a Nambūdiri wife and beget children for his own family.

British rule brought about the collapse of the Nāyar armies early in the nineteenth century. Probably as a result of this change, plural marriages gradually died out in Cochin. The lineage system persisted with little change until the turn of the century, but in both areas the employment of men in professional and wage work led to the development of privately owned property in addition to property owned jointly by the matrilineal group. The Malabar Marriage Act of 1896 permitted men to register their marriages and gave the children of such marriages rights in half the personal property of the father after his death. During this century, the greatly increased employment of men in salaried work, and the development of cash-crop farming, have brought about a partial disintegration of the matrilineage, and have tended toward the emergence of the elementary family as an economic and legal unit. Under the pressure of these changes, laws[3] were passed in 1933 and 1937 which required all men to register their marriages, gave rights of maintenance to their wives and children, and provided that the whole of a man's personal property be inherited by his wife and children. In addition, the laws permitted, though they did not require, equal division of the matrilineal estate on a per caput basis[4] between all members. Although some traditional households remain, it has now become fairly customary for a woman and her immature children jointly to separate their shares of property from those of the rest of their matrilineal group, and to set up a new establishment with the woman's husband. He, in turn, may have abstracted his single share of property from that of his own matrilineal group. Sometimes, the husband himself provides a new house for his elementary family from his own share of property and his private earnings. Sometimes the new house is provided from the property of the wife and children, who receive their husband and father into it as a resident and wage earner. Sometimes husband and wife pool their property and set up a joint establishment.

Given the modern heterogeneity of legal, economic, and residential arrangements, and given also variations in education, interests, and life experience, it is not surprising that cults of the dead reveal differential rates of change. I shall be chiefly concerned with the traditional cults, although these persist without change in only a few of the more traditionally patterned households—actually, in fifteen percent of Nāyar households in one Cochin village, and in thirteen percent in one village in Kottayam.

The Nāyars participate in three distinguishable categories of cults of the dead. The first comprises a collective cult, by the matrilineal property group, of the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, which I call lineage ghosts. This cult is non-Sanskritic. The second category comprises various kinds of offerings by individuals to the spirits of dead kinsfolk at funerals or on the anniversaries of deaths. These cults are Sanskritic in origin. The third category comprises various cults of the ghosts of persons who were not members of the Nāyar's own lineage; I call these alien ghosts. These cults,

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

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Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine 628
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste 688
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the 564
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear 684
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the 682
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the 564
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible 421
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in 476
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. 628

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kārana-* 694
van. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kārana-*
van's misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former 787
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts 782
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production; and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members.

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living.

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come.

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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between males, for a woman does not offer the threat of a rival to her male superior. 604
Difference of sex, however, makes this relationship even more formal than that 562
between men. Women do not appear frequently in the presence of their mothers' brothers. They occupy separate wings of the house, and intercourse between the sexes is severely restricted. Toward older brothers a woman's relationship is restricted 593
almost to the point of avoidance. If she commits a misdemeanor, especially a sexual 562
one, a woman immediately fears men senior to her in the *taravād*. Formerly, she 684
might be executed by her brothers if she had sexual relations with a lower caste man. In an orthodox household today, a girl who becomes pregnant by a low caste man will be either expelled from the house by her male seniors or, at best, will be thrashed and will receive much subsequent harsh treatment.

It may be wondered why, since women are excluded from legal authority and from 562
participation in the cult, ancestresses are believed capable of harming *taravād* members. 613
The explanation of this, too, seems to lie in the content of relationships with the 593
mother and other natal kinswomen. Women have no legal authority over their juniors. 769
Indeed, the mother of a *kāranavan* is herself under his jurisdiction. Women do, however, exercise great moral authority over their children throughout their lives. In 184
Cochin with duolocal residence, the care of children under about the age of five is 562
almost entirely in the hands of women in a traditional *taravād*. Their fathers have no 613
rights over them, the *kāranavan* is too remote a figure to concern himself with details 593
of child training, and junior men of the *taravād* are often absent from home. A mother 591
commonly treats her small children with indulgence, but is necessarily also the source of many frustrations, while the maternal grandmother and women of her generation are strict disciplinarians.

In Kottayam, where residence was traditionally avunculocal, children were frequently brought up in the *taravād* of the father. In such households today, the child has an intimate, affectionate relationship with his father who undertakes a part of his personal care. When the father's *kāranavan* is also the mother's father (as fairly often occurs with cross-cousin marriage), he and his wife treat the child with indulgence. Otherwise, they tend to have only a slight relationship with him and may even resent his claim to temporary hospitality in their house. The mother is, in these [604]
circumstances, again the child's chief mentor and disciplinarian, and he learns very early that his mother's brothers, though living elsewhere, are the real authorities whom he must respect and to whom he will return at adolescence, as their heir. In 613
both areas the reverence acquired for the mother is perpetuated throughout life. 593
Her wishes and those of his elder sister take precedence over those of a man's wife, to 184
whom he has a very subsidiary attachment. The relationship with the mother is clearly characterized by great depth of emotion and by greater tenderness than that toward male seniors. Even so, it appears that in this relationship too, the emotion is usually consciously ambivalent. I illustrate this statement briefly with reference to the 159
relationship between only one man and his mother, but it is characteristic of many. 593
This Cochin Nāyar, aged thirty-five, visited us stealthily in the evenings and kept his visits from his mother, telling her he had business in the town. He was afraid she would become jealous, and angry with him for eating Christian food. She watched over him, upbraiding him when he spent much time in the house of his wife and children. He took care to be prompt for meals, and although he found her food inadequate he would not complain in case he appeared to slight her cookery. He had had a high

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159 593 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!" 593 769 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 613 776 593 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate, as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely resembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to 769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack 593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and [613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 593 769 613 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

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however intimately related to his children he may have been, he belongs to a different economic and legal corporation. In death as in life, he has no publicly supported authority over his children. Children do have a personalized relationship with their father's spirit in Kottayam, however, which is discussed below.

The emotional content of the relationships with lineage ghosts among the Nāyars does not depend upon the fact that they follow matrilineal descent, although of course the role-structure of the cult is determined by this fact. The Īravas[13] of this area, who are tenant cultivators of lower rank than the Nāyars, have small patrilineal lineages and patrilocal extended families, cross-cut, traditionally, by dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. The Īrava patrilineage is called a *taravād* and is headed by its senior male member as *kāranavan*. The Īravas have a cult of dead patrilineal *kāranavans* almost identical in emotional and belief content with that of Nāyars. So also do the Coorgs, a patrilineal caste of the small province east of Kottayam, well described by Srinivas.[14] The common form of the cult and the similarity of detail in this general area must undoubtedly be attributed to diffusion or to a common historical origin. Nevertheless, the question then arises of why this cult was not diffused to all castes of the southwest coast, notably to the Brahmans. Conversely, we may ask why the Brahmanical cult of ancestors, which is quite different in form and content, did not entirely replace the ancestral cults of the non-Brahman castes centuries ago—for these castes have been exposed to Brahmanical culture probably for two thousand years and have in fact adopted many elements of that culture. Moreover, cults of punitive ancestors similar to the Nāyar cult are very widespread in the world. It seems certain that whatever their historical origin, the reasons for the perpetuation of these cults must be sought in the role-structure of the kinship system and the emotional content of relationships with major figures of the senior generation within it. I would suggest that cults of predominantly punitive ancestors are likely to be accompanied by kinship relationships in which the senior generation retains control over the junior until late in life, but in which major figures of the senior generation are not highly idealized. It seems probable that the chief sanction against value-violating behavior will be fear of some tangible form of punishment, rather than fear over loss of love, and that although open expression of aggression toward disciplinary figures is controlled, the aggressive component in the ambivalent relationship to seniors will be strong and not deeply repressed. Among Nāyars and Īravas of my acquaintance, at all events, a man may even be conscious of his ambivalence toward seniors, and to the extent that he is not able fully to accept his own aggressive feelings he seems to project these in the belief that his superiors are even more punitive than they may really be. A portion of this projected aggression his culture encourages him to displace on the figures of lineage ghosts, who can inflict even more serious punishments than can living superiors. As is frequently the case in our own society, the mechanism of projection seems to be closely allied with that of introjection, which appears in the belief that sickness and mental derangement are caused by the entry of a hostile ghost into the body of the patient.

The nature of traditional Nāyar relationships to their lineage ghosts may be clarified by contrasting them with those of Brahmans. I choose for this purpose the Tamil Brahmans of Tanjore,[15] with whom I am best acquainted. This caste of landowners and ritual specialists has patrilocal extended families and patrilineal lineages. Headship of the extended family does not, as among Īravas and Coorgs, pass down the line of

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father is highly ambivalent; for as head of the family he is the source of many frustrations. After death, aggressive elements do seem to appear covertly in the horrifying picture of hell and in the fear that by failing to perform the ancestral rites correctly, and to live piously, the son may imperil his ancestors' souls. But aggression against the parents seems to be too deeply repressed for them to be thought of, alive or dead, as themselves aggressive. Instead, the Brahman seems to effect a reaction formation against his aggression which appears in unusual concern for the ancestors' safety, and in the anxious need to perform numerous rites which will ward off from them the punishment of the god of death. I do not mean to suggest that every Brahman handles aggression toward elders solely and precisely in this way, or that every Nāyar handles the same troublesome impulses by projection. I would suggest, however, that both socialization and belief system encourage these different modes of handling aggression toward authorities, and that a change in any one of these areas would be likely to produce change in them all.

A more apt contrast with the Nāyar cult would be that of the Nambūdiri Brahmans, who live in contact with the Nāyars and from whom the Nāyars have derived many elements of their religion. Unfortunately, the religious orthodoxy of the Nambūdiris prevented me from studying them intimately. The information which I have from Nambūdiri informants and from literature[16] indicates however that their ancestral cult is similar to that of the Tamil Brahmans. Its role structure is different, for in the Nambūdiri patrilineal household only the eldest son may have Nambūdiri descendants. Younger sons may have Nāyar children, but these are totally excluded from the performance of rites for their dead fathers. Headship of the Nambūdiri family, like that of the Īrava, passes from the eldest son down the line of brothers and then drops to the eldest son of the junior generation. There is both a collective cult of dead patrilineal heads and also separate anniversary rites for individual dead. Both types of ritual take the Sanskritic form. If the deceased was a younger son, his eldest brother's sons perform these rites. Nambūdiris hold the same beliefs about the fate of the soul as do Tamil Brahmans and, like them, deny that the spirits of ancestors are punitive. The informal intimacy of behavior between men of senior and junior generations in the Nambūdiri household is also very similar to that among Tamil Brahmans, and contrasts with the formal etiquette of partial avoidance between Nāyar matrilineal kinsmen. It is somewhat extraordinary and interesting to note that the Nambūdiri Brahmans and the Nāyars, through centuries of close proximity and hypergamous marital unions, have retained totally different legal and emotional relationships within their respective unilineal units, with correspondingly different beliefs connected with their ancestral cults.

Although the Nāyars' relationships with ghosts are similar in important respects to those with living elders, they are significantly different in others. The ghosts' powers are not limited by the demands of reality, and they can magically protect and punish in fantastic ways in which human elders cannot. As Fortes points out for the Tallensi ancestors, the ghosts appear "as a standardized and highly elaborated picture of the parents as they might appear to a young child in real life—mystically omnipotent, capricious, vindictive, and yet beneficent."[17] It is while a child is comparatively helpless that his elders appear in this form. As he grows up and gains competence, the elders shrink to human proportions. But in some areas of living a Nāyar was traditionally helpless throughout life—with regard to flood and drought, many sicknesses, and

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Nambūdiri Brahmans

769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
182 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact
626 fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *taravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[794] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of
[613] commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of
564 the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

in the Nāyar case, for in spite of the institution of lineage ghosts there are serious limitations on the expression of aggression within the matrilineage. It is therefore logical to hypothesize that a residuum of unexpressed aggression is displaced outside the lineage toward outgroups and toward supernatural agents which represent these groups. However, there are also, as we shall see, realistic reasons, issuing from the political and economic structures, why individuals should feel aggressive toward outgroups of various categories. It seems probable that the institutions surrounding alien ghosts absorb some of these aggressions as well.

Alien ghosts in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression. The role-structure of alien ghost cults is that of the wider community, and to understand them we must see how they are interwoven with political and economic relationships between lineages and between castes. For political and economic factors limit both the form and the direction which the expression of aggression can legitimately take in these various relationships.

Within the lineage, as I have suggested, the Nāyars' aggression training permits them to acknowledge to themselves a certain degree of hostility in their relations with matrilineal kin. It does not, however, permit physical aggression between matrilineal kin, nor does it permit the expression of projected aggression in the form of accusations of witchcraft or sorcery between matrilineal kin. For the *taravād* is the smallest corporate unit in Nāyar society. Its members are bound by the closest ties of economic cooperation. They must present a united front to the world, and such forms of aggression would be incompatible with the smooth functioning of their group. A degree of aggression can, however, be safely projected outside the *taravād* on to lineage ghosts, whose cult, as we have seen, actually strengthens the solidary bonds between living matrilineal kin.

Turning to wider relationships within the Nāyar caste, we must note that the political organization traditionally permitted the open expression of organized physical aggression against peers outside the lineage, in controlled feuds between lineages of the same village, villages of the same chiefdom, and chiefdoms of the same kingdom, and in warfare between kingdoms. Such physical aggression within the caste was possible because the internal organization of the caste was segmentary. Conflicts within it therefore balanced each other. Lineages opposed each other within the village but combined against other villages. Villages opposed each other within the chiefdom but combined against other chiefdoms. Chiefdoms opposed each other within the kingdom but combined against other kingdoms in war.

In this system, the most severe limits on intersegment conflict were those on feuds within a village. Such feuds arose in response to grave disputes—often, it appears, involving charges against a Nāyar woman of immorality with a low caste man. But, particularly in Cochin, these feuds were of short duration. They were controlled and curtailed by the authority of village headman and district chief. Hence interlineage disputes were limited in their mode of expression. Moreover, it was possible for individuals of different lineages to quarrel, yet to be unable to persuade their *kāranavans* and the rest of their lineages to enter a feud with them. It is here that suspicions of sorcery came into play, chiefly through beliefs in the use of hired sorcerers who controlled alien ghosts. Affines were particularly suspect, for, outside the lineage, affines were the persons with whom one had closest relationships and with whom disputes could most easily arise. If, for example, a *kāranavan* seemed particularly fond of a

627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

● 769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft,
769 however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad,
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his
152 Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[25] and the initiation rites[26] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all
177 the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked
564 occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are
[782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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Act of 1947, moreover, low caste persons in general wish to enter the main court of the temple along with the higher castes and to propitiate the great deity. Alternatively, they build modern temples of their own dedicated to Sanskrit gods. They begin to shun the outer courtyards of temples populated by ghosts and devils and to leave these unpropitiated. Some Nāyars still believe that the lower castes have supernatural powers as sorcerers and lycanthropic witches, but believe that as the lower castes acquire education and "civilization" they voluntarily give up these powers. Others now deny that ghosts, witches, or sorcerers ever possessed powers at all.

All of these changes in belief and ritual are probably linked not only specifically to the collapse of *taravād* and caste as small birth-status groups, but more generally to the widening range of Nāyar social relations and to the relaxing of their former tight interdependencies in face-to-face relationships. As they move into a heterogeneous, mobile, urban setting composed partly of impersonal relationships with strangers, the Nāyars cease to regard the natural order as in all respects a moral order and cease to seek personal motives as the ultimate causes of misfortunes. The growth of scientific knowledge in schools and the spread of medical facilities also obviously influence beliefs about illness. This does not, of course, mean that the Nāyars and lower castes no longer require institutionalized modes of handling their aggressive impulses and their uncertainty in face of cosmic mysteries. In a few areas of living, new religious institutions have developed, which are outside the subject of this paper. In general, however, I think it is true to say that the scope of ritual beliefs and activities is shrinking[27] for Malabaris as a whole, and that as technology develops and new social arrangements become feasible, they concentrate more on the "how" of misfortunes, leaving the "why" to chance. Correspondingly, of course, conflict is increasingly handled through modern secular institutions (the law-court, the trades' union, the political party, the democratic election, etc.), which produce continuing social structural changes rather than serving to maintain harmony within traditional birth-status groups.

NOTES

[1] For a brief analysis of social change among the Nāyars, see E. K. Gough, "Changing Kinship Usages in the Setting of Political and Economic Change Among the Nāyars of Malabar," *Journal Royal Anth. Institute*, LXXXII (1952), 71-88.

[2] George P. Murdock, *Social Structure* (New York, 1949), p. 2.

[3] The Madras *Marumakkattayam* Act of 1933, and the Cochin Nāyar Act of 1937.

[4] Before the date of this Act, all division of ancestral property in a Nāyar *taravād* had been stirpital.

[5] For accounts of Nāyar propitiations of lineage ghosts, see E. Thurston, *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* (Madras, 1909), V, 362-3; F. Fawcett, *The Nāyars of Malabar*, Bull. Madras Govt. Museum (Madras, 1901), III, No. 3, 245-253; K. M. Panikkar, "Religion and Magic Among the Nayars," *Man*, XVIII, No. 7 (1918); V. K. Raman Menon, "Ancestor Worship Among the Nayars," *Man*, XX, No. 3 (1920); R. K. Pisharodi, *Ancestor Worship in Kerala* (1923).

[6] Menon, 1920.

[7] M. J. Levy, Jr., *The Family Revolution in Modern China* (Cambridge, 1949), pp. 168-9.

[8] F. Freud, *Totem and Taboo*, trans., Jas. Strachey (New York, 1950), pp. 51-63.

[9] M. Mead, *Male and Female* (New York, 1949), pp. 297-304.

[10] M. E. Opler, "An Interpretation of Ambivalence in Two American Indian Tribes," *Journal of Social Psych.*, VII (1936), 82-115.

[11] A. Kardiner and Associates, *The Psychological Frontiers of Society* (New York, 1945), pp. 112, 118ff, 167; M. Fortes, *The Web of Kinship Among the Tallensi* (Oxford, 1949), p. 234ff;

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest associations are the strongest, and persist through the life of the race as through the life of the individual. The higher power of reasoning which comes with higher development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and, according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit which is emancipated from the body at death at once inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [782]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans, remain at those holy spots, and become more and more god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much has been said already of this side of the subject of comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts. The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera. The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velichchappâd about three days afterwards going to perform elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

* The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

342
556 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
[769] between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
[778] women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
[735] and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
[782] of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot afford to make these images, substitute simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside and offered.

The entrance is at C.

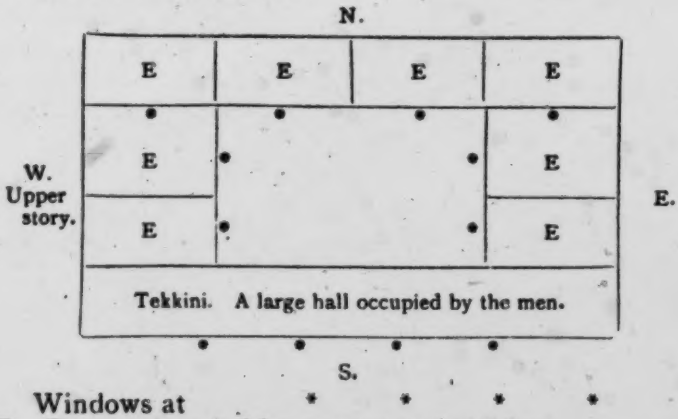

Windows at * * * *

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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[351]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

175 564 613 631 [701] [566]

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

613 [601] [783] [791] [769] [592]

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

[591] [595] [178]

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

613 582 564

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurssis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

Tiyyar

[South Malabar and Cochin]

613 must be unrelated: if a man married an *enangar* woman, the *enangar* bond was broken and each lineage must find new, unrelated *enangar*. *Enangar* must be present to witness marriages, [769] to help at funerals, and to represent their lineage's ancestral spirits in the ceremonial food-offerings to spirits on the sixteenth day after, or the anniversary of, a death. The prohibition [765] on marriages between *enangar* acts as an insurance that the *enangar* should not be prejudiced by ties of matrilaterial or affinal kinship in their task of bringing to justice members of the linked lineage who offended against caste law. Among Nayars, this was less likely to happen because patrilateral ties were less strong than are matrilaterial ties among Tiyyars.

614 Cutting across their lineage-grouping, the Tiyyars had dispersed, exogamous matri-
613 lineal clans, comparable with the clans of the north. My informants knew nothing about these clans except that they were once exogamous. They are not so today, since some people do
582 not remember their clan-names. Though the clans have died out, marriage is prohibited between known matrilineal kin.

595 The Tiyyars of this area had fraternal polyandry. In this they must be distinguished
585 from the Nayars, since the Tiyyars banned non-fraternal polyandry, while the Nayars of Malabar and Cochin forbade the marriage of one woman to two men of the same lineage, not to mention the same sibling-group. Tiyyar fraternal polyandry died out about twenty years ago. To carry out this marriage, the horoscopes of the girl and the eldest potential husband were compared and the amount of the dowry of jewels and vessels fixed. The bridegrooms went to the girl's house with their kin and *enangar*. Their mother's brother handed clothing for the bride, together with the *kānam* sum, as in Norther Malabar, to the mother's [533] brother of the bride. A learned man sang a marriage formula to the effect that the girl of such a lineage was here given to the men of such a lineage, with caste-men and the sacred lamp as witness. He adjured the bridegroom's party to punish her reasonably when necessary, but to 'Keep her well, but if you are displeased with her, bring her back to us even if she has ten children, and we shall have her back, after settling the accounts in the presence of the third man [the go-between in marriage arrangements] and the *enangan*.' The bride was seated in the marriage hall at the end of a row beside her bridegrooms. The bridegroom's mother and other kinsfolk, and finally their *enangan* and his wife, fed the grooms and then the bride with porridge and with coconut-milk.

[606] The marriage was consummated shortly afterwards in the bride's house, where each husband in order of age went to live with her for one or two weeks. At the end of the honeymoon period she was brought permanently to the husband's house, where she became her mother-in-law's subordinate. The husbands cohabited with her for equal periods in turn by the arrangement of their mother. Even a child might be married to the common wife by the
595 milk-tie, and when he grew up claim conjugal rights in his much older wife. If the family were large and the wife weak in health, a second and even a third woman might, at least in modern
[601] times, be married by all the brothers and shared as their common wife. Children called all the
[428] fathers *appan*, prefacing distinguishing terms. Sons had equal rights of inheritance. The system mitigated against division of property, but, at least in modern times, if the family became large, brothers might, on the death of their fathers, divide the property and the children and each take one of the wives to live with him in middle life.

586 Divorce is permitted: a divorced wife returns to her brother's house, whence she may in theory be remarried. To effect a divorce, the eldest husband traditionally took a piece of thread from his loin-cloth, burnt it in two, and blew the two pieces away, saying to the brother of the girl, 'Here is your sister's *āchāram*.' *Achāram* commonly means 'custom', and Aiyappan (1944, p. 184), interprets the phrase, 'Hereby the "thread-tie" [formed by presenting a loin-cloth to the wife at marriage] is snapped, and with it my customary rights over this woman as her husband terminate.' The earnest money was returned to the husband's kin in the

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawād* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*predham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tāli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawād*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [183] [165] [169] [183]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space *(mittam)* in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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551. The names of Nayars present great varieties and those most commonly met with are the following:—

(a) Andi Menon
Kandar Menon
Kannan Menon
Ittirayarachan
Korappan
Koman Menon
Kumara Menon
Thenchu Menon
Konthu Nayar
Eacharan Nayar

(b) Raman
Krishnan
Govindan
Gopalan
Achyuthan
Sankaran
Narayanan
Madhavan
Sreedharan
Raghavan
Neelacandhan
Velayudhan

(c) Names of females:
Kunjikavu
Chirutha
Ichon
Kotha
Nangeli
Ooli
Cheeru
Cheeronna
Ichi
Ittiri
Mukami
Oonni Maya

(d) Kalyani
Lakshmi
Madhavi
Rugmani
Seetha
Subhadra
Narayani
Dakshayani
Karthyayani
Meenakshi
Gowri
Bhargavi
Janaki
Parvathi
Sreedevi

(e) Pet names of males:
Appu
Appukuttan
Kuttan
Balan

(f) Pet names of females:
Nani (Narayani)
Mathu (Madhavi)
Kunju (Kunjukutti)
Eacheri (Easwari)
Parukutti.

55 564 The names of males given under (a) are those which appear to be caste names, probably given by the Nambuthiris, who are generally fond of these contracted and disguised appellations. The Nambuthiris say, that the Sudras were so ordained by Manu as not to be called by fair names. They were the landlords and priests, and the Nayars had to do servile work for them. They thought that they ought to keep the Sudras in complete ignorance, and could not endure to hear them talking distinctly in their presence. On one occasion, it is said that when a Sudra servant uttered the words "*Súrya Rasmi* (sun's rays)," his master was so displeased, that he closed his ears, for he could not bear to hear a servile fellow using so elegant a phrase from Sanskrit. On another occasion, when a Brahman overheard a Sudra uttering the words *ahimsa paramo dharma* (the highest of all duties is not to injure anybody), he said to himself, "what a pity it is, that a Sudra should be able to quote a vedic expression!". Their influence in these and other matters began gradually to diminish after the time of the great Malayalam poet, Thunjathu Rámanujan. The names of the caste-men given under (b) are chiefly the various designations of Krishna, Rama and Siva, all of whom are worshipped with equal reverence. Some think that the Nayars are chiefly the worshippers of Vishnu, but the fact that, when at Benares, Rameswaram and other places, they perform the ceremonies of offering of rice-balls in honour of their deceased ancestors, calling their ancestors

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, [782] and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock 769
caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors [532] are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789] and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754] Brahmans also share.

Serpent worship.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattán kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and 825
other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

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765 613 [782] and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. [825] Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

765 613 574 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

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no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

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mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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601 terms of address. Related to this Dravidian terminology we find, as
[605] might be expected, that all parallel cousins on both sides are forbid-
[582] den as sexual partners and consequently there is categorical cross-
602 cousin marriage (p. 397). We are not given any details regarding the circle of kin which we have called the micro-caste, for Gough is again more concerned with "lineages." However, it is quite clear that all the
[171] kinship customs, especially the obligations between the various categories of kin, appear very similar to the Sinhalese.

601 The categories of the terminology are widely extended and rela-
602 tions with paternal kin are formally defined. The son, for instance,
[769] must make annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. "Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations" (Gough, 1955*a*, p. 55). The father's sister's son was considered to have special claims on the girl (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 398).

602 It is noteworthy that with the residence pattern in which men live
591 on lineage land with their MB, it is precisely the rights of the paternal kin that are emphasized in customary rituals. Thus paternal kin have an important place in all *rites de passage:* first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, *tali*-tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death.
[553] At the naming ceremony, for instance, the infant's father's mother
[431] chooses the name, the father's father confers it, and the father gives a gold gift (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 401).

[171] These rights and obligations are of interest in contrast to the Sinhalese, where residence tends to be patrilocal and where it is, in fact, the claims of the maternal kin that are given the most prominence in the various life-cycle ceremonies.

602 We should observe that even the joking relationship, which is an
605 interesting feature of the Sinhalese cross-cousin relationship, is dupli-
171 cated in North Malabar: "Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges." And, of course, marriage was initiated with the "gift of the cloth."

582 So far as the general structure is concerned, there is little doubt as
121 to where we are. However, we are not given much information regard-
[114] ing endogamy and hypergamy. Gough notes only incidentally that
[611] "ordinary" Nambiars . . . married exclusively with each other" (1955*a*, p. 56), which suggests kin group endogamy with a likely dimi-
[613] nution of unilineal descent ideology in such groups. Gough elsewhere also observes in passing that there were "hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages" (1961, p. 400), which conforms to the idea expressed above. Since the pattern can be seen with greater clarity in the evidence regarding the Cochin aristocrats, I refrain from discussing the question of hypergamy here.

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771 From
824 the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being
[778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck.
[301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-
[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæo-carpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus
[278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that
538 cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

Folk tales.

539 The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or
[821] moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on
[775] their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a
[821] kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of
[825] serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have
[823] acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were
539 asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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825
171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes.
825 Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison,
171 are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for
782 snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship
778 at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person
[766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

● 771 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes
825 unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a
778 Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him
796 and left them in their present abode. He however promised to
[173] return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *havu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778] yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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[1] Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 88.

[2] Wilson & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113

[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.

[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.

[5] Hodson : *The Meiteis*, 110.

Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [770] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [789]

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [782]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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RELIGION.

It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and women can scarcely wear less than they do in compatibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 569
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for [201]
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the [773]
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII½ shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

½ [See cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- Ed.]

and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and [351]
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a [354]
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors 796
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

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ground is then plastered over with cowdung. Then you mark out with rice flour an eight-cornered chakram, in the centre of which you place a small piece of cadjan leaf, and you place a similar piece at four corners. You sit with your back to the chakram, facing eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening while performing pûja. This pûja is, I think, addressed to Karinkutti: not in any way to the sun God who is not then visible. For the pûja you must be supplied with fried grain, beaten rice, rice bran, a fowl, toddy, arrack, some flowers of three colours—one of them the tulsi *(Ocimum sanctum)* —sandalwood-paste, camphor, incense. (Note the use of the sacred tulsi in this diabolical incantation!) While the pûja, which I am unfortunately unable to describe (leaving my directions rather lame) is being performed the mûla mantram of Karinkutti is to be repeated 101 times.

In order to do all this you must bathe 7¼ nazhikas (about 2¾ hours) before dawn, and complete the pûja before dawn arrives. But even before this you must stand up to your chest in water and repeat the mûla mantram 101 times. And you must repeat the whole thing *da capo* in the evening. The mantram is thus repeated 404 times in the day. You are not done yet, in fact this is only the beginning. The whole thing is done every day for 21 consecutive days; and then you will have the evil spirit Karinkutti entirely at your disposal. The person who remains continent, eats but once a day, cooking his own food, may it is said bring the spirit into obedience in less than 21 days.

Subjection of Vanni Bhâiravan is a much more difficult matter, involving much more elaborate ceremonial, details of which may well be spared the reader as the example which has been given is quite adequate.

And the good spirits—

Bhagavati.	Mûkâmi.
Bbadra kâli.	Vîrabhadran.
Hanumân.	Móhini.
Ganapati.	Sarabha Mûrti.
Subrahmanyan.	

The evil and the good spirits are truly a strange collection of beings! Their names help to illustrate what has been said already, that the Hinduism of the west coast is a strange medley of the higher Hinduism with the lower cult of the country. Bhâirava or Kâla Bhâirava (Bhâiravan of the Telugu country) is elsewhere the object of adoration of what is almost a distinct cult, a kind of

mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika religion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to worship Bhaîri dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female. Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books, the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

* From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*tarawād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukads, Attikurssis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration*.

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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771 177 abound. The militant Romanism of the Holy Inquisition, and the no less militant Protestantism of the Dutch, had their chance, in turn, for at least a century and a half. Yet, with all the great religions of the world to choose between during the last two thousand years, it is nothing short of marvellous to see the Nāyars, who have, it must be remembered, assimilated a very great deal of the material and intellectual culture of their neighbours, and, more than that, excelled them in literature and music, still maintain with undiminished vigour their spirit-worship, black-magic, and demoniacal ceremonies, and are devoid of almost every element of true religious life.

771 We may be accused of the narrow use of a wide word in the phraseology of Tylor when we deny that the Nāyars have any religion apart from a veneer of Hindu influence. Their beliefs are mainly magical. Here, of course, I am treading on very dangerous ground, dangerous even to the initiated, but fatal to the novice. In this essay I have taken the distinction between religion and magic as being primarily a question of method rather than of intention or possible effect. The 771 orthodox French opinion that the difference between magic and religion is that 114 the latter is social while the former is anti-social, has been proved by Mr. E. S. Hartland and Dr. Marett to be wholly untenable; while the contention of Dr. Marett himself[1] is that the difference between magic and religion lies in the attitude of society towards them.[2]

771 Among the Nāyars there is an implicit distinction between practices to propitiate 782 a god and those with which to bully a spirit. Bullying a spirit for purposes of social 114 benefit I have not considered to be religion, though it is recognised by society as beneficial and therefore according to Dr. Marett should be considered as religious—because it does not possess the emotional and the psychological elements which

[1] *Anthropology*, p. 210 (Home Univ. Series).

[2] Dr. Marett has recently expressed his view thus:—

"The dominant social tradition tolerates in a community only certain practices and the beliefs associated with them. These may be said to constitute the religion of the community. It does not matter whether they embody customs such as sacrifice and prayer which are essential to the civilised man's notion of *his* religion, or whether they involve processes of sympathetic magic, etc., such as have for us become disreputable.

"On the other hand, when resort is had to the supernaturalistic means in order to gain selfish and anti-social ends we may speak of magic." (Class Lecture on Primitive Morals.)

Here Dr. Marett seems to go back to the French view and hold that the difference between magic and religion is that the former is selfish and anti-social while the latter is disinterested and social. The view here submitted is different. It is submitted that primitive society understands the difference between magical and religious customs even when both are essentially social and disinterested. To the primitive mind, the difference between religion and magic lies in the method and procedure of the ceremonies, or, as we shall now call them, the ritual. As method and procedure only reflect the mental state of the performer and the society to the benefit of which these ceremonies are performed, this difference is essentially psychological. This position is better explained by the Nāyar customs and beliefs noted below.

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

● 771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[787] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

484 There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
717 journey :
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Muppōram
Trikeṭṭa iva ezhu Naal
Vitakkil vilāyā Bhūmi
Pōkunnakil avan varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

● 771 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

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valent among them also. The more one looks into these matters the more one becomes clear that in the unorganised and uneducated human mind, be it "civilised" or be it primitive, there is a horizontal stratification of the most contradictory ideas, which lie absolutely undisturbed in the ordinary course of life. In the mind of the ordinary man whose *forte* is not clear thinking, a great deal of intermingling of such ideas might take place. It is no uncommon sight to see a thoroughly Hindu-ised Nāyar who talks about Absolutism and Illusion, and believes in them, paying a *Kāniyan* to get the devil out of his little niece. This is, perhaps, the truth which lies midway between those who assert, like Dr. Frazer, that magic and religion are hostile and cannot be reconciled, and those who, like Dr. Marett, hold that in their origin they are the same, that it is in their character as looked upon by society they differ. The view I have maintained here is that religion and magic are different in their psychological and emotional effects and that Dr. Frazer is right when he says that they are at bottom hostile. But the almost universal coexistence of magic and religion is due to the attitude of society which tolerates all contradictions and insists only on their effect being for social welfare.

VII.—THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE NĀYARS.

Occupation.—The Nāyars are at present an essentially agricultural population. The vast majority of them are peasant proprietors owning small farms. Rice and coco-nuts are the chief things cultivated, though in North Malabar pepper and cardoman have also their share.

With regard to these matters the Nāyars have attained a certain stage of excellence. Their coco-nut estates are planted with a considerable amount of scientific skill and they are proficient in the industries which are allied to coco-nut cultivation; such as coir-matting, copra making and extraction of coco-nut oil. The extreme fertility of the land has made agricutural chemistry, as far as coco-nut and rice cultivation are concerned, a matter of secondary importance; and even to-day there are very few Nāyars who have studied the Western methods of agriculture.

As each Nāyar family generally lives in a compound of its own, coco-nut cultivation is generally in small farms. Extensive coco-nut plantations owned by the same man are very few. The position is much like that in England before the Enclosures. Even if all the land in a particular area is owned by the same person it is seldom enclosed and transformed into one large estate. On the other hand, they continue to be regarded as separate compounds and the houses on them are generally occupied either by Nāyar tenants or by Pulaya slaves.

The fact that Nāyar families live in garden houses is one of great significance. Horticulture is practised with great interest in all families, rich as well as poor. It is, in fact, very seldom that any Nāyar family uses vegetables bought from the market.

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101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as
614 *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from
174 outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were
825 called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days
771 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a
[161] community of 3¼ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattus*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred ser-
[784] pents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars
174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

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Religion.

The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-chattan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kávus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, ánd require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic. 564 771 776 [782]

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand maladies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which Brahmans also share. 769 [532] 771 776 [789] [754]

Serpent worship.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattán kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be found in the compounds of every Nayar house in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi. 771 778 825

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve their condition, returned to their old country. After their departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or *Páthála* took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled 773 778 825 [776]

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a 841 woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Ishuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
881 are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
846 Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
789 requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
782 rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
787 trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
776 nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn
791 must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
783 spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
789 A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
783 correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
796 and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
793 ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
791 who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
825 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyanchit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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771 From 824 the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudráksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 Folk-tales. The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a [825] kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of [823] serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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464 564 [212] The Nayars are the second in the list of the castes as regards learning, and only five per cent. of the population belong to the learned professions, but they are found in all departments of public service. The community is now availing itself largely of the benefits of modern education, and the members are fast becoming conspicuous in every walk of life. In every department of the State, in all the learned professions, they form a respectable majority, and the only people who successfully compete with them are the Brahman immigrants from the other coast. Though there are extensive landholders and substantial farmers among them, a very large majority of the caste-men are really very poor, being either petty farmers, agricultural labourers or day labourers, earning [357] wages at the rate of four to five annas a day. Even women of the poorer classes do agricultural work. Domestic servants in Hindu families are almost wholly Nayars, but none of them are artisans, weavers or potters.

264 [515] [771] **Food.** The Nayars seldom eat before their bath or before worshipping in the temple close at hand. Their meals are generally three in number, namely, breakfast which is taken early in the morning, a midday meal between eleven and twelve, and another between seven and eight in the evening, but this meal is generally taken by children between 262 five and six. The breakfast usually consists of *kanji* or rice 264 gruel with some pickles and *pappadam* (round wafers made of the meal of the kidney-bean). Coffee is becoming popular [272] among the Nayars, and this beverage is now often taken for [556] breakfast in well-to-do families. They do not recognize any danger in the use of it, and individuals of all ages indulge in it, so much so that it is even given to young infants. The midday meal, which is usually served between eleven and twelve o'clock, consists of boiled rice together with a few vegetable curries; and butter-milk mixed with rice is the last course.

Their supper which usually consists of similar preparation [562] is taken between seven and eight at night. The women take their food after the male members of the family. Only a minority of Nayars are strict vegetarians, though there is no prohibition against their eating meat, fish or fowl.

252 556 [357] In large aristocratic families, Brahman cooks are engaged to prepare the meals, but the serving is in some cases done by the members. In other families, on the contrary, the cooks of

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 [868] [126] Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 614 [428] Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

*595 [429]

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our visit was to see a *Pullavan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

564 750 771

[Text continues on P. 214]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

178 were farmers who owned vast extents of lands, which were cultivated by means of their own capital and stock. These families yet survive, but have scattered hovels to live in and are reduced to the rank of landless cultivators, entirely dependent on the landlords for subsistence.

000 There is however ample scope for economic improvement if some of the standing evils be removed. First of all must come education and enlightenment among the masses, for which nothing short of free and compulsory education can be of help in view of the poverty and the rank apathy of the people. A law must regulate the relations of the jenmi and kudiyan (tenant) which would deal successfully with the problem of oppression of the weak by the strong, and the absolute economic and social servility of the one to the other. Agriculture must be improved and co-operation stimulated. The indebted classes must gradually be liberated from the coils of the money-lenders and landlords, either by means of loans on nominal interest or otherwise. The public must be educated in the modern developments of agricultural science as well by example as by precept. They must also be initiated into the advantages of co-operation and mutual help. The operations of the savings banks, assurance societies, agricultural loans, etc., must be brought into more intimate reach of the ryot. Deeper and more wells should be dug and irrigation works also introduced. Roads and other public ways must be opened into the hearts of these sequestered areas. Boys and girls must be educated and trained to be good industrious men and citizens. In short, a strong movement must be started to awaken the people from apathy into activity, from thraldom into self-help and self-reliance, from illiteracy into enlightenment.

For all these, none but the landlords can take the best initiative. Therefore education must first of all be given to them. Now they belong to a class which is the most conservative, the most dominant, the richest and the most oppressive in Malabar. By education, they must be brought round to a sense of justice, brotherhood and [171] philanthropy. They are orthodox religionists who spend days and nights in ceremonials and chanting of vedic lore. But they do not know what their chants mean and do this because their forefathers did so. This cannot make men cultured and helpful to society.

These are some of the reforms that have to be undertaken and some of these have to come from the people themselves, but there are others which the Government alone can deal with effectively.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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121 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with
551 the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 In view of the great number of communities that have remained
171 untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman,
121 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and
593 inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated
[604] at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's
[764] funeral.

In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in con-
121 trast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the
593 rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire com-
764 plex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar
[604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan
[171] Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

There is always the emphasis on the connections between the chil-
121 dren of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be sepa-
593 rated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the
605 double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the
121 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of
602 the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea-
171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy:
812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.
77 Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union
[601]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 181 769 [772] [212] [538] [785] [782]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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legend "made in Austria." The Nâyars wear none but the gold, "mounted" as they call it (the mounting being much as the upper portion of one section of the necklace, in the plate), strung together through the mounting just as the necklace: a very effective ornament for the neck. The brass imitations of the sequin are worn by the women of the inferior races of whom we shall have some description hereafter. If one asks the ordinary Malayali, say a Nâyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rama and Sita; between them a cocoanut tree!

301 177 564*

Turkish coins, French half louis, and German 10 mark pieces are also used in the same way, each one being known by a distinctive vernacular name, and no corruption of its nomenclature in European coinage, so that it is always easy to identify one of these coins by its vernacular name. For instance, every Malayali knows what an "Amâda" is: it is what we know to be a real or imitation Venetian sequin.* The half louis of the empire is known as the "pakshikkas," probably from the eagle on the reverse. And so on.†

Ornaments are never worn on the ankles or on the waist, as is the rule in other parts of Southern India.

564* 301

Dress, men.—This is very simple; ordinarily one cloth round the loins, the ends overlapping a foot or two in front. It is not tucked between the legs, which is the fashion practically all over India, but hangs straight to the ground. It should touch the ground, or very nearly do so. Wearing a cloth in such fashion carries with it dignity to the wearer. A Tîyan, or a man of any inferior

291 564*

* I have never heard any explanation of the word Amâda in Malabar. The following comes from Tinnevelly: "Amâda was the consort of Bhagavati and he suddenly appeared one day before a Shânár (the caste devoted to climbing the palms and drawing off the juice) and demanded food. The Shânár said he was a poor man with nothing to offer but toddy, which however he gave in a palmyra leaf. Amâda drank the toddy and performing a mantram over the leaf it turned into gold coins which bore on one side the pictures of Amâda, the Shânár and the tree; and these he gave the Shânár on a reward for his willingness to assist him. This explains the two names—Shânár caste (as they are called in Tinnevelly, but where they are not very common), and Amâda."

[773]

† It is scarcely right to say any of these coins, even the sequin, is not current. The value of each is known everywhere to a nicety. It must be remembered that throughout Malabar copper coins of the English and Dutch East India Companies, of Mysore, and of almost every former dynasty of South India are to be found amongst the coins actually current with the people, while in the rural parts reckoning is always in fanams: not in annas.

[436]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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custom is one which makes for improvement of the race, 793
bound up as it is with the Marumakkattâyam system, 564
which, guided by the anulômam principle, has fewer hindrances in the way of natural selection than perhaps any other marital custom throughout the world.

The divine commands of Srí Parasu Râma, the 793
imputed originator of the Marumakkattâyam system 564
which is followed by 70 per cent. of the people of 773
Malabar, are supposed to be contained in the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam, a work in Sanskrit verse, written on the ordinary Malabar grantham (palm-leaf book). It purports to be a monologue "addressed by the Rishi Garga to Yudhishthira the eldest of the Pândus." Chapter XLIX relates "how certain celestial damsels were brought from Indra's world by Parasu Râma to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kêralam Brâhmans, and it relates how Parasu Râma at Vishabhadri (Trichûr), pronounced his commandment to the women (not being of the Brâhman caste) to satisfy the desires of Brâhmans, enjoining on them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was void of the least taint of sin." Unfortunately no scholar has given his opinion as to the time when this was written. Most likely it is not very ancient, and may be attributed to device of the Nambûtiris. But it is respected as authoritative. "One of the foremost Nambûtiris in Malabar in respect of wealth, rank, sanctity and learning," in common with the rest of his clan, relied absolutely on it, and informed the Commission: "The Smiriti says the Sûdras' appointed path to heaven is serving the Brâhmans." "The practice of Brâhmans . . . . . having sexual intercourse with servile (Sûdra) women is in accordance with the Sástras." "If 564
a Brâhman wished to have sexual intercourse with a 837
Sûdra's wife, the Sûdra would be bound to gratify the wish." "A Sûdra cannot be sure of the true parentage of the children born of his wife. Hence the Sûdras cannot follow Makkattâyam"—inheritance in the male line. The Zamorin Maharajah Bahadur informed the Commission that "according to Parasu Râma . . . . chastity should not be observed by non-Brâhman females." Again, the "Ettan Tamburan," one of the senior members of the Zamorin's family, a learned Sanscrit scholar said: "It has been ordained by Parasu Râma that in Kêrala, Marumakkatâyam women need not be chaste;" and he quoted a sloka in proof that there

683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed. [201]
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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754 object to be milked; how to cure a headache; to prevent
812 bad dreams, and so on.

N.B.—A mantram must be spoken, breathed, whispered with extreme accuracy. There must be no omission or false accent. Anything of the kind, or wrong pronunciation, destroys its efficacy at once.

FAMOUS MAGICIANS OF MALABAR.

791 We will close this chapter on magic which, though painfully inadequate, is already rather too long for its purpose, by mention of some of the famous workers in the art. Those who are familiar with the west coast will at once recall to mind the names of three Brâhman families whose scions are famed throughout the land as possessors of stores of magic, and at the same time—so interwoven is magic with religion!—revered for their saintliness. The eldest member of one of these is said to be "an honoured guest throughout the length and breadth of Kêrala; and on certain State occasions in Trevandrum and elsewhere, his presence is indispensable." A well-known tradition relates how that magic came, so to speak, into the family. (It is not necessary to give the family name, even though it is a household word on the west coast).

773 Long ago in the days of the Perumals, a Brâhman and
791 his friend were belated in the Yakshi paramba (*yakshi*—
776 female demon, *paramba*—garden) near Trichur.* The place was dreary; nothing but palms around. Suddenly they were accosted by lovely damsels who asked them to pass the night under their roof, and soon they were lodged in a sumptuous house, each in a separate chamber. But in the night, the damsels who had, *Lorelei* fashion, attracted the travellers, resumed their demoniacal forms and ate the Brâhman. His friend they could not touch as he had on his person a grandha sacred to Bhagavati; but in the morning he found himself perched on the top of a palm tree underneath which lay the bones of his friend, the Brâhman.

The Brahman's widow gave birth to a son soon after the strange death of her husband. When the boy was eleven years of age, she related to him how he had been made fatherless. He vowed vengeance on the Yakshis and Gandharvas (male demons) and, like a sensible boy, set about preparation for his life-task. It was not long before he had mastered the Vedas and all learning, and having done so he retired to the jungle, where he was

* To this day people avoid this place at night.

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engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His 773
devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared 791
before him in human form and handed him a grandah, 776
which is to this day the greatest work on magic in [553]
existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts for the prefix "Sûrya" to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of 791
Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case. 789

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in 842
infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talis- 791
man, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan 789
[776]

* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

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up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-therrtham* ('disc-water').

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *Kannichāru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 52).

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vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol.

773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son.

588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet.

841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[787] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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death. At ten or twelve years of age of a girl, her mother begged some one of their relations to marry her, and they did so by tying a mariage badge (*tali*). Then the bridegroom would leave her and go away without any consideration of his new relationship. She might also remain with him if he wished it. If she was not inclined to do so, the mother would then go about seeking some one to take her daughter to live with him. If the girl happened to be pretty, three or four Nayars would agree to live with her, and the more lovers she had, the more highly was she esteemed. Each man had his appointed time from midday to the next day at the same hour, during which some signal was placed at the door so that the others might not enter. She was at liberty to dismiss whomsoever she disliked. The advantage of this system was, that a man, who had not the means to support a wife, might have only a share of the cost of the maintenance. Nevertheless, there was a difficulty in ascertaining the fathers of children, who generally lived with the mothers by whom they were brought up. The fathers, in such cases, were named by the mothers. It is said that the kings made this law in order that the Nayars might not abandon their service. According to this system, the fathers were not succeeded by their sons but by nephews (sons of sisters). The above is a summarised account from 'The Travels on the East coast of Africa and Malabar' by Duarte Barbosa, from those of Lodovico Varthema, as also from the voyage of Frankoy Pyrard, page 371.

595 [588] [604] [175]

Origin of the custom of polyandry.

The orthodox view or rather the traditional account according to the *Keralamahatmyam*,[1] is that certain celestial damsels were brought from the world of Indra by Parasurama to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kerala Brahmans; and that at Vrishabhadri (Trichur), he pronounced his commandment to the *Sdmanthan* and *Sudra* castes to gratify the desires of the said Brahmans, ordering them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was devoid of the least taint of sin. This is certainly a very convenient arrangement for the junior members of the Nambuthiri families to be relieved of their life-long bachelorhood (*Bramhacharyam*) without any

595 773 595 [564]

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.

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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.— There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them :— 533 [182]

Bhadrakali Páttu :—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta páttu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati páttu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs :—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam* :—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkakarappan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *karanavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nentranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*.

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796 184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or 796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora- 184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali, 773 widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati, 776 in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after 173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra- 796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the 184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, coriander, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities [439] used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu [492] Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiat- [782]
ed by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ances- 769
tors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worship-ped even now in special *kóvús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors [532]
are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789]
and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754]
Brahmans also share.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies 825
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 771 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 778 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a 825 woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [841] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [782] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to [532] re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu. 771 778 825 [532]

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :— 755 759 [787] 755 759 773

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta. [428]

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb 776 [778] [782]

796
526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman
[184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the
[175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them
[431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a
[194] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic
[198] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu-
[176] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The
[173] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogde of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

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[776]
[773]

was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed to have only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive among us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about four in the morning, every young female of Nair families with pretensions to decency gets out of bed, and takes her bath in a tank. Usually a fairly large number of these young ladies collect at the tank for the purpose. Then all, or almost all of them, plunge in the water, and begin to take part in the singing that is presently to follow. One of them then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song, chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed, and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction, and struck against its surface, so that the water is completely ruffled, and is splashed in all directions, producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged, together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound, and then the leader stops awhile for the others to follow in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza with another, at the same time beating on the water, and so on until the conclusion of the song. All of them make a long pause, and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn, when they rub themselves dry, and come home to dress

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [772] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
824 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavâyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[775] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804] * Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks 613
round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on 764
the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made [532]
out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (mak- 765
ing offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the 782
second day after death and continues for seven days, the parti- 613
culars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chíthayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the 824
belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in 826
the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Sa-* 764
mánan, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Déva-* 774
dathan and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brah- [789]
man sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the [775]
palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 782

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned care- 824
fully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 765
613

the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804]

* Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
[825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[231] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
613 been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
574 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
783 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
[824] place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
[431] bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
613 the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no
[783] ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [782]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

Nayar
Tiyyar

184 68 The unconscious E. KATHLEEN GOUGH
182 hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about
the spirits of dead *kāraṇavans* of the patrilineal group, which, like Nayar *kāraṇavans'* spirits,
593 are predatory and dangerous beasts to be propitiated with fear. Hostility to the father is
however in his lifetime more deeply suppressed than to the Nayar mother's brother, as is
775 male sibling rivalry. Among Nayars, an attempt is made to mitigate the divergent interests
of married brothers by reducing to a minimum the claims of their wives and children. Their
595 mutual jealousy is also acknowledged in the prohibition against brothers having sex-relation
with the same woman. Among Tiyyars unity of marital interests is ensured by obliging brothers
to share a wife. This enforced unity of brothers is the most striking feature of the Tiyyar
system and that which contrasts most strongly with the matrilineal castes.

182 Also among Tiyyars the father-daughter relationship resembles that of the Nayar to his
sister's daughter. After she is five to six, a girl's father sternly disciplines her; with the onset
184 of puberty an etiquette of partial avoidance is imposed. The 'possession' of women by serpent-
gods of their natal *tarawād*, and the exorcism of demons during pregnancy lead me to suspect
593 that unconscious incestuous wishes towards the father are perpetuated in women as they are
towards the mother's brothers (whose images are the serpent gods of the matrilineage) among
Nayars and matrilineal Tiyyars.

593 The Tiyyar system is not, however, a 'regular' patrilineal one. We may suspect this from
the existence of matrilineal clans. First, the father's power is not absolute: he shares it with
182 his brothers. Second, the harmony between brothers is, as among Nayars, maintained primarily
through their dependence on the mother. Among Nayars men neglect their wives and children
613 for the sake of *tarawād* and mother. Among Tiyyars they forgo sexual satisfaction for the sake
184 of the mother and domestic harmony: the mother controls the wife's actions and dictates
the turns by which her sons may sleep with their common wife. This dependence on the
606 mother is reflected, as among Nayars, in devotion to Bhagavadi.

Third, the Tiyyar system resembles the Nayar in the strength of brother-sister ties.
593 The Tiyyar father early surrenders part of the guardianship of his daughters to his sons.
This appears at the *tāli*-rite where the father hands his daughter to the mock bridegroom,
182 who returns her at the 'divorce' to her brother. The relationship between a mature but un-
married girl and her brother is, as among Nayars, one of discipline, restraint and partial
184 avoidance. After her marriage and departure to the husband's house, the restraint between
a Tiyyar woman and her brother is somewhat relaxed. Should she be divorced or widowed,
however, she is returned to her brother.

The disciplinary role of the brother is reflected in the relationship to the mother's brother. He is not, as in many patrilineal systems, an intimate with whom joking and licence are permitted. He is rather a potential father-substitute, and may in fact become one if his sister is divorced or widowed. At his death his sisters' children observe pollution as for a patrilineal kinsmen and, after the deceased's sons but before his younger brothers, make offerings to the spirit. In life his claim as a potential father-in-law resembles that of the Nayar or Tiyyar mother's brother in North Malabar.

595 Fraternal polyandry strengthens the claims of maternal kin, as it does the ties between
a woman and her natal family. For in the traditional family, with a single common wife, there
182 is only one set of maternal kinsfolk for all the children of brothers. Even if a second wife were
taken, sororal polygyny or the sororate might perpetuate this situation. Again, it is clear
593 that with fraternal polyandry many Tiyyar women must have remained unmarried and under
the permanent guardianship of their brothers. The uncertain prospect of marriage for a
woman gives us a further clue to the meaning of the *tāli*-rite.

588 Having clarified the relationship of women to their natal kinsmen, we can state more
clearly the probable unconscious motives for the *tāli*-rite. In all the groups her natal kins-
593 men retained strong though varying rights in a woman throughout her life. In all, the bond
182

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Nayar
Tiyyar

up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-theertham* ('disc-water').

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *Kannichāru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 92).

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 37.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion 755
and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has [532]
a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, [373]
sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come [535]
before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and the devil is supposed to have been cast out.

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," that they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into [775] •
girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endear- 776
ment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god. He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place

[1] Note, the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
484 journey :
717
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Muppēram
Trkelu iva ezhu Naal
Vitakkil vilayā Bhōmi
Pōkunnakil arun varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

717 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

711 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Izhuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
[789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn
[791] must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
[783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
[753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
[793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
825 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. Among the trees used for *pûjas* or sacrifices are the sandal-wood, the *pâlâsu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrâksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

Folk-tales.

The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Râhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mânikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Sénhakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chithayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brahman sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified.

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned carefully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared

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824 765 782 613 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank [825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the [775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave [231] any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

765 783 613 574 During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawad* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawad*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawad*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyaham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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765 613 [782] and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when [825] clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

764 importance that the whole pyre burns at once. The
613 greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or grounds round every Nâyar's house). The eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation.
[763] It should be said that, on the news of a death, the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the taravâd go and bathe, they remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead body has been placed. A small image representing the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done, the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses. When the
764 cremation has been done by night, the duty of sêshakriya
782 (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun
775 the next day between 10 and 11 A.M., and is done on
613 seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11, and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from

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the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

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They kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandal paste, and leaves of the cherūla, the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making the offerings. The half boiled rice is made into balls (pindam), and each one present takes one of these in his right hand, and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and leaf is gently tapped with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed, and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing. The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and the piece of iron in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun- [834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being [775] thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

The souls of those who have committed suicide, or met death by any violent 766 means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome 775 to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they [782] are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman priests are called in, and appease them by means of tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it."

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting 764 features in the death ceremonies as performed by the 184 Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre 613 are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each [564] carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round. They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all, and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre."

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted 763 in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 184

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar 301 789 wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be 304 favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore [177] by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women [564] of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. 776 Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of [532] these have granite representations, or at least such [778] emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met [775] with accidental death, and girls who have died before [766] their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic [791] amulets are attached to the waist by members of both [789] sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits [782] are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

564 servants, nowadays [20] collectively called Amba
794 lavasis. The highest of these were the Chakkyars or reciters of Puranic stories, and the Pushpagans or flower-gatherers for temples.
[611] These two castes had a patrilineal descent-system of the same type as Nambudiris, and are said to have once been Nambudiris who were degraded for ritual offences. They ranked below Nambudiris and above Nayars and the matrilineal temple servant castes. These latter in-
[533] cluded Nambyars, a small caste whose work was to accompany Chakkyar recitations on a metal drum; Psharodis and Variyars, both of whom traditionally sweep the temple, clean temple vessels and make garlands for the idols; Puduvals or drummers on a drum called maddalam; and Marars or regular drummers on another drum called chenda.

The temple-servant castes were small and were chiefly congregated in villages owned by Nambudiri landlords or by large temples. Four main types of temple were owned by the higher castes of Malabar. First came large and wealthy temples owned and managed entirely by groups of Nambudiri landlords and dedicated to one of the orthodox Brahmanical male deities of India, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second came the private temple of each individual Nambudiri family in villages owned by Nambudiris; these were small replicas of the first type, dedicated to the same types of deities. Third came the large temples, one of which was associated with each
[776] royal and chiefly matrilineage. These were usually dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali, the Nayar goddess of war, small pox and the soil.

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564 formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death
765 pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the
783 caste.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage
776 goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess,
794 named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sick-
[782] ness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrol-
[588] oger might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was
[842] worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the
[753] goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was be-
826 lieved that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of
[784] caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence
681 is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally
564 responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was
[692] the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge
[623] and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the
[753] taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of [776]
impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [753]
impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to [776]
Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at [613]
Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the [586]
festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranavan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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159 school education and disbelieved in much traditional Nāyar ritual. Yet he once
593 arranged for the performance of a sacrifice to a minor malevolent deity, Kuttichāttan, because his mother thought that this demon had killed their calf. On this occasion he complained that he found her control irksome, and wished he had younger brothers who would care for her and allow him to travel more. "I love *and* fear her," he said, "Sometimes I am angry with her." "But you don't say anything?" "Ah, no, nothing!"
593 Far more than in most of the patrilineal castes of South India, therefore, a man's
769 mother remains the supreme, if somewhat resented, moral authority. There is no wonder that after death a woman should be believed capable of punishing her children and grandchildren if they displease her.

769 Even so, ancestresses play only a minor part in the cult of forebears, subordinate,
613 as in life, to the spirits of *kāranavans*. For the cult of lineage ghosts too closely resembles everyday adult relationships in the *taravād* for women to be accorded a
776 paramount place within it. In religion, the supreme moral authority of the mother
593 finds its expression rather in the cult of the goddess Bhagavadi. Bhagavadi is lifted above the sphere of kinship relationships, yet as patron of the *taravād* and the village she is stated to be the supernatural counterpart of the mother. Her attributes are more awesome and archaic than are those of ancestresses, and it seems probable that in her are portrayed very early infantile fantasies of the mother, corresponding to those of the period when she was the only significant object in the child's world. She inspires devotion and tenderness but, in her aspect as Bhādrakāli, she is also a horrendous demon, having snakes for hair, talons for fingernails, fangs for teeth, brandishing weapons in her arms, and with her mouth dripping blood. Her oral aggression is emphasized, for she is a devourer of male demons who dare to oppose her power. Bhagavadi is the great deity of both men and women among Nāyars, but she is more concerned with men than with women. She is the goddess of war, she possesses men more frequently than women, and it is men who devote themselves intensively to
769 her cult. Ancestresses, on the other hand, seem to be somewhat more likely to attack
593 women than men. The different relationships of men and of women to their mothers may be relevant in this connection. For a woman, the relationship with the mother is less awesome, less inspiring, more intimate and realistic but also more irksome and
[613] rivalrous than for a man. A woman replaces her mother in the *taravād*, and as she grows up, rivalry, including sexual rivalry, is often apparent between them. Women retain the right to administer corporal punishment to their daughters until adolescence or marriage, whereas men earlier pass under the discipline of their mothers' brothers and appear to retain a more childlike image of the mother. Nuances in the cult of the ancestors and the great deities appear to reflect this differential relationship of men and women to the senior generation.

184 In Kottayam, with avunculocal residence, fathers traditionally had a protective
593 and intimate relationship with their children. It might be expected that the father's
769 ghost would figure in some way in the cult of ghosts. This is not the case. The cults
613 are practically identical in Kottayam and Cochin, and although a woman and her immature children in Kottayam lived in the house of the woman's husband, the husband's lineage ghosts were not believed capable of affecting their welfare. This is apparently because, both in Kottayam and Cochin, the ancestor cult mirrors the legal structure and collective responsibility of the *taravād*, which are identical in the two areas. The father's ghost has no place among the lineage ghosts because,

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *taravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
173 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
769 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
776 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
782 chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[794] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of
[613] commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
613
782

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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft, however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

769 The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad,
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his
152 Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

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of particular impor-
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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[2] Ibbetson & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149.

[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.

[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.

[5] Hodson : *The Meiteis*, 110.

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

*142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the other of silver and iron. [789] The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of the right hand. [237] An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my collection) on a string round the waist. [789] The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. [776] Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian—a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

In three the cephalic length was 20 cm. or over. In nine the nasal height was 5 cm. or over. 141 564*

Face.—The notes made on a few individuals will be set down here. In most cases the supraciliary arches were well marked, and the nasal notch was deep. Nose generally straight, or nasal point slightly raised. Prognathism rare. Lips, especially the lower lip, often very thick.

(1) Very well bred looking. Eyebrows fleshy and thickly marked. Supraciliary arches very slight. Deep nasal notch. Nose straight; nasal point raised very slightly—and very well shaped. In the left ear a very small hole above the usual one in the lobe; I have not noted why it was made.

(2) Supraciliary arches rather prominent. Upper portion of forehead somewhat protuberant. Deep nasal notch. Nasal point raised. Lower lip thick. This man's father was a Nambûtiri. He appears in the plate.

(3) Forehead high. Deep nasal notch. Slight prognathism. Lower lip very thick.

(4) Supraciliary arches not marked. Nasal notch moderate. Lips thin.

Two out of the twenty-five were deeply pitted with small-pox, the Malabar goddess of small-pox, Bhânnâramûrti, having hurt them. In one man the broadest part of the head was above the ears, a little in front. [164] [776]

Figure.—The number of those put down as slight and those put down as medium are about equal.

Hair.—Worn in the usual Malayali fashion which has been described already and, as a rule, plentiful and wavy; treated with gingelly oil, which is sometimes perfumed. The number of individuals whose hair (on the head) was noted as "very thick and wavy" is abnormally large. A young man aged 24 had some white hairs here and there on his head; a man of 35 was a little grey; a man of 39 also; and one of 44 was quite grey. Whiskers or growth of hair on the cheeks were observed in more than half the number of subjects. In several there was hair, fairly thick in some, in the small of the back, and one man had thick hair all over the back. 142 564* [302]

Hair on the chest was "moderate" or "thick" in more than half.

Hair on the arms was "moderate to thick" in about half; in the other half "slight."

Hair on the legs was, as a rule, thick: rarely less than moderately thick. The legs of one man were like those of a bear.

683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under [178]
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for [201]
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

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pit, then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and 796
puts down her plate for an instant while she makes 564
profound salaam to the goddess ere going away.

And now the procession starts out from the temple, 796
issuing from the northern gate, and for a moment con- 776
fronts a being so strange that he demands description. 536
Of the many familiar demons of the Malayalis the two most intimate are "Kuttichchâttan" and "Gulikan," who are supposed to have assisted Kâli (who is scarcely the Kâli of Brâhmanism by the by) in overcoming the Asura, and on the occasion of this festival these two demons dance before her. "Gulikan" is represented by the Vannân and "Kuttichchâttan" by the Manûtan who have been mentioned already, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tîyans. I saw poor "Gulikan" being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was and was told he was "a devil." He looked mild enough; but then his "make up" had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the northern entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, his hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; his head and neck was swathed and decorated; a wooden platform arrangement from which hung a red ornamented skirt was fastened to his hips; there was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales's feathers arrangement (made of plank) the top of which reached five feet above his head; and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchâttan was treated in much the same manner.

As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his three minutes' dance, preparation for which occupied all the afternoon, was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he moved at all, let alone dance.

The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchâttan gives his dance,

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776 found by south to the westward, and leaving the enclosure proceeds to a certain banyan tree under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 50 yards are the nine men of the Tîyan caste, mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate—*larger* than the plates used when encircling the fire pit—on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents on this occasion as well as before is called talapôli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tîyan women following, carrying their kalasams and talapôli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of "devil dancers" garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these "devil dancers" who (never ceasing his gyrations, mad-like gestures and contortions), presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment.

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[755]

The procession passes through the temple yard, the enclosure, from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tîyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let us note here as we go along the curious distribution of this rice which is heaped in the fire pit. Two-thirds of it go to the four Tîyans carrying the Pû (flower) kalasams and one-third to the five who carried the Jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy, and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is the measure of rice and the measure of paddy covered with plaintain leaves as before, beside them

796 778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 788 782 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows [765] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a [302] year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate* shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the [776] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

* [See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is
[564] regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their
825 powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends
776 also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence
[753] which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

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As the subject of serpent-worship is one of fascinating interest, I will add to the preceding extract, which is as interesting as it is accurate, an excerpt from the "Report of the Census of Travancore" for 1891 (the Malayalam year 1066), a book which is perhaps not accessible to many. The shrine which is described therein is in the neighbouring Native State of Travancore, but it is equally representative of one in Malabar :— 776 778 [127]

"A serpent-kavoo in Travancore. Many places of Hindu worship exist in Travancore under groves locally known as kavoos. There are thousands of these in the country. Lieutenants Ward and Conner estimated their number at 15,000 seventy years ago. This number has, I think, increased since then. These kavoos are all dedicated to minor divinities such as Nàgathans, Nàgarajas, Yekshis, Gandharvas, and Sàstas. Some are of great age and repute and own enormous properties for their maintenance. One of these a well-known sarpa-kavoo in a village 70 miles north of Travancore will be here described. Mythological origin for these sarpa-kavoos is thus stated in the Kéralòlpatti. When Parasuràma's first colonists found Kérala uninhabitable and unimprovable, they abandoned it and returned to their old country. During the time of their absence the Nàgas (serpents) of the lower world, called in popular language Nàgalòkam or Pàtàla, took possession of the newly-reclaimed land and settled there. The colonists returning found that the serpents had usurped their lands, upon which a fight ensued, and Parasuràma arbitrated between his colonists and the Nàgas, wih the result that these latter were to be given a corner of every occupied compound. Thus arose the sarpa kavoos of Malabar which, as I have already described in a previous chapter, is generally at the south-west corner of every Tarvâd garden. And Parasuràma further ordained that the places allotted to the Nàgas were to be left untouched by the knife or the spade, thus enabling the underwood trees and creepers to grow luxuriantly therein. It is to such places that the name of kavoo (or grove) is given. In the kavoo are generally planted several idols of serpents on a stone basement called chittrakoodam, and sometimes a low wall is thrown round to prevent cattle or children trespassing into that space. The propitiation of the serpents is deemed essential for the well-being and prosperity of the householder. Offerings of noorum palum (dough and milk) of cooked rice, lights and songs are [782]

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made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkòttu Illam, where the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent god and that of the female. Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla :—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandavavanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Másí. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12¼ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

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by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institution and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about 2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed
[825] that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out
776 of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to
825 exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles
[231] seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give 796 to almost all the junior members and servants of the household 431 and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves 556 mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or 466 five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, 431 as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other 796 accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically 796 concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the [535] noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are [526] carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasan- [524] tries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As [776] recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the [773] burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every [515] young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a [533] fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight 776 [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

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776 821 during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal [184] Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three 241 days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, [243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one [132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there [776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 241 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their 252 own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance 466 or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 241 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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The Panikkars dabble also in magic. In Plates XVI, XVII are figured four yantrams, selected from a number in my possession as representative, presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver or copper plate (a yantram written on gold is the most effective), and worn on the person. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylindrical case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, or round the neck.

No. I. Aksharamâla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless; but it gives life to all others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

No. II. Sûlini.—For protection against sorcery, or devils. This is to invoke the goddess and secure her aid. The ceremony brings a blessing to the receiver of the charm.

No. III. Mâha Sûlini.—To be used to prevent all kinds of harm through devils, chief of whom is Pulatini—he who eats infants. May be used also as protective against enemies. Women wear it to avert miscarriage. The letter in the middle, Hûm Mâha Sûlini. That in the rim is Om.

No. IV. Kâla Bhâiravi.—Represents the goddess. The goddess must be pleased *first* by worship. No sacrifice, which is rather odd, as this terrible goddess is generally represented in Southern India as loving blood. The letters do not form any mantram. Each letter has life in itself. Prevents all harm from enemies, and attack by devils.

Other yantrams to be used in much the same way as these are:—

The *Ganapati* yantram. To increase knowledge. To put away fear and shyness.

The *Sarasvati* yantram. To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

The *Panchakshari* yantram, a square containing 81 smaller squares, in each a mystic letter; the whole representing Siva. For persons on whom medicines have no effect. Also against evil spirits. A person out of whom an evil spirit has been driven is perfectly safe ever after with this carried on his person.

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a çadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Srîparamêsvaranûm Srî Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâî Ezhunellumpôl Srî

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754
795 until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like
564 a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood—vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment. [864] A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

● 776 A regular working magician tells us something more
789 of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

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ground is then plastered over with cowdung. Then you mark out with rice flour an eight-cornered chakram, in the centre of which you place a small piece of cadjan leaf, and you place a similar piece at four corners. You sit with your back to the chakram, facing eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening while performing pûja. This pûja is, I think, addressed to Karinkutti: not in any way to the sun God who is not then visible. For the pûja you must be supplied with fried grain, beaten rice, rice bran, a fowl, toddy, arrack, some flowers of three colours—one of them the tulsi *(Ocimum sanctum)* —sandalwood-paste, camphor, incense. (Note the use of the sacred tulsi in this diabolical incantation!) While the pûja, which I am unfortunately unable to describe (leaving my directions rather lame) is being performed the mûla mantram of Karinkutti is to be repeated 101 times. 776 789

In order to do all this you must bathe 7¼ nazhikas (about 2¾ hours) before dawn, and complete the pûja before dawn arrives. But even before this you must stand up to your chest in water and repeat the mûla mantram 101 times. And you must repeat the whole thing *da capo* in the evening. The mantram is thus repeated 404 times in the day. You are not done yet, in fact this is only the beginning. The whole thing is done every day for 21 consecutive days; and then you will have the evil spirit Karinkutti entirely at your disposal. The person who remains continent, eats but once a day, cooking his own food, may it is said bring the spirit into obedience in less than 21 days.

Subjection of Vanni Bhâiravan is a much more difficult matter, involving much more elaborate ceremonial, details of which may well be spared the reader as the example which has been given is quite adequate.

And the good spirits—

Bhagavati.	Mûkâmi.
Bbadra kâli.	Vîrabhadran.
Hanumân.	Móhini.
Ganapati.	Sarabha Mûrti.
Subrahmanyan.	

The evil and the good spirits are truly a strange collection of beings! Their names help to illustrate what has been said already, that the Hinduism of the west coast is a strange medley of the higher Hinduism with the lower cult of the country. Bhâirava or Kâla Bhâirava (Bhâiravan of the Telugu country) is elsewhere the object of adoration of what is almost a distinct cult, a kind of [771] 771 795 776

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mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika religion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to worship Bhaîri dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female. Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books, the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

* From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

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754 object to be milked; how to cure a headache; to prevent
812 bad dreams, and so on.

N.B.—A mantram must be spoken, breathed, whispered with extreme accuracy. There must be no omission or false accent. Anything of the kind, or wrong pronunciation, destroys its efficacy at once.

FAMOUS MAGICIANS OF MALABAR.

791 We will close this chapter on magic which, though painfully inadequate, is already rather too long for its purpose, by mention of some of the famous workers in the art. Those who are familiar with the west coast will at once recall to mind the names of three Brâhman families whose scions are famed throughout the land as possessors of stores of magic, and at the same time—so interwoven is magic with religion!—revered for their saintliness. The eldest member of one of these is said to be "an honoured guest throughout the length and breadth of Kêrala; and on certain State occasions in Trevandrum and elsewhere, his presence is indispensable." A well-known tradition relates how that magic came, so to speak, into the family. (It is not necessary to give the family name, even though it is a household word on the west coast).

773 Long ago in the days of the Perumals, a Brâhman and
791 his friend were belated in the Yakshi paramba (*yakshi*—
776 female demon, *paramba*—garden) near Trichur.* The place was dreary; nothing but palms around. Suddenly they were accosted by lovely damsels who asked them to pass the night under their roof, and soon they were lodged in a sumptuous house, each in a separate chamber. But in the night, the damsels who had, *Lorelei* fashion, attracted the travellers, resumed their demoniacal forms and ate the Brâhman. His friend they could not touch as he had on his person a grandha sacred to Bhagavati; but in the morning he found himself perched on the top of a palm tree underneath which lay the bones of his friend, the Brâhman.

The Brahman's widow gave birth to a son soon after the strange death of her husband. When the boy was eleven years of age, she related to him how he had been made fatherless. He vowed vengeance on the Yakshis and Gandharvas (male demons) and, like a sensible boy, set about preparation for his life-task. It was not long before he had mastered the Vedas and all learning, and having done so he retired to the jungle, where he was

* To this day people avoid this place at night.

engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His 773
devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared 791
before him in human form and handed him a grandah, 776
which is to this day the greatest work on magic in [553]
existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts for the prefix "Sûrya" to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of 791
Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case. 789

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in 842
infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talis- 791
man, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan 780
[776]

* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *mangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *mangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *mangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

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marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

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Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Aaān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*asuatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *teppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Aaān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 Again in all the groups studied the

276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
782 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food
787 taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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Nayar
Tiyyar

and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 588 [793] [852] [764]

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

564 182

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

Nayar
Tiyyar

588

831 up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted
182 near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars
776 a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhaga-
vadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-
tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

776 Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

776 Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks
773 on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-therrtham* ('disc-water').

775 Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin.
588 The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi.
776 It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant
[782] spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *Kannichdru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

773 I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory
182 both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme
776 importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and
831 eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 42).

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Nayar
Tiyyar

vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol. 773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tâli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tâli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son. 588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet. 841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

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Nayar

Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

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775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 37.

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Nayar

ceremony is to be performed and each of them puts on a mask made for the occasion 755
and paints himself in such a way as to look really terrible. The mask of each has [532]
a different expression. At about 8 o'clock in the night, the girl (or girls) possessed
of the devil is brought in front of the house where are gathered all the people of the
village. The whole place is illuminated with big lamps and the girl sits alone, [373]
sometimes supported by her mother. Then one by one the masked magicians come [535]
before her and execute most frightening dances to the accompaniment of terrifying
music. In dancing they make various gestures, possibly with a view to mesmeric
effect, and throw various sorts of power, and *rudhilam*, prepared to look very much like
blood, is brought into great prominence. Dancer succeeds dancer, each more terrible
looking than his predecessor, and the poor girl loses control of herself and falls into
a sort of hysteria, in which the devil in her confesses where it came from and who
prompted it,[1] etc. In that case the dance is supposed to have been successful and
the devil is supposed to have been cast out.

This *Kolam Thullal* is performed on various occasions. The only time I have witnessed it was in 1913, when passing through a village situated in the very heart of the country. The "subject," on that occasion, was a child-mother of fourteen, and the reason for the performance given by her brother, when asked by me, was that the girl had fainted four or five times during the month "without any cause," then they had found out through the astrologer that her husband's relations had been trying to cause trouble by evil magic.

A milder and less expensive form of the same dance is *Velan Thullal*. In this only one man dances with almost the same paraphernalia as the *Kāniyāns* have for *Kolam Thullal*. This variety, however, is generally used only to cure children.

Such performances are only for the ghosts of dead men who have entered into [775]
girls or children. But if *Kutti Chattan* tries to do harm, these practices are of no
avail. *Kutti Chattan* (sometimes merely *Chattan*, *Kutti* means boy, a term of endear- 776
ment, *Chattan* is supposed to be a corrupted form of Satan) is in no sense a god.
He is something like Puck, very much inclined to mischief. He is supposed to be a
dwarf, though he can assume any other form or remain invisible as he chooses. He
never goes out of his way to harm anyone, though if anybody injures him once, *Kutti Chattan* never forgives and keeps on troubling him for life. His favourite method of annoying anybody is by throwing stones at the house or dropping unclean things in the food. He may do so without interruption, which would render life almost impossible. He is supposed to have no fingers and, therefore, his vices can be thwarted by people who know it. For example, he cannot pick up things if kept in a place

[1] Note, the "confessions" are without doubt due to subconscious suggestion. The whole scheme of the dance—the music, the masks, the lighting—seems to be arranged with the sole purpose of rendering the "subject" liable to suggestion. More than this, the girl herself believes that she must be possessed of some ghost, and therefore the ground for suggestion is already prepared.

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[787] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The
[755] entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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551 The names of Nayars present great varieties and those most commonly met with are the following:—

(a) Andi Menon
Kandar Menon
Kannan Menon
Ittirayarachan
Korappan
Koman Menon
Kumara Menon
Thenchu Menon
Konthu Nayar
Eacharan Nayar

(b) Raman
Krishnan
Govindan
Gopalán
Achyuthan
Sankaran
Narayanan
Madhavan
Sreedharan
Raghavan
Neelacandhan
Velayudhan

(c) Names of females:
Kunjikavu
Chirutha
Ichon
Kotha
Nangeli
Ooli
Cheeru
Cheeronna
Ichi
Ittiri
Mukami
Oonni Maya

(d) Kalyani
Lakshmi
Madhavi
Rugmani
Seetha
Subhadra
Narayani
Dakshayani
Karthyayani
Meenakshi
Gowri
Bhargavi
Janaki
Parvathi
Sreedevi

(e) Pet names of males:
Appu
Appukuttan
Kuttan
Balan

(f) Pet names of females:
Nani (Narayani)
Mathu (Madhavi)
Kunju (Kunjukutti)
Eacheri (Easwari)
Parukutti.

551 The names of males given under (a) are those which appear
564 to be caste names, probably given by the Nambuthiris, who are generally fond of these contracted and disguised appellations. The Nambuthiris say, that the Sudras were so ordained by Manu as not to be called by fair names. They were the landlords and priests, and the Nayars had to do servile work for them. They thought that they ought to keep the Sudras in complete ignorance, and could not endure to hear them talking distinctly in their presence. On one occasion, it is said that when a Sudra servant uttered the words "*Súrya Rasmi* (sun's rays)," his master was so displeased, that he closed his ears, for he could not bear to hear a servile fellow using so elegant a phrase from Sanskrit. On another occasion, when a Brahman overheard a Sudra uttering the words *ahimsa paramo dharma* (the highest of all duties is not to injure anybody), he said to himself, "what a pity it is, that a Sudra should be able to quote a vedic expression!". Their influence in these and other matters began gradually to diminish after the time of the great Malayalam
[776] peot, Thunjathu Rámanujan. The names of the caste-men given under (b) are chiefly the various designations of Krishna, Rama and Siva, all of whom are worshipped with equal rever-
[782] ence. Some think that the Nayars are chiefly the worshippers of Vishnu, but the fact that, when at Benares, Rameswaram and
[769] other places, they perform the ceremonies of offering of rice-balls in honour of their deceased ancestors, calling their ancestors

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for [534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God [533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pâttu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they [526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree). [264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner [262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, [431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam [777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kúranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Púrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 238.

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796 184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or 796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora- 184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali, 773 widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati, in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what 776 was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after 173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra- 796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the 184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, coriander, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities [439] used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu [492] Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796 When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184 modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439] *desams* of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492] and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776] was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314] boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273] of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564] of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782] ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, [789] the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which

Agricultural ceremonies.

[787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira :—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz* :—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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the gate of the houses, he is met by a woman with a lighted lamp and some leaves on which is placed the rice. This is carried into the yard in procession, while those assembled cry out, 'Fill, fill, increase, fill the house, fill the basket, fill the stomach of the children'. Three times is it carried on a plantain leaf placed on a wooden plank while the lighted lamp is placed on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and stalks of paddy with ears of grain in them are stuck with cow-dung to the various parts of the house, to the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous breakfast brings the ceremony to a close.

Puthari:—The next ceremony is the formal cooking and eating of the new rice (*Puthari*). It sometimes takes place on the *Nira* day, but generally it is an independent festival. An auspicious day is chosen as soon as the first crop is harvested and threshed—a day which must be before the *Onam*. The rice is cooked and eaten with a special curry made of *tagara* (Cassia tora) peas, the fruit of *puthari chunda* (Swertia Cherata), brinjals (Solanum Melongena) and green pumpkin.

Ucharal:—At the end of Makaram (January-February), when the second crop has been harvested, the year's agricultural operations are supposed to be over, and Mother Earth, *Bhúmi Dévi*, is considered to rest during the hot weather until the first shower begins. At the beginning of this period the Malayali observes a festival in honour of the Goddess' menstruation, which, like the *Roman Februria*, is supposed to take place at this time. On the last three days during this festival, all granaries are closed, paddy is not sold, and no implement of agriculture is touched, while even the rice to be eaten during these three days is pounded before-hand. On the first day before sunset the granaries are closed, some thorns and shrubs of broom are fixed to the door and cow-dung and ashes are spread in front of it. The next two days are holidays for all; the house must not be swept, nor the floors smeared with cow-dung, and the garden even may not be swept or watered. On the fourth day the granaries are opened, and a basketful of leaves is taken to the field and burnt with a little manure perhaps to indicate that the cultivator remains in possession.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

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Religion.

The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-cháttan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities or demons are located in *kívus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kinniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, and require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

[264] [340] [532] [782]

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, [782] and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallúx*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávúx*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántix*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789]
and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754]
Brahmans also share.

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[532]

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávúx* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and 825
other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 825 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 795 778 825 [782] The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a 787 vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the 841 grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [782] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to [532] re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kilamezhuthum Pattum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
791 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
796 man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[534] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a
[532] scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Ishuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
[789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn
[791] must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
783 spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
723 correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil
796 Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
793 ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
791 who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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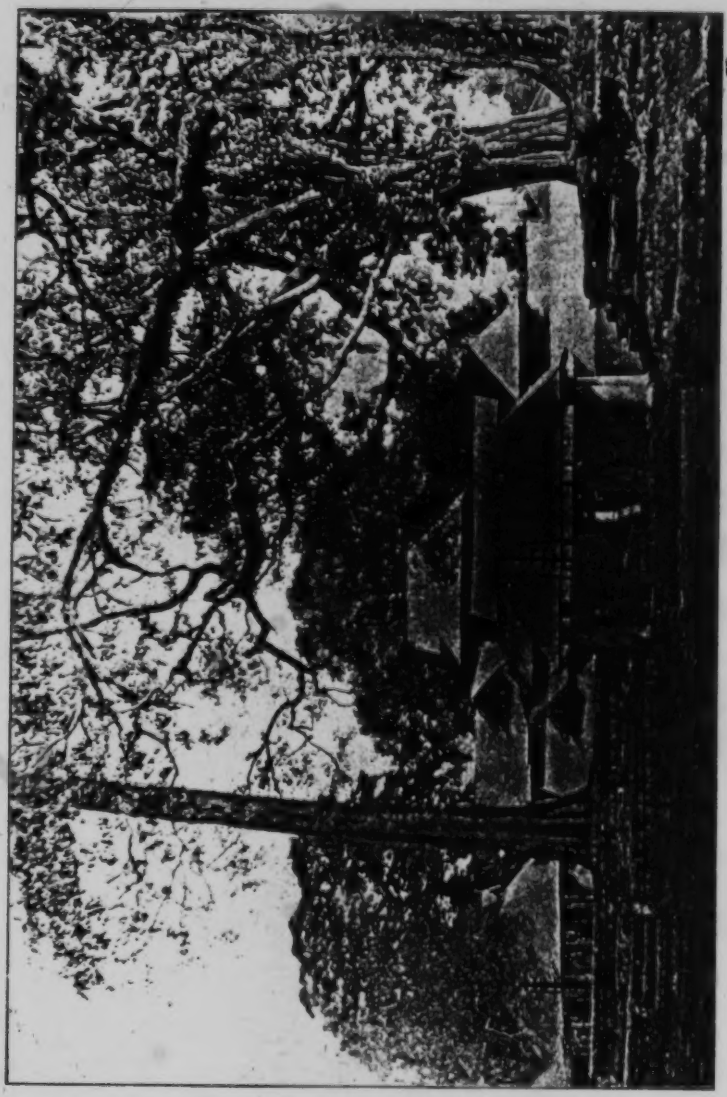

CRANGANORE BHAGAVATHI TEMPLE.

[facing p. 86]

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine; and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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During the exile of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, they 825
lived chiefly by hunting. One day, when Sita was drying some 539
pieces of flesh, a crow accidentally pecked at one of Sita's ruddy toes, taking it for one of the blood red pieces of meat. She thereupon told her husband about it, who shot an arrow at the crow and blinded it in one eye, and thenceforth its descendants have been blind in one eye.

When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea, for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asura*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

Ari-pravu or the common house-dove has a story told of it. These birds, male and female, are always found in pairs together. Once, it is said, they were quarrelling about a game, and the quarrel ended in the desertion by the male bird of his mate, who recognizing the mistake called for him, and her cries are said to be ever calling out for her mate.

Rain, Thunder and Lightning:—In the aërial regions are 539
huge monsters of extraordinary strength (*Kalameghattanmar*) [821]
who are supposed to possess two horns with the aid of which all the water from the earth is drawn up during the summer, [776]
to be spat out in the rainy season at Indra's (Rain God's) bidding. Lightning is caused by the friction of the horns, while engaged in the task of spitting out water. Another version of the story as to the origin of lightning is, that it is caused by the brandishing of Indra's sword, while engaged in ordering the monsters to supply the earth with water.

It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger [825]
every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that [826]
organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined.

Evil spirits are believed to have the power at times of [776]
changing men into tigers, such being distinguished by having [825]
no tails.

The claws and even the teeth of the tiger are used as [789]
charms against witchcraft and the evil-eye. They may frequently be seen set in silver, and worn round the necks of [825]

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 825 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brahmany kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykatta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 784 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 562 having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged." 301 789

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year. 304 [177] [564]

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th 776 [532] [778] [775] [766] [791] [789] [782]

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

796 526 would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman [184] pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the [175] pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the uzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them [431] is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a [194] small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic [178] of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

796 Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclu- [776] sively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The [773] popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogue of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed to have only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive among us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about four in the morning, every young female of Nair families with pretensions to decency gets out of bed, and takes her bath in a tank. Usually a fairly large number of these young ladies collect at the tank for the purpose. Then all, or almost all of them, plunge in the water, and begin to take part in the singing that is presently to follow. One of them then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song, chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed, and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction, and struck against its surface, so that the water is completely ruffled, and is splashed in all directions, producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged, together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound, and then the leader stops awhile for the others to follow in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza with another, at the same time beating on the water, and so on until the conclusion of the song. All of them make a long pause, and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn, when they rub themselves dry, and come home to dress

significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death." 796 [776]

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon 796 651 [648] [178] 796 [777] [787]

796 man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

788
demons dance before her. Gulikan is represented by 796
the Vannān and Kuttichchāttan by the Manūtan who 776
have been already mentioned, and who are under like
restrictions with the nine Tiyans. I saw poor Gulikan 796
being made up, the operation occupying five or six 776
hours or more before his appearance. I asked who 536
he was, and was told he was a devil. He looked mild 788
enough, but then his make-up had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the north-east entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, the hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; and his head and neck were swathed and decorated. A wooden platform arrangement, from which hung a red ornamented skirt, was fastened to his hips. There was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales' feathers arrangement, the top of which reached five feet above his head, and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchāttan was treated in much the same manner. As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple, where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his dance was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he could move at all, let alone dance. The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchāttan gives his

796 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving
788 the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under
776 which is a high raised platform built up with earth
536 and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of
796 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste men-
564 tioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a
788 crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[782] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
788 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the
796 pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their
[481] girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

788 trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in
796 the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a shar-
782 pened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion
796 all the more revolting. One other higher and more
788 acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing
755 mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious
782 disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in
788 the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the
796 homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani
796 day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. 788 In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror 796 in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, [776] all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and [783] sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respec- [431] tive homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, 526 "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time 875 when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice 564 physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in 526 a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

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302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

*142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

*301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

[789] (1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the other of silver and iron. The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

[237] [789] [776] (2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of the right hand. An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my collection) on a string round the waist. The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

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796 the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he
777 happens to fix his eyes upon on this particular morning. According to Nair and even general Hindu Mythology there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance ashes, firewood, oil and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as, reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold and such like ones on the morning of the next New Year. Whereas wholesome and favourable consequences can be produced by the sight of auspicious objects like those just enumerated. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sight-worthy objects on the New Year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known, in native phraseology, as a *kani*. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A Grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed clothe, some "unprofitably gay" flowers of the *Konna* tree, a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps filled with cocoanut oil "clear as diamond sparks" are kept intensely burning and a small plank of wood or some other seat is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house and takes them blindfolded so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the Kani. The members are seated one after another in the seat and are then and not till then asked to open their eyes and carefully look at this Kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers which they have bought
[735] and stored for the occasion. The Kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the carelessly confused noise of the crackers the morning breaks and preparations are begun for the morning
[264] meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice-kanji with a
[262] grand appendage of other eatable substances and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on grand scales.

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight

776 [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâî Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vinâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teâcher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777] bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock [753] has business everywhere relieving people from their oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every [761] Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week : [262] [828]

> "*Ezuzcha Kulichalum*
> *Vyazcha Kulikkaruthu.*"

784 772 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this : "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

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717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

484 There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
777 journey :
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāki Mwppōram
Trkelta iva āzhu Naal
Vilakkil vilāyā Bhūmi
Pōkunnakil aran varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, "a vast oral tradition of leading cases" connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same "rationale": that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified: for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

711 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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342 351 823 372 [564] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses. If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times. Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi), 824
or *peràl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant on the west, *nâga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayál* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peràl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arâyal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

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fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police, and the village watchmen (*kávalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for [534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God [533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they [526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Ushinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree). [264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner [262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, [431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and [263] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet preparation of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam [777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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supposed to take part under the supervision and guidance of the Srikandath Panikkar, whose family is the military instructor and leader of the people of Chittur. The Panikkar's duty is to train the youths of the 100 houses in the military arts. The performance referred to is, more or less, an exhibition of the bodily prowess of the youths trained by the Panikkar, and at the end of it he receives presents from the *Nóduvázhi* and one hundred fanoms—one fanom for each house—from his pupils. The amount of one hundred fanoms is still paid to him every year, and is defrayed out of the collection made for the Kongapada festival for which the Panikkar's family is exempted from the payment of all subscriptions. The training of the youths of the place is begun a few weeks before the Kongapada festival in the *kalari* (military gymnasium) of the Srikandath Panikkar, and the Panikkar takes a prominent part in all the functions connected with the festival from beginning to end.

The "Pana" festival of Chittur.

Once in a few years and commencing on an auspicious day after *Vishu*, this ceremony is performed on a grand scale, in which the Nayars of the town (one male member from almost every house) organised themselves into parties, one party for singing songs in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati, another for dancing before her, and the third for playing on musical instruments. These men have, during this period, to bathe early in the morning, cook their own food and remain under a vow to be ever in devotion to the deity. Preliminary to the celebration of the actual festival, which sometimes run for a number of days, the men are given 41 days' training in the several courses of dancing in the Porayattu family house, one of the four *Pramánakkars* (leading members) of the place, and the final performance takes place in the Pokkumarath house.

In the court-yard of the latter house a large pandal supported on 64 posts, is put, up and in its middle is drawn a floral diagram (*padmam*) over which a lighted brass lamp, and in front of it a stool, are placed with a metal pot of water surmounted by a full pod of cocoanut flowers and a washed cloth arranged in the form of a beautiful crown. The Goddess, who is supposed to be located therein by means of holy *mantrams*, is propitiated every night between 9 and 12 P. M., with offerings and *pujas*, to the accompaniment of drumming, singing,

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241 the gate of the houses, he is met by a woman with a lighted lamp and some leaves on which is placed the rice. This is carried into the yard in procession, while those assembled cry out, 'Fill, fill, increase, fill the house, fill the basket, fill the stomach of the children'. Three times is it carried on a plantain leaf placed on a wooden plank while the lighted lamp is [782] placed on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and stalks of paddy with ears of grain in them are stuck [776] with cow-dung to the various parts of the house, to the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous breakfast brings the ceremony to a close.

Puthari:—The next ceremony is the formal cooking and eating of the new rice (*Puthari*). It sometimes takes place on the *Nira* day, but generally it is an independent festival. An [777] auspicious day is chosen as soon as the first crop is harvested and threshed—a day which must be before the *Onam*. The [263] rice is cooked and eaten with a special curry made of *tagara* (Cassia tora) peas, the fruit of *puthari chunda* (Swertia Cherata), brinjals (Solanum Melongena) and green pumpkin.

Ucharal:—At the end of Makaram (January-February), when the second crop has been harvested, the year's agricultural operations are supposed to be over, and Mother Earth, *Bhumi Dévi*, is considered to rest during the hot weather until the [776] first shower begins. At the beginning of this period the Malayali observes a festival in honour of the Goddess' menstruation, which, like the *Roman Februria*, is supposed to take place at this time. On the last three days during this festival, all granaries are closed, paddy is not sold, and no implement of agriculture is touched, while even the rice to be eaten during these three days is pounded before-hand. On the first day before sunset the granaries are closed, some thorns and shrubs of broom are fixed to the door and cow-dung and ashes are spread in front of it. The next two days are holidays for all; the house must not be swept, nor the floors smeared with cow-dung, and the garden even may not be swept or watered. On the fourth day the granaries are opened, and a basketful of leaves is taken to the field and burnt with a little manure perhaps to indicate that the cultivator remains in possession.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

796
777
787

on this particular morning. According to Nair, and even general Hindu mythology, there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance, ashes, firewood, oil, and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones, which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold, and such like, on the morning of the next new year. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand, who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sightworthy objects on the new year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known as a kani. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken, and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed cloth, some 'unprofitably gay' flowers of the konna tree (*Cassia Fistula*), a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel, and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps, filled with cocoanut oil clear as diamond sparks, are kept burning, and a small plank of wood, or some other seat, is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day, some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house, and takes them blindfolded, so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the kani. The members are seated, one after another, in the seat, and

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are then, and not till then, asked to open their [illegible]s, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

613 794 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a pre-puberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 608 621 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage

Since lineages were usually groups of actual and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own sub-caste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

1 [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess --- Analyst]

543 servants is set aside at the expense of the tara-
342 vad to entertain these men when they visit their wives, sometimes for two or three days at a time.

351 The buildings and courtyard are surrounded
515 by a shady garden of coconut, jackfruit, cashew
[343] nut and mango trees. Chiefs and village head-men have a private bathing pool with stone steps running round it in their own garden; retainer [56] Nayars more often bathe in the large public bathing pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathe and swim daily in public clad in a loin-cloth, on opposite sides of the pool.
[526] Both boys and girls become excellent swimmers and divers almost as soon as they can walk.

351 In the southeast corner of the garden is an
[764] open space set aside as the group's cremation ground, while at another corner is a dense shrub-
[778] bery devoted to the snake-gods of the group, in which small stone images of cobras are set up.

421 The property-group was traditionally a cor-
592 porate group in other sense than those in which
672 this term applied to the lineage. Whereas the lineage was held responsible in cases of offence against religious law (sins, or crimes against the village community), the property-group was responsible in cases of debt or theft (torts). The headman, on behalf of the group, must make restitution for such offences from the group's jointly owned funds. In addition, as representative of the group in the assembly, he must pay annual dues to the temple funds. Through its headman, the group also acted as a single legal personality in the payment of wages to its

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their ex-
treme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual
sexual promiscuity within the caste, and mini-
mal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus
Complex [59] which caused men to fear and pro-
pitiate the phallic representatives of their fath-
ers, and women to have fantasies about "pos-
session" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfor-
tunately snake worship is now practically ex-
tinct; I never saw it, and found present-day in-
formants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic,
dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal
symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This
would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility
of the father, which must have been experienced
by Nayar children since they slept, and do today,
in the mother's room till age four or five and
have opportunity to witness parental intercourse,
would be repressed before latency and leave its
mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about
the father which could be translated into the cul-
tural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods.
Such archaic representations contrast with the
less distorted ones of male forbears of the tara-
vad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very
seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

592 devoted to dead karanavans' spirits, opening off
769 the inner courtyard, contains a number of small
778 wooden stools on which the spirits are believed to come and sit. In those branches of the taravad which have remained in situ for many generations, retaining [60] an old ancestral house while collateral segments hived off into new ones (6), the ancestor shrine contains many stools, placed in order and named with the names of the karanavans going back to the first of the segment or of the lineage as a whole. In newer houses built by segments which have recently left the parent house there may be only one or two, starting with the stool of the man who built the house and was its first karanavan. (7) Offerings of cooked good, with delicacies of the kind most enjoyed by the recipient during his lifetime, are made before each stool by the living karanavan, in the presence of all members, twice annually on the new moon days of April-
592 May and October-November. The spirits of
769 dead karanavans are thought of as vindictive and
152 fearsome, ever prone to take offence against living members who fail in any of the details of ritual performances and general care of the taravad house and lands which are their duty, and to vent hostility on them out of all proportion to their offence. They are placated with fear and reverence but without affection. Their character contrasts with that of the patrilineal ancestral spirits of Tamil Brahmans, who are thought of as harmless, straving, lonely, pitiful beings who must be given food to sustain them in the life in the world of the dead. This

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 753 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 778 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all, unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīthams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[4] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fruits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *aravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, 578 to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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754 769 564 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do. If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 769 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 152 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres. In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft, however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

769 564 782 613 776 152 The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi, who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad, only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple. In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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to Abibuduya, the serpent of the deep. Further, an inscription at Banavasi in Kanara in South India, records the erection of a cobra stone in the middle of the 1st century A.D. 825 171

In Chamba district the 'golden snake' is offered milk.[2] In Bengal the snake goddess Manasa is worshipped widely, and this is supposed to give protection from snake-bite. Manasa is represented by an earthen pot with vermilion marks. Among the Meithies of Manipur the snake is believed to be the manifestation of a dead ancestor and is accordingly venerated and worshipped. A cult of the snake god is found among the Khasis of Assam, which however is diminishing now-a-days. Among the Khasis a mythical snake called U Thlen is worshipped and is propitiated by the offering of human blood.[3] It is believed that the Thlen attaches itself to homes and families and is the bestower of wealth, prosperity, fame and well-being to its hosts. However, it needs regular and periodic propitiation by the offering of human blood, and in the event of its being neglected it brings disease, ill luck and ruin to the unlucky family which has angered it.

In South India and particularly among the Nayars the worship of snakes is an established cult. Snake groves or *kavus*, which are clumps of wild trees festooned with creepers, abound in plenty, usually near the homes of Malayali Hindus. These groves are called *vishathum kavu* (poison shrine) or *nagakotta* (snake shrine). Usually a block of granite is carved into the shape of a cobra's head, called *chitra kutta kalu* and is consecrated at the spot. 825 778 171

In Quilon district, Travancore, near Haripad is a big snake worship centre in the form of the Manarsalil temple. One of the important snake shrines is called *bernie kavu* situated in Chenganur taluk of the Quilon district. In Trivandrum is the great temple of Padmanabha Swami and here one of the important deities worshipped is Ananta, the mighty serpent, upon whose great coils Lord Vishnu reclines on the ocean of milk.[4] Further, in Tirunelveli a temple dedicted to Shankar and the goodess Gomiti called Sankaranianar Koil has a snake mound where worship is offered to serpents in the hope that chronic stomach ailments will be cured by propitiating the 825 171

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825
171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes.
825 Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison,
171 are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for
782 snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship
778 at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person
766 dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes
825 unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a
779 Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him
796 and left them in their present abode. He however promised to
173 return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak:hangba.[5] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778] ●
yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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[2] Wilson & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113
[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.
[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.
[5] Hodson : *The Naithais*, 110.

the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all 765
following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest 613
river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better [778]
by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory 765
ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched 613
by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he 783
enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the [584]
Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling [465]
and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, 554
well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is 621
the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day 765
after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5-s boundaries,

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary
[613] priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[188] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

796 564 [778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

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leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire. The offering is never an adjunct of the prayers; it is always something done for benefit received. The thing to be noted is that a vow is *always* fulfilled; fulfilled as well as the vower can possibly fulfil it; it is never forgotten or overlooked. 782

> " When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be
> " When the devil was well the devil a saint was he "

is a couplet inapplicable to the Nâyar, or, indeed, to any people in Southern India, where vows, of objects to be given or animals to be sacrified, are treated always with the utmost sacredness even by people who perhaps in no relation of life behave for an hour with common honesty.

A true Malayali festival is that held at Kottiôr, in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynâd hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. The average rainfall at Kottiôr in July is probably 60 inches at least, so the devotees generally get a good ducking. Though it is a festival for high and low these do not mix at Kottiôr. The Nâyars go first, and after a few days, the Nâyars having done, the Tîyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march; and not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exhuberant excitement but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. 796 [132] [564]

I have not been able to ascertain with that definiteness which would enable me to offer more than an opinion, the connection between this violence of language and physical force against innocent people who are met *en route*, and the object of worship at Kottiôr, so will leave that part of the subject alone. The other day I visited the Gangamma festival at sacred Tirupati in North Arcot, and observed, together with conduct the most truly religious vows being carried out with the strongest disregard to personal comfort, the use of language truly filthy and obscene *towards the goddess herself!* "Gangamma! You have a—— (using a filthy word for the vagina) as big as a basket." "She is a whore" said another; and each one in the little crowd of votaries, evidently from the same village, as they approached the shrine, tried to out-do the other in insult and vituperation of the goddess to whom they had 796 782 [778]

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
[574] accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

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Nâyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about 30 yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot of the festival, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not accompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place unless during the few days of the festival when it is safe: at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. How much this belief has to do with Iswara need not be commented on! Nothing on earth would have persuaded either the Nâyar or the Kurichchin to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno had not embarked on so fearful a journey! About a hundred yards beyond the stream we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. Why this uncomfortable place was chosen I know not; in the rains when the festival is held it is usually under water, and the people have to stand in water. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. By the same token the lingam had been broken and displaced a few days previously by some Mâppilas searching for treasure which they thought was there. *Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds in which the people had lodged during the festival. Grass and weeds were growing high, and the sheds were dilapidated and looking as if they had not been used for years; but then the rain in Malabar brings about destructive effects with astonishing rapidity.

Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. I am not

* The circle of stones is specially interesting. Near the Angadipuram-Manjery road, between Vellila and the ferry is a monolith in the centre of a piled up platform circled with stones, the circle 30 feet in diameter. Apparently one of the many pre-Hindu remains in Malabar. Description of the ancient remains in Malabar, which are specially interesting, must be made later on. Just now let me note that stone circles are common. And I find in my notes the following: "On the hill side just about the Tirunelli temple (North Wynâd forests), where there is a clearing in the forest and the ground is somewhat flat, is a circle of stones 12 feet in diameter, and filled up with earth so as to make a raised platform nearly 2 feet in height; in the centre a small upright stone 10 inches high. To the north-east, three flat upright stones . . . . and a flat place, rudely square about 11 feet from the circle, evidently an old sacred place of some of the jungle folk."

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796 778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 781 782 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows [765] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a [302] year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate* shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the [776] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

* [See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Tarayâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

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shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs, and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pâmbantullel are performed to propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family. The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others. These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

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As the subject of serpent-worship is one of fascinating interest, I will add to the preceding extract, which is as interesting as it is accurate, an excerpt from the "Report of the Census of Travancore" for 1891 (the Malayalam year 1066), a book which is perhaps not accessible to many. The shrine which is described therein is in the neighbouring Native State of Travancore, but it is equally representative of one in Malabar :— 776 778 [127]

"A serpent-kavoo in Travancore. Many places of Hindu worship exist in Travancore under groves locally known as kavoos. There are thousands of these in the country. Lieutenants Ward and Conner estimated their number at 15,000 seventy years ago. This number has, I think, increased since then. These kavoos are all dedicated to minor divinities such as Nàgathans, Nàgarajas, Yekshis, Gandharvas, and Sàstas. Some are of great age and repute and own enormous properties for their maintenance. One of these a well-known sarpa-kavoo in a village 70 miles north of Travancore will be here described. Mythological origin for these sarpa-kavoos is thus stated in the Kéralòlpatti. When Parasuràma's first colonists found Kérala uninhabitable and unimprovable, they abandoned it and returned to their old country. During the time of their absence the Nàgas (serpents) of the lower world, called in popular language Nàgalòkam or Pàtàla, took possession of the newly-reclaimed land and settled there. The colonists returning found that the serpents had usurped their lands, upon which a fight ensued, and Parasuràma arbitrated between his colonists and the Nàgas, wih the result that these latter were to be given a corner of every occupied compound. Thus arose the sarpa kavoos of Malabar which, as I have already described in a previous chapter, is generally at the south-west corner of every Tarvâd garden. And Parasuràma further ordained that the places allotted to the Nàgas were to be left untouched by the knife or the spade, thus enabling the underwood trees and creepers to grow luxuriantly therein. It is to such places that the name of kavoo (or grove) is given. In the kavoo are generally planted several idols of serpents on a stone basement called chittrakoodam, and sometimes a low wall is thrown round to prevent cattle or children trespassing into that space. The propitiation of the serpents is deemed essential for the well-being and prosperity of the householder. Offerings of noorum palum (dough and milk) of cooked rice, lights and songs are [782]

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made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkottu Illam, where the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent god and that of the female. Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla :—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandavavanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Mási. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12½ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

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by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institution and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about 2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

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778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed
[825] that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be
776 remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out
825 of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles
[231] seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

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for him by the Tîyan at Uchâl. I recollect a case of murder which arose out of nothing more or less than a Tîyan tenant's refusal to present his Nâyar landlord with a Pâla Ata at Uchâl. I once tried to preserve one of these cakes, but the results were too disastrous for description.*

HABITATIONS.

A house may face east or west; never north or south. As a rule the Nâyar's house faces the east. Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, as in the case of of the poorest houses a small portico, or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the Nâyars. The following is a plan of a nâlupura or four-sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich:

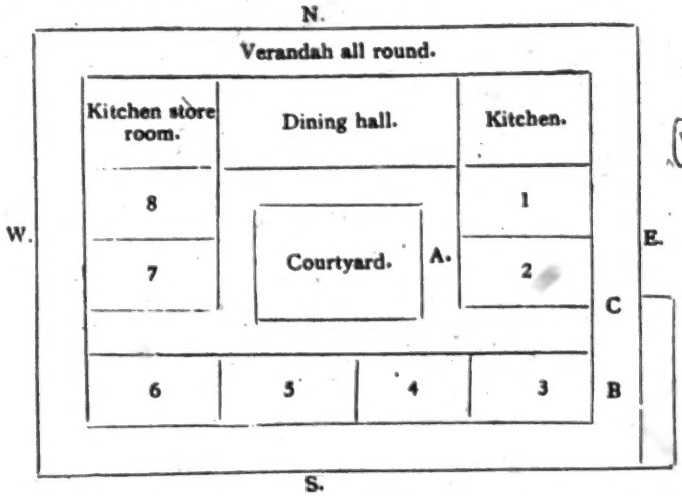

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms which are used generally for storing grain.

At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper story occupied by the female members of the family. At B is a staircase to the rooms of the upper story

*For much of the information regarding Uchâl I am indebted to Mr. M. Raman Menon.

342 occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and that of the women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans and old women of the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot afford to make these images, substitute simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside and offered.

The entrance is at C.

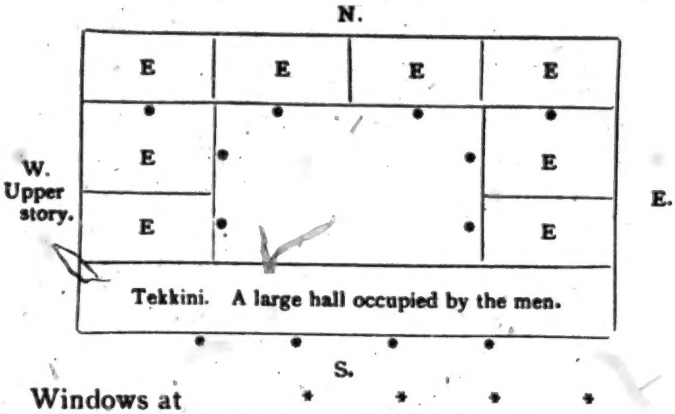

Windows at

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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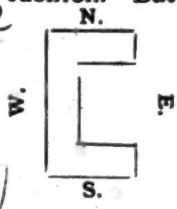

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

342 [357] [778] [251] [823] [574] [769] 342 787 342 [735] [178] [532] [177]

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342
The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi), 824
or *perdl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant, on the west, *nâga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayâl* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *perdl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arâyal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

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The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State. 564

6. *Máráár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies. [534]

7. *Pádamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision. [788]

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Váníyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :— 564 326

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1] [778]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses. 564

12. *Edachéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *tâli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Athizham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Brihmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *tâli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpàd in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the maternal uncle or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and brings the girl, who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with ornaments,
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. She is then
[326] seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes presents of cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *tâli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle-disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic. [782]

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallúx*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávúx*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand maladies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which Brahmans also share. 769 [532] 771 776 [789] [754]

Serpent shrines (*Núgattún kávúx* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be found in the compounds of every Nayar house in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi. 771 778 825

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve their condition, returned to their old country. After their departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or *Páthála* took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled 773 778 825 [776]

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a 825 low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 772 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite is conveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *púja*s to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
791 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
796 man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[534] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a
[532] scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*Idlam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindú houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Ishuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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771 824 From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

Folk tales.

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning. 824 539

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those of children under two or three years of age as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. 764 [766] 763 [778] [823]

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon) 764 [824] [804]

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawad* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawad*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawad*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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Fig. 5. A typical Kerala landscape: the red laterite dust road passes between green paddy fields; the blue sky is reflected in the water of the irrigation channel by the side of the road.

[M8]

Fig. 6. A Christian shrine at a crossroads in Cochin.

[P. 238 – A]

588 [765] death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he [793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh- [564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day. [184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 184 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri [778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's [789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This [354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight [352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a [824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes [301]

Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in [534]
which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi [354]
(bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

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613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his
[576] right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

765 613 524 [783] that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 [415] comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

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moments of a dying person are really very trying. All members (male and female), junior to the dying person, pour into his or her mouth drops of Ganges or other holy water or conjee (rice) water in token of their last tribute of regard. Before the person breathes his last, he or she is removed to the bare floor, as it is considered sacrilegious to allow the last breath to escape while lying on the bed, and in a room with a ceiling, which last is supposed to obstruct the free passage of the breath. The names of gods, or sacred texts are loudly dinned into his or her ears, so that the person may quit this world with the recollections of God serving as a passport to heaven. The forehead, breast, and the joints especially are besmeared with holy ashes, so as to prevent the messengers of death from tightly tying those parts when they carry away the person. Soon

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after the last breath, the dead body is removed to some open place in the house, covered from top to toe with a washed cloth, and deposited on the bare floor with the head towards the south, the region of the God of death. A lighted lamp is placed near the head, and other lights are placed all round the corpse. A mango tree is cut, or other firewood is collected, and a funeral pyre is constructed in the south-eastern corner of a compound or garden known as the corner of Agni, which is always reserved as a cemetery for the burning or burial of the dead. All male members, generally junior, bathe, and, without wiping their head or body, they remove the corpse to the yard in front of the house, and place it on a plantain leaf. It is nominally anointed with oil, and bathed in water. Ashes and sandal are again smeared on the forehead and joints. The old cloth is removed, and the body is covered with a new unwashed cloth or a piece of silk. A little gold or silver, or small coins are put into the

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged." 301 789

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year. 304 [177] [564]

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th 776 [532] [778] [775] [766] [791] [789] [782]

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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [778] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

however, no objection to myself and my companions visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchiyan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not acompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[784] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this
[481] bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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342 From the portico, you go direct into a big hall in the middle of which is a big yard paved with granite; this yard is exposed to the sky. On one side of the hall—right or left—are situated two or three rooms, from one of which you are taken to upstairs rooms which are also connected with the portico. On the portico side of the hall are the kitchen, bath-room, and a few more rooms which are utilized for various purposes. In another place of the compound is an outhouse in which Brahmans are asked to perform worship.* Near this house is a tank and a well. The house itself possesses a well near it for the exclusive use of the inmates.

But educated Nayars now-a-days build their houses on different plans.

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[113] kept at a distance of a specified number of feet by the higher castes. There is a full and interesting study of the tribes and castes in Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer's "Cochin Tribes and Castes." The Hindus however form the majority.

[778] *[In Nayar houses, I am informed by Mr. L. K. Anandakrishna Iyer, this shrine is sacred to the cobra, to whom worship must be given by a Nambudri Brahman, as otherwise the Nayars are bitten. This belief may be the cause of the subjection imposed on Nayars by Nambudris, particularly in relation to Nayar women.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes* :588 "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, [648] when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . 796 . This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal 588 of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted [779] under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. 588 L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reason- 178 able doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, 174 and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

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4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

Malabar, in which patrilineal and matrilineal castes who are similar in their kinship customs are described, and again we find that other sections of the same casts are patrilineal or matrilineal in different localities. In parts of Ceylon I would hear villagers suggest that sons took their "names" from their father and daughters from their mother, a reflection not so much of descent (for these ideas were not applied in practice) but of the difference between the sexes.

Even the Muslims are not very different. On the Malabar coast the diversity of origins in the Muslim community can be easily traced in the complex body of customs, appellations, different signs, and practice whereby subgroups appear to distinguish one another. Gough (1961) has discussed some features of the matrilineal Muslims (Mapilla); D'Souza (1959) in a carefully documented article observes that, leaving aside a special group who call themselves *Arabi* and attempt to follow traditional Islam, Muslims in general conform to the patterns of kinship usual in Malabar and are divided into patrilineal and matrilineal *taravads* (p. 492). Moreover, in the case of patrilineal *taravads*, several of them again come together to form an *endogamous* group; hence in any locality there are several endogamous Moplah groups (p. 493). He goes on to make the following observation (p. 498):

> In the coastal North Malabar, as one proceeds southwards to places like Quilandy and Badagara, the mother right social organization undergoes a change. The change becomes quite distinct in the coastal region of South Malabar. The change in mother right traits . . . may be primarily attributed to the fact that whereas in North Malabar the ancestral property is inherited exclusively in the female line, in the south it is inherited . . . in the male line. But the social organization is essentially mother right and the modifications are such as suit the change in the principle of inheritance.

It is not merely this shifting picture of descent and inheritance which strikes one as being entirely in line with the material collected by Iyer (1909, 1912, 1937) in all kinds of small caste groups, for D'Souza (1959, p. 502) firmly establishes that the Muslim Mapilla also follow the Nambudiri–Nayar model of hypergamy with considerable dedication: "For instance, the Thangal males can marry women from any other groups of Moplahs [Mapilla] but Thangal women cannot marry any man other than a Thangal. An Arabi male can marry any [Mapilla] woman other than a Thangal, but the Arabi woman can marry, besides an Arabi male, only a Thangal male, and so on."

There is little doubt that the marriage customs recorded by D'Souza bear a close similarity to those recorded for the Moors of Ceylon earlier in this volume. D'Souza's evidence on names is not directed to the question of hypergamy and prestige, but it does appear that names

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

PL. XI.

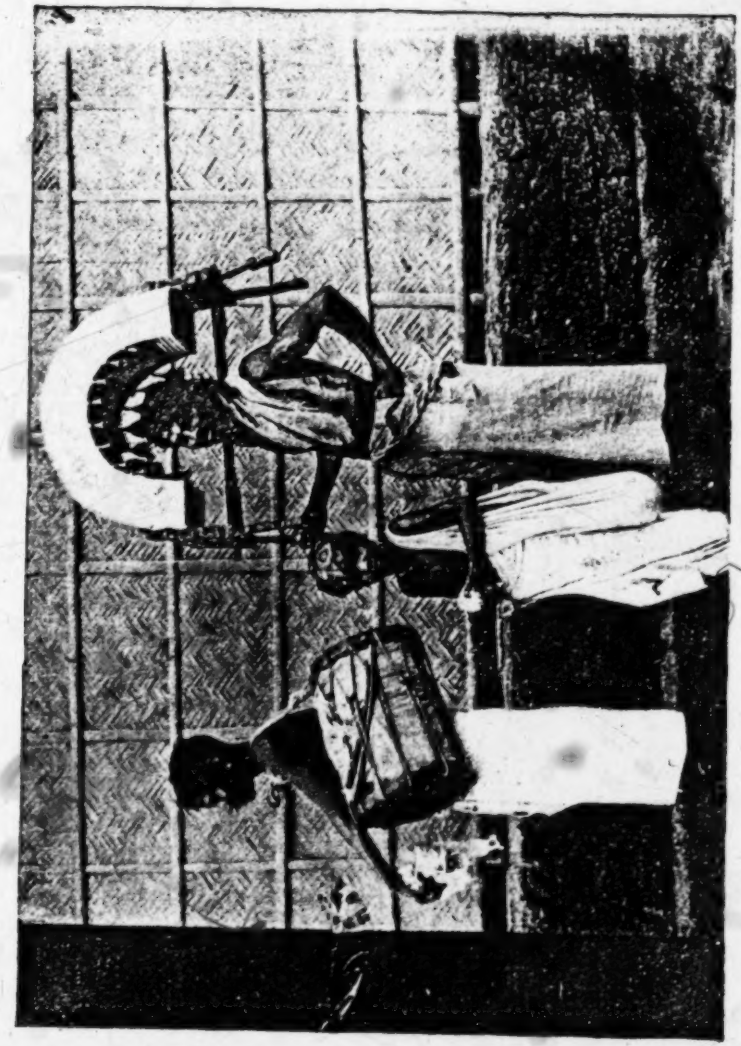

A PALNI PILGRIM, WITH HIS KAVADI.

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[Facing p. 230]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol.

773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tâli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tâli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son.

588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet.

841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11.
Nayar
Tiyyar

796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims
78 as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar,
and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard
in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows
copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *adhurari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Muk-
kuyans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the
actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to
Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd
of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its
walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return
quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in
fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the
goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day,
its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship
again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and
78 pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted
182 in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the
object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phan-
tasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene
attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards
881 higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted'
182 bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their
girls to womanhood.

831 Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary
ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint
ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emo-
tional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and
564 masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed
on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore,
in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are
identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in
danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other
lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened
To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-05) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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78

PALNI PILGRIM AND KAVADI.

[facing p. 39]

794 the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the
564 soil. Fourth came the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, one of which was found in each village or group of villages of the same subcaste where Nayar retainers were present.
[782] In the first two types of temples, animal sacrifice was forbidden; offerings were of flowers, fruits, incense and fire. The priests were
[793] either Nambudiri Brahmans or members of a lower landless caste called Embrandiri Brahmans who are immigrant from South Canara to the north. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which contained a temple of type (1), there was often no Nayar population at all: a group of lineages of one or more temple servant subcastes replaced them as retainers of the Nambudiris and as kanam tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of type (2), there would be one or two individual lineages of one or other temple servant caste, attached to the Nambudiri temple, but also a group of Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple. [22] In villages not headed by Nambudiri Brahmans, there might be only a Bhagavadi temple, managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might also be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple servant castes did not work in village Bhagavadi temples. Similarly in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple owned by the ruling lineage, the temple servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars, but individuals of the

other temple servant castes might come from other villages to assist at special annual ceremonies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi temples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brahman, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the temple and periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. Consistent with these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambudiris and all temple servants were vegetarians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise almost identical in general culture to Nayars, and historically were probably once Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine or intermarry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine) and above the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food from them but not give food to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servant castes and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few social relations outside the temple, and did not interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at
[764] a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

592 782 nagas or cobra-deities which were believed to guard each group were housed in the snake-grove in a corner of the garden and annually given offerings of milk and eggs by the karanavan in the presence of members. As well as warding 592 782 off ordinary sickness and misfortune they were particularly [58] believed responsible for the fertility or barrenness of taravad women. Special offerings were made to them if a woman failed to conceive, and a performance was held a at which men and women of a low caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the snakes in the grove to appear. A [787] group of women of the taravad, after purifying themselves by fasting and sex-continence for several days previously, then became possessed by the snake-gods (who are said to have "entered into them") and performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voice of the snakes and announce what propitiations were necessary to appease [158] them. Sometimes the ceremony ended with one or more women falling into a fit. It seems 592 fairly certain that the snake-gods were (as so 786 commonly elsewhere) worshipped as phallic symbols. Since they were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forbears, but were capable of alternately withholding fertility from taravad women or causing them to conceive, it is a plausible guess that they collectively symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property-group, who had been so essential to its perpetuation yet

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

564 794 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matrilineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 794 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden. [782] [793] Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as permanent tenants. [613] In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 794 613 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhagavadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 564 [793] [791] [782] In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman, attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

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vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[8] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[8] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives.
[343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands
556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[351] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village
[312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing
[515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

351 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside
613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals.
[764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods
[776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of
[782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta-
[825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might
592 sit on guard in time of war.

241 *Economic Activities* The property group obtained almost all of its subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the
427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya
613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as
433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade
[439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle-
[432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods
[431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the
592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops
[465] were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[753] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might
become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men 796
might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and 769
called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will 613
and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* 773
where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by 785
the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious [346]
possession is still more common among the lower castes. [184]

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities 769
associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma* 776
devī). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always 782
thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief 613
deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in [346]
common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its [184]
own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the [753]
taravād goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding
or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men
alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an
intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or
failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with
its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barren-
ness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be [346]
housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building
formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then
be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to
the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated
with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more
ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are
the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives
of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its 769
members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, 626
the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, 782
failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retri- 613
bution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to
preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan*
who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of
his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who
died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small
offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult
may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular,
a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death
may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation.
One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retri-
bution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* [597]
adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the [429]

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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. [628]

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kārana-* [694]
van. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kārana-*
van's misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members.

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living.

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come.

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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Nambūdiri Brahmans

crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relationships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts, this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders. They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

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eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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the pyre toward the close of the cremation, and the disposal of the bones and ashes in a river far from the ancestral house. But among my Brahman informants in Tanjore these rites were carried out without explanation, and hostility to the dead seemed to find no conscious expression. Nāyars performed the same rites in full consciousness of fear and hostility to the ghost. Even at the end of the *dīkṣā* period when the chief mourner has deposited the ashes in a river, Nāyars believe that Bhairava and Kāla, messengers of the god of death, dog the mourner's footsteps back to his ancestral house. He is out of danger from them only after performing final offerings in the house which gather the ghost to its forebears and thus appease its wrath. Nāyars, like Brahmans, express grief at a death and engage in ceremonial weeping, although neither caste weeps with the loud vehemence characteristic of the lower polluting castes. But whereas Brahmans give full expression to grief and guilt, suppressing the hostile aspect of their ambivalence, Nāyars perform the same rites in consciousness both of grief and of hostile fear of the dead.

The traditional Nāyar rites and beliefs illustrate the common phenomenon of elements of symbolic culture being diffused from one group to another and endowed with a new emotional content and meaning in accordance with the needs of the receiving group. The Nāyars presumably adopted Brahmanical death rites centuries ago because of the prestige associated with certain distinctive customs of the highest group in the caste society. The extensive contact with Brahmans afforded to them by hypergamous marital unions gave them an unusual exposure to Sanskrit culture. But through centuries of exposure to Brahmanical custom the Nāyars retained such characteristically "low caste" features as animal sacrifice to punitive deities, religious possession, and propitiation of punitive lineage ghosts. I would argue that the Nāyars and lower castes retained these customs because the emotional dispositions engendered by their occupations and social relations—in particular, their ways of handling aggression and relationships to authorities—are different from those of Brahmans. Presumably also the Nāyars adapted the Sanskritic death rites to their own role structure and belief system, because these grew out of and served to uphold norms of relationships within the *taravād*.

The Cults of Alien Ghosts

In addition to lineage ghosts, Nāyars believe that the spirits of persons of any caste who died prematurely from epidemic, accident, murder, or suicide can bring misfortune to the living. Such ghosts, which I call alien ghosts, haunt the neighborhood where they died and are particularly malevolent. The misfortunes they inflict include many kinds of sickness; madness, female barrenness, cattle deaths, house fires, or poltergeist activities. Like lineage ghosts, most alien ghosts are called *pretams*. In Cochin, the Sanskrit word *piśāca* is sometimes used to distinguish them from lineage ghosts. In Kottayam, there is an elaborate cult of certain particularly important ghosts, which are called *teyyams* (a corruption of the Sanskrit word *deva* 'god').

In Cochin, one or more alien ghosts is sometimes attached to a Nāyar *taravād*, whose members are obliged to arrange for its regular propitiation. The ghost may be that of a person who is known to have died violently, within living memory, on the *taravād's* land. Alternatively, when a misfortune occurs in a household, the astrologer may newly discover that the ghost of some such person, long dead, is haunting the *taravād's* land. He may order a shrine to be built and propitiations to be made. Shrines

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to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

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Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a
washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
184 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
776 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
564 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local
796 government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[794] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of
[613] commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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754 forms of direct aggression which would be condemned by law. I am uncertain whether
769 low caste people actually practice sorcery, but it seems very probable that they do.
564 If they do, it is also very probable that they regard their actions as forms of retaliation which are morally justifiable, although outside the framework of the law. By contrast, alien ghosts institutionally attached to the *taravād* and the village have the support of all right-minded persons and are more comparable to institutionalized secular authorities. For they are concerned with the overall maintenance of interdependent and harmonious relations between castes of the community, and their cults are a public, collective acknowledgement of the need for these relationships.

564 A complete analysis of alien ghost cults would, of course, require full discussion
769 of their role in the lives of the lower castes themselves. I lack space here for such a discussion but will make one or two relevant points. In each of these lower castes there were cults of familial ghosts. These, though less elaborate than the Nāyar cult of lineage ghosts, fulfilled similar intrafamilial functions. Some lower caste households
[778] also erected one or more unhewn stones in their gardens which were believed to enshrine male or female alien ghosts or minor deities. These spirits seem to have fulfilled, for the household itself, similar functions to those of the *dharma devī* of a Nāyar *taravād*. They were propitiated by the low caste householder. Nāyars believed that a low caste man could also control such a household spirit, or some personal spirit over which he had gained individual sway, to bring harm on an enemy through sorcery. Lower caste persons certainly believed that some members of their castes possessed these powers, and it seems probable that some persons did try to employ them. Household or personal spirits could also be used by powerful owners to exorcise other harmful spirits from the bodies of high or low caste people suffering from attacks by sorcery.

564 The Nāyar's relationship to these lower castes was therefore one of secular authority
152 combined with some ability to oppress them in the economic and political spheres.
754 In addition, the Nāyar projected his aggression against them in the belief that they might harm him through witchcraft or sorcery. The lower caste man's relationship to the Nāyar was one of submission. He could not express direct aggression toward the Nāyar. He probably did, however, express aggression toward a Nāyar enemy covertly through sorcery. It is possible that a few low caste persons in addition believed themselves capable, through witchcraft, of assuming the form of an animal and bringing harm to an enemy of higher caste. It must also be mentioned that low caste persons believed others of their caste to be capable of sorcery against themselves. Witchcraft, however, seems to have been confined to relationships between low and high castes.

769 The lower castes of the village also owed allegiance to the Nāyar goddess Bhagavadi.
564 who was enshrined in Cochin in the village temple, and in Kottayam in small temples
782 attached to particular *taravāds*. The lower castes could, however, approach Bhagavad.
613 only through the propitiation of alien ghosts attached to the *taravād* or the temple.
776 In the context of these propitiations, the lower caste officiant's relationship to his
152 Nāyar hosts was a complex combination of aggression, authority, cooperation, and submission. In the *teyyam* festival of a Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam, for example, lower caste officiants must first humbly gain permission from the living Nāyar *kāranavan* the Nāyar lineage ghosts and the *taravād* goddess before starting their own propitiations. In the offerings to the *teyyams* which follow, the officiant's attitude to these minor deities is ostensibly one of humility, although the actual performance of the blood sacrifices permits considerable expenditure of aggression. Later, when the officiant

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[25] and the initiation rites[26] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[969] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are
[782] often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

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825 171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 825 171 782 778 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes. Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison, are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 825 778 796 173 Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him and left them in their present abode. He however promised to return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

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796 please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear
[564] the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

[791] *Sarpa preeti* is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

796 *Sarpa tulal* is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The
755 unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

796 *Sarpa yaga* is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

825 One of the special attributes of snakes is their power
753 over disease. The snake deities are specifically impor-
796 tuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour
800 on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

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of particular importance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

REFERENCES

[1] Tod : *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, 86.

[2] Elliot & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149.

[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.

[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 841.

[5] Hodson : *The Naithais*, 110.

wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate.*[1] It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

[1] [see plate V, facing p. 220 -- An.]

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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [783] [771] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [789]

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long key. This individual is throughout *chief* among the offerers of "pindam" (balls of rice) to the deceased.

The corpse is laid on the bier, with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it and a little camphor, sandalwood and ghee, if these things are within the means of the Taravâd. Here must be stated the in- [561] variable rule that no member of the Taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son), sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre; failing a son the next (junior) in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre burns at once: the greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's Taravâd who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or garden around every Nâyar's house): the eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and the piece of iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation. It should be said that on the news of a death the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the Taravâd go and bathe, those remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead had been placed. A small image of the [532] deceased is then made out of raw rice * representing the deceased, and to this image a few grains of rice and [782] gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done [515] the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses.

* The ceremony is called Veli Unka (?).

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
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* Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who âre junior to the deceased. They [764] [607]

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
[825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[231] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
613 been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
574 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
783 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
[824] place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
[431] bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
613 the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

[783] Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being [825]
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [782]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

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the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under [178]
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [201]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new cloths to women after menstruation, but my information on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the goldsmith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only. 796 564 [294] [326]

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple; Vannân bringing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day. [293]

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword. 796 326 226 564

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the 796 564 [1782] [482] [326]

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411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

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776 round by south to the westward, and leaving the enclosure proceeds to a certain banyan tree under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 50 yards are the nine men of the Tîyan caste, mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate—*larger* than the plates used when encircling the fire pit—on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents on this occasion as well as before is called talapôli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tîyan women following, carrying their kalasams and talapôli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of "devil dancers" garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these "devil dancers" who (never ceasing his gyrations, mad-like gestures and contortions), presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment.

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The procession passes through the temple yard, the enclosure, from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tîyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let us note here as we go along the curious distribution of this rice which is heaped in the fire pit. Two-thirds of it go to the four Tîyans carrying the Pû (flower) kalasams and one-third to the five who carried the Jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy, and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is the measure of rice and the measure of paddy covered with plaintain leaves as before, beside them

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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

796
564 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a
•782 a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain
793 room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple
[534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As
[533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

796 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate im-
114 portance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 An important local festival is that held near Palghat,
184 in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti
782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[13] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the
[346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others
[26] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of
[532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver
[326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

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leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire. The offering is never an adjunct of the prayers; it is always something done for benefit received. The thing to be noted is that a vow is *always* fulfilled; fulfilled as well as the vower can possibly fulfil it; it is never forgotten or overlooked. 782

> " When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be
> " When the devil was well the devil a saint was he "

is a couplet applicable to the Nâyar, or, indeed, to any people in Southern India, where vows, of objects to be given or animals to be sacrified, are treated always with the utmost sacredness even by people who perhaps in no relation of life behave for an hour with common honesty.

A true Malayali festival is that held at Kottiôr, in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynâd hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. The average rainfall at Kottiôr in July is probably 60 inches at least, so the devotees generally get a good ducking. Though it is a festival for high and low these do not mix at Kottiôr. The Nâyars go first, and after a few days, the Nâyars having done, the Tîyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march; and not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exhuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. 796 [132] [564]

I have not been able to ascertain with that definiteness which would enable me to offer more than an opinion, the connection between this violence of language and physical force against innocent people who are met *en route*, and the object of worship at Kottiôr, so will leave that part of the subject alone. The other day I visited the Gangamma festival at sacred Tirupati in North Arcot, and observed, together with conduct the most truly religious vows being carried out with the strongest disregard to personal comfort, the use of language truly filthy and obscene *towards the goddess herself!* "Gangamma! You have a—— (using a filthy word for the vagina) as big as a basket." "She is a whore" said another; and each one in the little crowd of votaries, evidently from the same village, as they approached the shrine, tried to out-do the other in insult and vituperation of the goddess to whom they had 796 782 [778]

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
(346) which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
(793) permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
(577) accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

Nâyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, 796
when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee- 778
deep and about 30 yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot of the festival, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not accompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place unless during the few days of the festival when it is safe: at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. How much this belief has to do with Îswara need not be commented on! Nothing on earth would have persuaded either the Nâyar or the Kurichchin to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno had not embarked on so fearful a journey! About a hundred yards beyond the stream we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. Why this uncomfortable place was chosen I know not; in the rains when the festival is held it is usually under water, and the people have to stand in water. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. By the same token the lingam had been broken and displaced a few days previously by some Mâppilas searching for treasure which they thought was there. *Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds in which the people had lodged during the festival. Grass and weeds were growing high, and the sheds were dilapidated and looking as if they had not been used for years; but then the rain in Malabar brings about destructive effects with astonishing rapidity.

Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings [782] [788]
of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. I am not

* The circle of stones is specially interesting. Near the Angadipuram-Manjery road, between Vellila and the ferry is a monolith in the centre of a piled up platform circled with stones, the circle 30 feet in diameter. Apparently one of the many pre-Hindu remains in Malabar. Description of the ancient remains in Malabar, which are specially interesting, must be made later on. Just now let me note that stone circles are common. And I find in my notes the following: "On the hill side just about the Tirunelli temple (North Wynâd forests), where there is a clearing in the forest and the ground is somewhat flat, is a circle of stones 12 feet in diameter, and filled up with earth so as to make a raised platform nearly 2 feet in height; in the centre a small upright stone 10 inches high. To the north-east, three flat upright stones . . . . and a flat place, rudely square about 11 feet from the circle, evidently an old sacred place of some of the jungle folk."

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796 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate* shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

* See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst

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Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him.

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890).

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796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

[see cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- Ar.]

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and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and [357]
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a [354]
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword 796
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

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performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera. The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velichchappâd about three days afterwards going to perform elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

* The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

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months. The last is the day following Siva râtri, the well-known Hindu festival. As it was told to me "Food is offered to the ghosts" on these occasions; to all ancestors, male and female. Food of any kind except cooked rice is offered.* It is cooked and placed in the middle room on the west side of the house, where are kept small images in gold or silver of the senior members of the Taravâd (in poorer houses, a stone simply is put to represent the deceased), and the door will be shut for about ten minutes, after which the food will be removed and eaten by the house people. Special worship of ancestors is often made at the temples specially sacred, on the new moons which have been specified, especially on the last. The plate depicts the crowd in the bed of the Ponnâni river on the day following Siva râtri. Men and women bathed and put on clean cloths and, when they had done so put a little burning camphor, sandalwood powder and some other little accessories, on a leaf which was floated down the river after a brief prayer. The scene of the picture adjoins the temple at Tirunavâyi, supposed to be the oldest in Malabar.

SERPENT WORSHIP.

Description, such as is here attempted, of the Nâyar's religion is incomplete so far. There remains to say something of serpent worship and to make some allusion to common superstitions. For description of these I would refer the interested reader to a capital little book entitled "Malabar and its Folk" published by Messrs. Natesan & Co., Madras, by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panniker, B.A., himself a Nâyar as his name denotes. With this gentleman's permission I will reproduce here chapter 12 of his book entitled "Serpent Worship in Malabar":—

"Malabar is a country which preserves to this day primitive institutions of a type peculiarly fascinating to the ethnologist. Of the various kinds of primitive worship still practised in the country that of the serpent occupies a prominent place. Here the serpent is deified and offerings of pooja are often made to the reptile. It has got a powerful hold upon the popular imagination. Each household has got its own serpent deity possessing large powers for good as well as for evil. A separate spot is set apart in the house-compound as the abode of these deities. This reserved spot is converted into a small jungle almost circular in

* Bread made of rice flour may be offered.

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776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is
[564] regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

"One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
428 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends
776 also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

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As the subject of serpent-worship is one of fascinating interest, I will add to the preceding extract, which is as interesting as it is accurate, an excerpt from the "Report of the Census of Travancore" for 1891 (the Malayalam year 1066), a book which is perhaps not accessible to many. The shrine which is described therein is in the neighbouring Native State of Travancore, but it is equally representative of one in Malabar :— 776 778 [127]

"A serpent-kavoo in Travancore. Many places of Hindu worship exist in Travancore under groves locally known as kavoos. There are thousands of these in the country. Lieutenants Ward and Conner estimated their number at 15,000 seventy years ago. This number has, I think, increased since then. These kavoos are all dedicated to minor divinities such as Nàgathans, Nàgarajas, Yekshis, Gandharvas, and Sàstas. Some are of great age and repute and own enormous properties for their maintenance. One of these a well-known sarpa-kavoo in a village 70 miles north of Travancore will be here described. Mythological origin for these sarpa-kavoos is thus stated in the Kéralòlpatti. When Parasuràma's first colonists found Kérala uninhabitable and unimprovable, they abandoned it and returned to their old country. During the time of their absence the Nàgas (serpents) of the lower world, called in popular language Nàgalòkam or Pàtàla, took possession of the newly-reclaimed land and settled there. The colonists returning found that the serpents had usurped their lands, upon which a fight ensued, and Parasuràma arbitrated between his colonists and the Nàgas, wih the result that these latter were to be given a corner of every occupied compound. Thus arose the sarpa kavoos of Malabar which, as I have already described in a previous chapter, is generally at the south-west corner of every Tarvâd garden. And Parasuràma further ordained that the places allotted to the Nàgas were to be left untouched by the knife or the spade, thus enabling the underwood trees and creepers to grow luxuriantly therein. It is to such places that the name of kavoo (or grove) is given. In the kavoo are generally planted several idols of serpents on a stone basement called chittrakoodam, and sometimes a low wall is thrown round to prevent cattle or children trespassing into that space. The propitiation of the serpents is deemed essential for the well-being and prosperity of the householder. Offerings of noorum palum (dough and milk) of cooked rice, lights and songs are [782]

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made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkòttu Illam, where the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent god and that of the female. Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla :—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandavavanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Másí. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12½ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

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by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institution and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about 2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627
This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627
this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634
when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627
another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634
chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578
being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525]
two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652]
wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankâm*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423
to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427
in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178]
the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821]
a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

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* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol. [782]
"Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut) . . . after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."— [762]
"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

342 occupied by the male members. There is no connection
556 between the portions allotted to the men and that of the
[769] women. No. 8 is for the family gods. The Kârnavans
[778] and old women of the family are perpetuated in images
[735] of gold or silver, or, more commonly, brass. Poor people,
who cannot afford to make these images, substitute
simply a stone. Offerings are made to these images (or
[782] to the stones) at every full moon. The throat of a fowl
will be cut outside, and the bird is then taken inside
and offered.

The entrance is at C.

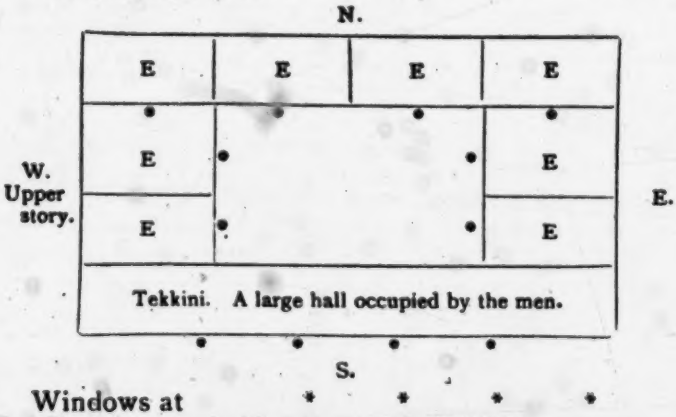

Windows at

E. Rooms occupied by women and children.

It may be noticed that the apartment, where the men sleep, has no windows on the side of the house which is occupied by the women. The latter are relatively free from control by the men as to who may visit them. We saw, when speaking of funeral ceremonies, that a house was supposed to have a central courtyard; and of course it has this only when there are four sides to the house. The nâlupura, or four-sided house, is the proper one for in this alone can all ceremonial be observed in orthodox fashion. But it is not the ordinary Nâyar's house that one sees all over Malabar. The ordinary house is, roughly, of the shape here indicated. Invariably there is an upper story. There are no doors but only a few tiny windows opening to the west. Men sleep in one end, women in the other, each having their own staircase. Around the house there is always shade from many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion.

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The Panikkars dabble also in magic. In Plates XVI, XVII are figured four yantrams, selected from a number in my possession as representative, presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver or copper plate (a yantram written on gold is the most effective), and worn on the person. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylindrical case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, or round the neck.

No. I. Aksharamâla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless; but it gives life to all others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

No. II. Sûlini.—For protection against sorcery, or devils. This is to invoke the goddess and secure her aid. The ceremony brings a blessing to the receiver of the charm.

No. III. Mâha Sûlini.—To be used to prevent all kinds of harm through devils, chief of whom is Pulatini—he who eats infants. May be used also as protective against enemies. Women wear it to avert miscarriage. The letter in the middle, Hûm Mâha Sûlini. That in the rim is Om.

No. IV. Kâla Bhâiravi.—Represents the goddess. The goddess must be pleased *first* by worship. No sacrifice, which is rather odd, as this terrible goddess is generally represented in Southern India as loving blood. The letters do not form any mantram. Each letter has life in itself. Prevents all harm from enemies, and attack by devils.

Other yantrams to be used in much the same way as these are:—

The *Ganapati* yantram. To increase knowledge. To put away fear and shyness.

The *Sarasvati* yantram. To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

The *Panchakshari* yantram, a square containing 81 smaller squares, in each a mystic letter; the whole representing Siva. For persons on whom medicines have no effect. Also against evil spirits. A person out of whom an evil spirit has been driven is perfectly safe ever after with this carried on his person.

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789 magician was called in to prepare one of these. Placing
791 an ordinary style and a small sheet of copper in a box, he closed it. Presently a noise was heard inside the box; and in a few moments a sound as of the style falling. The box was opened and magic figures were found to be inscribed on the copper sheet. The lady wears the talisman now! The magician must have been in a favourable mood on the occasion, as he is said to have given an additional performance on his own account. When he had placed the style and the tiny sheet of copper in the box, taking two young cocoanuts in his hands, he kept on throwing them in the air and catching them. "What will you have in each?" he asked. "Honey in one and boiled milk in the other" was the answer. Of course these were found in the cocoanuts when they were opened by the magician, but it was somewhat gross of the Nâyar gentleman to test the quality of the milk by turning it into curds the next
[493] day. Wonderful stories are told of this man who used to be seen at night carried in a mancheel by invisible bearers, whose weary chant could be heard, but whose bodily presence was beyond the reach of human eye.

791 The last and the chief of this trio is the once famous Kandeth Nayar who departed this life about a hundred years ago. Every one knows about the Kandeth Nayar,
[782] and any one now-a-days who wants to injure another invokes his aid, and resorts to his tomb to fulfil his vow. I understand that sacrifices at his tomb are common, and that his power reaches from the land of shades in almost the same strength as when he lived.

791 The rather incoherent way in which the terms
754 warlock, magician, have been used seems to demand some explanation. Strictly speaking, the Parayan Ôdiyan is the only warlock. Magician is scarcely the correct term for the ordinary worker in magic. Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible to avoid a somewhat indiscriminate use of these terms on account of the way in which the functions of the warlock, the magician, the astrologer, and even the priest are really interwoven one with the other. The professed magician is often also the warlock and *vice versâ*. The vernacular word, which is as catholic as that which stands for "Religion," is "mantravâdi"—mantram man; he who is sought every day of the year by hundreds of the people of Kêrala, to relieve them of their physical troubles and infirmities, to cure their cattle, to injure their enemies, aye, even to destroy them.

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhus*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambûdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sûdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *taravād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambûdiri

marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

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588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The
[782] Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of
[787] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the
[582] maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a
582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while
58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-
605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy
[593] commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

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presence of *maṅgal*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kāṇam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravāḍ*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravāḍ*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravāḍ*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs. 613 602 588 182 184

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *tarawād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child. 182 184 593 613 843 [827] [822]

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring. [607]

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1] 184 843 789 182 [564] [787] [782]

Again, in all the groups studied the *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake- 000

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *tarawād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pēdhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *ōmar*.

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613 Again in all the groups stubied the

276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one
782 or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes
787 then 'enter the bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension
182 of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, more-
593 over, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

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[1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1926) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 9) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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588 182 184 *sambandham* lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tâli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tâli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tâli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tâli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tâli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator'.'s role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tâli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tâli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tâli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [533] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [782] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdûvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] 305 [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

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up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

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Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

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Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-theertham* ('disc-water').

775 588 776 [782]

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *K'annichdru* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

773 182 776 831

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 94).

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darśana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

764
[564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution.
783 The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On
[564] the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men
526 of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Dīksha* (which means a
782 vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes
765 the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in
[527] the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration*.

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

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771 177 abound. The militant Romanism of the Holy Inquisition, and the no less militant Protestantism of the Dutch, had their chance, in turn, for at least a century and a half. Yet, with all the great religions of the world to choose between during the last two thousand years, it is nothing short of marvellous to see the Nāyars, who have, it must be remembered, assimilated a very great deal of the material and intellectual culture of their neighbours, and, more than that, excelled them in literature and music, still maintain with undiminished vigour their spirit-worship, black-magic, and demoniacal ceremonies, and are devoid of almost every element of true religious life.

771 We may be accused of the narrow use of a wide word in the phraseology of Tylor when we deny that the Nāyars have any religion apart from a veneer of Hindu influence. Their beliefs are mainly magical. Here, of course, I am treading on very dangerous ground, dangerous even to the initiated, but fatal to the novice. In this essay I have taken the distinction between religion and magic as being primarily a question of method rather than of intention or possible effect. The 771 orthodox French opinion that the difference between magic and religion is that 114 the latter is social while the former is anti-social, has been proved by Mr. E. S. Hartland and Dr. Marett to be wholly untenable; while the contention of Dr. Marett himself[1] is that the difference between magic and religion lies in the attitude of society towards them.[2]

771 Among the Nāyars there is an implicit distinction between practices to propitiate 782 a god and those with which to bully a spirit. Bullying a spirit for purposes of social 114 benefit I have not considered to be religion, though it is recognised by society as beneficial and therefore according to Dr. Marett should be considered as religious—because it does not possess the emotional and the psychological elements which

[1] *Anthropology*, p. 210 (Home Univ. Series).

[2] Dr. Marett has recently expressed his view thus:—

"The dominant social tradition tolerates in a community only certain practices and the beliefs associated with them. These may be said to constitute the religion of the community. It does not matter whether they embody customs such as sacrifice and prayer which are essential to the civilised man's notion of *his* religion, or whether they involve processes of sympathetic magic, etc., such as have for us become disreputable.

"On the other hand, when resort is had to the supernaturalistic means in order to gain selfish and anti-social ends we may speak of magic." (Class Lecture on Primitive Morals.)

Here Dr. Marett seems to go back to the French view and hold that the difference between magic and religion is that the former is selfish and anti-social while the latter is disinterested and social. The view here submitted is different. It is submitted that primitive society understands the difference between magical and religious customs even when both are essentially social and disinterested. To the primitive mind, the difference between religion and magic lies in the method and procedure of the ceremonies, or, as we shall now call them, the ritual. As method and procedure only reflect the mental state of the performer and the society to the benefit of which these ceremonies are performed, this difference is essentially psychological. This position is better explained by the Nāyar customs and beliefs noted below.

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

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775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Disease is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[751] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 37.

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

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551. The names of Nayars present great varieties and those most commonly met with are the following:—

(a) Andi Menon
Kandar Menon
Kannan Menon
Ittirayarachan
Korappan
Koman Menon
Kumara Menon
Thenchu Menon
Konthu Nayar
Eacharan Nayar

(b) Raman
Krishnan
Govindan
Gopalan
Achyuthan
Sankaran
Narayanan
Madhavan
Sreedharan
Raghavan
Neelacandhan
Velayudhan

(c) Names of females:
Kunjikavu
Chirutha
Ichon
Kotha
Nangeli
Ooli
Cheeru
Cheeronna
Ichi
Ittiri
Mukami
Oonni Maya

(d) Kalyani
Lakshmi
Madhavi
Rugmani
Seetha
Subhadra
Narayani
Dakshayani
Karthyayani
Meenakshi
Gowri
Bhargavi
Janaki
Parvathi
Sreedevi

(e) Pet names of males:
Appu
Appukuttan
Kuttan
Balan

(f) Pet names of females:
Nani (Narayani)
Mathu (Madhavi)
Kunju (Kunjukutti)
Eacheri (Easwari)
Parukutti.

551 564 The names of males given under (a) are those which appear to be caste names, probably given by the Nambuthiris, who are generally fond of these contracted and disguised appellations. The Nambuthiris say, that the Sudras were so ordained by Manu as not to be called by fair names. They were the landlords and priests, and the Nayars had to do servile work for them. They thought that they ought to keep the Sudras in complete ignorance, and could not endure to hear them talking distinctly in their presence. On one occasion, it is said that when a Sudra servant uttered the words "*Súrya Rasmi* (sun's rays)," his master was so displeased, that he closed his ears, for he could not bear to hear a servile fellow using so elegant a phrase from Sanskrit. On another occasion, when a Brahman overheard a Sudra uttering the words *ahimsa paramo dharma* (the highest of all duties is not to injure anybody), he said to himself, "what a pity it is, that a Sudra should be able to quote a vedic expression!". Their influence in these and other matters began gradually to diminish after the time of the great Malayalam [776] poet, Thunjathu Rámanujan. The names of the caste-men given under (b) are chiefly the various designations of Krishna, Rama and Siva, all of whom are worshipped with equal rever- [782] ence. Some think that the Nayars are chiefly the worshippers of Vishnu, but the fact that, when at Benares, Rameswaram and [769] other places, they perform the ceremonies of offering of rice-balls in honour of their deceased ancestors, calling their ancestors

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Sivagothrakár (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawád* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *káranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

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536 intermittently blown. Such are the crude theatrical properties which the actor has to face.

[533] At about eight o'clock begins the *Thódayam purapád*, consisting of songs which are meant to initiate the audience into the mysteries of the plot. But this takes place behind the [782] drop curtain, which has not yet been drawn up. Next comes the *Vandanaslókam*—a song in propitiation of some particular god—and then begins the play. The actors perform only by means of dumb-show, and the music is provided by the singers who, though invisible, are close at hand. All changes of thought, feelings, and emotions are conveyed by means of gestures of which there are said to be sixty-four different kinds, and in the commingling of these, lies the skill of the actor. Inhuman and unchivalrous acts, such as chopping off the noses and breasts of women, are usually enacted behind the scenes; though, in certain cases, these are made realistic by the characters to be victimised wearing false noses and breasts. [435] It is not until the dawn of day that the play ends. The cost of a night's performance is only about fifteen rupees, while the cost of all the stock in trade is often less than 400 rupees.

536 A special innovation in this direction was made by the 176 Valia Kovil Tampurán of Travancore and others who translated a few of the most important Sanskrit dramas. They introduced a real improvement in the construction of the stage and scenery, as also in the mode of dress, the style of music, and the method of acting, all of which were changes for the better. Dramatic companies were organised in many places where the plays were acted. They were at first very popular, but most of them disappeared as they did not play; but yet poets and versifiers still continue their work of producing plays for the stage.

536 *Mohiniydttam.*—This is an institution, very much like the nautch of the East Coast. A leader (*Nettuvan*) obtains the service of two or three young girls of low birth and trains them for the performance. He takes the girls from house to house, gets a paltry allowance for each day's performance, and thus makes a living. The performance is usually acted at night, when the girls, dressed in the gaudy attire, are led by [654] the *Nettuvan* in an amorous dance. This is an abominable institution, and the women who are thus rented out are looked

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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.— There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them :— 533 [782]

Bhadrakali Páttu :—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta páttu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati páttu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs :—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam* :—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796
When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184
modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439]
desams of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492]
and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776]
was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314]
boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273]
of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564]
of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782]
ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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796 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation,
184 birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the
796 people. The battle was fought with the result already men-
184 tioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Konga-pada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Náduvázhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

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1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

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supposed to take part under the supervision and guidance of the Srikandath Panikkar, whose family is the military instructor and leader of the people of Chittur. The Panikkar's duty is to train the youths of the 100 houses in the military arts. The performance referred to is, more or less, an exhibition of the bodily prowess of the youths trained by the Panikkar, and at the end of it he receives presents from the *Nâduvâzhi* and one hundred fanoms—one fanom for each house—from his pupils. The amount of one hundred fanoms is still paid to him every year, and is defrayed out of the collection made for the Kongapada festival for which the Panikkar's family is exempted from the payment of all subscriptions. The training of the youths of the place is begun a few weeks before the Kongapada festival in the *kalari* (military gymnasium) of the Srikandath Panikkar, and the Panikkar takes a prominent part in all the functions connected with the festival from beginning to end.

The "Pana" festival of Chittur.

Once in a few years and commencing on an auspicious day after *Vishu*, this ceremony is performed on a grand scale, in which the Nayars of the town (one male member from almost every house) organised themselves into parties, one party for singing songs in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati, another for dancing before her, and the third for playing on musical instruments. These men have, during this period, to bathe early in the morning, cook their own food and remain under a vow to be ever in devotion to the deity. Preliminary to the celebration of the actual festival, which sometimes run for a number of days, the men are given 41 days' training in the several courses of dancing in the Porayattu family house, one of the four *Pramânakkars* (leading members) of the place, and the final performance takes place in the Pokkumarath house.

In the court-yard of the latter house a large pandal supported on 64 posts, is put, up and in its middle is drawn a floral diagram (*padmam*) over which a lighted brass lamp, and in front of it a stool, are placed with a metal pot of water surmounted by a full pod of cocoanut flowers and a washed cloth arranged in the form of a beautiful crown. The Goddess, who is supposed to be located therein by means of holy *mantrams*, is propitiated every night between 9 and 12 P. M., with offerings and *pujas*, to the accompaniment of drumming, singing,

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and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this propitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

Agricultural ceremonies.

Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quantity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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the gate of the houses, he is met by a woman with a lighted lamp and some leaves on which is placed the rice. This is carried into the yard in procession, while those assembled cry out, 'Fill, fill, increase, fill the house, fill the basket, fill the stomach of the children'. Three times is it carried on a plantain leaf placed on a wooden plank while the lighted lamp is placed on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and stalks of paddy with ears of grain in them are stuck with cow-dung to the various parts of the house, to the agricultural implements, and even to trees. A sumptuous breakfast brings the ceremony to a close.

Puthari:—The next ceremony is the formal cooking and eating of the new rice (*Puthari*). It sometimes takes place on the *Nira* day, but generally it is an independent festival. An auspicious day is chosen as soon as the first crop is harvested and threshed—a day which must be before the *Onam*. The rice is cooked and eaten with a special curry made of *tagara* (Cassia tora) peas, the fruit of *puthari chunda* (Swertia Cherata), brinjals (Solanum Melongena) and green pumpkin.

Ucharal:—At the end of Makaram (January-February), when the second crop has been harvested, the year's agricultural operations are supposed to be over, and Mother Earth, *Bhúmi Dévi*, is considered to rest during the hot weather until the first shower begins. At the beginning of this period the Malayali observes a festival in honour of the Goddess' menstruation, which, like the *Roman Februria*, is supposed to take place at this time. On the last three days during this festival, all granaries are closed, paddy is not sold, and no implement of agriculture is touched, while even the rice to be eaten during these three days is pounded before-hand. On the first day before sunset the granaries are closed, some thorns and shrubs of broom are fixed to the door and cow-dung and ashes are spread in front of it. The next two days are holidays for all; the house must not be swept, nor the floors smeared with cow-dung, and the garden even may not be swept or watered. On the fourth day the granaries are opened, and a basketful of leaves is taken to the field and burnt with a little manure perhaps to indicate that the cultivator remains in possession.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS

(Continued).

564 771 776 Religion. The high caste Nayars profess Hinduism and follow most of the religious practices of the Brahmans whose influence in matters religious as well as social is supreme all over the State. They worship the superior deities of the Hindu pantheon (Siva, Vishnu, and their consorts, as also Ganapati) in *ambalams* or *kshetrams* (temples) of which there are in the State many that have long been in existence. Everywhere in the State, the caste-men and women with their children may be seen going to worship the deities in their local temples both morning and evening after their baths in the [264] public tanks. It is only after this worship that they take their meals, and seldom do they depart from this rule. They also adore the minor deities, namely, Subramanian, Ayyappan, Sástha or Vettakkorumakan, Bhagavati, as well as Kali, the goddess of small-pox, and malignant demons, such as, Kutti-cháttan, Mundian, Gulikan, Gantákaranan. But these deities [346] or demons are located in *kávus*, mere unpretentious structures with the characteristic tiled roofs and ornamental gables. [532] These deities are represented by carved or uncarved pieces of stone placed on elevated seats beneath the *ál* (Ficus religiosa), the *pala* (Echites scholaris), or the *kánniram* (strychnos), and the priest is usually a non-Vedic Namburi, an Elayad, a Músad, [782] or one of the Sudra castes. The deities such as Subramanian and others above mentioned, are the sons of Siva, ánd require no animal sacrifices, but the host of demons require to be propitiated with offerings of goats, or fowls, while their wishes are often interpreted by oracles, who are known as *velichapads*.

The Cochin State, as well as Malabar and Travancore, is the land of magic, sorcery, and witchcraft, and as well as

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiat- [782]
ed by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ances- 769
tors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors [532]
are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789]
and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754]
Brahmans also share.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and 825
other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [753] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu. 771 778 825 [532]

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :— 755 759 [787] 755 759 773

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt be families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta. [428]

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb 776 [778] [782]

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
796 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
[534] man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[532] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhútas* on the one hand, and *Prétas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Izhuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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775 [881] time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings. [846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most [789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron [782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* [787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi- 782 nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to [776] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn [791] must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil [783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire). [789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons, 346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in 775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon [753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments [796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat- [793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and [791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is 225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine; and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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771 824 From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being [778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. [301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæo-[782] carpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigan-tea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 **Folk-tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the second day after death and continues for seven days, the particulars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chíthayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Samánan*, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Dévadathan* and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brahman sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified.

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned carefully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared

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824 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring
765 with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an
782 obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread
613 some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank
[825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the
[775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave
[231] any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

During the seven days the house of the deceased and all
765 its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the mem-
783 bers of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can
613 members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting them-
574 selves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to 765
the *tarawád* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast 613
to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawád*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones [778] are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is [775] that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawád*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which 765
a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morn- 783
ing the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* 613
(washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Na- 793
yar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day [431] and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly [604] functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* [593] (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one 765
who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls 613
[782]

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765 613 and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed [782] spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. [825] Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

589
184 Manavālan arrives in rich attire. He is often preceded by a sort of body guard with sword and shield who utter a curious kind of cry, and is met at the gate of the girl's house by a bevy of matrons with lamps and salvers decorated with flowers and lights, called talams. A man of the girl's family washes his feet, and he takes his seat in the pandal on the girl's right. Sometimes the girl's father at this stage presents new cloths (mantravādi or mantrokôdi) to the pair, who at once don them. The girl's father takes the tāli, a small round plate of gold about the size of a two-anna bit, with a hole at the top, from the goldsmith who is in waiting, pays him for it, [787] and gives it to the Manavālan. The karnavan or father of the girl asks the astrologer thrice if the moment has arrived, and, as he signifies his assent the third time, the Manavālan ties the tāli round the girl's neck amidst the shouts of those present. The Manavālan carries the girl indoors to the macchu, and feasting brings the day to [533] a close. Tom-toming and other music are of course incessant accompaniments throughout as on other festal occasions, and the women in attendance keep up a curious kind of whistling, called kurava, beating their lips with their fingers. On the fourth day, girl and Manavālan go in procession to the temple richly dressed. The boy, carrying some sort of sword and shield, heads [782] the party. If the family be one of position, he and the girl must be mounted on an elephant. Offerings are made to the deity, and presents to the Brāhmans. They then return home, and, as they enter the house, the Manavālan who brings up the rear is pelted by the boys of the party with plantains, which he wards off with his shield. In other cases, he is expected to make a pretence of forcing the door open. These two usages are no doubt to be classed with those marriage ceremonies which take the

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184 of pān-supāri. Every time that a marriage ceremony is
[574] celebrated, a member of the family visits His Highness the Rāja with presents, and solicits his permission for the celebration. Such presents are often made to the Nambūdri Jenmis (landlords), by their tenants, and by
[424] castes attached to illams. It may be noted that certain
[643] privileges, such as sitting on a grass mat, having an elephant procession, drumming, firing of pop-guns, etc., have often to be obtained from the Ruler of the State. The marriage itself begins with the procession to the marriage pandal with the eight auspicious things (ashtamangalyam) and pattiniruththal (seating for song), at the latter of which a Brāhmini or Pushpini sings certain songs based upon suitable Purānic texts. The girls and other female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal, where the Pushpini sings, with tom-toms and the firing of pop-guns at intervals. After three, five, or seven rounds of this, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass pot is carried on an elephant by the Elayad or family priest to the nearest Bhagavati temple, where it is planted on the night previous to the ceremonial day with tom-toms, fireworks, and joyous shouts of men and women. A few hours before the auspicious moment for the ceremony, this cutting is
[782] brought back. Before the tāli is tied, the girls are brought out of the room, and, either from the ground itself or from a raised platform, beautifully decorated with festoons, etc., are made to worship the sun. The bridegroom, a Tirumulpād or an enangan, is then brought into the house with sword in hand, with tom-toms, firing of pop-guns, and shouts of joy. At the gate he is received by a few female members with ashtamangalyam in their hands, and seated on a bench or

Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brâhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brâhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambûdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pânans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534]
which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* [354]
carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

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on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782] juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824] waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564]
of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764] lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825] woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of [824] the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828] superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613] pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

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613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the
[576] Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{10}$ of a pāra) with raw
[782] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at 764 the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of 613 the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The [824] whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among [782] the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The [823] corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghī (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravād. Here must be stated [561] the invariable rule that no member of the taravād, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

* The eldest male member of the taravād is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravād.

764 importance that the whole pyre burns at once. The
613 greatest care is taken that it burns as a whole, consuming every part of the corpse. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the deceased's taravād who carried it to the pyre go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound or grounds round every Nâyar's house). The eldest, he who bears the piece of torn cloth and iron (the key), carries an earthen pot of water, and all return together to the place of cremation.
[763] It should be said that, on the news of a death, the neighbours assemble, assisting in digging the grave, preparing the pyre, and so on, and, while the members of the taravād go and bathe, they remain near the corpse. By the time the relatives return it is almost consumed by the fire, and the senior Anandravan carries the pot of water thrice round the pyre, letting the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks round. On completing the third round, he dashes the pot on the ground close by where the head of the dead body has been placed. A small image representing the deceased is then made out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seeds are offered. When this has been done, the relatives go home and the neighbours depart, bathing before entering their houses. When the
764 cremation has been done by night, the duty of sēshakriya
782 (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun
775 the next day between 10 and 11 A.M., and is done on
613 seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11, and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the taravād younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from

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the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

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They kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandal paste, and leaves of the cherūla, the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making the offerings. The half boiled rice is made into balls (pindam), and each one present takes one of these in his right hand, and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and leaf is gently tapped with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed, and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing. The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and the piece of iron in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

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no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613 This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769] need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775] collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, [787] the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764 the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613 Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783 member of the taravād should bathe before he enters his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564] Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465] on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766 taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613 there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765 sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302 friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184] forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766 the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765 is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613 seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782] his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784] [834]

766 613 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from 765 tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun- [834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [534] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

The spirits of those who have committed suicide, or met death by any violent means, are always particularly vicious and troublesome to the taravād, their spirits possessing and rendering miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless they are pacified, they will ruin the taravād, so Brāhman priests are called in, and appease them by means of tilahōmam, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghī, gingelly, and other things are offered through it." 766 775 [782]

"There are," Mr. Fawcett writes, "many interesting features in the death ceremonies as performed by the Kiriattil class. Those who carry the corpse to the pyre are dressed as women, their cloths being wet, and each carries a knife on his person. Two junior male members of the taravād thrust pieces of mango wood into the southern end of the burning pyre, and, when they are lighted, throw them over their shoulders to the southwards without looking round. Close to the northern end of the pyre, two small sticks are fixed in the ground, and tied together with a cloth, over which water is poured thrice. All members of the taravād prostrate to the ground before the pyre. They follow the enangu carrying the pot of water round the pyre, and go home without looking round. They pass to the northern side of the house under an arch made by two men standing east and west, holding at arms length, and touching at the points, the spade that was used to dig the pit under the pyre, and the axe with which the wood for the pyre was cut or felled. After this is done the kodali ceremony, using the spade, axe, and big knife. These are placed on the leaves where the corpse had lain. Then follows circumambulation and prostration by all, and the leaves are committed to the burning pyre." 764 184 613 [564]

In connection with the death ceremonies, it is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the last 763 184

342 always shade from the many trees and palms. Every house is in its own seclusion."

Concerning Nāyar dwellings, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the houses of the Nāyar, standing in a separate compound, have been by many writers supposed to have been designed with special reference to the requirements of offence and defence, and Major Welsh states that the saying that every man's house is [244] his castle is well verified here. The higher ambition of the Nāyar is, as has frequently been said, to possess a garden, wherein he can grow, without trouble or expense, the few necessaries of his existence. The garden surrounding the house is surrounded by a hedge or strong fence. At the entrance is an out-house, or patipura, which must have served as a kind of guard- [356] room in mediæval times. In poorer houses its place is [237] taken by a roofed door, generally provided with a stile to keep out cattle. The courtyard is washed with cow- [532] dung, and diverse figures are drawn with white chalk 346 on the fence. Usually there are three out-houses, a [343] vadakkettu on the north side serving as a kitchen, a cattle-shed, and a tekketu on the southern side, where [164] some family spirit is located. These are generally those of Maruta, *i.e.*, some member of the family who has died of small-pox. A sword or other weapon, and a seat or other emblem is located within this out-house, which is also known by the names of gurusala (the house of a saint), kalari (military training-ground), and daivappura [782] (house of a deity). The tekketu is lighted up every evening, and periodical offerings are made to propitiate 351 the deities enshrined within. In the south-west corner [312] is the serpent kavu (grove), and by its side a tank for [245] bathing purposes. Various useful trees are grown in the garden, such as the jack, areca palm, cocoanut, plantain, tamarind and mango.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar
[304] was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar 301 789
wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged."

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be 304
favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore [177]
by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women [564]
of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year.

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. 776
Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of [532]
these have granite representations, or at least such [778]
emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met [775]
with accidental death, and girls who have died before [766]
their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic [791]
amulets are attached to the waist by members of both [789]
sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits [782]
are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere
[564] near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

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he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum-sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

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796
man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kālasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

796 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving
788 the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under
776 which is a high raised platform built up with earth
536 and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of
796 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste men-
564 tioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a
788 crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

796 564 [193] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 572 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

796 however, no objection to myself and my companions
778 visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not acompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged
[788] during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival
[792] carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

796 Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is
788 given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri
[793] priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but
[778] the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is

inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their journey, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

796 788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Nayar

is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guru- 796
vayūr in November, 1895. On a high raised platform 788
under a peepul tree were a number of people under 782
vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed on his behalf that, if he were cured, he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck, and a like string on his right arm. These were in some way connected with the vow. His head was bent, and he sat motionless under his kāvadi, leaning on the bar, which, when he carried it, rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.), and milk—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and was about to start. Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of 796
silver over the lower portion of the forehead, almost 788
covering his eyes; his tongue protruding beyond the 785
teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. He had been fasting for two years. He was much under the influence of his god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. Several of the pilgrims had a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One [782]
poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock—a wide silver band over the mouth, and a skewer piercing both cheeks. He sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about three feet high. People fed him with milk, etc., and he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nāyars when they assume the pilgrim's robes and set out for Palni;

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after
paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside
and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar
serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only
a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in
the temple is said to have been introduced only of
recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent.
My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans
opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit
on the image. Here again there is the same strange
union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and
irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest
religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple
dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the
infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy.
The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no
striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely
excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[782] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their
[481] girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

in equally loud and profuse strains. This is continued 788
right up till the beginning of their homeward journey. 796
Nobody whom they come across on the way can successfully escape the coarse Billingsgate of these religious zealots. Even women are not spared. Perhaps it is in their case that the pilgrims wax all the more eloquently vulgar. A number of cock's feathers are stuck or tied upon the tip of a stick, and with this as a wand they begin to dance and pipe in a set style, which is extremely revolting to every sense of decency. Some of the pilgrims walk all the distance to the temple, while others go by boat or other conveyance; but in neither case do they spare any passer-by. Hundreds of gallons of arrack and [273]
toddy are consumed during the festival. The pilgrims reach the temple in their dirty attire. The temple premises are crowded to overflowing. The worship of 788
the goddess is then commenced. The offerings consist 796
of the sacrifice of cocks at the temple altar, turmeric 782
powder, but principally of pepper, as also some other objects of lesser importance. A particular spot inside the temple is set apart for the distribution of what is called manjal prasadam (turmeric powder on which divine blessings have been invoked). The work of doling it out is done by young maidens, who are during the process subjected to ceaseless volleys of vile and vulgar abuse. Now, leaving out of account the minor ceremonies, we come to the principal one, viz., the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea is that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed, the greater is the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence men vie with one another in the number of cocks that they carry on the journey. The sacrifice is begun, and then there takes place a regular scramble for the sanctified spot reserved for this butchering ceremony. One man holds a cock by the

788 trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in
796 the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a shar-
782 pened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion
796 all the more revolting. One other higher and more
788 acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing
755 mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious
782 disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in
788 the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the
796 homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani
[776] day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

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783 PURIFICATION AND EXPIATION--practices reflecting a sense of contamination or guilt; concept of ritual uncleanness; things and persons considered unclean or impure; purification rites (e.g., ritual ablutions and bathing); concepts of sin, salvation, and redemption; riddance of sin (e.g., confession, remission, atonement, penance, scapegoat); etc. See also:

Elimination 514
Personal hygiene 515
Ideas about unclean castes 564
Definitions of acts regarded as sinful 673
Punishment of ritual offenses 688
Conception of pollution, contagion, and loathsome diseases 753
Ideas about corpses 784
Ideas about sexual intercourse 833
Ideas about menstrual blood 841
Ideas about the exuviae of childbirth 844

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; i[illegible] members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests [illegible] the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet,

564 within a few feet. Equal interdining took place
[264] only between members of the same caste or sub-
caste, but at a higher caste feast members of
lower castes might receive food from higher
caste hosts. The Nambudiris, royalty, chiefs,
temple servants, retainers, middle-class and
servant Nayars thus collectively formed the
[611] "good" castes of the society. Nambudiris and
two small castes of their temple servants were
patrilineal; all the rest were matrilineal. (1)

[361] Below all these castes, living in a separate
part of the village, were the "low" or "pollut-
[783] ing" castes. These included in order of rank,
Iravas or toddy-tappers and tenant-farmers, with
20 to 50 households per village; Kanisans (as-
trologers) with one to three households per vil-
lage; the artisan castes (blacksmiths, gold-
smiths, carpenters, bell-metal workers and
stone-masons, who ranked equally) each with one
to three houses per village; low caste washermen
and barbers (who ranked equally) each with one
to five houses per village; and bow-makers, each
with about one to ten houses per village. Iravas,
[611] Kanisans, washermen and barbers had double
[595] unilineal descent: [25] patrilineal, patrilocal ex-
[614] tended families with fraternal polyandry, cross-c
cut by large exogamous dispersed matrilineal
clans. Artisans and bow-makers had patrilineal
descent with patrilocal extended families and
[437] fraternal polyandry. All of these castes worked
for each other and for the "good" castes of the
524 village. Iravas, the most numerous and influen-
427 tial, owned their own house-sites and leased rice-
lands and other garden lands from the matrilineal

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washerman's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
●783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

564 ritual pollution decreed that the several lower
783 castes might not touch each other, and that members of each lower caste, according to their ritual rank, must refrain from approaching members of the "good" castes within distance ranging from 15 to 40 feet.

564 Finally, on the outskirts of the village, in a
[361] separate area, lived the serf-castes of Parayas
437 and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella-makers; in each village two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple-servants and Nambudiris. Each property-group of these castes owned one or more families of Pulayas as its ancestral property who could be bought and sold. Food, household materials and clothing were provided for serfs by their owners. The Pulayas were freed by law in 1850, since when they have been landless agricultural labourers serving the "good" castes and Iravas for daily wages in kind. As "exterior" castes, Parayas
[1783] and Pulayas may not approach "good" castes within a distance of about 60 feet and may not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main roads. (These rules were however abolished by law at Independence in 1947.) [27] Each caste is endogamous and the two may not
[611] interdine. Unlike the higher castes they have a bilateral kinship system without unilineal descent groups. In addition to these Hindu castes
361 there were and are in Kerala large groups of
563 Muslims and Christians. (2) Christians had their separate villages and were divided into castes in a similar manner to Hindus. Muslims

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
563 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

564 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
564 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended such festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

000 ritual and other social cooperation.

613 (2) Ritual Cooperation in the Lineage
783 In addition to the joint performance of the pre-puberty marriage rite, members of a lineage were united in ritual observances at a birth or death. On each of these occasions, all members fell for fourteen days into a condition of ritual pollution (pula) in which they might not touch, eat with, or enter into the houses of other members of their caste, enter the public temples or bathing pools of the village, enter their own ancestor shrines, sacred snake groves or other sacred places of their lineage, or take part in everyday social life. This period of ritual pollution resembled one of temporary excommunication from caste, the only difference being that those ostracized were regarded by others with special friendliness rather than hostility. It effectively set apart the lineage as a solidary group at times of crisis in its history, and gave recognition to their joint concern with increase or decrease in their membership.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship
794 of the lineage goddess or dharma devi ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, is a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi, and in this context was probably though of as a primeval ancestress of the lineage, though I lack data definitely to indicate this. Her idol was housed in a small shrine in the precincts of the oldest ancestral house, or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] 613 [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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tion they entered for fifteen days into a condition of ritual pollution. They might not eat with nor touch other Nayars, enter the temple or other houses, bathe in the public bathing pools of their caste, or eat meat or salt. Death pollution, and to a milder degree birth pollution, cut off the clan from participation in the social life of the caste. It isolated the members as a group set apart in a special and dangerous ritual condition, who had to observe taboos for their own and each others' safety. Its observance stressed the kinship connection of clansmen and marked their common concern on the occasion of an increase or decrease in their membership. Only those clansmen living within the neighborhood, however, were obliged to attend a funeral or visit a house of birth. Beyond these observances clansmen had only loosely defined rights of hospitality in each other's homes. As far as I am aware they never assembled as an organized group.

In time a clan might divide into two or more clans by the common consent of its members. The decision to separate depended both on geographical distance and on distance of relationship. If a segment of the core unit moved into an adjacent neighborhood its members might maintain clanship with the parent lineage for several hundred years thereafter. If they moved to a distant part of the district (say, fifteen miles away) their grandchildren might sever the connection. Severing clanship was called "cutting the pollution bond." Representatives of the branches met and decided not to inform each other of future deaths in their respective groups. Usually the outlying branch would soon afterward adopt the name of the oldest ancestral house site in its own vicinity as its clan name. Exogamy was theoretically preserved as long as matrilineal ties were remembered—usually, about three generations after the division.

Beyond the neighborhood, clan ties had no legal or economic concomitants and were relatively unimportant, their claims being subordinated to those of lineage, village, neighborhood, district, and kingdom.

THE LINEAGE

A lineage comprised those members of a clan living in one Nayar neighborhood, and it operated within the legal and social framework of this unit. As we have noted, the retainer Nayars of a neighborhood were of the same caste. They interdined and intermarried freely and the neighborhood was their unit of caste administration. A neighborhood might comprise the retainer Nayars of one village or of two or three adjacent villages, or occasionally Nayars of only part of a large village (e.g., a royal village) in which more than one caste of

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613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave
[553 ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month,
[588 the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony
[881 of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to
[843 a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem-
[769 bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar
[765 also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the
[783 fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides
[885 and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

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Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, 588
enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more 836
men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar 564
man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter 613
into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is 613
relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since 564
the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local 588
caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a cere- 182
mony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a [688]
girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round [885]
her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled 613
similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a 564
funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the de- 764
ceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all [783]
enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the 765
death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar 613
households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and 783
made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members ob- 782
served death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large 613
feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from 765
all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar 564
from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a 783

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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 681 564 [784]

castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

613 681 684 564

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

613 681 564 [783] [574]

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses (such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

613 682 [696]

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If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the täli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The täli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the täli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her täli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the täli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [627]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
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593 184 858 [613] will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may receive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 613 [764] [783] A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollution and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 613 184 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some resemblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate [783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 613 593 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them. A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād [867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The [868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks, 593 613 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was [584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not [431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949,1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[6] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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The Killing or assault of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or 783
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. [628]

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kārana-* [694]
van. The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kārana-*
van's misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

769 crop and cattle blight. These he continued to explain in terms of a childlike picture
731 of powerful supernatural elders.

It must also be noticed that although there are slight differences in the relation-
769 ships of men and women to lineage ghosts, the ghosts are, in general, far more alike
783 than are matrilineal elders. A man's relation with his mother is very different from
154 that with his mother's brother, and his relations with different mother's brothers are
[562] by no means uniform. Yet the ghosts are collectively regarded as both protective and dangerously punitive. It seems probable, therefore, that a Nāyar reprojects his own supergo onto the standardized, institutionalized image of lineage ghosts which his culture provides him. For the superego, like the ghosts, is a composite of the prohibitions imposed by a number of elders. The superego is also formed in part from the individual's own aggression, which he defends against by projecting it upon the generalized parental image which he has internalized. If this view is correct, reprojection of the harsh superego onto ghosts in times of misfortune must serve to reduce guilt. For the offences which the ghosts ostensibly punish with sickness are often inadvertent or trivial ones, such as failure in the correct performance of rites. The astrologer's diagnosis may thus permit him to focus his generalized guilt (concerning deeper, unconscious aggressive impulses) upon a specific, minor lapse of duty on the part of
[782] himself or one of his kinsmen. He is then able to take practical steps to alleviate his guilt through propitiation of the supernatural agents. The Brahman's offerings on behalf of his ancestors also seem to serve as an alleviation of guilt, but in a different manner. For instead of reprojecting his harsh superego onto ancestral figures, the Brahman apparently projects it wholly outside the area of human relations onto a vindictive god of death, whose hell he believes endangers both his own and his parents' souls. He appears to alleviate his guilt through rites designed to preserve them and himself from this fate.

769 If it is true that the Nāyar reprojects his own superego upon the lineage ghosts,
182 this would explain why the ghosts are so much more punitive than are living elders.
626 They are thus fitting agents for the infliction of natural misfortunes, which in fact fall more heavily and capriciously than do the punishments of living elders. The fact that all members of the *taravād* are enabled to focus projected aggression and guilt feelings upon the ghosts probably enhances the internal solidarity of the *taravād*, by lifting a portion of these troublesome feelings from inside to outside the group. The cult thus brings together in rites of propitiation these very kinsmen who (in one aspect of their relationship) hate each other, and forges renewed bonds of mutual devotion in the appeasement of beings whom all of them fear.

Funerals and Anniversaries: The Sanskritic Cults

76 Although they retained the non-Sanskritic cults of ghosts, the Nāyars long ago
184 adopted many Brahmanical usages in connection with funerals and with rites on the
564 anniversary of a death. Such usages include cremation rather than burial of the dead, and offerings of rice balls (*bali*), water, and other oblations in the days of pollution following a death. As among Nambūdiri Brahmans, the chief heir, at the end of the period of pollution, enters a period of ascetic mourning (*dīkṣā*) for one year in Cochin and for forty-one days in Kottayam. At the end of this time he may dispose of the bones and ashes in a sacred river. He makes *bali* offerings to the spirit on each day of his mourning, and at its close, performs final offerings which unite the deceased with

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AW11 Kerala AW11
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778 771 hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

825 771 776 These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal [782] sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event 825 however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating 783 woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may 782 cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent 776 called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches [841] in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; [753] but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a [784] consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no [841] menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards [843] of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

776 782 The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

486 564 784 562 178 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstruation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. 783 841 564 613 486 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 178 562 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing, except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

564 613 588 of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) [184] which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, [586] confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the [765] divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli [783] on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while 585 the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of [588] her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu 184 Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

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the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe and return home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gâya, Ramêsvaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynâd, and there dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gâya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the Taravâd have no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. This is called "Ashtagâya Shraddham." It puts an end to the need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the Taravâd, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on.

Then on the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. Until this has been done, any one touched by any member of the Taravâd should bathe before he enters his house or partakes of any food. A man of the Athikkurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil in which have been put some gingelly seeds (all together) over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling and the bath which follows it removes the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his office on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the Taravâd.

In the case of death of a senior member of a Taravâd, well-to-do and reckoned as of some importance, there is the feast called Pinda Atiyantaram on the sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and friends. The word neighbours, as used here, does not mean those who live close by, but, owing to the custom of Malabar under which each house is in its own paramba (garden or enclosure) which may be a large one, those of the caste living within a considerable area round about. I am not sure whether in connection with these ceremonies there is mutual assistance in preparation for the funeral; or whether there is any recognized obligation between members of the same amsham, dêsam or tara; or whether this kind of mutual obligation obtains generally between any Taravâd and those of caste round about, irrespective of 5-a boundaries

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RELIGION.

It will be easier to convey a rational conception of the religion of the Nâyars, not by what is written but by what is left out; so we will proceed on this plan. The ceremonies connected with marriage and death go far towards indicating what are their religious ideas in general. The conservative character of the people of Malabar whose country is an earthly paradise, severed from the major portion of the Indian peninsula by the high mountains of the Western Ghâts, secure in its happy seclusion, where Nature has lavished her gifts with the prodigality of a Bacchante, prepares us for finding much of the primitive element in their religion. With the more uncultivated, the wilder races, this is almost entirely primitive in character; no more the cult of a Siva or Vishnu than of Sqaktktquaclt.

As has been remarked already ("Nambûtiris" Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), we see in Malabar the most undiluted form of the highest, the most abstract religion of Southern India, side by side with the most entirely primitive. The Nâyars have much of both.

The saying, "cleanliness is next to godliness," is one of those which contain much more real wisdom than is usually apprehended. The world is really divided, as I think Mr. Havelock Ellis points out, between the dirty and the clean; and, if I err not, the same author tells us that clothed man cannot be truly clean. Man has advanced far in development when he has become a clean animal. Now the Nâyars' religion is one of cleanliness, undiminished by superabundant clothing. Men and women can scarcely wear less than they do in compatibility with the received ideas of decency and propriety, nor can they be more scrupulous in the matter of personal cleanliness. No Nâyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It is a rule seldom broken that every Nâyar goes to the temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed; generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Polayan or any inferior being, even a Tîyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandalwood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about 99 years ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching

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the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of which those who have never visited shores somewhat alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever may be the reason for it, there is much more of the extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless to them. They do not know one from the other except in name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of Southern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers. It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accuracy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent. of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to let it be known to the people that they do it. They like it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[188] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [554] D83 [541]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564 There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldli- 796
ness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described 776
before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent 782
gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves [787]
in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The 796
entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful 776
concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a 782
ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes 787
afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are
regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in 776
certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from 533
house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty 534
large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece 782
of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of
strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has 766
been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of 776
a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The 825
killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst
us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all [783]

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he [613] was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 562 611 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person is and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road as Zamorin, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

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royal lineage. The retainer sub-castes disputed for rank and, in their separate villages, held the same rights of administration over the lower castes. In all these sub-castes, including the royal lineage, men were trained from the age of seven as soldiers in village gymnasia headed by military leaders (Asāns), and formed a permanent, mobile militia of the kingdom. Below the retainer sub-castes in rank came the small, non-military Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers.[1] Quite apart from these Brahman and Nayar sub-castes, in a separate area of the village lived the lower patrilineal castes of tenants and menials and the lowest, 'exterior' castes of serfs.

The Nayar Kinship System. The Nayar lineage (*taravād*) is exogamous and matrilineal kinship terms are extended throughout its range. Its members are united by the observance of fifteen days' ritual pollution at a birth or death, and traditionally by worship of the spirits of dead heads of the lineage, and of a group of totemic snakes. The lineage is divided into small segments, which I call property-groups, each three to five generations deep. Each group is headed by its eldest man (*kāranavan*) who is the legal guardian of its members and controls their property.

The property-group was also until recently the dwelling-group. Residence was, and is still in some houses, uxorilocal: a husband visits his wife after supper and leaves before breakfast. Traditionally, a woman might have any number of lovers of appropriate sub-caste, and a man any number of mistresses. This custom of combined polyandrous and polygynous unions, besides being consistent with a strong matrilineal lineage system, was almost certainly associated with the occupation of Nayar men as soldiers, since it began to die out shortly after the armies were disbanded, about 1810, and a hundred years before the lineage showed signs of disintegration.

The rules of mating were as follows. Sex relations were prohibited within the lineage, and with more than one man or one woman of the same lineage. The Nayar servant sub-castes of oil-mongers, funeral-priests, washermen, and barbers were endogamous, as were all the lower patrilineal castes and the serf-castes. Within the range of military and ruling sub-castes (except for the royal lineages which admitted no peers), all unions were permissible outside the lineage and the range of prohibited affines, and within the sub-caste. Furthermore, these sub-castes were knit together by 'hypergamous' unions between women of lower and men of higher sub-caste. Members of the three retainer sub-castes, which disputed for rank, had only temporary and sporadic sex-relations across sub-caste boundaries. These took place during war when soldiers were permitted to contravene the normal rules against dining with or touching members of other retainer sub-castes and might enter each others' houses in order to eat and sleep. More permanent relationships were encouraged between women of the retainer sub-castes and Kiriyattil, Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Kiriyattil women and Sāmantan, royal, or Nambūdiri men; between Sāmantan women and royal or Nambūdiri men; and between royal women and Nambūdiri men. The royal lineages, acknowledging no others as peers, were obliged to marry all their women upwards and all their men downwards. The Walluvanād and Cochin princesses married Nambūdiri men, the princes Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, or retainer-women. The Zamorins at first married only some of their women to Nambūdiris, and the rest to men of the more ancient royal lineages of Beypore, Bettem, and Kodungalur, all of whom had been conquered by the Zamorins and made honoured vassals in their kingdom. At some time in the 18th century, the Zamorin's lineage gave up this practice and began to marry its women only to Nambūdiris, while continuing to marry its men to Sāmantan, Kiriyattil, and retainer-Nayar women.

[1] Respectively called Vettukaḍs, Attikurssis (Chidigans in Cochin), Veluthedans, and Vilakkatalavans. The small temple-servant castes who rank between Nambūdiris and Nayars and were also concerned in hypergamous marriages are for lack of space excluded from this discussion.

588 [564] [793] marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bride-groom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house 588 833 178 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 782 787 793 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 [831] [753] [782] [834] Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

588 [783] [264] The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

588 184 595 [765] [783] [851] In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride-groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

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addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar.

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death.

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurusis (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

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000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse. [262] [783] [834]

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 613 564 602 [586] Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *kāranavan*. This man is usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but particularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

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with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *tarawdd* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*predham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tdli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *tarawdd*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [1083] [1065] [1069] [1083]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

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pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion.

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'.

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of ostracism by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tāli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his older kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

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588 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives
182 of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars,
564 so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdavari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surro-
184 gate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'.
182 The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste,
787 who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might
604 tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before
184 the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste
182 it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one
[588] intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood
[305] by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for
[759] Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are mid-
[582] wives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by
[693] name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in
[584] some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions
[793] and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-
[782] broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death
[783] he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 [588] [793] [852] [764]

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *taravād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

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The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *taravād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakti* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

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When the

family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

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[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

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It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Taliketta kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangan* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Thavazhvad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Kōda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 782 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Diksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Diksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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and wives with others as a universal national custom; (c) the absence of "*Sati*."[1]

In view of the fact that the Veddas are a strictly monogamous people, the prevalence of this custom in Ceylon can only be attributed to South Indian influence. Existing as it does in almost physical contiguity, it is indubitable that these customs and the Nāyar customs had the same origin. In fact, a Naga community was spread over the whole of South India, and the pressure of Aryan emigration seems gradually to have driven them behind the western Ghats in the case of the Nāyars and beyond the straits in the case of their kindred in Ceylon.

The Laws of Philology also support this view. I am assured by Don de Z. Wickerma Singhe that the change from "G" to "Y" (as from Nagar to Nayar) is very commonly met with in Dravidian and Prakistic languages. Apart from the general consonance of this change to the philological rules, Mr. Wickerma Singhe also pointed out to me that in Sinhalese[2] the Sanskrit word *Nāga* is written and pronounced as *Naya*.

The word *Nāyar*, therefore, is, without a shadow of doubt, the same as the word *Nāgar*, which means serpent-men.

Note 2.—The Nāyars and the Todas.

Dr. Rivers, in his learned and elaborate study of the social conditions of the Todas, makes some interesting comparisons with regard to their customs and some of the survivals in Nāyar social life. Before venturing to criticise some of his deductions I may be allowed to state that his idea of the emigration of the Todas to their present country from Malabar is probably right, though the evidence that he has adduced does not in any way prove it. The following facts which he has not noticed may give some additional weight to this hypothesis. Among the Nāyars the dairy (*Pal-pura*) is considered a thing to be kept *ceremonially pure*. No unclean person may approach it, and even the pollution of a child-birth is considered to be sufficiently strong to preclude those whom it affects from touching things belonging to the *Pal-pura*. It would be an exaggeration to say that the *Pal-pura* is considered sacred, but it is certainly *purer* than any other part of the house. Also the way in which the Todas convert milk into butter-milk is exactly the same as among the Nāyars. These customs with regard to the dairy are prevalent, not only where there is geographical contiguity between the Nāyar-land and the Toda-land, but also in Middle Travancore, which is at least two hundred and fifty miles from the land of the Todas.

Some, however, of the arguments brought forward by Dr. Rivers would not bear critical investigation. For example, he says[3]: "More important is the custom of

[1] *Ibid.*
[2] Cf. Wm. Greiger, *Sinhalese Etymology.*
[3] Pp. 699–70.

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553
554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Asán.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Manndtiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564
582 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous.
833 This is the general rule, though exceptions
783 may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.[1]

Marriage prohibitions.

564 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere
582 observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris,
783 Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolathiri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

[784]
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Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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Ambalavásis form alliances with Nayar women, but the latter and their children cannot touch their husbands and fathers without polluting them. The children of this union belong to the mother's family. In the clan system, descent was at first reckoned in the female line; consequently, uterine ties alone constituted kinship. The father was not regarded as related even to his children, and not considered as a member of the family. In this system all the children bear the clan name, and the clan name becomes the test of blood relationship. But the moment the descent is recognised through the male, the clan system breaks down. Among the Nayars the kinship is still reckoned through the female line. 564 582 783

Marriage is endogamous among the low caste Sudrás. The following restrictions are however in force among all classes of Sudrás. There cannot be intermarriages between the descendants of any female ancestor. It is strictly prohibited even in the case of two persons belonging to the same *taravád* or family whose relationship cannot be traced to its origin, but is only traditional. A man cannot marry the sister of his deceased wife. The custom is more changing. A man cannot marry from the family of his deceased wife, but is now limited to the *thdvashi* to which his wife belonged. Even this is now being overlooked. 564 582 [614]

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the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *táli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *táli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkákkarappan* temple and tie the *táli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahádévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpád is the *táli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *táli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *táli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tálikettu kalyánam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *tali*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tálikettu*

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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *válkannáti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 8y.

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is celebrated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morning of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 771 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 778 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [841] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [782] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to [532] re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
789 requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
782 rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
783 spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil
[753] Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
793 ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pújas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawad* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawad*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawad*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to 252 556
the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large 574
number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those 564
served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given 252
when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the 564
polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may some- [264]
times eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is [574]
curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occa- [796]
sions, good many formalities have to be observed in the [576]
allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The [262]
consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water [271]
from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes [793]
their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give [783]
punnyáham (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life 291
of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar [293]
always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there

105 563 [1095] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 1783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [1084] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [1084] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [1765] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 581 588 833 It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an [183] unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus gradually come to know the children better and to influence their upbringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is however always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield 564 before them.

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakketam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tālikettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, [783] and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water [793] from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution.

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at [765] the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family.

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu [797] recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled.

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to 564
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
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783 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
[613] drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

564 this tract or nād there were originally six stānis or chief-
634 tains, who ruled, under the Rāja, with the assistance, or subject to the constitutional control, of four assemblies of Nāyars called Kūttams. Each kūttam had its hereditary president. In this tract there are seven groups of kulams. The highest includes twelve kulams, Vengalat, Pattillat, Viyyūr, Nelliōt, Atunkudi, Amayangalat, Nellōli, Nilanchēri, Rendillat, Pulliyāni, Orakātteri, and
[553] Venmēri. Of these, the Pattillat and Rendillat (members of the ten and members of the two illams or houses) affix the title Adiyōdi to their names, the last three affix the title Nambiyar, and the rest affix Nāyar. Of the six stānis already mentioned, three, with the title of Adiyōdi, belong to the Vengalat kulam, while two of the presidents of kuttams belonged to the Pattillat kulam. The younger members of the stāni houses are called kidavu. It is the duty of women of Viyyūr and Nelliōt kulams to join in the bridal procession of members of the Vengalat kulam, the former carrying lamps, and the latter salvers containing flowers, while the Rendillat Adiyōdis
564 furnish cooks to the same class. Pattillat Adiyōdis
783 and Orakātteri Nambiyars observe twelve days' pollution, while all the other kulams observe fifteen. The second group consists of six kulams, Eravattūr, Ara-Eravattūr (or half Eravattūr), and Attikōdan Nāyars, Tonderi Kidāvus, Punnan Nambiyars, and Mēnōkkis. All these observe fifteen days' pollution. The third group consists of three kulams, Tacchōli to which the remaining three stānis belong, Kōthōli, and Kuruvattān-
[553] chēri. All affix Nāyar to their names, and observe fifteen days' pollution. The fourth group consists of three kulams, Peruvānian Nambiyars, Chellādan Nāyars,
[643] and Vennapālan Nāyars. All three observe fifteen days' pollution. The name Peruvānian means great or

principal oil-man ; and it is the duty of this caste to present the Kurumbranād Rāja with oil on the occasion of his formal installation. The fifth group consists of the three kulams, Mannangazhi, Paramchela, and Pallikara Nāyars, all observing fifteen days' pollution. A member of the first-named class has to place an āmanapalaga (the traditional seat of Nambūdiris and other high castes) for the Kurumbranād Rāja to sit on at the time of his installation, while a member of the second has to present him with a cloth on the same occasion. The sixth group consists of four kiriyams named Patam, Tulu, Manan, and Ottu respectively, and has the collective name of Rāvāri. The seventh group consists of six kulams, Kandōn, Kannankōdan, Kotta, Karumba, Kundakollavan, and Panakādan Nāyars. All observe fifteen days' pollution, and the women of these six kulams have certain duties to perform in connection with the purification of women of the Vengalat, Pattillat, and Orakatteri kulams. Besides these seven groups, there are a few other classes without internal sub-divisions. One such class is known as Pāppini Nāyar. A woman of this class takes the part of the Brāhmini woman (Nambissan) at the tāli-kettu kalyanam of girls belonging to the kulams included in the third group. Another class called Pālattavan takes the place of the Attikurissi Nāyar at the funeral ceremonies of the same three kulams."

In illustration of the custom of polyandry among the Nāyars of Malabar in by-gone days, the following extracts may be quoted. "On the continent of India," it is recorded in Ellis' edition of the Kural, "polyandry is still said to be practiced in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayālam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the procession, and turmeric water is sprinkled. [231] When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, "women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat 825
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

765 613 574 that, in some parts of Malabar, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the [783] Karanavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him. To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that, on the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the taravād of the deceased combine, and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours who are invited, one man or woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called patni karigi. On the seventh day, a return feast will be given by the taravād of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours. Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed, but the members of the taravād remain under death pollution. On the fourteenth day 764 613 comes the sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the cal- [415] cined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the taravād go to the place of cremation, and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried (not burnt by fire in the usual way), cover up the mouth of this pot with a piece of new cloth, and, all following the eldest who carries it, proceed to the nearest river (it must be running water), which receives the remains of the dead. The men then bathe, and return [184] home. In some parts of Malabar the bones are collected [778] on the seventh day, but it is not orthodox to do so. Better by far than taking the remains to the nearest river is it to take them to some specially sacred place, Benares, Gaya, Rameswaram, or even to some place of sanctity much nearer home, as to Tirunelli in Wynaad, and there 764 769 613 dispose of them in the same manner. The bones or ashes of any one having been taken to Gaya and there deposited in the river, the survivors of the taravād have

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

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mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

In some families, after
796 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
526 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
535 the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other
[524] prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed;
[564] generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that
[671] the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [773] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

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inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796
Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 728
Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564]
by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785]
and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783]
as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [195]
ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782]
assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respective homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, "when the Malayâlis say the body is cool, is the time when, according to custom, the Nâyar youths practice physical exercises. At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

286 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to [791] house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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564 here turns out to be patrilineal and patrilocal. We shall see that, as
611 usual, the question of descent is attached to the same general struc-
[591] tures as elsewhere.

613 We first note that the "patrilineage" of the South is called a *taravad* like the matrilineal units of the Nayar. The patrilineage is reported to be exogamous with a depth of five to seven generations united by the worship of lineage gods, ancestors, and snakes. Marriage tends to be
595 patrilocal, and one of the interesting features of the Tiyyar of this
[591] area is that, as with the Sinhalese, polyandrous marriages are freely
[171] permitted. A woman is married to a group of brothers who have access to her, it is said, by order of seniority. The ceremony of marriage
585 again involves the gift of the cloth, and we note the custom of feeding
171 the groom or grooms and the bride with porridge and milk as with various groups in Ceylon.

593 Inheritance is in the male line, but women retain rights in their
[428] natal household. Indeed, this right is expressed in the customary rela-
[586] tions between brothers and sisters. At divorce, the woman returns to her brother. Her eldest brother is considered her guardian. At the
[765] death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe
[783] ritual pollution. At the death of a man, his sister's sons observe pollution and perform mourning offerings to his spirit.

604 The customary claim of the MB and the FZ are given recognition in
588 numerous ceremonies. In the prepuberty rituals, a girl goes through
[613] a mock-marriage ceremony with a boy from a "lineage" into which
[605] she might marry, who clearly stands to her in the relation of cross-cousin. Her "mother's brother's wife" (FZ?) parts her hair in certain pregnancy ceremonies. The ritual husband-boy is brought by his MB, and the girl by her MB. The boy places the *tali* necklace—indicative of married status—on her neck, where it is tied by her FZ.

582 Gough notes that cross-cousin marriage is "preferential," though
605 with the observation that it is not "enjoined to the extent" that it is
114 in the North (1955*a*, p. 62). It is clear that this statement refers to actual cross-cousin, not categorical cross-cousin, marriage. We are informed that parallel cousins on both sides are tabooed and must conclude that here again we have the Dravidian pattern of categorical cross-cousin marriage.

601 I have no information about the terminology of reference or address,
576 though it seems likely that terms of reference, at least, are identical to those of the North Tiyyar.

121 I think that all the elements of the general structure can be detected
602 in this system. There is categorical cross-cousin marriage, and the various claims of the MB and FZ upon Ego are indicated in ritual terms. This is quite in accordance, as we noted before, with the strong

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613
castes, or receive customary help from their enangar at life-crisis 681
ceremonies. If the ostracism was not effected it was believed that the 564
whole neighborhood would fall into disfavor with the caste goddess [784]
and might become prey to epidemic or crop failure.

The point on which I am uncertain is whether the lineage as a 613
whole was ostracized, or whether other branches of the lineage 681
normally retained their caste status by severing their own connections 684
with the offender's property group. The latter actually occurred in a 564
case in Cochin in 1924. A Sudra Nayar woman had sex relations with a man of the caste of Nayar funeral priests. Shortly after the assembly met, the other houses of her lineage repudiated all connection with the offender's household, which alone remained ostracized for a year. The woman and her lover then fled to Malaya. The household paid its fine and was reaccepted to caste. I do not know whether it was possible under native rule for a lineage to repudiate its responsibilities in this way.

Minor offenses, such as dining with low-caste people, were settled 613
by the offender's property group paying a fine to the village temple. 681
The offender and his household were purified from their pollution by 564
certain ritual acts. They then gave a feast to their enanger at which [783]
they were publicly reaccepted to caste. Traditionally, graver offenses [574]
(such as the one above) met harsher penalties. The caste's judgment on such an offense traditionally had to be ratified by the district chief or by a royal officer. The offender was then either executed by his immediate matrilineal kin or surrendered to the king for sale into slavery. His household members performed his funeral rites and only then were they taken back into caste.

Whether or not the lineage as a whole was held collectively responsible for offenses against the religious law of the caste, it was not held responsible for civil wrongs judged by the village headman or for crimes judged by the chief or by officers of the royal court. The property group, headed by its kāranavan, and not the whole lineage, was responsible in cases of theft, debt, or other offenses concerning property which were judged by the village headman. With regard to 613
a major crime, a Nayar who murdered another was tried in the court 682
of the king or of a higher chief. If the murdered man was of the same [696]
or a higher caste than the murderer, the murderer was executed by a small group of Nayars selected by the judge. If the murdered man was of lower caste, the murderer's property group had to pay a fine to the district chief. Again, if a Nayar of any rank committed treason

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949,1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are 613
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha 562
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

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486 564 784 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar
562 woman observes pollution for three days during menstru-
178 ation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified.
783 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is
841 effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South
564 Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier*
613 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is,
486 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu."
[123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna
178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more
562 liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive,
[628] partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the
582 Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhú-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [604] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable [302] enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for 765 the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bali.

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[789] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week: [262] [828]

> "*Ezuzcha Kulichalum*
> *Vyāzcha Kulikkaruta.*"

784 777 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this: "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

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717 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

484 There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
777 journey :
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāhi Muppūram
Trkelta iva ēzhu Naal
Vitakkil vitiyā Bhōmi
Pōkunnakil avan vari.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

711 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
177 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as
614 *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from
174 outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were
825 called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days
771 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a
[161] community of 3¼ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattu*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred serpents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all
[784] his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars
174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

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disengaged as quickly whenever he drops his 'musquet' in the wood or slings it across his shoulders for the purpose of rushing to close encounter with this terrible instrument."[1]

Cavalry was unknown; there was only infantry. The soldiers wore a silk cloth wound round the head and carried swords, shields, lances and bows. The king had an umbrella formed of the leaves of a tree and fixed on to the end of a cane, for protection from the sun. There was no standard. When they were in battle, and one army was at a distance from the other, two ranges of a cross-bow, the king would ask the Brahmans to go to the camp of the enemy and tell the knights to let one hundred of his men fight with the same number on his side, when both the parties would go to the central space to do so. The fighting continued even for three days, when blows were given on the head and at the legs. After the death of some men on either side, the survivors were directed to return to their camps. If any more fighting was desired, the same course was adopted. Sometimes the king rode on an elephant, and sometimes the Nayars carried him. The pay of a soldier was four carlini a month, and in time of war half a ducat.

The Nayars whom the king received in his service were never dismissed, however old they might be. They received their pay and rations, and the king granted favours to whosoever had served him well. If, however, they were left unpaid for some years, some four or five hundred of the aggrieved would rise up and go in a body to the palace, and send word to the king that they would go away dismissed, because he did not give them food. The king would then beg them to have patience, pay them at once either the whole amount due to them or a part of it with a promise to pay the balance at an early date. The king generally satisfied them, considering it a disgrace that they should go away to serve under another ruler. Even in times of war they were not at liberty to touch any peasant, or eat and drink with him in his house without penalty. The king was bound to support the mother and family of any soldier who died in war. He also treated, at his own expense, any soldier who was wounded in battle.[2]

1. Abbe Dubois People of India.
2. A Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar, page 130-131, Duarte Barbosa.

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554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the *Zamorin*.

7. *Asán*.—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Asán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan*.—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Manndtiyar*.—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous,
582 while the low caste Sudras are endogamous.
833 This is the general rule, though exceptions
783 may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam* from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted. [1]

Marriage prohibitions.

564 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere
582 observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris,
783 Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolatheri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

[784]
[562]
[484]

Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 585 Marriage customs. There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity,[1] and the omission or neglect of it will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days. [688] [782]

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *kúranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites [787]

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

105 563 [1795] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 1783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [1984] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [1984] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [1965] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

000 Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
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841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction
823 has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does
784 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823 784 562 of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776] that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843] Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564 Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613] sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564 plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634 nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644] between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613 This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769] need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775] collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, [787] the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764 the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613 Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783 member of the taravād should bathe before he enters his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564] Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465] on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766 taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613 there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765 sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302 friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184] forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766 the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765 is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613 seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782] his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784] [834]

766 613 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from 765 tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members. 769 613 182

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud[8] derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead[9] in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living. 769 171

Opler,[10] in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child[11] in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation. 181

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *puraṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come. 769 [702] [212] [538] [785] [782]

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[35] and the initiation rites[36] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the
785 supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
[579] accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. 796 788 785 [782]

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock. 796 788

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars 796 184 788

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890). [171] [113]

787 performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his
796 forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it
[785] against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera.
[465] The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velich-
791 chappâd about three days afterwards going to perform
796 elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

769 Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion
782 must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

[113] * The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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764 [564] soon as death has taken place in a house, and on his arrival undertakes the general management of the ceremonies.

After the corpse is tied and laid on the plantain leaves, a ceremony called *Para Nirathuka* takes place. (*Para* is a measure of paddy, and *Nirathuka* means to place in line.) A coconut-oil lamp is lit and placed at the head of the corpse and immediately in front of it are placed three *paras* of rice. The significance of this ceremony is unknown to me.

766 *Ceremonies of Cremation.*—If the deceased is the eldest of a family the body is now cremated. A pyre is made of mango wood, and the corpse is placed with its head towards the south (the god of death, according to the Hindu mythology, resides in the south), and then covered with fuel. The nephew or younger brother lights the fire. Then all the members of the family and all others who have been polluted by contact with them go and bathe in the tank. During the process of burning there is a process called *Kumba pradikshanam*—which is manifestly an Aryan custom (*Kumbham* and *Pradikshanam* are two Sanskrit words: the first means a pot, and the second means to walk round). The ceremony, as its name implies, consists of walking round the pyre with a pitcher, the bottom of which is pierced. One of the family fills this pitcher with water and carries it three times round the burning corpse, dashing it on the ground at the end.

765 Two or three members of the family continue to perform funeral rites for the next fourteen days. As I have not taken part in it I do not possess first-hand knowledge.

765 783 [564] For all the fourteen days, all the members of the family are under pollution. The pollution, in the case of death, is very strong. All the members of the family are untouchable, and any Nāyar who touches them must purify himself by a bath. On the fourteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. The *Mārān* comes in the morning and gives everyone some oil. After smearing the body with these everyone goes and bathes, and comes back clad in white. The *Mārān* then sprinkles holy water, and a Brahmin priest purifies the house. There is generally a big feast for two days.

765 526 The feast on the fifteenth day is accompanied by some sports. All the men of the neighbouring villages come for it, and there is great *tamasha*. How far this could be identified with funeral sports elsewhere it is hard to say.

785 782 765 [527] After these feastings one of the family undertakes a *Dīksha* (which means a vow) for forty-one[1] days or a whole year. During this time, the man who undertakes the *Dīksha* lives apart with a Brahmin. He is not allowed to talk to or see a woman. He must not cut his hair or his nails. He must bathe twice a day in the river, or in the tank, and lead a pure and pious life. If it is only for forty-one days, there is not much feasting at the end of it. If it goes on for a full year, there is a huge celebration,

[1] All ordinary vows are taken for forty-one days. If you want to placate a deity you pray to him for forty-one days. If you want to make a big sacrifice it extends to forty-one days, etc.

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with all kind of sports.[1] The family, which is supposed to have been in mourning during the whole period, goes back to its normal life.

M. Van Gennep considers the state of mourning as "Un état de marge pour les survivants, dans lequel ils entrent des rites de séparation, et d'où ils sortent par des rites de réintegration dans la société général (rites de levée du deuil)."[2] With regard to the first fourteen days in particular, a Nāyar family in mourning constitutes a special society. During this period, and to a certain extent to the period till the final rites (forty-one days, or one year) social life is suspended. The ceremony at the end of the year is then a *rite de réintegration.*

VI.—RELIGION AND MAGIC AMONG THE NĀYARS.

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The religious beliefs of the Nāyars show an extraordinary mixture of Hindu and Dravidian cults. All the temples are dedicated to Krishna, Siva, or Kartyayani. There are also a few *kavus*, or groves, for the worship of the lesser Hindu deities. But the important point with regard to this is that the Nāyars are, as a whole, a people almost without a religion,[3] and they use Hindu temples for practices which receive no sanction even in the generous vagueness of that creed. The religious conceptions of Hinduism have but the slightest influence on the Nāyar community as a whole. It is quite true that there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but the very fact that the distinction of Saiva-ism, Sakti-ism, Vaishnava-ism, etc., have not reached them, is sufficient proof that, though they have been Hinduised in form and have belonged to the Hindu fold, their primitive beliefs have survived to a great extent.

Nothing shows so much the extreme persistence of primitive culture, even in the face of higher civilising agencies, than the wide and almost universal acceptance of spirit-worship, and the almost entire absence of religious life among the Nāyars after at least twenty centuries of contact with Hinduism. Their contact with religions has not been limited indeed to Hinduism. The Jews, flying after the destruction of their Temple, found refuge among the Nāyars, and have lived in their midst for nigh two thousand years. The Apostle St. Thomas is supposed to have planted a community of Syrian Christians among them, who also have lived side by side with the Nāyars as their social inferiors in Malabar for almost the same length of time. Ever since Mohamed founded his religion in Arabia, Allah has found faithful worshippers in Malabar who moved with equal status among the Nāyar population. The beautiful creed of Gautama Buddha had for long its devout votaries in the land of the Nāyars, and traces of Buddhist monasteries and survivals of Buddhist worship still

[1] There is a story about a poet who enjoyed this celebration very much and said to the master of the house, "I hope there will be one like this here every year."

[2] *Rites de Passage*, p. 211.

[3] See the discussion following.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Pattum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
796 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
[534] man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[532] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796
Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 788
Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564]
by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785]
and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783]
as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [785]
ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782]
assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guru- 796
vayūr in November, 1895. On a high raised platform 788
under a peepul tree were a number of people under 782
vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed on his behalf that, if he were cured, he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck, and a like string on his right arm. These were in some way connected with the vow. His head was bent, and he sat motionless under his kāvadi, leaning on the bar, which, when he carried it, rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.), and milk—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and was about to start.
Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of 796
silver over the lower portion of the forehead, almost 788
covering his eyes; his tongue protruding beyond the 785
teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. He had been fasting for two years. He was much under the influence of his god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. Several of the pilgrims had a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One [782]
poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock—a wide silver band over the mouth, and a skewer piercing both cheeks. He sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about three feet high. People fed him with milk, etc., and he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nāyars when they assume the pilgrim's robes and set out for Palni;

796 788 and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-
[785] locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

796 "Brief mention must be made of the festival held
788 at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost
184 corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan's Manual of Malabar. 'It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts "Nada-a Nada-a" of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of "Nada-a Nada-a" (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled
[195] at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

592 nagas or cobra-deities which were believed to
782 guard each group were housed in the snake-grove in a corner of the garden and annually given offerings of milk and eggs by the karanavan in the presence of members. As well as warding
592 off ordinary sickness and misfortune they were
782 particularly [58] believed responsible for the fertility or barrenness of taravad women. Special offerings were made to them if a woman failed to conceive, and a performance was held a at which men and women of a low caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to entice the snakes in the grove to appear. A
[787] group of women of the taravad, after purifying themselves by fasting and sex-continence for several days previously, then became possessed by the snake-gods (who are said to have "entered into them") and performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voice of the snakes and announce what propitiations were necessary to appease
[158] them. Sometimes the ceremony ended with one or more women falling into a fit. It seems
592 fairly certain that the snake-gods were (as so
786 commonly elsewhere) worshipped as phallic symbols. Since they were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forbears, but were capable of alternately withholding fertility from taravad women or causing them to conceive, it is a plausible guess that they collectively symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property-group, who had been so essential to its perpetuation yet

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their ex-
treme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual sexual promiscuity within the caste, and minimal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus Complex [59] which caused men to fear and propitiate the phallic representatives of their fathers, and women to have fantasies about "possession" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfortunately snake worship is now practically extinct; I never saw it, and found present-day informants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic, dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility of the father, which must have been experienced by Nayar children since they slept, and do today, in the mother's room till age four or five and have opportunity to witness parental intercourse, would be repressed before latency and leave its mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about the father which could be translated into the cultural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods. Such archaic representations contrast with the less distorted ones of male forbears of the taravad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple, but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [482] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The [786] Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

other temple servant castes might come from other villages to assist at special annual ceremonies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi temples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brahman, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the temple and periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. Consistent with these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambudiris and all temple servants were vegetarians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise almost identical in general culture to Nayars, and historically were probably once Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine or intermarry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine) and above the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food from them but not give food to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servant castes and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few social relations outside the temple, and did not interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

592 nagas or cobra-deities which were believed to
782 guard each group were housed in the snake-grove in a corner of the garden and annually given offerings of milk and eggs by the karanavan in the presence of members. As well as warding
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782 particularly [58] believed responsible for the fertility or barrenness of taravad women. Special offerings were made to them if a woman failed to conceive, and a performance was held a at which men and women of a low caste called Pulluvar played instruments and sang songs to
[787] entice the snakes in the grove to appear. A group of women of the taravad, after purifying themselves by fasting and sex-continence for several days previously, then became possessed by the snake-gods (who are said to have "entered into them") and performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voice of the snakes and announce what propitiations were necessary to appease
[158] them. Sometimes the ceremony ended with one or more women falling into a fit. It seems
592 fairly certain that the snake-gods were (as so
786 commonly elsewhere) worshipped as phallic symbols. Since they were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forbears, but were capable of alternately withholding fertility from taravad women or causing them to conceive, it is a plausible guess that they collectively symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property-group, who had been so essential to its perpetuation yet

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[153] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

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The Killing or assaut of a Nayar

outside the lineage led to feuds between lineages or between larger territorial units. 692
In Cochin, the king had more power than in Kottayam to curtail such feuds or confine [628]
them to organized duels for which a fee must be paid. Minor offences against caste [688]
law, such as dining with low caste persons, were tried by the subcaste assembly of the [564]
village and resulted in temporary excommunication of the offender's property group
and the payment of a fine to the village goddess's temple.

The *kāranavan* had the legal right to punish offences within the property group 613
and also those offences against caste law for which the caste held the property group 692
responsible until justice had been done. Incest and murder within the lineage appear [684]
to have been punished by expulsion from the *taravād* by the *kāranavan* and from the [682]
caste by the caste assembly. In cases of grave insubordination by a junior member, the [564]
kāranavan had the right to deny him maintenance or access to the ancestral house
until he mended his behavior.

Thus the supernatural agents of the village and the *taravād* primarily acted to 692
force the human authorities to carry out their judicial duties. If, for example, the 626
caste failed to excommunicate the *taravād* of an individual who had sinned against 613
its religious laws, it was believed that the village goddess would strike the village with
epidemic, flood, or some such misfortune. Similarly, if incest within the lineage went
undetected or unpunished, the lineage ghosts and the patron goddess might cause the
offenders to die or might bring misfortune on the *taravād* as a whole.

The fact that any member of the *taravād* may suffer as a result of the misdemeanors 613
of any other, carries into the realm of supernatural sanctions the collective respon- 626
sibility of the *taravād* in social and legal affairs. If a man breaks a ritual rule of the 783
caste, his whole *taravād* is polluted and liable for excommunication. If a death or
birth occurs, the whole lineage is temporarily polluted and excluded from normal
social life. At the back of these norms lies the fact that the *taravād* is an economic
and legal corporation. Its property is owned jointly, and the *taravād* is responsible [421]
for the debts of any one member. Its male members must support each other in [476]
feuds against other lineages. It is not surprising that the concept of being members
one of another in secular affairs is projected into the realm of mystical retributions. [628]

The points at which supernatural agents might replace, or act instead of, human
authorities, appear to have been those where a subordinate was wronged by one who was 769
himself a powerful authority and could manipulate the law. Thus lineage ghosts were
probably particularly effective in punishing or setting to rights misdemeanors of the 626
kāranavan himself. I am uncertain whether, in traditional law, junior members could 613
sue in court for the deposition of an erring *kāranavan*. They certainly possessed this
right in British law, but even so, it was very difficult before 1933 to get rid of a *kāranavan*. [694]
The lineage ghosts appear to have provided important sanctions against a *kāranavan's* misdoings, for they brought misfortune on a *taravād* whose *kāranavan* disgraced
its reputation for hospitality or squandered its property. I was told that the former [787]
custom by which a junior member might be possessed by a ghost and voice its threats
to the *taravād* added force to the complaints of young men who were cheated by
their *kāranavans*. The fact that only the *kāranavan* may propitiate the lineage ghosts [782]
points up both his responsibility to the ghosts to ensure good conduct and prosperity
in his *taravād*, and also his responsibility to his juniors to ensure the favor of the ghosts.

I have myself recorded no case in which lineage ghosts were believed to have actually prevented a crime on the part of a *kāranavan*, as distinct from punishing one. V. K.

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accumulating religious merit against the life to come. With regard to their interests in this world, the ancestors resemble their descendants.

Lineage ghosts are powerful beings who can help or harm the living. The effect which they exert on the fortunes of the living is much greater than that exerted by the living on their own. They can aid their descendants by preserving crops, cattle, houses, and children, but their punitive characteristics are those most emphasized. Offerings to ghosts are designed less toward seeking positive good than toward averting misfortune. There is no idealization of the ghosts as morally superior beings. They are human in their failings of envy and bad temper, and indeed, even more capricious than the living. They may punish wrongdoing with a degree of justice, but they do not look sympathetically into the hearts of propitiants, and are almost as likely to exact vengeance for accidental mistakes in the performance of rites as for wilful immorality. Nāyars do not attempt to enter intimate spiritual communion with them or to please them by inner suffering and renunciation. Rather, the ghosts are bought off with gifts of food in order that their envy may be appeased.

These attitudes to the ancestors[12] are, it seems, directly related to relationships with the senior generation among the living. A man's relationship with his mother's brother is, from childhood, one of stern discipline. All mother's brothers have authority over their nephews and in traditional households may inflict corporal punishment on adolescents. There is a marked lack of intimacy between senior and junior men within the *taravād*, and the sanction on a nephew's good conduct is fear of punishment rather than fear over loss of love. Good *kāranavans* are devoted to their juniors in a stern and dutiful manner. They are proud of their *taravād* as against the rest of the world, but they do not exhibit personal tenderness to their juniors. Power is vested in the senior generation; there is little feeling that a nephew could wield power over his uncle by withdrawing his emotional support. Great emphasis is placed on a formal etiquette of dignified and respectful behavior, amounting to partial avoidance, but neither party need feel that he loves the other in his heart. Nephews will not normally readily reveal hostility toward their uncles before outsiders, for they wish to preserve the dignity of the *taravād*. But they do publicly acknowledge hostility under provocation, and more frequently accuse the uncle of aggression toward themselves. That hostility is a normal component of relationships with mother's brothers is proverbial among Nāyars. They recognize this as the reason why a formal etiquette of behavior is indispensable. And even in spite of the stringent rules regulating the intercourse of mother's brother and sister's son, physical aggression between them may occur. In spite of the supernatural sanctions against violence within the lineage, I heard several stories of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers. Aged *kāranavans* of large *taravāds* often complain of their loneliness. They may not behave intimately with their juniors and know in their hearts that they are hated and envied. "Indeed," as one Nāyar remarked, "in an old-fashioned *taravād* the position of the *kāranavan* is not safe." The office of *kāranavan* is, of course, much coveted. Junior men commonly number themselves off in order of age-rank as second, third, fourth men, etc., and with divided feelings await the demise of those above them which will raise them to higher rank. The relationship between older and younger brothers, own or classificatory, is only slightly less stern and formal than that between mother's brother and sister's son.

The relationship of a woman with her mother's brother is less harsh than that

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Nambudiri Brahmans

eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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769 613 778 782 to alien ghosts are built in the garden of the *taravād* house. They are propitiated annually or in emergency, usually with a cock sacrifice and an offering of toddy. Such alien ghosts are of a lineage other than that of the hosts and are usually of different caste. If a member of the *taravād* dies violently, his successors take care of his ghost in the course of their ancestral propitiations and do not commonly build a special shrine for it in their garden. They may fear such a ghost more than they fear the ghosts of forebears who died naturally, but they will not speak of this to outsiders. Rather, they are likely to deny to others that violent deaths have taken place in their lineage in the past, particularly if the deceased was a suicide or was executed in punishment for a crime. Such a ghost may however be regarded as a source of misfortunes by a Nāyar household of another lineage or by a household of one of the lower castes, expecially it the deceased died on its land or was in some way connected with it. It is then enshrined as an alien ghost in the garden of this house.

769 613 566 564 782 Most commonly, an alien ghost housed in a Nāyar garden is that of a former serf of the property group, of one of the "exterior" agricultural laboring castes of Pulayans, Parayans or Pānans. The legends of such ghosts are nowadays often forgotten, but several Nāyars told me that they are likely to be the ghosts of serfs who died after a quarrel with their masters or who were actually killed by them. The ghost is hostile to the *taravād* as a group and demands regular sacrifices if misfortune is to be averted. It is more hostile and capricious than are lineage ghosts, although it can also afford a certain vague protection to the *taravād* if it is correctly propitiated. Propitiations are made annually by a person of the ghost's own caste, often a Parayan or Pulayan of a family now serving the Nāyar property group. The propitiant's fee and the materials for the offering are provided by the *taravād*.

An alien ghost tends to be angered by persons who walk near its shrine at times other than those of propitiations. Some ghosts are angered only if people approach them round midnight or midday. At night, however, ghosts are able to wander some distance away from their shrines, so that it is possible to approach and offend them without being conscious of trespassing. In case of sickness or misfortune, the astrologer [787] may diagnose that someone of the *taravād* has unwittingly offended the ghost and may order an emergency offering. After he has made the sacrifice, the low caste propitiant is likely to become possessed by the ghost and, while in a state of frenzy, [578] to declare its satisfaction or to order further offerings. He may also take the opportunity to voice any grievances harbored by the *taravād's* low caste servants against its *kāranavan*.

A ghost of this kind may occasionally harm someone from outside its hosts' *taravād* who walks on their land at night. It could also harm its low caste propitiant if he failed in the correct performance of the rites. Usually, however, its attacks are confined to its hosts.

The ghost of such a hostile servant is to be distinguished from that of a servant who died heroically and voluntarily in the service of his Nāyar masters. Many Nāyar *taravāds* have legends of faithful serfs who died defending their masters' house during war, saved the lives of women and children, rescued their patrons from accidental death, or committed suicide in grief when a Nāyar patron had been killed. After death the ghosts of these servants are housed along with the *taravād's* lineage ghosts and are honored in ancestral propitiations. Nāyars point out that their heroism even makes the difference of caste irrelevant, for food is offered to them before it is offered

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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a
washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a
sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-
owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf.
One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he
had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had
him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and
disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune
until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit
had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local
[794] government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[613] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of
commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally
enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her
annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes
such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more
minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants
of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes
in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high
castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing
imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed
by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements
both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks
before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the court-
yards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons'
wrath.

769 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
184 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
776 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
796 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
564 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple; a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of
564 the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves
787 control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

627 wife, his matrilineal juniors were believed to be especially likely to hire sorcerers to
613 harm her. For they would fear that their *kāranavan* might secretly convey to his wife
152 gifts and cash which belonged to his *taravād*. Yet without their *kāranavan's* support
754 they would be unable to enter an open group conflict with the *taravād* of his wife.
182 The belief that affines might practice sorcery, and the existence of ritual remedies against such attacks, therefore provided for the expression of projected aggression against persons of other lineages within the caste. I do not know whether Nāyars did, in fact, hire sorcerers to harm their affines, or merely suspected this of others, but it seems very probable that they did. If so, sorcery also provided a covert mode for the expression of direct aggression outside the lineage too. It must be noticed that although, in the case cited, these hostilities arose as much in the conflict of interests between the *kāranavan* and his matrilineal kin as between the *kāranavan's* wife and her husband's *taravād*, their institutionalized expression was not allowed to disrupt the *taravād*. For the *kāranavan's* matrilineal kin could not practice, and could not be suspected of practicing, sorcery against the *kāranavan* himself. Instead, members of the *kāranavan's* lineage were believed to move (and probably did move) against his wife's lineage as a group, thus endangering the solidarity of the marriage but indirectly promoting unity within each lineage.

564 Turning to the relations between castes, it is obvious that as endogamous groups
578 of different rank, occupation and wealth, castes were in many contexts outgroups to
152 each other whose interests were opposed. As landlords and noncultivating tenants,
182 the Brahmans and Nāyars wished to exploit the lower castes for their labor; conversely,
754 the lower castes wished to obtain as much compensation as possible from the higher castes. In these circumstances there was great realistic potential for hostility between castes, quite apart from the fact that the internal unity of each caste probably required the displacement of considerable additional aggression toward outgroups in other castes. Organized physical aggression between castes was, however, not feasible. For castes were economically and politically interdependent and linked by hereditary, interhousehold service ties. The lower castes could not rise up against the higher castes who employed them and held political power, and the higher castes could not wantonly harrass the lower castes on whom they depended for services. Instead, it was in the relations between castes that the institutions of witchcraft and sorcery were most prominent. The general tendency was for the Nāyars to accuse the lower castes of these evils. This is understandable, for the Nāyars with their wealth and authority had particular reason to suspect the lower castes of envy and hidden hatred. This generalized projection of aggression toward the lower castes served to enhance the internal unity of the Nāyar caste. At the same time, the open expression of aggression against particular low caste persons was institutionally controlled. For the astrologer did not customarily name his client's enemy, and even if the Nāyar had his own suspicions, open accusations of witchcraft and sorcery were not permitted.

769 The lower castes were considered peculiarly appropriate propitiants for alien
564 ghosts, and only low caste people could voluntarily undergo possession by them.
787 This suggests that the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost, like the fear of
152 witchcraft and sorcery, expressed in a disguised manner the Nāyars' projected aggres-
182 sion against the lower castes. The association between lower castes and alien ghosts
[766] was, for Nāyars, indeed appropriate, for both were ritually polluting. Among Nāyars, the corpses of persons who die violently or from epidemic are unusually polluting and

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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their ghosts unusually dangerous. Instead of being burned by their matrilineal kin, the corpses of these persons are buried hastily by men of the washermen's caste—a caste particularly associated with demon propitiation and voluntary ghost possession. The spirits of these victims become alien ghosts. In their anger they may possess and cause injury to persons of any caste in their community. But only the lower castes can induce shamanistic possession by them, and it is chiefly (some say only) the lower castes who can control them to work good or ill. Appropriately, Nāyars believe that low caste witches perform additional rites connected with highly polluting objects and places in order to enhance their evil power. Witches, for example, are believed to procure a magical substance by abstracting the foetus from the body of a pregnant woman and boiling it in a cremation ground, to the accompaniment of spells to a favorite ghost or patron demon.

There is, however, a qualitative difference between the Nāyar fear of direct attack from an alien ghost and the fear of witchcraft or sorcery. An element of morality enters into the former fear, even though alien ghosts are more wanton and capricious than lineage ghosts. Although they are malevolent and hateful, alien ghosts must, like lineage ghosts, be respected and propitiated, and there is a feeling that they have the right to be as they are. When they are associated with regular cults of the *taravād* and the village, moreover, alien ghosts can also afford some vague measure of protection from misfortune to those Nāyars who conscientiously arrange for their propitiation. It follows, therefore, that the alien ghost attached to a *taravād* or a village temple acts in some measure as a kind of conscience for the Nāyar in his relations with low caste people. For a Nāyar *taravād* which arranges grand festivals for its alien ghosts, lavishing gifts on the low caste officiants who propitiate them and represent them as oracles, is also likely to be a *taravād* which has good relations with its lower caste servants in all contexts of living. In the case of the Nāyar relation to alien ghosts of his *taravād* and his village, as in the case of his relation to lineage ghosts, the concept of reprojection of the superego may therefore be appropriate, as well as that of the simple projection of aggressive id impulses. For while there seems no doubt that the Nāyar projects on to alien ghosts some of the aggression which he has toward the lower castes, just as he projects onto lineage ghosts some of the aggression he feels toward matrilineal elders, these ghosts act also as stern monitors of his conduct in relationships, respectively, with the lower castes and with matrilineal kin.

The situation is somewhat different with regard to beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery. It is true that a Nāyar who has recently wronged an untouchable or an affine may be one most likely to suspect untouchables or affines of attacks by sorcery. But he does not—at least openly—phrase the attack in terms of justifiable retaliation for his own wrongdoing. Instead, he speaks of some anonymous affine or low caste person who, out of his own envy and wickedness, has used his evil power over a patron ghost in order to harm an innocent person. Nor does the Nāyar respond to the attacks of witches and sorcerers by humble propitiation of the possessing demon. Instead he engages a low caste practitioner of his own to exorcise the demon with the help of a superior ghostly power. Thus, while both the belief in sorcery and the public cults of alien ghosts probably reveal, indirectly, the projection of Nāyar aggression against out-groups, they operate in different social contexts. Witchcraft and sorcery are regarded, by Nāyars who are the recipients of these attacks, as the evil work of envious persons against those more successful than themselves. They are seen as covert substitutes for

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[28] and the initiation rites[29] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony. 796 782

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas. [354] [801]

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted. [825] [787]

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and 782 796 564 [533] [534]

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KURUP NÂYARS.

*141 *564 [114] The number examined, 8, is not, of course, enough on which to base dependable averages. The men of this clan are—judging by the average such as it is—the tallest of all those examined. Tall, straight, well-bred looking men they are, carrying with them an air of independence and self-respect as one of the old fighting clans. It will be observed that the cephalic length is greater than the average for all the Nâyars, while the cephalic index is less, showing that they are longer headed, and more dolichocephalic than the average Nâyar. Again, the measure of vertex to chin is much greater than in any other clan; and their faces are narrower. The index $\frac{\text{Bizygomatic} \times 100}{\text{Vertex to chin}}$ gives the Nambûtiri one of 69.5, all the Nâyars excluding the Kurups 66.2, and the Kurups 64.5.

[551] The men are called by their clan name, Râma Kurup, Krishna Kurup, Gôvinda Kurup. The name Rama seems to be a favourite one, as four out of eight were so called.

Ages ranging between 20 and 72 *.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Averages of 8.	To stature =100.
Stature	174·9	163·4	167·1	...
Height, sitting	88·8	82·9	85·7	51 3
Do. kneeling	130·3	120·2	124·1	74·3
Span	184·8	173·0	178·6	106·8
Chest	89·4	78·3	82·4	49·3
Shoulders	42·2	38·8	40·4	24·2
Left cubit	51·0	45·1	47·5	28·4
Left hand length	20·8	18·2	19·3	11·5
Do. width	8·8	7·7	8·2	...
Left middle finger	12·3	10·9	11·5	6·9
Hips	28·4	24·5	26·4	15·2
Left foot length	28·0	24·9	26·4	15·2
Do. width	9·5	8·0	8·8	...
Cephalic length	20·6	18·9	19·5	11·7
Do. width	14·6	13·4	14·0	...
Do. index	74·6	68·9	72·0	..
Bigoniac	10·9	9·6	10·3	...
Bizygomatic	13·7	12·3	13·1	...
Maxillo-zygomatic index	83·5	76·7	79·6	...
Nasal length...	5·3	4·4	4·8	2·87
Do. width	3·9	3·4	3·7	...
Do. index	84·1	64·2	76·2	...
Vertex to tragus	14·3	12·3	13·2	7·9
Do. to chin	21·8	19·0	23·3	12·1
Middle finger to patella	13·0	3·6	9·2	5·51

[787] * The man who said he was by his horoscope 72 was put down by me as looking 58.

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unsuitability to the time in which they exist, which is 585
apparent amongst those societies more liable to change. 764

But whatever the reasons may be, the relations 182
between the sexes in Malabar are unusually happy. They seem to be more than commonly natural. The 593
most obvious reason for their being so is that they are less influenced by considerations of property than elsewhere. The desire to maintain property within the [421]
family is the curse of all natural relations between the sexes. What strange customs has it not put upon mankind! We have some strange examples of these in Southern India, as when a woman is married to the door-post of the house, and the house owner begets children on her to inherit his property; or when a man marries his child to a woman, and himself begets children on her, and the individual who stands in the position of father may be but a few years older than the son. But we need not look farther than Europe for anomalous customs which inhibit the working of the law of natural selection. Malabar is fairly free from unfortunate customs, and it is perfectly fair to say the marital relation amongst the Nâyars is more than commonly natural.

A description of the ceremonies and formalities 588
connected with the marital connexion will now be [127]
attempted. The first of these, described as "most peculiar, distinctive, and unique," is the Tâli-kettu-kalyânam. The details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony itself, in some form, is essential, and must be performed for every Nâyar girl before she attains puberty. Tâli-kettu-kalyânam means marriage by tying the tâli, or ceremony of tying the tâli, a small golden ornament, worn on the neck, the ordinary badge of marriage amongst the Dravidian peoples.

The following account was given by M.R.Ry. 564
K. R. Krishna Menon, retired Sub-Judge, to the Com- 613
mission:— 588

"The Tâli-kettu-kalyânam is somewhat analogous to what a Dévadâsi (dancing girl attached to pagodas) of other countries undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhûs, a Kshatriya,—and among the Chárna sect, a Nedungâdi,—is invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and in the presence of friends and castemen ties tâli round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined [787]

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[787]
along with those of the boys of her Enangan (a recognised member of one's own clan) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers, is marked out as a fit person to tie the tâli, and a day is fixed for the tâli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Káranavan of the boy's family. On the appointed day the boy is invited to a house near that of the girl, where he is fed with his friends by the
[574]
head of the girl's family. The feast is called 'Ayani Unu,' and the boy is thenceforth called 'Manaválan' or 'Pillai' bridegroom. From the house in which the Manaválan is entertained, a procession is formed, preceded by men with sword and shield shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her taravâd, to meet the other procession, and after meeting the Manaválan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the pandal erected for that purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour and there his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths on the occasion. The Manaválan is then taken to the centre of the pandal where bamboo-mats, carpets, and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside of the house, and after going round the pandal three times, places her at the left side of the Manaválan, and the father of the girl then presents a new cloth tied in a kambli to the pair, and with this new cloth (technically called 'mantravadi') they change their dress. The wife of the Káranavan of the girl's taravâd, if she be of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting anklets, etc. The Purohita called 'Elayatu' (a low class of Brâhmans) then gives the tali to the Manaválan, and the family astrologer shouts 'Muhurtham' (auspicious hour), and the Manaválan, putting his sword on the lap, ties tali round the girl's neck, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families a Brâhmini sings certain songs intended to bless the couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a certain Nayâr who is versed in songs performs the office. The boy and the girl are then carried by Enangans to a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank or river, holding each other's hands. After changing cloths, they come home preceded by a procession, which varies in importance according to the wealth of the girl's family. Tom-toms and elephants usually form part of the procession, and saffron water is sprinkled. When they come home the doors of the house are all shut, which the Manaválan is required to force open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt

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"The variations of the Sambandham are the Pudamuri, Vastradánam, Uzhamporukkuka, Vitáram Kayaruka, etc., which are local expressions hardly understood beyond the localities in which they are used, but there would be hardly a Malayali who would not readily understand what is meant by *Sambandham tudan guga* (to begin Sambandham). The meaning of this phrase which means "to marry" is understood throughout Kéralam in the same way, and there can be no ambiguity or mistake about it. 585 184

"It is thus found that Sambandham is the principal word denoting marriage among Marumakkattayam Nâyars. It will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, that the principal features of this Sambandham ceremony, all over the Kéralam, are in the main the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically: the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony: the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place: the presentation of the *danam* (gifts) to the Brahmans: the sumptuous banquet: the meeting of the bride and the bridegroom,—are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted Sambandhams in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to, are gone through at all Sambandhams among respectable Nâyars, and I would further say that they ought to be gone through at every Sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the Sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of Sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the Putamuri, or Vastradanam, as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of Sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of Sambandham I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. Of course my description will be borne out by the evidence that is before us. The preliminary ceremony, in every Putamuri, is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and the bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes 585 787 184

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184 agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the
[787] marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's Kâranavan, and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and
[574] the bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth; and this preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all Putamuris in North Malabar, is called 'Putamuri Kurikkal,' but is unknown in South Malabar.

"Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the Putamuri, the bridegroom visits his Kâra-
[584] navans and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and
[113] nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed the bridegroom proceeds, after sunset, to the
[564] house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends to seats
[431] provided in the tekkini, or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*danam*) or money gifts to the
[579] Brahmans assembled. After this the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to
[187] appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *padinhatta* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house, called padinhatta, in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated, and turned into a bed-room for the occasion. There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps, and *Ashtamangaliam*, which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangaliam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of the cocoanut tree, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, burning fire, and a small round wooden box called 'cheppu' made in a particular fashion. These will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his groom's-man enters the room through the eastern door. The bride, dressed in rich cloth and bedecked with jewels, enters the room through the western door, accompanied by her aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the Ashtamangaliam and lit-up lamps in front of her. The groom's-man then hands over to the bridegroom a few pieces of new cloth, and the bridegroom puts them into the hands of the bride. This being done, the elderly lady who accompanied the bride, sprinkles rice over

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monial when copied meaninglessly, is surely food for painful reflection.

The ceremony to be described is not one of cake and wine, for the doings of people who have reached that bathos have little interest to the anthropologist, though they may have some to the *observer* of social diversions, but the genuine ceremony as done in orthodox fashion in South Malabar without modern adornment will now be described. My informant says in the first place [582] the man should not enter into Sambandham with a woman until he is 30. Now-a-days, when change is running wild, the man is often much less. In [181] North Malabar, which is much more conservative than [184] the south, it was, however, my experience that Sambandham was rare before 27 on the side of the man. And now continue with the Note.* "The Kâra- 585 navan and the women † of his household choose the 564 bride, and communicate their choice to the intending 613 bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are informally consulted, and if they [787] agree, the astrologer is sent for and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the Sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and when on the point of leaving they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have Sambandham with—(naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony, the proposal is accepted with pleasure and the party (from the bridegroom's house) returns home."

Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for [574] the evening, and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same age as the bridegroom (for elders never accompany him) are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M. and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the Taravâd),

* Of which what follows is an abstract.

† My correspondent uses the word "Ladies." I prefer women, a finer word.

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Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl-wife, the Ammâyi as they call her (literally "uncle's wife"). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate house of her husband's Taravâd, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (tâlam) and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated on a mat, and a burning lamp and a nazhi (1 measure) of rice and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women [married or not I cannot say] takes up a plantain and puts a piece of it in the Ammâyi's mouth; a little ceremony called Madhuram Tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She lives in her husband's house for a few days and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, gifts of the senior women of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. [431]

"In a big Taravâd, where there are many women, the Ammâyi does not, as a rule, disperse sympathy and good will in the household, and if she happens to live temporarily in her husband's house, as is sometimes though very rarely the case in south Malabar, and to be the wife of the Kâranavan, it is observed that she gets, more than her share of whatever good things may be going; hence the proverb 'Ammâyi Ammayê Kallinmel Vechchittu Mattoru Kallu Kondu Nârâyana'—'Place Ammâyi Amma on a stone and grind her with another stone.'" [539]

Yet one more extract—a reference taken from my notes. The Rev. S. Mateer, author of a well-known book on Travancore, where he resided something over a quarter of a century I think, informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Travancore—that he had "known an instance of 6 brothers keeping 2 women, 4 husbands to one, and 2 to the other. In a case where 2 brothers cohabited with one woman and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition." I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nâyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), 595

595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in [787] the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is [824] fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

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event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

"*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

"Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

"*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage 782
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and [357]
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a [354]
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword 796
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

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787 performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his
796 forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it
[785] against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera.
[465] The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velichchappâd about three days afterwards going to perform
791 elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The
796 careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

769 Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion
782 must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

[113] * The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the school-master. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2½ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

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are truly difficult. Members of the brotherhood are 754
bound to secrecy by solemn oaths, and the secrets of 795
their craft are not allowed lightly to pass to any out- 564
sider. A member of the brotherhood may have one or more disciples or apprentices who are in the first place bound to strict obedience. These apprentices fill vacancies in the brotherhood.

He who would be a member of the Ôḍi cult falls at the feet of him whom he would have as master, and begs for initiation into the mysteries. The master tries to dissuade him, but the would-be Ôḍiyan persists; and then, when assent is given, comes the trial. He follows his master to a lonely place by night. The master disappears in mist, and then re-appears as some terrible beast, now standing still, now rushing furiously towards the novice as if to tear him in pieces. If he stands still and unperturbed the novice is considered to have fulfilled *that* test. He is then required to pass the night alone in the forest, which he is made to believe is peopled with strange beings howling horribly. When he has satisfied the master that he is not afraid, he is subjected to other tests, and he is eventually accepted as a novice. He is introduced formally to the brotherhood on a certain selected day, when, having invited them to a feast, pûja is made to the dread spirit worshipped by them—Nîli of Kallaḍikôd or Kallaḍikôd Nîli, as she is called (Kallaḍikôd is the *place* name), through whose aid the Ôḍiyan works his devilment. Flesh and liquor are consumed, and the novice is taught how to procure the magical *Pilla thilum* (infant oil).

The principal ingredient to be used in preparing this is a fœtus of some 6 or 7 months' growth. The Ôḍiyan fixes his eye on some woman, who may be of any caste other than his own, in her first pregnancy. Then, on a selected day, usually a Friday, he proceeds to her house at midnight, provided, that is, he meets with no inauspicious omen on the way. I am not sure what omens are auspicious or the contrary; but at any rate the Ôḍiyan [787] returns home should he meet with an omen which is unfavourable, and starts out again some other night. Transforming himself into a dog, a bullock, a cat or some other quadruped, he walks thrice round the house, shaking vigorously a cocoanut-shell containing *gurusi*, a compound of turmeric water, lime and other substances, the colour of which is red. The woman whose appearance is desired comes out. She cannot help herself. If locked in she bangs her head against the wall, and yells

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much the same part as did its maternal and affinal kinsmen to a patrilineal lineage in the lower castes. Individual *enangar* were moreover often of course affines (*bandhu*) to members of the lineage. But among Nayars, the marriage-tie was so slender that individual affinal bonds were not, it seems, strong enough to unite the lineage to the rest of the sub-caste group. This was achieved instead by a hereditary relationship between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of marriage ties between them.

In these retainer sub-caste groups the *tāli* must be tied by an *enangan*. Each girl had a separate bridegroom, usually a youth who might have already formed *sambandham* relationships of his own. The *tāli*-tiers were chosen at a local assembly. The choice was made by the village astrologer, who compared the horoscopes of the girls with those of suitable young men and fixed the auspicious date and time for the ceremony to take place.

In Kiriyattil, Samantan, and royal lineages, whose women frequently or invariably married men of higher sub-caste, the *tāli*-tier was chosen from the appropriate higher sub-caste. Women of village headmen's lineages were commonly 'tied' by men of their district headman's lineage, and Sāmantan women and Cochin princesses by Nambūdiri Brahmans. Calicut princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of Kodungalur, one of the ancient ruling lineages which had been conquered by Calicut. Similarly, Walluvanād princesses had the *tāli* tied by men of the lineage of Beypore, a more ancient and therefore higher-ranking lineage than their own of an adjacent small kingdom which was also feudatory to Calicut. In these sub-castes the 'bridegroom' was usually an elderly man.

The account which follows was given by Sūdra Nayars of Pālakkara, the Cochin village where I worked. In Pālakkara, the *tāli*-rite in its full form has not been performed for twenty-two years, and, like many of the traditional rites of Nayars, it is doubtful if it will ever be performed again. This description refers to this most recently held ceremony, at which the *tālis* were tied for nineteen girls, ranging in age from two to twelve, of a lineage comprising twelve property-groups.

The ceremony required the co-operation of the whole village, which at that time was coterminous with the *tara*. It was held in the lineage's oldest ancestral house. A shed of bamboo and palm-fronds was erected before the house, the first corner-post, of areca-palm wood, being planted ceremonially by the carpenter. A man of the temple-servant caste of Kurups drew a picture of the Malabar goddess Bhagavadi on the floor of the shed, of the type drawn in the village Bhagavadi temple at festivals to the goddess. Nayar men of the village then went and cut down a branch of the milk-exuding tree of Bhagavadi from near the village temple. This they planted near the corner-post in the floor of the shed, in order, informants said, 'to bring Bhagavadi to the *tarawād* and set up a temple in the house'. A plank of wood of the same tree was set in the shed for each girl to sit on in turn.

All *enangar* of the lineage, and representatives of every other Nayar house in the village, attended the four days of ceremonies. On the first morning, the girls went in procession to the shrine of the lineage's *dharma devi* (goddess of moral law). This goddess, represented by a stone image, is the lineage's private Bhagavadi. She is propitiated annually with cooked food to ward off sickness and misfortune. Similar offerings were made now, and the procession returned. Young men of the lineage then went to meet the bridegrooms, who arrived on elephants with their male age-mates, accompanied by music. At the gate married women of the lineage met them carrying brass plates each containing a lit wick, paddy, rice, and a spray of coconut flowers. The bridegrooms' feet were washed by brothers of the girls and they were seated in the marriage-shed. Near the picture of Bhagavadi were laid paddy and rice, coconut flowers, the sacred brass lamp of the household, and a tray of eight auspicious objects (*ashtamangalyam*). These included a woman's loin-cloth, a rouge-box, a bell-metal mirror, an arrow, a coconut-spray, rice, paddy and a lit wick; they figure also in the Nambūdiri

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marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

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588 coconut in half, returned amid music, and entered the middle room. The barber woman dressed her and threw rice on her head.

[604] The girl's mother's brother's wife then carried a plank of the milk tree into the marriage shed, walked round with it three times, and placed it on a mat over rice and paddy. The Tandan of the local group must be present to witness the rites. The mother's brother's wife [782] and other women, or in some areas the *kāranavan*, led out the girl who, with her face hidden by a cloth, walked three times round and sat on the plank. The barber man instructed her to perform an offering of rice and water to the household lamp and the post supporting the south-east corner of the shed, which had previously been set up by the carpenter with ceremonies at an auspicious time. The girl threw more rice to the cardinal points, the earth, and the sky. Gold and silver coins, salt, rice, paddy, turmeric, charcoal, and pieces of old cadjan leaf from the house-thatch were then tied separately in leaves and placed in a mud pot. The mouth of [789] the pot was covered with a leaf and tied with string. The girl sprinkled rice over the pot, broke a hole in the lid, and picked out one of the articles, which was examined as an augur of her destiny and of the number of children she would bear. She then twisted off a coconut from a bunch hanging at the corner of the shed. Each of her relatives threw a new cloth over her head. Half of the cloths were given to the barber, who at this point uncovered the girl's face and head and poured coconut water from a leaf of the pipal tree on to a silver and a copper coin which he had placed upon her head. Her *kāranavan* asked the astrologer if the auspicious time had arrived, after which the barber woman handed the *tāli* to the mother's brother's wife who tied it round the girl's neck. The barber woman poured water on the girl's hands: this she threw upwards three times and once each to the cardinal points. A lit cotton wick, steeped in oil, was twisted round a rod of bamboo stuck in a young coconut. The girl was required to look at the sun and at this wick. She then walked three times round a coconut tree in the garden, pouring water at its root. This concluded the ceremonies. Unfortunately, I have no record of whether the girl was further secluded after the rites were over.

[604] Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, p. 288) reports that the *tāli* was tied 'either by the maternal or paternal aunt or by the would-be mother-in-law, if the husband for her has [582] already been selected'. All of these kinswomen (mother's brother's wife, father's sister and husband's mother) are real or potential mothers-in-law because of cross-cousin marriage. My own informants and also Aiyappan state that the rite included an initiation into cookery: the girl was made to grind condiments on a grindstone and to pretend to cook milk porridge before the *tāli* was tied. Aiyappan reports that the barber woman instructed her, and at the end said: 'Prepare sweet porridge, give it to father and mother, and to me, and keep what remains in the *uri*' (a rope support to keep vessels suspended).

This initiation rite, while, like the Nayar one, symbolizing the girl's attainment of maturity and her passage to the status of a married woman, is adapted to the occupation and kinship of Tiyyars. It is significant that to attain 'wifehood' a Tiyyar girl must grind condiments and make porridge – a foreshadowing of her domestic duties as wife.

588 The mother's brother's wife and the father's sister are preferred mothers-in-law for a 582 Tiyyar girl. The fact that either could be replaced by the actual prospective mother-in-law if the girl were already betrothed proves that they acted in the rite as potential mothers-in-law. The mother's brother's wife is of course suited to become a girl's mother-in-law in a matrilineal system which recognizes strong paternal claims (see Fortes 1953, p. 200). Marriage of her son to her husband's niece mitigates the proverbial conflict between cross-cousins, while 58 cementing the relationship between father and son who frequently live together and co-605 operate in cultivation. The father's sister's claim is equally strong. In this marriage the boy commonly returns to his mother's brother in his natal house, the girl remaining in her paternal [593] house where she has been brought up. The matrilineal cross-cousin marriage of a man is

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presence of *mangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kāsam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *tarawād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *tarawād* sit before Mannans and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pradhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *ouar*.

613 Again in all the groups studied the
276 tarawād is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-
564 gods (*nagas*) who reside in the small grove in the south-east corner of the ancestral gardens.
182 If they are offended, the snakes inflict the *tarawād* with barrenness among women, disease, and
184 child-deaths. They are propitiated by the low caste of Pulluvar. A Pulluvar and his wife
782 come to the Nayar or Tiyyar grove and draw figures of the serpents in green, red, yellow, and
787 black. They sing songs of entreaty to the snakes, and play on a musical instrument, while one or more women of the propitiating *tarawād*, who have observed sexual continence and food taboos for several days previously, dance round the figures with hair streaming. The snakes then 'enter [illegible] bodies' of these women, who behave in a dissociated manner and speak with the voice of the possessing snake-spirit, announcing to *tarawād* members the kind of propitiation necessary to overcome their wrath. Since they are the guardians of the *tarawād*, are jealous of the marital sexuality of women born into it, can inflict them with barrenness, and periodically 'enter into' them, it seems likely that these totemic snakes are unconsciously regarded as phallic symbols of the *tarawād*'s male forbears (whether matrilineal or patrilineal). Their 'possession' of the women would thus reflect the incestuous desires of women towards men of the parental generation in the *tarawād*, and secondarily towards their brothers.

593 I have discussed in general terms the probable existence of unconscious incestuous
182 desires between the individual and members of the parental generation and, as an extension of this, between siblings. We must now face the problem of whether, in the matrilineal castes, a regular Oedipus complex exists: that is, of whether a man unconsciously wishes to kill his father and appropriate his mother, and whether a girl harbours murderous wishes towards her mother and incestuous ones towards her father.[1]

There seems little doubt that in the matrilineal as in the patrilineal castes, a 'normal' Oedipus complex must develop in early infancy. Even among South Malabar Nayars the physiological function of the male in procreation is clearly acknowledged, and a child is expected to resemble its father as well as its matrilineal kin. The Nayar infant must, moreover, be aware of the marital relationship between its parents, since it commonly sleeps in the
593 mother's room until the age of about four or until the next sibling is born. At about the age of
604 five to six, however, a change takes place in the relationship between a South Malabar Nayar
182 child and its parental generation, and thus, we may suppose, in its unconscious attitudes to these figures. A boy now comes under the discipline of his mother's brothers, and a relationship of reverence with underlying hostility begins to be formed. A girl becomes aware that her mother's brothers are her ultimate guardians and, though she may still approach them freely, she must submit to them. The father drops into the background. In a traditional household, whereas he might play with them freely as babies, he may not now interfere in the upbringing of his children. Even today, he may be already divorced and replaced by another husband: in Palakkara sixteen out of seventy Nayar sibling groups containing children under
[578] the age of fifteen had no contact with the *genitor* or his kin. The mother's brother thus takes over a great part of the role of *pater*. The relationship admits, however, greater conscious hostility than does the patrilineal father-child relationship. Despite the reverence demanded in public, Nayar men sometimes remark privately that they harbour murderous feeling towards their *kāranavan*: several have in fact killed him. Such conscious hostility to the father would be almost unheard of in a high patrilineal caste. The partial avoidance required between a man and his sister's son, and the extreme formality of their behaviour, reflect this underlying hostility. The relationship with the elder brother is, in etiquette, modelled on that

[114] [1] My data, as far as Malabar matriliny is concerned, contradict Malinowski's (1916) theory that the Oedipus complex is absent from the start in matrilineal societies and is replaced by the wish to marry the sister and kill the maternal uncle. They confirm Ernest Jones's (1924) conclusion that a normal Oedipus complex exists in matrilineal as in patrilineal societies, but that in matriliny repressed incestuous desire for the mother is extended to an unusual degree to the sister, and much unconscious hostility to the father deflected towards the mother's brother. Roheim's (1950, ch. 3) refutation of Malinowski's view and his analysis of the Oedipus complex of Normanby Island are also relevant.

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambûdiri landlords, the *nâdâvari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tâli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tâli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kâranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kâranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tâli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

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588 [114] to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

[623] The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent [613] people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kārnavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the [787] *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the [791] presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar* [301] house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the [576] male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The [605] eldest girl's father's sister's son (*i.e.*, her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

595 175 [609] [114] the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 174 538 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 174 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 613 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the [787] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few [593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangar* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be. 843 613 [604] [593] [787] [842]

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?" 843 613 182 [604] 843 182 789

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter. 843

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it. 846 783

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar 853 846 608

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[924] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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775 spirits can be seen. At night their mouth is full of fire of different colours, but it
[776] throws out no rays. That it throws out no rays is important because therein is supposed to lie the distinction between an ordinary light and the fire in the mouth of a spirit.

The *Prētam* is supposed to hover round its burial place or the place of its accident. Everyone is warned off such a place at night time. The hours during which these
[754] *Prētams* appear are between 9 in the evening and 3 in the morning. It must be noticed here that the *Prētam* of a "black-magician," as distinct from a social magician like the *Kāniyān*, has more power to do mischief: it has more "*orenda*," so to say. The man who practises black magic invariably dies a violent death, and his *Prētam* hovers round the scene of his former activities.

782 "Man dreads above everything else," says S. Reinach,[1] "illness and death,
753 punishments inflicted by the angry spirits with which his imagination peoples this
776 world." This is absolutely true with regard to the Nāyars. Di[illegible] is generally
[754] believed either to be the outcome of offending a god or due to the magic performance of interested relations. Preventive sacrifice is very common, and every year all respectable Nāyar families perform some sort of propitiation ceremonies in the
[787] village temple. If a whole village is ravaged by some epidemic, the villagers inquire into the matter through the astrologer, and if he finds, as he usually does, that it is due to the wrath of the village god or goddess, ceremonies of various kinds are at once undertaken and goats are offered as sacrifice, and sometimes a *Desavalathu*, a procession of the people with images, around the village is performed.

75 But such occurrences are rare. Only epidemics are put down to the wrath of
775 offended gods. Other diseases as well as misfortunes are put down to the influence of *Prētams*, bribed into action by jealous or covetous relatives. When any great misfortune, such as a succession of deaths, happens in a family, the first thing that is done is to consult the astrologer, who is sure that a ghost is working it under the influence of magic. His prescription is, of course, counter-magic, to be performed by himself. An offence to a god can easily be rectified if one does some elementary sacrifices, but the performance of counter-magic is neither so inexpensive nor so
[75] easy. First of all one has to get rid of the evil already done. For that elaborate ceremonies may be necessary. Secondly, ceremonies to keep one immune from
755 future attacks are essential. If it is any woman who is possessed of the devil, and it is women who generally suffer from these things, an expensive and elaborate devil dance called *Kolam Thullal* has to be performed. For this the village has to be informed, and each family in the village is supposed to contribute something in kind to the expenses and take its share in the work. The ceremony is as follows:—

Preparations for the dance must begin a good many days beforehand. The *Kāniyān* of the village with twelve others of his people come to the house where the

[1] *Cults*, p. 27.

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
[789] self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a
[755] heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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361 The Nayars, like other Malayali Hindus, are not lovers
564 Habitations. of towns, but generally live in detached houses, with large compounds and good gardens. The strict customs of caste purity and impurity in former times made them desert places where they were liable to be polluted by the members of very low castes. They generally select the site of a house either on the margin of a fertile valley or ravine with bright green fields of rice in
351 front. The entrance to their compounds, which are often somewhat raised off the ground by laterite or mud walls, is at some little distance from the main house, and consists of a door in the centre of a strong gate-way, which is the first that attracts one's attention as the dwelling is approached. The gate is quaintly constructed, and the surroundings are exceptionally neat and
417 tidy. It is also essential that a stair or a ladder should lead up to it from the bank of a green level paddy flat, reminding one of the days when security of life and property depended upon one's own ability to laugh a seige to scorn; when a Nayar house was his castle, and when at the gate-way were posted retainers to keep watch and ward against enemies.
343 Seats for them to rest on, right and left, both outside and inside, a solid quaintly carved door and lintel, a room above approached by a ladder from inside, with windows, or openings whence shots were discharged on lawless intruders, and finally a thatched roof, complete the characterstics of a gate house.
351 Permission to build such a gate house was a rare privilege and
342 had to be obtained from the rulers, but with a change in the old order of things, this restriction has, like many others of the kind,
587 ceased to exist. The plan and other details of the structure of a Nayar house are determined in strict conformity with the principles of the ancient Hindu science of architecture based on astrology.[1] A compound or garden is first selected and measured out into a square plot and is then divided into four parts by imaginary lines running lengthwise and breadthwise through the centre or middle of it. Either the north-east or south-west portion is chosen for the site of a house, the former being pre-
564 ferred to the latter. The south-east corner is generally set apart as the family burial-ground. There are again special spots selected for the well, tank, cow-shed, serpent grove and the family deity. The selection of the site for the house is

1. Chandrika.

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space *(mittam)* in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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CHAPTER II.

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THE SUDRAS OF COCHIN.

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A. THE HIGH CASTE SUDRAS (NAYARS)

(Continued).

582 According to Nayar ideas the most desirable bride for a young man is the daughter of his maternal uncle.

588 There are two forms of marriage in vogue among the
585 Marriage customs. Nayars, namely, the *Thálikettu kalyánam* (*táli* tying ceremony), and the *Sambandham* (the customary nuptial union of man and woman), the first of which is performed for every girl before puberty, and the second, the real adult marriage, is celebrated after she comes of age. The *táli* tying for every girl is compulsory before she arrives at maturity,[1] and the omission or neglect of it
[688] will place her and her family under a ban; for, it is considered
[782] a religious impurity for a girl to attain puberty before the performance of this ceremony. There is however a tendency for these restrictions to be overlooked now-a-days.

588 In every *taravád* or family, the ceremony is performed once in ten or twelve years, and all the girls down to the baby in the cradle, who have not already undergone this ceremony, are married in this fashion for the sake of economy. When, in a family, the *táli* tying ceremony has to be performed for a girl or a number of girls, the *káranavan* or senior member thereof, at a meeting of the friends and relatives of
[787] the family, sends for the local astrologer, who after examining the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls determines the auspicious hour for it as well as for certain subsidiary rites

[784] 1. As a rule, the tali tying ceremony is performed before the girl attains puberty, but sometimes it is performed afterwards. In the latter case, the girl is prohibited from entering temples during the period intervening between the attainment of puberty and the tali tying ceremony.

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which precede or follow it.[1] Information is then given to the relatives, and friends of the family regarding the performance of the ceremony on a certain date, when invitations are sent around to those that should attend the wedding. The ceremony then opens with a fixing of the post[2] for the erection of a pandal, which is tastefully decorated and in which the ceremony is performed. The male members of the village are invited and treated to a feast followed by the distribution of betel leaf, arecanuts and tobacco for chewing.[3] In the Cochin State, every time the ceremony is performed in a privileged family, or in one wishing to obtain privileges, a member thereof visits His Highness the Raja with presents (*thirumulkázhcha*), and requests his permission for the celebration. Similar presents are also made to the Nambuthiri *jenmies* by their tenants and others attached to the *illams*. It is interesting to note that certain privileges, such as sitting on grass mats, having a procession with an elephant, beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, worshipping of the Sun on a platform especially constructed, have often to be obtained from the ruler of the State.[4] Then follows the *Ashtamangalyam Vekkal* (procession to the marriage pandal to place the eight auspicious things, namely rice, paddy, tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking glass, a well washed cloth, lighted fire, and a small wooden box called cheppu) which is a formal beginning of the ceremony, or if necessary, earlier still, and for which a *Brúhmani* is invited. On the night previous to the ceremony, the girl neatly dressed and adorned in her best is taken by her caste-women to a reserved spot in the house (*Patinnóttu Iruttal*, seating on the western side), where some ceremonies are gone through, and the *Brúhmani* or *Pushpini* entertains the party with her songs, chiefly *Purinic*. Soon after, the girl and the female members of the family, dressed in gay attire and decked with costly ornaments, come out in procession to the pandal where the

1. The village astrologer is entitled to be formally invited. He makes certain predictions at the sight of the messenger about the results of the marriage. When he arrives at the gate of the house, he is formally received, and he makes certain other predictions from the movement of the flame of a lamp as to the result, happy or otherwise, of the marriage. In the latter case, he suggests some remedies.
2. For this also an auspicious hour is fixed by the astrologer.
3. A few important members sit together and prepare a kind of list for the purchase of provisions for the feast and other expenses.
4. Such privileges are permanently enjoyed by certain aristocratic families. Some obtain them on marriage occasions.

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588 same formality is again gone through. The girl has to sit
[778] with her face veiled. After going round the pandal, three, five or seven times, a cutting of the jasmine placed in a brass vessel is carried by the Elayad or family priest, who, mounted on an elephant with it, and accompanied by a grand procession with the beating of drums, a display of fire-works, and the joyous shouts of men and women, goes to the nearest Bhagavathi or other temple, where the plant and the *tâli* (marriage badge) placed in a vessel are consecrated by the performance of a *puja* by the temple priest. The party then return home with it. The night previous to the ceremony is
[574] marked by a feast called *Athâzham*. Next day, the girl who is again properly dressed and well adorned, is led to the reserved spot or the central chamber in which are placed a lighted brass lamp and a vessel full of rice. A short time before the auspicious hour, she goes round the pandal or shed three times, and is led on by the *Brâhmani* to the worship of the Sun (*Adithyane Thozheekal*). In some cases this is done on the bare ground, and in others in a shed provided with a ceiling of plank previously erected for the occasion. After this the girl is seated in front of the shed and somewhat on its western side. The bridegroom or the *tâli* tier, who may be a Thirumulpâd in the case of several girls, is invited and lodged in a house near the bride's family, where he and his friends are treated to a feast called *Ayal* or *Ayini Oonu*. A short time before the auspicious hour, the bridegroom, armed with a sword and neatly dressed, starts in procession with his party to the bride's house, where, at the gate, he is received by a few male members with *ashtamangalyam* in their hands and seated conspicuously in the pandal. In some cases, there is a grand procession from the bride's house to meet the bridegroom's party. A male member of the family, either the maternal uncle or the brother of the bride, washes his feet, and brings the girl, who is already gaily dressed and bedecked with ornaments,
[431] into the pandal, round which she goes three times. She is then
[326] seated on his left side, and the girl's father makes presents of cloths (*manthrakodi*) in which bride and bridegroom dress
[787] themselves, and after the usual distribution of gifts to Brahmans and the Elayad, the latter hands over the *tâli* made by the village goldsmith, at the lucky moment mentioned

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by the Kaniyán or local astrologer, to the bridegroom who with the sword on his lap ties it round the neck of the girl. She is then required to hold an arrow and a looking glass. When several girls have to undergo the ceremony, a single Thirumulpád performs it or as many Thirumulpads as there are girls. The Thirumulpad gets one to eight rupees for each girl. As soon as the *táli* tying is over, certain formalities indicative of the wife's duties (giving the bridegroom betel to chew, giving him a vessel of water to wash his feet and some fruits to eat, etc.), are gone through, and after this, the *táli* tier is allowed to depart receiving his fee for the service rendered by him. The account given above is that of the ceremony performed in the aristocratic families of the State. Among the Nayars in the northern parts of the State as well as in other places, the Kaniyan or the village astrologer examines the horoscope or horoscopes of the girl or girls and those of the boys of the families of their *enangans*, selects the boy or boys fit to tie the *táli* and determines the auspicious hour, when information is also given to the *káranavan* of the boy's families regarding the proposal and a formal request to them to allow the boys to serve as bridegrooms. In the event of their willingness, preparation for the ceremony begins at once. The rites and the order in which they are performed differ in different places, and in different subdivisions of the same caste, but the general characteristics are the same throughout. In well-to-do families there is a *táli* tier for each girl, while in others, a young man is invited to tie the conjugal collar for one girl, and for others, the mother does it. The beating of drums, firing of pop-guns, the procession with elephant, and the worship of the Sun by the girl on a raised platform are all dispensed with. The other formalities except the *Bráhmani's* song in some places are the same as those described above. Added to the jollity of the occasion are the vociferous and joyous shouting of the parties of men arranged for the purpose, as also a peculiar sound produced by the women assembled there.

The married couple are taken inside the house, and the ceremony is practically over. The *Karayinmél Asán*, the headman of the village, plays an important part in the ceremony. In a conspicuous part of the pandal he is provided with a seat on a cot, on which are spread, a grass mat, a black blanket and

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she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

Sambandham.

The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs connected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bridegroom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kâranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bridegroom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly welcomed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Râmâyanam* or other sacred book, referring to marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read by the Asân or village school-master. Some music is also provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

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will also be found on a close and careful examination of facts, 585 that the principal features of this *sambandham* ceremony all 184 over Keralam, are, in the main, the same. As there are different local names denoting marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the [787] examination, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether the stars agree astrologically, the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony, the usual hours at which the ceremony takes place, the presentation of the *dánam* (gifts) to the Brahmans, the sumptuous banquet, the meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are the features which will invariably be found in all well conducted *sambandhams* in all parts of Kéralam alike. But here I would beg to state, that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all *sambandhams* among respectable Nayars, and I would further say, that they ought to be gone through at every *sambandham*, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of *sambandham*, with the particular incident attached to certain forms of *sambandham* in South Malabar. I shall describe the *Pudamuri* or *Vastraddnam* as celebrated in North Malabar, and show how the other forms of *sambandham* are related to it. I consider the *Pudamuri* form the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The preliminary ceremony in every *Pudamuri* is 585 the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom 184 by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride 787 in the presence of the relations of the bride and the bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down the results of his calculation on a piece of palmyra leaf with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan, one of which is handed over to the bride's *kúranavan* and the other to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the bride- [574] groom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the [431] former also receives presents in the shape of money or cloth, and this preliminary ceremony is invariably performed

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184 at all *Pudamuris* in North Malabar. It is called *Pudamuri*
[787] *Kodukkal* (giving pieces of cloth for dressing), and it is unknown in South Malabar.

Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the *Pudamuri*, the bridegroom visits his *kúranavans* and elders in caste to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nut, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset, to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house of the bride's party, and is conducted with his friends, to seats
[431] provided in the *tekkini* or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (*dánams*) or money gifts to the Brahmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now the time for the
(787) astrologer to appear and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the *patinjúttu* or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths and betel leaves and nuts. The cloths are placed in the western room of the house in which all religious and other important household ceremonies are usually performed. This room will be decorated and turned into a bed room for the occasion.
[354] There will be placed in the room a number of lighted lamps and *ashtamangalyam* which consists of eight articles symbolical of *mangalyam* or marriage. These are rice, paddy, the tender leaves of cocoanut trees, an arrow, a looking-glass, a well-washed cloth, lighted fire and a small round wooden box called a *cheppu* made in a peculiar fashion. They will be found placed on the floor of the room aforesaid as the bridegroom enters it. The bridegroom with his best man enters the room through the western door accompanied by the bride's aunt or some other elderly lady of her family. The bride stands facing east with the *ashtamangalyam* and lits up lamps, and the head and shoulders of the bride and bridegroom are touched, and the bridegroom immediately leaves the room, as he has to
[431] perform another duty. At the *tekkini* or southern hall, he now presents his elders and friends with cakes and betel leaves and

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the [564] barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to 852 purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* [789] through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole [789] ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this propitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which [787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

Agricultural ceremonies.

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a 825 low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days. In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kálamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the goddess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called, becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums, the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession. The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

Sásta or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasurama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicated them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhûtas* on the one hand, and *Prêtas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Izhuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
789 requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* [787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
783 spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
[753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
793 ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a por- [789] tion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykatta Pisichus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

588 invited to the girl's house at an auspicious hour appointed for the purpose, and, in the presence of friends and castemen, ties a tāli (marriage badge) round her neck, and goes away after receiving a certain fee for his trouble. [787] Among the other sects, the horoscope of the girl is examined along with those of her enangan (a recognised member of one's own class) families, and the boy whose horoscope is found to agree with hers is marked out as a fit person to tie the tāli, and a day is fixed for the tāli-tying ceremony by the astrologer, and information given to the Karanavan * (senior male in a tarwad) of the boy's family. The feast is called ayaniūnu, and the boy is thenceforth called Manavālan or Pillai (bridegroom). From the house in which the Manavālan is entertained a procession is formed, preceded by men with swords, and [613] shields shouting a kind of war-cry. In the meantime a procession starts from the girl's house, with similar men and cries, and headed by a member of her tarwad, to meet the other procession, and, after meeting the Manavālan, he escorts him to the girl's house. After entering the booth erected for the purpose, he is conducted to a seat of honour, and his feet are washed by the brother of the girl, who receives a pair of cloths. The Manavālan is then taken to the centre of the booth, where bamboo mats, carpets and white cloths are spread, and seated there. The brother of the girl then carries her from inside the house, and, after going round the booth three times, places her at the left side of the Manavālan. The father of the girl then presents new cloths tied in a kambli (blanket) to the pair, and with this [613] new cloth (called manthravadi) they change their dress. [564] The wife of the Karanavan of the girl's tarwad, if she be

* The rights and obligations of Karanavans are fully dealt with by Moore, Malabar Law and Custom, 3rd edition, 1905.

of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613]
on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564]
Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793]
to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787]
muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556]
a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533]
couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783]
a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534]
drums) and elephants usually form part of the proces- [231]
sion, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264]
boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586]
constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184]
Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765]
which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

589
184 Manavālan arrives in rich attire. He is often preceded by a sort of body guard with sword and shield who utter a curious kind of cry, and is met at the gate of the girl's house by a bevy of matrons with lamps and salvers decorated with flowers and lights, called talams. A man of the girl's family washes his feet, and he takes his seat in the pandal on the girl's right. Sometimes the girl's father at this stage presents new cloths (mantravādi or mantrokōdi) to the pair, who at once don them. The girl's father takes the tāli, a small round plate of gold about the size of a two-anna bit, with a hole at the top, from the goldsmith who is in waiting, pays him for it, [787] and gives it to the Manavālan. The karnavan or father of the girl asks the astrologer thrice if the moment has arrived, and, as he signifies his assent the third time, the Manavālan ties the tāli round the girl's neck amidst the shouts of those present. The Manavālan carries the girl indoors to the macchu, and feasting brings the day to [533] a close. Tom-toming and other music are of course incessant accompaniments throughout as on other festal occasions, and the women in attendance keep up a curious kind of whistling, called kurava, beating their lips with their fingers. On the fourth day, girl and Manavālan go in procession to the temple richly dressed. The boy, carrying some sort of sword and shield, heads [782] the party. If the family be one of position, he and the girl must be mounted on an elephant. Offerings are made to the deity, and presents to the Brāhmans. They then return home, and, as they enter the house, the Manavālan who brings up the rear is pelted by the boys of the party with plantains, which he wards off with his shield. In other cases, he is expected to make a pretence of forcing the door open. These two usages are no doubt to be classed with those marriage ceremonies which take the

form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 528
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavālan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574] entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nāyar houses will feed 1,000 Brāhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tāli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nāyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801] represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622] a Nāyar tāli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

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[787]

astrologer, and those youths in the tarwads who have passed the age of eighteen, and whose horoscopes agree with those of the girls, are declared to be eligible. The ola (palm-leaf) on which the Kaniyan (astrologer) writes his decision is called the muhurta charutu, and the individual who receives it from him is obliged to see that the ceremony is performed on an auspicious day in the near future. The next important item is the fixing of a wooden post in the south-west corner or kannimula of the courtyard. At the construction of the pandal (booth) the Pidakakkar or villagers render substantial aid. The mandapa is decorated with ears of corn, and hence called katirmandapa. It is also called mullapandal. On the night of the previous day the kalati or Brâhman's song is sung. A sumptuous banquet, called ayaniunnu, is given at the girl's house to the party of the young man. The ceremony commences with the bridegroom washing his feet, and taking his seat within the pandal. The girl meanwhile bathes, worships the household deity, and is dressed in new cloths and adorned with costly ornaments. A Brâhman woman ties a thread round the girl's left wrist, and sings a song called Subhadraveli, which deals with the marriage by capture of Subhadra by Arjuna. Then, on the invitation of the girl's mother, who throws a garland round his neck, the bridegroom goes in procession, riding on an elephant, or on foot. The girl's brother is waiting to receive him at the pandal. A leading villager is presented with some money, as if to recompense him for the permission granted by him to commence the ceremony. The girl sits within the mandapa, facing the east, with her eyes closed. The bridegroom, on his arrival, sits on her right. He then receives the minnu (ornament) from the Ilayatu priest, and ties it round the girl's neck. A song is sung called

[533]

588 system prevails, all members of such families, both male
184 and female, are also provided with meals. On the third
(574) day, the villagers are again entertained to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding, and on the fourth day the girls are taken out in procession for worship at the nearest temple amidst tom-toms and shouting. After this a feast is held, at which friends, relatives, and villagers are given a rich meal. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and flowers, the invited guests depart.
[431] Presents, chiefly in money, are made to the eldest male member of the family by friends and relatives and villagers, and with this the ceremony closes. From the
[787] time of fixing the first pole for the pandal to the tying of the tāli, the village astrologer is in attendance on all ceremonial occasions, as he has to pronounce the auspicious moment for the performance of each item. During
[536] the four days of the marriage, entertainments, such as Kathakali drama or Ottan Tullal, are very common. When a family can ill-afford to celebrate the ceremony on any grand scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, or to the illam of a Nambūdri, if they happen to belong to sub-divisions attached to illams, and the tāli
[735] is tied with little or no feasting and merriment. In the northern taluks, the very poor people sometimes tie the tāli before the Trikkakkarappan on the Tiruvonam day."

An interesting account of the tāli-kettu ceremony is given by Duarte Barbosa, who writes as follows.* "After they are ten or twelve years old or more, their mothers perform a marriage ceremony for them in this manner. They advise the relations and friends that they may come to do honour to their daughters, and they

* *Op. cit.*

sambandham ceremony all over Kēralam are in the main 585
the same. As there are different local names denoting 184
marriage, so there may be found local variations in the performance of the ceremony. But the general features are more or less the same. For instance, the examina- [787]
tion, prior to the betrothal, of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom to ascertain whether their stars agree astrologically; the appointment of an auspicious day for the celebration of the ceremony; the usual hour at which the ceremony takes place; the presentation [431]
of dānam (gifts) to Brāhmans; sumptuous banquet; the [574]
meeting of the bride and bridegroom, are features which are invariably found in all well-conducted sambandhams in all parts of Kēralam alike. But here I would state that I should not be understood as saying that each and every one of the formalities above referred to are gone through at all sambandhams among respectable Nāyars; and I would further state that they ought to be gone through at every sambandham, if the parties wish to marry according to the custom of the country. I would now briefly refer to the local variations to be found in the ceremony of the sambandham, and also the particular incidents attached to certain forms of sambandham in South Malabar. I shall describe the pudamuri or vastradānam as celebrated in North Malabar, and then show how the other forms of sambandham differ from it. Of all the forms of sambandham, I consider the pudamuri the most solemn and the most fashionable in North Malabar. The prelimi- [787]
nary ceremony in every pudamuri is the examination of the horoscopes of the bride and bridegroom by an astrologer. This takes place in the house of the bride, in the presence of the relations of the bride and bridegroom. The astrologer, after examination, writes down

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom [574] distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

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however, my experience that sambandham was rare [181] on the side of the man before twenty-seven." "The [582] Karanavan," Mr. Rāman Menon writes, "and the women [584] of his household choose the bride, and communicate their choice to the intending bridegroom through a third party; they may not, dare not speak personally to him in the matter. He approves. The bride's people are [787] informally consulted, and, if they agree, the astrologer is sent for, and examines the horoscopes of both parties to the intended union. As a matter of course these are found to agree, and the astrologer fixes a day for the sambandham ceremony. A few days before this takes place, two or three women of the bridegroom's house visit the bride, intimating beforehand that they are coming. There they are well treated with food and sweetmeats, and, when on the point of leaving, they inform the senior female that the bridegroom (naming him) wishes to have sambandham with . . . . (naming her), and such and such a day is auspicious for the ceremony. The proposal is accepted with pleasure, and the party from the bridegroom's house returns home. Preparations for feasting are made in the house of the bride, as well as in that of the bridegroom on the appointed day. To the former all relations are invited for the evening, 585 and to the latter a few friends who are much of the same 574 age as the bridegroom are invited to partake of food at 7 or 8 P.M., and accompany him to the bride's house. After eating they escort him, servants carrying betel [431] leaves (one or two hundred according to the means of the [613] taravad), areca nuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's household, and which are distributed to the guests. When the bride's house is far away, the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at the bride's house, they sit awhile, and are again [276]

Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787]
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day
he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of
the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife).
They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl
with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of
her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right
leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a
burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede
her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice,
and some plantains are placed before her. One of the
younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece
of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called
madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then
sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or
cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house.
After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house
on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely
the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the
Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her
share of whatever good things may be going. Hence
the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind
her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is neces- 593
sary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his

Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed [843] during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778] pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793] exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789] called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkalā, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534] which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782] concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787] auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824] of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415] woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti* [354] carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764 613
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the [769]
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [775]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [787]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important,
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living
members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women,
possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters
his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in
which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the
persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and
the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution.
The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the
taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams
there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body
unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no
variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I
have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year.
He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of
the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [821].
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

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on this particular morning. According to Nair, and even general Hindu mythology, there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance, ashes, firewood, oil, and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones, which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold, and such like, on the morning of the next new year. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand, who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sightworthy objects on the new year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known as a kani. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken, and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed cloth, some 'unprofitably gay' flowers of the konna tree (*Cassia Fistula*), a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel, and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps, filled with cocoanut oil clear as diamond sparks, are kept burning, and a small plank of wood, or some other seat, is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day, some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house, and takes them blindfolded, so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the kani. The members are seated, one after another, in the seat, and

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

286 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil [791] and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as [783] common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

Nâyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men 796 when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-778 deep and about 30 yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot of the festival, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not accompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place unless during the few days of the festival when it is safe: at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. How much this belief has to do with Iswara need not be commented on! Nothing on earth would have persuaded either the Nâyar or the Kurichchin to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno had not embarked on so fearful a journey! About a hundred yards beyond the stream we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. Why this uncomfortable place was chosen I know not; in the rains when the festival is held it is usually under water, and the people have to stand in water. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. By the same token the lingam had been broken and displaced a few days previously by some Mâppilas searching for treasure which they thought was there. *Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds in which the people had lodged during the festival. Grass and weeds were growing high, and the sheds were dilapidated and looking as if they had not been used for years; but then the rain in Malabar brings about destructive effects with astonishing rapidity.

Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings [782] of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. I am not [788]

* The circle of stones is specially interesting. Near the Angadipuram-Manjery road, between Vellila and the ferry is a monolith in the centre of a piled up platform circled with stones, the circle 30 feet in diameter. Apparently one of the many pre-Hindu remains in Malabar. Description of the ancient remains in Malabar, which are specially interesting, must be made later on. Just now let me note that stone circles are common. And I find in my notes the following: "On the hill side just about the Tirunelli temple (North Wynâd forests), where there is a clearing in the forest and the ground is somewhat flat, is a circle of stones 12 feet in diameter, and filled up with earth so as to make a raised platform nearly 2 feet in height; in the centre a small upright stone 10 inches high. To the north-east, three flat upright stones . . . . and a flat place, rudely square about 11 feet from the circle, evidently an old sacred place of some of the jungle folk."

6:Fawcett.G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 788 782 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows [765] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a [302] year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the [776] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is *not* Krishna.

[See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. 796 788 785 [782]

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock. 796 788

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars 796 184 788

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890). [171] [113]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

79 Plate XII shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

½ [see cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- Ar.]

In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Aaān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage [842] ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a 184 clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the tradi- 178 tional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and 776 themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he [613] could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on 613 ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony 564 with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. 184 The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit 833

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Aaān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 653).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

The above two subdivisions are mere titles and the members belonging to them are not numerous in the State. 564

6. *Márár.*—The members of this subdivision act as drummers and musicians in temples and also render important services to Brahmans and Kshatriyas in their ceremonies. [534]

7. *Pódamangalam Nayars.*—The members of this clan are engaged in escorting processions in temples. Some also act as sweepers in them. There are not, I am informed, very many in the State belonging to this subdivision. [788]

8. *Pallichán Nayars.*—These are palanquin-bearers of the Brahmans and Kshatriyas.

9. *Vattekád Nayars.*—They are the pressers of oil for use in temples. It has been remarked by some that the Vattékád Nayars are not always admitted to be true Nayars and that in some places they are called Vániyans (oil mongers.) The subdivision is endogamous. There are two minor subdivisions, the members of which neither interdine nor intermarry.

10. *Chempukotti Nayars.*—These are the workers in copper for temples and Brahman houses. The following tradition regarding them is interesting :— 564 326

"Chempukottis or Chempóttis (copper tappers) are copper-workers whose traditional business is the roofing of the *srikóvil* or inner shrine of the temple with that metal. They are said to have originally formed part of the *Kammálan* or artisan community. When the great temple of Taliparamba was completed, it was purified on a scale of unprecedented grandeur, no less than thousand Brahmans being employed. What was their dismay when the ceremony was well forward, to see a Chempukotti coming from the *srikóvil*, where he had been putting the finishing touches to the roof! This appeared to involve a re-commencement of the whole tedious and costly ritual; and the Brahmans gave vent to their feelings of despair, when a vision from Heaven re-assured them. And thereafter Chempótties have been raised in the social scale, and are not regarded as a polluting caste." [1] [778]

11. *Otattu Nayars.*—They are the tile and thatch makers for temples and Brahman houses. 564

12. *Edachéri Nayars.*—They are the makers and sellers of dairy produce.

1. Malabar District Gazetteer, page 120.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *káranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *távazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days. In addition to the daily *púja*s to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Páttum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the goddess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called, becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums, the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession. The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

Sásta or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasurama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicated them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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attracts a very large number of pilgrims during the *Mandala pûja* from Malabar, Cochin and Travancore. This deity is peculiar to these parts, where he has the largest number of worshippers.[1]

Demon worship.

The worship of the tutelary deities above described is to a very great extent the outcome of a belief in, and a constant fear of, the influence of demons and evil spirits on mankind, a belief which has existed from a very remote period. The worship of demons is confined to the lower orders and has no connection with the higher forms of Hinduism, and yet this belief in demons is so wide-spread that not even the Brahmans are free from it. In every part of the State, in Malabar and in Travancore, magicians and sorcerers, from the highest Nambuthiri to the lowest Parayan, find employment in exorcising their baneful influences. Among the Pánans, Mannáns and Parayans, magic, sorcery, and witchcraft are a hereditary profession, and among the Nambuthiripáds of Kallúr, Káttumatam, and Chennamangalam are to be found special family deities by whose aid they are supposed to avert the actions of demons and spirits. It is curious to note that there are exorcists even among Christians and Mussalmans; and another interesting fact in connection with this is that the high caste Hindus exercise their magic influence by propitiating, by the aid of their sacred *mantrams*, the more refined and sublime manifestations of God, while the low caste-men propitiate Káli in her more hideous aspects. The ordinary people make a distinction between *Bhútas* on the one hand, and *Prétas* and *Pisáchas* on the other. The former are regarded as the messenger of Siva and his consort Sakti, while the latter are the souls of the departed who have died a violent and unnatural death by suicide, murder, or by drowning, and they are believed to be demons who wander about inflicting injury upon mankind in various ways. At noon and at midnight are the chief hours when they attempt to seize or possess those who walk in lonely places or take shelter under tamarind trees or on the sides of tanks. At night the demons are believed to call loudly in order to allure people out of their homes into distant jungles and there to kill them; hence, as a rule, at night a call is not responded to until it is repeated a fourth

1. Vide Religion of the Izhuvans, Vol. I, page 313.

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Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787]
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife). They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice, and some plantains are placed before her. One of the younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house. After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her share of whatever good things may be going. Hence the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [41] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. Early on the sixth day, the head- [326] man of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arāyan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

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796
man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

demons dance before her. Gulikan is represented by the Vannān and Kuttichchāttan by the Manūtan who have been already mentioned, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tiyans. I saw poor Gulikan being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was, and was told he was a devil. He looked mild enough, but then his make-up had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the north-east entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, the hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; and his head and neck were swathed and decorated. A wooden platform arrangement, from which hung a red ornamented skirt, was fastened to his hips. There was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales' feathers arrangement, the top of which reached five feet above his head, and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchāttan was treated in much the same manner. As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple, where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his dance was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he could move at all, let alone dance. The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchāttan gives his

796 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving
788 the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under
776 which is a high raised platform built up with earth
536 and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of
796 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste men-
564 tioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a
788 crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

796 however, no objection to myself and my companions
778 visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not acompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged
[788] during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival
[792] carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

796 Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is
788 given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri
[793] priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but
[778] the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is

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inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796
Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 788
Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564]
by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785]
and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783]
as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [195]
ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782]
assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

796
788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guru- 796
vayūr in November, 1895. On a high raised platform 788
under a peepul tree were a number of people under 782
vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed on his behalf that, if he were cured, he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck, and a like string on his right arm. These were in some way connected with the vow. His head was bent, and he sat motionless under his kāvadi, leaning on the bar, which, when he carried it, rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.), and milk—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and was about to start.
Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of 796
silver over the lower portion of the forehead, almost 788
covering his eyes; his tongue protruding beyond the 785
teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. He had been fasting for two years. He was much under the influence of his god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. Several of the pilgrims had a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One [782]
poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock—a wide silver band over the mouth, and a skewer piercing both cheeks. He sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about three feet high. People fed him with milk, etc., and he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nāyars when they assume the pilgrim's robes and set out for Palni;

796 788 [785] and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

796 788 184 "Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan's Manual of Malabar. 'It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts "Nada-a Nada-a" of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of "Nada-a Nada-a" (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled [195] at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years. It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[784] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this
[481] bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

13:Thurston & Rangachari - E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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in equally loud and profuse strains. This is continued 788 right up till the beginning of their homeward journey. 796 Nobody whom they come across on the way can successfully escape the coarse Billingsgate of these religious zealots. Even women are not spared. Perhaps it is in their case that the pilgrims wax all the more eloquently vulgar. A number of cock's feathers are stuck or tied upon the tip of a stick, and with this as a wand they begin to dance and pipe in a set style, which is extremely revolting to every sense of decency. Some of the pilgrims walk all the distance to the temple, while others go by boat or other conveyance; but in neither case do they spare any passer-by. Hundreds of gallons of arrack and [273] toddy are consumed during the festival. The pilgrims reach the temple in their dirty attire. The temple premises are crowded to overflowing. The worship of 788 the goddess is then commenced. The offerings consist 796 of the sacrifice of cocks at the temple altar, turmeric 782 powder, but principally of pepper, as also some other objects of lesser importance. A particular spot inside the temple is set apart for the distribution of what is called manjal prasadam (turmeric powder on which divine blessings have been invoked). The work of doling it out is done by young maidens, who are during the process subjected to ceaseless volleys of vile and vulgar abuse. Now, leaving out of account the minor ceremonies, we come to the principal one, viz., the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea is that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed, the greater is the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence men vie with one another in the number of cocks that they carry on the journey. The sacrifice is begun, and then there takes place a regular scramble for the sanctified spot reserved for this butchering ceremony. One man holds a cock by the

788 trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in
796 the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a shar-
782 pened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion
796 all the more revolting. One other higher and more
788 acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing
755 mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious
782 disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in
788 the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the
796 homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani
776 day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. 788 796 In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, [776] all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and [783] sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respec- [431] tive homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, 526 "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time 875 when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice 564 physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in 526 a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915

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302 Nâyar women of all classes shave the hair about the vagina. They 564* shave themselves, standing, placing one foot on a bench or anything a [412] couple of feet or so from the ground, thus raising the leg. The use of scissors for this purpose is rare, new fangled and not sanctified by custom. [177] In a few houses now-a-days razors of English or German manufacture are kept for the use of the women; but according to general custom the barber woman pays periodical visits, and the women of the house receive from her a razor, with which they shave themselves. The armpits, the [305] eyebrows and stray hairs on any other part of the body, excepting of course the head, are shaved by the barber woman. I have it an excellent authority that some of the elderly women—possibly those who are old and fleshy—submit their entire person to the barber woman's razor. The young women never.

In the Tamil country the women, as is well known, use a depilatory. Possibly the Nâyar women resort to shaving in order to avoid the unpleasant odour of the depilatory. The reason for shaving or destroying the hair on that part of the body is not apparent. No reason is assigned for it. Very likely the custom arose out of necessities for cleanliness, when the Nâyars were not the clean people they are now, and like all customs has persisted aimlessly.

Colour of the skin.—Using Broca's colour tables. The 142 darkest was as No. 43 (one only); the fairest, 44 to 30. 564* Two others were fair or very nearly so. The colour number for 5 was 37; for 5 was 28; for 13 was 29, and lighter. Darker than the Nambûtiri. The women, who are not so much exposed to the sun, are distinctly fair as well as well favoured. Many are very handsome.

Colour of the eyes.—Out of 20 individuals (using Broca's colour tables for the eyes), in 13 the number corresponding to their eyes was 2, while in 7 it was 1 to a little lighter. So that the eye is, as a rule, brown; rarely black.

Ornaments, men.—Not much jewellery is worn. One 301 or two golden earrings called kadukkans are worn, as a 564* rule, in each ear by those who can afford to do so. Some [304] of the members of this clan who call themselves "Padi-nâyirattil"—"one of 10,000"—doubtless a relic of the old Nâyar military system, pierce the ears, but never wear earrings. The title of the hereditary chief of these is Ayyâyira Prabhu Karttâvu. The 10,000 do not, however, all belong to this clan. I came across a man of the Nambiyâr clan who belonged to it, and he too could not wear earrings. Rings and amulets are also worn commonly.

One individual wore 2 golden earrings, of the pattern called kadukkan in each ear.

One individual wore two rings made of an amalgam [789] of gold and copper, called "tambâk" in the vernacular, [515] on the ring finger of the right hand, for good luck. "Tambâk" rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to

wash the face with the hand on which is a "tambâk" ring. I see in my notes a record of an individual who wore one of these rings on the second finger of the left hand. They are common.

One individual wore two rings of the pattern called triloham (lit: metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these rings was made during an eclipse!

One individual wore a silver bangle as a vow. It was to be given up at the next festival to be held at a place called Kottiôre, a famous festival in North Malabar, the scene of it being far away in the forest under the hills. He also wore a "tambâk" ring on the ring finger of the right hand for luck; and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the left hand.

One individual wore no jewellery, but there was a small circular tattooed spot in the centre of the forehead over the glabella. Tattooing is not common. This individual is the only one of those examined who was tattooed.

Women.—The style of the jewellery worn by the women will be seen in the *plate*. It is altogether unlike any other South Indian jewellery. The necklaces are almost identical in form, shape and general character with those of Sindh. Silver is never worn.

The lobes of the ears are dilated in childhood generally in the sixth month and in them are worn large spiral rings of white metal or the more solid "tôda," really a handsome ornament, in the groove of which the elongated ear-lobe is almost concealed. It is made of gold. Properly speaking the tôda is an ornament worn exclusively by the Nâyar women. Several necklaces are often worn at the same time. The Venetian sequin, which probably first found its way hither in the days of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency; thus illustrating the well-known thesis that things originally made for use, by and by pass into ornament. There are instances of this use of coins in Europe, of course, as amongst the Swabian peasantry. So fond are the Malayalis—those of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore—of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitations of the sequin. The former, brought from Europe, are often seen to bear the

1/1 [see plate I, facing p 220 -- An.]

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301 * 564 silver earrings called kalluvechcha kadukkan which means an earring set with stone (pushyarâgam—topaz).

(1) Three plain golden rings on ring finger of left hand, the same on the little finger of the same hand, and a thin iron ring on the ring finger of the right hand.

[302] (2) Sandal paste patch over glabella; four stripes of the same on chest; three vertical stripes on each upper arm.

(3) Three golden earrings—the usual kadukkans—in each ear. [789] An amulet in a silver cylindrical case worn on the waist. Inside the case is a charm written on a copper leaf. It is to protect its wearer against the influences of the evil eye.

(4) One tambâk, one plain gold ring on ring finger of the right hand.

[304] (5) Ears pierced. Wears no earrings as he has no money. A dab of sandal paste over the glabella, another over the sternum, and on each shoulder.

163 *Prolificness.*—The clan being endogamous, it will be well to note here the number of children born in 16 fami- * 564 lies of those examined. In all there were born 44 male and 35 female children; altogether 79. This gives an average of 4·9 in each family; and of those there were living at the time an average of 4·6 for each family. A figure which is above the average for the Nâyars as a body, be it noted.

141 It is perhaps scarcely worth noting that the average weight of four men was 119 lb.

Names of some of those examinad.

613 * 564 Tarvâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Mêlapalli	Kêlu Nâyar	Cooly	22
463 Kanjôli	Râman Nâyar	Writer	22
Kurundottathil	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	20
551 Puthukûdi	Achutan Nâyar	Trade	22
Ponmilli	Krishnan Nâyar	Do.	45
115 Kuttakil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	32
Payarvîtil	Aiyappen Nâyar	Mason	36
Pûvakunial	Châthu Nâyar	Cultivator	26
Kalathil	Shangaran Nâyar	Cooly	25
Korolath	Shangunni Nâyar	Do.	22
Pallithotathil	Gôpalan Nâyar	Nothing	22
Kûtakkil	Râman Nâyar	Cooly	30
Thondil	Appa Nâyar	Writer	20

551 Thondi or Thundi was, I think, mentioned by one of the ancient geographers as a port near where this last man lived. This man, therefore, bears the name of the place as it was, probably, in the days of Ptolemy.

142 *Colour of the skin* (*Broca's colour types*).—The fairest
*564 was No. 40 (one only); and the two next fairest were 30 to 44 and 39 to 44. The darkest was 43. The average seems to be a little darker than 29 but not so dark as 28. Darker than the Kiriyattil.

Colour of the eyes (Broca).—The colour of the eyes of half the number was as No. 1, and that of the other half as No. 2. One exception was between Nos. 1 and 10. The average therefore is a dark brown; not black.

*301 *Ornaments.*—Ears pierced, and the usual earrings
*564 (kadukkans) worn by those who can afford them. In one
[304] case the earrings were set with a red stone. The ornaments or adornments of various individuals were as follows:—

(1) Bell metal ring on the ring finger of right hand.

(2) Two brass rings on ring finger of right hand. A string of wool thrice round the right wrist to keep off fever at night.

(3) Tattooed circular mark over glabella. The operator was a woman of the Chetti caste, a travelling tattooer, and the cost of the operation 2 pies.

(4) One gold kadukkan in each ear. Two copper
[515] rings on ring finger of right hand. Washing the face
[789] with a hand wearing a copper ring removes black spots on the face, and prevents them coming. So said the wearer.

(5) Two amulets, silver cylindrical cases containing mantrams, worn on a string round the waist to keep off fever and devils. Amulet cases are often worn on the
163 waist in the way of ornament pure and simple.

*564 *Prolificness.*—In 12 families the children born were 29 males and 34 females, or an average of 5·2 children to each family.

141 The average weight of 4 individuals was 119½ lb.

The names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
551 Blathâdi ...	Govindan ...	Cultivator ...	40
*564 Râvâri Chandil ...	Kêlu ...	Do. ...	22
463 Palôli ...	Kunju ...	Do. ...	25
1.5 Murikolipôil ...	Shangaran ...	Trader ...	21
Kuttadath ...	Krishnan ...	Writer ...	20
Thaikandi ...	Appu ...	Cooly ...	26
Thazhathadathil ...	Châthu ...	Do. ...	24
Erankulangara ...	Kittan ...	Milk seller ...	25
Vêlashêri ...	Cherukoman ...	Cultivator ...	40
Chêlattumal ...	Kunhunni ...	Cooly ...	44
Patavetti ...	Châthukutti ...	Cultivator ...	62

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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [771] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [789]

from the inquisitive passer-by. The fact remains that 292
the Nâyar, of whom we are now speaking, who never or 751
very rarely wears any covering on the head, cannot withstand the effect of the direct rays of the sun without an umbrella. A few hours' walk in the midday sun where there is little or no shade, is sufficient to bring on fever to the ordinarily strong man.

Colour of the skin was taken generally on the right 142
arm just below the shoulder, the book containing the 564*
colour types being pressed against the skin.

The fairest was No. 44 (Broca).

The darkest was No. 28 (only one of this).

More than half were 29 and fairer, and the remainder were still fairer, several being 44 or very nearly.

Colour of the eyes.—In about three quarters of the subjects the colour of the eyes was No. 2 (Broca); in about one-quarter they were 1 to a trifle darker. In one individual the colour was between 2 and 3; a light brown.

Ornaments.—One or two golden kadukkans are 301
commonly worn in each ear by those who can afford them. 564*
Ears pierced always. Though not for purposes of orna- [304]
ment, the ears of two individuals were marked by holes—pieces cut out of the cartilage. In one there was a circular hole 4 mm. in diameter, cut out of the cartilage of the right ear, and in another a circular hole 6 mm. in diameter in the left ear. In both cases the holes had been made during childhood to prevent colic.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) One tambâk ring on ring finger, right hand. One iron ring on the little finger of the left hand.

(2) One gold kadukkan in each ear. One plain gold ring on the ring finger of the right hand. Wore a silver girdle on the waist instead of a string, to which he fastened his lunguti.

(3) Silver cord round the waist; on it a silver [189]
amulet case, of the usual shape, having inside it a charm written on a gold leaf to protect the wearer against the evil eye.

(4) One silver ring on ring finger of the left hand. Two gold kadukkans in each ear.

Miscellaneous.—One man was tested, and found to 141
have perfect vision. Weight was recorded in five cases 564*
only; the average was nearly 110 lb. which is probably [157]
not far from the general average.

302 [777] Shaving cannot be done on a Tuesday or a Saturday, or on the day of an eclipse of sun or moon; nor on the full moon day, the new moon day, nor on the 11th day of the moon—the Êkadasi. This applies to most Nâyars, but not to all.

+142 564 *Colour of the skin.*—The skin of the darkest individual corresponded to Broca's colour type No. 43. There was but one of this colour.

Three were of No. 28.
Seventeen were of No. 29 and lighter.
Three were of No. 37 and lighter.
One not taken.
The average colour must be nearly as fair as 37.

Colour of the eyes.—The average corresponds rather to Broca's No. 2 than to his No. 1.

Nine individuals were of No. 1.
Seven individuals were between 1 and 2.
Seven individuals were of No. 2.
Two not taken.

+301 564 [304] *Ornaments.*—All those examined had had their ears pierced; but most of them wore no earrings, saying it was not proper for a Purattu Chârna Nâyar to wear them. Four individuals, or nearly one-sixth of the whole, however, wore the ordinary earrings; one indeed wore (the only instance) one gold and one silver earring in each ear. Rings of any kind may be worn on the fingers, and the thin iron ring such as is usually worn, was observed occasionally on the ring finger of the right hand, or on the little finger of the left.

The ornaments worn by a few individuals were as follows:—

(1) Aged 23. Two rings on the ring finger of the right hand; one of them tambâk (described already), the other of silver and iron. [789] The last was worn as a prophylactic against fever. Said he had worn it for the previous five days, and during that period he had had no fever! (This individual, by the way, had been vaccinated, and suffered from an attack of small-pox nine years afterwards.)

(2) Aged 35. One copper ring on the ring finger of the right hand. [237] An amulet of tiger's teeth (as in my collection) on a string round the waist. [789] The amulet contains nothing, and is worn to protect its wearer from fever. [776] Two silver amulet cases of the usual cylindrical pattern worn on the waist; each contains a mantram written on paper for protection against evil spirits. On

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one occasion he was frightened when near water, and subsequently was troubled by beings called Pûtams, devils of a very inferior kind which haunt water. He had bad dreams, so consulted a Mâppila priest (a Musalian—a priest of sorts) who gave him the mantrams. Wore also a charm—"to entice the public" as he explained, so that people will, as a rule, like him, please him, flatter rather than annoy him. He got this too from a Mâppila priest—a Mullah.

(3) Aged 24. This man had travelled. At Dvâraka the city of Krishna, the ninth incarnation of Vishnu (in the Kulluva peninsula), a chank above and a chakkra below had been branded on his left upper arm, on his right, a chank above and a lotus below. Each forearm bore the branded mark of an indistinct seal said to represent Krishna, testifying to a visit to the temple at Dharnidara. Had been to Benares and worshipped his ancestors at Gaya (throwing their ashes into the Ganges), an operation which at once removes all necessity to give them any further attention.

Prolificness.—In 9 families, in respect of which notes were taken, there were born altogether 48 children, 30 male and 18 female, or about 53 children to each family.

Following the rule, or rather custom, which governs all marital connexions amongst the Nâyars, a woman of this clan may be mated with a man of the same clan, or with a man of the Kiriyattil clan, but with no other clan. Consequently, a man of this clan cannot be mated with a Kiriyattil woman, for the woman can never mate with one who is not at least her equal.

Names of some of those examined.

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Kizhâk Vellat ...	Kundu	Cultivator	42
Panôli	Konti	Do.	22
Karuthôdiyil ...	Gôvindan Kutti ...	Head of his family ...	21
Vellât	Gôpâlan	Cultivator	24
Pudieth	Kanaran	Schoolmaster	23
Puttikapureth ...	Kelukkutti Menon* ...	Writer	36
Karumuthil ...	Kandar, *alias* Kunja Panikkar.* ...	Cultivator	70
Pâlat	Râma Panikkar ...	Do.	56
Kâkkât	Gôvindan	Do.	20

* The affix (Panikkar, Menon) is a title, not necessarily but possibly hereditary.

Note.—I find I have noted one man as Viyyâr Purattu Chârna, as if Viyyûr is a sub-clan, and that he marries in his own sub-clan; but I am not sure whether the Purattu Chârnas are so sub-divided, and think not.

(2) Aged 32. Four gold earrings in each ear. One "tambâk" ring on ring finger of left hand. A ring made of a bit of wire picked up on the road worn on the ring finger of left hand. 301 564*

(3) Two gold earrings, set with a red stone, in each ear. Wears an amulet, contained in the ordinary cylindrical amulet case; but I have not noticed what the amulet itself actually is. He used to be much troubled by a devil, the departed spirit of an east-country Brâhman who died by drowning. He wore the charm to keep this gentleman off. [775] [789]

(4) Aged 24. A silver girdle worn, instead of a string, to which the languti is tied. An iron ring on the 3rd toe of the left foot. Rings are very rarely worn on the toes by any people in Malabar. All over the rest of the Madras Presidency they are, of course, common.

(5) Aged 39. Three earrings, of the usual pattern in each ear. A ring called an elephant's ring, made of silver, in which is arranged circularly a piece of the hair of an elephant's tail, worn on the ring finger of the left hand. There is one of these rings in my collection.

Names, etc., of a few are given—

Taravâd.	Name.	Occupation.	Age.
Pilathottathil ...	Thêyyan Mênon ...	Amshom Mênon or writer. ...	44
Potishêri	Unikkandan ...	Post runner	31
Valia parambath ...	Râman	Peon	20
Chatho Vîtil	Vêlappa Mênon ...	Servant	26
Chandrethil	Kuttan	Do.	22
Earat	Krishnan	Cartman	39
Kanjôli	Shangara Mênon ...	Writer in a temple ...	34
Kôlangyarath ...	Chandu	Cooly	36

115 551 613 463 564*

This last-named individual was measured in the Cannanore Jail, in which institution he, a prisoner himself, filled the office of hangman. He had hanged 10 men in the jail, and, at the rate of 2 rupees a case, he was owed 20 rupees; a nice little sum, which he would be given when leaving the jail at the expiration of his sentence. I was surprised to find a man of the Nâyar caste filling the office of hangman, so enquired the reason and was informed he had put aside the caste scruples while in jail. The office was in its way lucrative, and, when he emerged into freedom, no one would be the wiser, and he would have twenty and odd rupees in his pocket. He did not mind violating certain principles of his caste, doing that which is derogatory, so long as no one knew; but he *did* mind being found out. 564* 693 183

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804]

* Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

796 564 [778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

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789 The Panikkars dabble also in magic. In Plates XVI, [791] XVII are figured four yantrams, selected from a number in my possession as representative, presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver or copper plate (a yantram written on gold is the most effective), and worn on the person. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylindrical case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, or round the neck.

No. I. Aksharamâla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless; but it gives life to all others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

[782] *No. II. Sûlini.*—For protection against sorcery, or devils. This is to invoke the goddess and secure her aid. The ceremony brings a blessing to the receiver of the charm.

No. III. Mâha Sûlini.—To be used to prevent all kinds [776] of harm through devils, chief of whom is Pulatini—he who eats infants. May be used also as protective against enemies. Women wear it to avert miscarriage. The letter in the middle, Hûm Mâha Sûlini. That in the rim is Om.

No. IV. Kâla Bhâiravi.—Represents the goddess. The [782] goddess must be pleased *first* by worship. No sacrifice, which is rather odd, as this terrible goddess is generally represented in Southern India as loving blood. The letters do not form any mantram. Each letter has life in itself. Prevents all harm from enemies, and attack by devils.

Other yantrams to be used in much the same way as these are:—

[856] The *Ganapati* yantram. To increase knowledge. To put away fear and shyness.

The *Sarasvati* yantram. To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

The *Panchakshari* yantram, a square containing 81 smaller squares, in each a mystic letter; the whole representing Siva. For persons on whom medicines have no [776] effect. Also against evil spirits. A person out of whom an evil spirit has been driven is perfectly safe ever after with this carried on his person.

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PL. XVI

789 ●

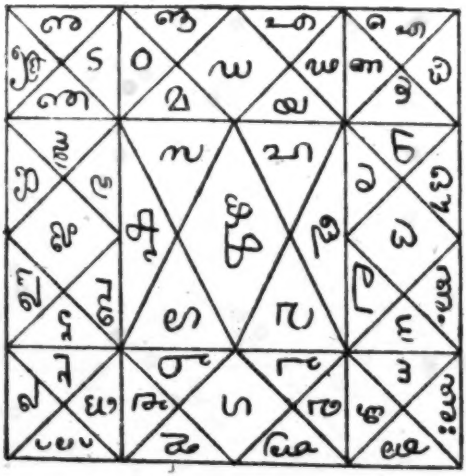

I

II

[facing P. 306, A]

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PL. XVII

789

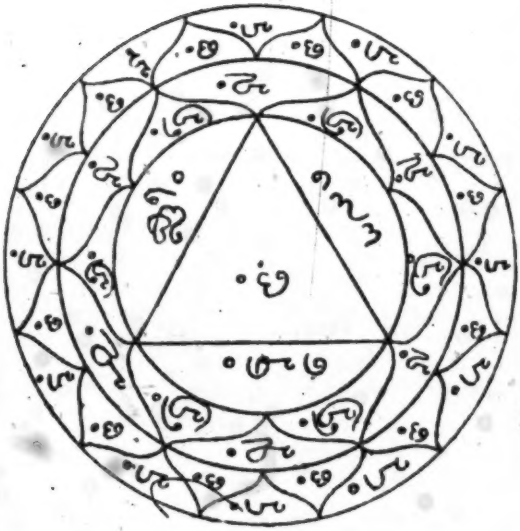

III

IV

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[facing p. 306, B]

Zinco., Survey Office, Madras.
1915

The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it repre- 789
ents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put 842
ogether in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by
arren women so that they may bear children. It may
e traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or
n a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the [834]
atter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive
lays, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar
nay not have sexual connection.

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless
nen and women in order to obtain offspring. The others
re prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat
nemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss
f property by theft, to win over the good feeling of
thers, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only 789
elieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the
round and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too
ong to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through
lack magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in [755]
shes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round
he waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the
Asvârûdha yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would
lso be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is
ble to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he [825]
nay make the most refractory horse amenable by tying
t round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle.
n some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram,
while in others each has its own mystic meaning.

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying
one of these charms to himself that they are entirely
noperative unless accompanied in the first place with the
nystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp 754
n the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were
assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In [791]
he evening I was able to see and converse with the
drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. [564]
The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians,
few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are
not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin,
Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri
Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar
appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man.

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had [115]
been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of
his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain

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Pârvati kê kannêru dôsam undâî Srî Paramêsvaran Srî 755
Pârvati ute kannêru dôsem Tîrtâtu pôlê Tîrnupôka Svâmi 539
en guruvînâna."

(I prostrate myself to Bhagavati. When Sri Paramesvaran and Srî Parvati went hunting, Srî Parvati was under the influence of the evil eye; Srî Paramêsvaran then put away this influence. I swear by my guru.)

(2) "Ôm Pêpûti Vôrrûpôti Yerrîkâ Swâhâ Yên Guru Vînâna."

The meaning of this is not clear. "Ôm"=I. "Yerrîka"=burnt. "Swâhâ" (used as a verb)=devour. "Guru Vînâna"=by the guru or teacher. But in mantrams the word guru invariably means the deity.

Mantram (1) is whispered on sixteen grains of rice: 755
on each grain separately, not on all together. As the mantram is whispered on each grain, the grain is placed in oil. When the sixteen grains have been placed thus in the oil, it is stirred while the mantram (2) is repeated sixteen times. The magician then hands this oil in silence to the person who has been injured by the evil eye. The person receives it also in silence, and rubs it over his head. No word is spoken until he has finished.

Fear of harm from the evil eye is very general. At 754
the corner of the upper story of almost every Nâyar house 789
near a road or path is suspended some object, often a doll-like hideous figure, on which may rest the eye of the passer by. And of course in every field some object is erected for the same purpose.

Magic such as is practised by the Malayan, or the Panikkar, is quite fair and above-board. It is, as a rule, all for good: never for harm. Nearly every misfortune, [777]
bodily ill or ailment, and even death is caused by some [753]
malignant spirit or through its agency, and the warlock has business everywhere relieving people from their [761]
oppression. I feel perfectly safe in saying that every Nâyar believes in magic through and through. No matter what his collegiate course has been, no matter how full of knowledge such as the West can give him, no matter how thrilled he may be by the higher Hinduism which condemns it altogether, he believes in magic as the cause of ills, and he believes in magic for removal of these. It is the last resource always, and the most powerful means in the hands of man. What are medicines, what is all our western science compared to it! The Nâyar will not, I trust, be offended by these remarks, which after all mean nothing more than that he

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is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan. The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are therefore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

* The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

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754
795 until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like
564 a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood—vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment. [824] A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

776 A regular working magician tells us something more
● 789 of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

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ground is then plastered over with cowdung. Then you mark out with rice flour an eight-cornered chakram, in the centre of which you place a small piece of cadjân leaf, and you place a similar piece at four corners. You sit with your back to the chakram, facing eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening while performing pûja. This pûja is, I think, addressed to Karinkutti: not in any way to the sun God who is not then visible. For the pûja you must be supplied with fried grain, beaten rice, rice bran, a fowl, toddy, arrack, some flowers of three colours—one of them the tulsi *(Ocimum sanctum)* —sandalwood-paste, camphor, incense. (Note the use of the sacred tulsi in this diabolical incantation!) While the pûja, which I am unfortunately unable to describe (leaving my directions rather lame) is being performed the mûla mantram of Karinkutti is to be repeated 101 times.

In order to do all this you must bathe 7½ nazhikas (about 2¾ hours) before dawn, and complete the pûja before dawn arrives. But even before this you must stand up to your chest in water and repeat the mûla mantram 101 times. And you must repeat the whole thing *da capo* in the evening. The mantram is thus repeated 404 times in the day. You are not done yet, in fact this is only the beginning. The whole thing is done every day for 21 consecutive days; and then you will have the evil spirit Karinkutti entirely at your disposal. The person who remains continent, eats but once a day, cooking his own food, may it is said bring the spirit into obedience in less than 21 days.

Subjection of Vanni Bhâiravan is a much more difficult matter, involving much more elaborate ceremonial, details of which may well be spared the reader as the example which has been given is quite adequate.

And the good spirits—

Bhagavati.	Mûkâmi.
Bbadra kâli.	Vîrabhadran.
Hanumân.	Móhini.
Ganapati.	Sarabha Mûrti.
Subrahmanyan.	

The evil and the good spirits are truly a strange collection of beings! Their names help to illustrate what has been said already, that the Hinduism of the west coast is a strange medley of the higher Hinduism with the lower cult of the country. Bhâirava or Kâla Bhâirava (Bhâiravan of the Telugu country) is elsewhere the object of adoration of what is almost a distinct cult, a kind of

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mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika religion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to worship Bhaîri dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female. Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books, the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

* From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

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magic. Fortunately, by the kindness of Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, these blanks have been filled up in the translation which he has obtained for me—from *one who knows.* 789 212

I will give here an excerpt from it, which is fairly representative of the sympathetic side of magic such as is common in Malabar. It is not, I think, concerned with sympathetic or symbolic magic exclusively, as, unless I am much mistaken, an evil spirit is here also invoked. It is within the domain of black magic, in which, I think, an evil spirit is always made to help if not to work the evil. 754 212

It describes how to cause certain pains in the body of another. A mantram is written (here, I think, an evil spirit is called up, though such does not appear to be said), on the stem of the kâitha plant. The stem should be the length of eight fingers. A figure representing the person to be injured is (also) drawn on the stem. A hole is bored to represent the navel. The mantram is repeated, and at each repetition a certain thorn (kâra mollu) is fixed into the limbs of the figure. The name of the person and of the star under which he was born are written on a piece of cadjan leaf, which is stuck into the hole representing the navel. The thorns are stuck in 21 times; that is, removed and replaced 21 times. Two magic circles are drawn below the nipple on the figure. The stem is then hung up in the smoke of the kitchen. A pot of toddy and some other accessories are procured, and with these certain rites are performed by the warlock. When he has concluded them, he moves three steps backwards. He shouts aloud thrice, fixing in again the thorns, thinking all the while of the particular mischief with which he would afflict the person to be injured.

When all this has been done, the person whose figure has been drawn on the stem and pricked with thorns, feels pain as if *he* were being pricked with thorns.

The grandha describes also how an enemy may be stuck dumb. The head of a dark coloured fowl is cut off. The head is then split, and a piece of cadjan on which are written a mantram, the name of the person to be injured, and the name of the star under which he was born, is stuck into the split head which is then sewn up, taking care to stitch the tongue to the beak. The head is then inserted in a certain fruit, which, after being tied up with a withe of a certain creeper nine spans in length, is deposited under the enemy's gateway. [825]

In it, too, we are told how to win over a man, or a quarrelsome husband; how to quiet refractory cows which

engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His 773
devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared 791
before him in human form and handed him a grandah, 776
which is to this day the greatest work on magic in [553]
existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts for the prefix "Sûrya" to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of 791
Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case. 789 ●

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in 842
infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talis- 791
man, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan 789
[776]

* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

789 791 magician was called in to prepare one of these. Placing an ordinary style and a small sheet of copper in a box, he closed it. Presently a noise was heard inside the box; and in a few moments a sound as of the style falling. The box was opened and magic figures were found to be inscribed on the copper sheet. The lady wears the talisman now! The magician must have been in a favourable mood on the occasion, as he is said to have given an additional performance on his own account. When he had placed the style and the tiny sheet of copper in the box, taking two young cocoanuts in his hands, he kept on throwing them in the air and catching them. "What will you have in each?" he asked. "Honey in one and boiled milk in the other" was the answer. Of course these were found in the cocoanuts when they were opened by the magician, but it was somewhat gross of the Nâyar gentleman to test the quality of the milk by turning it into curds the next [493] day. Wonderful stories are told of this man who used to be seen at night carried in a mancheel by invisible bearers, whose weary chant could be heard, but whose bodily presence was beyond the reach of human eye.

791 The last and the chief of this trio is the once famous Kandeth Nayar who departed this life about a hundred [782] years ago. Every one knows about the Kandeth Nayar, and any one now-a-days who wants to injure another invokes his aid, and resorts to his tomb to fulfil his vow. I understand that sacrifices at his tomb are common, and that his power reaches from the land of shades in almost the same strength as when he lived.

791 754 The rather incoherent way in which the terms warlock, magician, have been used seems to demand some explanation. Strictly speaking, the Parayan Ôḍiyan is the only warlock. Magician is scarcely the correct term for the ordinary worker in magic. Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible to avoid a somewhat indiscriminate use of these terms on account of the way in which the functions of the warlock, the magician, the astrologer, and even the priest are really interwoven one with the other. The professed magician is often also the warlock and *vice versâ*. The vernacular word, which is as catholic as that which stands for "Religion," is "mantravâḍi"—mantram man; he who is sought every day of the year by hundreds of the people of Kêrala, to relieve them of their physical troubles and infirmities, to cure their cattle, to injure their enemies, aye, even to destroy them.

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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *tarawād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pedhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *ima*.

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588 182 184 *sambandham* lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tâli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tâli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tâli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tâli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tâli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tâli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tâli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after [533] the mock seclusion before the *tâli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [782] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

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kalyánam of the Nayars and the marriage ceremony among other Hindus. All available evidence unmistakably points to the conclusion that the former is, in intention, if not in effect, the actual marriage ceremony of the Hindus. The ceremonials in the two cases differ very little; there is, however, one exception, namely, that in the case of Brahmans and others, vedic *mantrams* are recited, while the Nayars are compelled to substitute Brahmani *pattu* (song), which should be uttered in the *Rig vedic swaram*. Ever since the institution of this system of marriage in Kerala, these songs have been in existence, and they invoke the blessings of numerous children for the pair. It must also be noted that, among all Brahmans, the wedding ceremony is divided into two parts, namely, the first in which the ceremonials form the chief feature, known as betrothal, and the second, popularly known as consummation or the real marriage. In the case of Nayars and other *marumakkathayam* Hindus, the *táli* tying ceremony for a girl, which is performed before the first sign of menstruation, refers to the betrothal, and the *sambandham* to the real marriage. There is this important difference that, while the Brahmans perform the ceremony after the selection of a husband and postpone the union of the couple to a future date, the *marumakkathayam* people perform the ceremony first and select the husband on the second occasion, *i. e.*, when the girl is fit to be united to her husband. Hence the bridegroom in the first ceremony acts the part of a vicarious husband. But when the husband is ready at hand, it is not unusual for the girl to be actually married on the occasion of *táli* tying. The reason for this departure may have been due to the scarcity of suitable young men in the old troublous times and the consequent difficulty of securing a proper husband for every girl before puberty and the danger of girls being out-casted in default of it. Hence it is that the early legislators have devised this convenient plan to allow every girl to be married in a sense with the necessary religious ceremony, and enable her to remain unmarried for life without being subject to excommunication from caste. This view is supported by the fact, that the Nayars were, till towards the close of the eighteenth century, a fighting race and that there was a great loss of lives in the wars with neighbouring principalities and tribes. As in other matters the letter of the law has been closely followed, without a corresponding adherence to its spirit.

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velichapad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, [789] the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole [789] ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this propitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which [787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

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[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiat- [782]
ed by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic.

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ances- 769
tors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worship-ped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors [532]
are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati 771
who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand mala- 776
dies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants [789]
and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which [754]
Brahmans also share.

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be 771
found in the compounds of every Nayar house 778
in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies
a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and 825
other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi.

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala 773
absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve 778
their condition, returned to their old country. After their 825
departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or [776]
Páthála took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled

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775 [881] [846] [789] [782] time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings. Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* [787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 782 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machinations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to [776] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn [791] must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil [783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire). [789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 346 775 [753] [796] In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons, the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat- [793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and [791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 825 **Worship of animals and plants.** To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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During the exile of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, they 825
lived chiefly by hunting. One day, when Sita was drying some 539
pieces of flesh, a crow accidentally pecked at one of Sita's ruddy toes, taking it for one of the blood red pieces of meat. She thereupon told her husband about it, who shot an arrow at the crow and blinded it in one eye, and thenceforth its descendants have been blind in one eye.

When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea, for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asura*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

Ari-pravu or the common house-dove has a story told of it. These birds, male and female, are always found in pairs together. Once, it is said, they were quarrelling about a game, and the quarrel ended in the desertion by the male bird of his mate, who recognizing the mistake called for him, and her cries are said to be ever calling out for her mate.

Rain, Thunder and Lightning:—In the aërial regions are 539
huge monsters of extraordinary strength (*Kalaméghattanmár*) [821]
who are supposed to possess two horns with the aid of which [776]
all the water from the earth is drawn up during the summer, to be spat out in the rainy season at Indra's (Rain God's) bidding. Lightning is caused by the friction of the horns, while engaged in the task of spitting out water. Another version of the story as to the origin of lightning is, that it is caused by the brandishing of Indra's sword, while engaged in ordering the monsters to supply the earth with water.

It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger [825]
every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that [826]
organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined.

Evil spirits are believed to have the power at times of [776]
changing men into tigers, such being distinguished by having [825]
no tails.

The claws and even the teeth of the tiger are used as [789]
charms against witchcraft and the evil-eye. They may fre- [825]
quently be seen set in silver, and worn round the necks of

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a por- [789] tion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykutta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks 613
round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on 764
the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made [532]
out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (mak- 765
ing offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the 782
second day after death and continues for seven days, the parti- 613
culars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chithayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the 824
belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in 826
the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Sa-* 764
mánan, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Déva-* 704
dathan and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brah- [789]
man sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the [775]
palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 782

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned care- 824
fully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 765
613

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala
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We were taken to a camp two miles further on where we found some black, yak-hair, Tibetan tents, standing, as they do, like spiders because of their strange construction. There were flocks of sheep about, as well as a few yaks (*gYag*), animals from which our present hosts, the nomads, made their living. A tent, larger than the others, proved to be that of the *goba*, and we were taken close to it and invited to put up our own tents nearby.

Very soon after our arrival, we attended a masked dance at the monastery, and the abbot himself acted the Black Hat dancer which is the principal role. There were many spectators present, all the nomads of Rupchu taking a particular and obvious pleasure in what they saw. Another day, we witnessed a ceremony called *zor* (*Zor*) in which a *torma*, made of the head, backbone and entrails of a goat, standing on the animal's skin, was destroyed by lamas armed with great knives, as a way of exorcising devils and evil spirits.

Then came a reception in the *goba's* tent, a festive function at which there were many guests. We were entertained with *chang*, dried meat, *tsampa*, turnips and buttered tea, and the party was a very gay one in which most of the guests, the *goba* and the abbot included, got roaring drunk.

At another reception to which we were invited at the monastery before leaving and in which all our caravaneers received coloured bits of rag as talismans from the hands of the *tulku*, I was able to inform myself about the marital customs of the nomads.

The day after the reception at the *gompa*, we left for Leh, capital of Ladak (7th August, 1938). It was a cold journey as there was frost already on the high passes, and we had three to cross before we reached lower ground near Tso Kar (*mTs'ho dKar*), "the White Lake". From here, we continued down the Gya valley, where we encountered the first houses and fields again and received our first letter in many weeks, addressed to us by the Superintendent of the Moravian Mission in Ley, the Reverend Walter Asboe. A few stages further on, we crossed the Indus near Upshi, and followed its right bank past Himis and Tikse *gompas* to Sheh, one stage before our destination.

On the 22nd August, 1938, we came to Leh in the early afternoon and were received at the entrance of the town by the Moravian Missionary, the local authorities and a crowd of Ladakis, men, women and children. We were taken past the mile long *mani* walls to the Residency in the south-westerly quarter, where we had been authorized to stay during the period of our visit to Ladak. Very soon, we met those who

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple,
[789] where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534]
which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti * [354]
carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

177 of Vasco da Gama and Albuquerque, is one of those coins
301 which, having found favour with a people, is used persistently in ornamentation long after it has passed out of currency. So fond are the Malayālis of the sequin that to this day there is quite a large trade in imitations of the coin for purposes of ornament. Such is the persistence of its use that the trade extends to brass and even copper imitation of the sequins. The former are often seen to
[554] bear the legend 'Made in Austria.' The Nāyars wear none but the gold sequins. The brass imitations are worn by the women of the inferior races. If one asks the ordinary Malayāli, say a Nāyar, what persons are represented on the sequin, one gets for answer that they are Rāma and Sīta; between them a cocoanut tree."

301 In connection with the wearing of charms by Nāyars
789 Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "One individual (a
[777] Kiriattil Nāyar) wore two rings made of an amalgamation of gold and copper, called tambāk, on the ring finger of
[325] the right hand for good luck. Tambāk rings are lucky rings. It is a good thing to wash the face with the hand, on which is a tambāk ring. Another wore two rings of the pattern called trilōham (lit. metals) on the ring finger of each hand. Each of these was made during an eclipse.
301 Yet another wore a silver ring as a vow, which was to be
789 given up at the next festival at Kottiūr, a famous festival
782 in North Malabar. The right nostril of a Sūdra Nāyar was slit vertically as if for the insertion of a jewel. His
[304] mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had his nose slit. Another wore a silver bangle. He had a wound in his arm which was long in healing, so he made a vow to the god at Tirupati (in the North Arcot district), that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to send the bangle there by a messenger.

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged." 301 789

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year. 304 [177] [564]

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th 776 [532] [778] [775] [766] [791] [789] [782]

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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 789 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 782 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like 793 sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

796
788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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use. No other manure is used. Green manure is not grown but is got from somewhere or other according to circumstances. Varatties are not made. Wood fuel is the only sort used. 241 [372]

Insect pests.—Of these, the most ruinous is the "Chazhi" the terror of the ryot. The chazhi is a small insect of the locust species half an inch long which in millions appear in a few seasons and spread desolation in the paddy fields. Two remedies are current against this pestilence: (1) catching them directly by drawing a cloth (which serves the purpose of a net) attached to two handsticks over the crops and thus killing them; (2) but by far the most efficacious remedy in the estimation of the cultivator is the putting of a talisman in the fields which a local conjurer (Mandravadi) has prepared for him. What chazhi is to paddy "Mahali" is to the arecanut, the only difference being that in this case nothing is believed to be possible to combat the calamity. 242 [789]

Cattle diseases are (1) hoof disease, (2) Koraladappan (swelling in the neck), (3) Thada (mumps), (4) obstruction of urine and dung, (5) sudden epileptic attacks, and other diseases whose causes and cure are unknown to the peasant. Poisoning is sometimes done by Paraiyas of neighbouring desams for the sake of getting the flesh. For beef is eaten only by this lowest class and when cattle die they will be called to remove the carcase. A number of cattle are annually destroyed by tigers also which often venture into the sheds of the peasants. Talismans and offerings to deities are conceived to be the only remedy. 232 [789]

No assistance is obtained from the Agricultural department, nor any from any veterinary doctor.

Wood is commonly got for all uses from private trees; but the forest also supplies sometimes wood for small necessities. For building purposes, wood is purchased—not from any fixed place. 313

Houses.—The depressed castes have miserable hovels for their houses. A mud wall of five feet height with a ruined roof which can protect the inmate neither from sun nor rain is the order of the day. 342

Except the palatial family homes of the two jenmis, there are no tiled houses. Terracing is not customary here. All other houses are thatched, and thatching is always of straw.

Most houses have gardens surrounding them, where arecanut trees, plantains, mango trees, jack, etc., are grown. They are joyful to look at. 351

The maximum distance of cultivated lands from the home of cultivator is one mile.

An acre of land costs from Rs. 200 to Rs. 300. But purchases on jenmi tenure are worth above Rs. 500. But it is impossible to acquire jenmam property except for jenmis; for the jenmis are jealous guardians of their lands and never sell lands once acquired. Direct threatenings and indirect intimidation are used by them to obtain the jenmam right of lands if held by any lesser landowner. 423 [435]

Subsidiary industries.—Neither weaving nor spinning have ever been practised in this desam. 463

Other crafts—

1. Arrack and jaggery making.
2. Ironsmith.

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet.

564 kanam tenants of the village, on a triennial ten-
427 ure (verum-pattam) retaining about one-fifth of the produce for their own sustenance and paying
564 the rest as rent in kind. One or more small
437 patrilineal groups of each of the other castes had what was called a desam avakasam or "village right," namely the right to work exclusively for members of their natal village. Sometimes, in the case of small castes such as astrologers and barbers, the right might extend to several adjacent villages who collectively shared the labour of one servant family. Avakasams were hereditary in patrilineal groups; they involved payment in paddy and vegetables by each patron household, of whatever caste, after the two harvests of the year, and the right to take part in village festivals and be fed at higher caste festivals and marriages.

[791] Astrologers and artisans were hired by all the higher castes of the village, by each other and
[305] by Iravas who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the lower polluting castes of this group, but not for the "good" castes who em-
[296] ployed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the lower polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman; however, the low [26] caste washerman's lineage must provide clean cloths for the "good" castes after death, menstruation and childbirth and had ritual obligations to high caste women on the two latter occasions. Bow-
564 makers served Nayars and Iravas. Each of the
783 lower polluting castes was endogamous and interdined equally only within the caste. Rules of

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564 794 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matrilineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 794 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden. [782] [793] Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as permanent tenants. [613] In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 794 613 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhagavadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 564 [793] [791] [782] In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman, attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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PL. XII.

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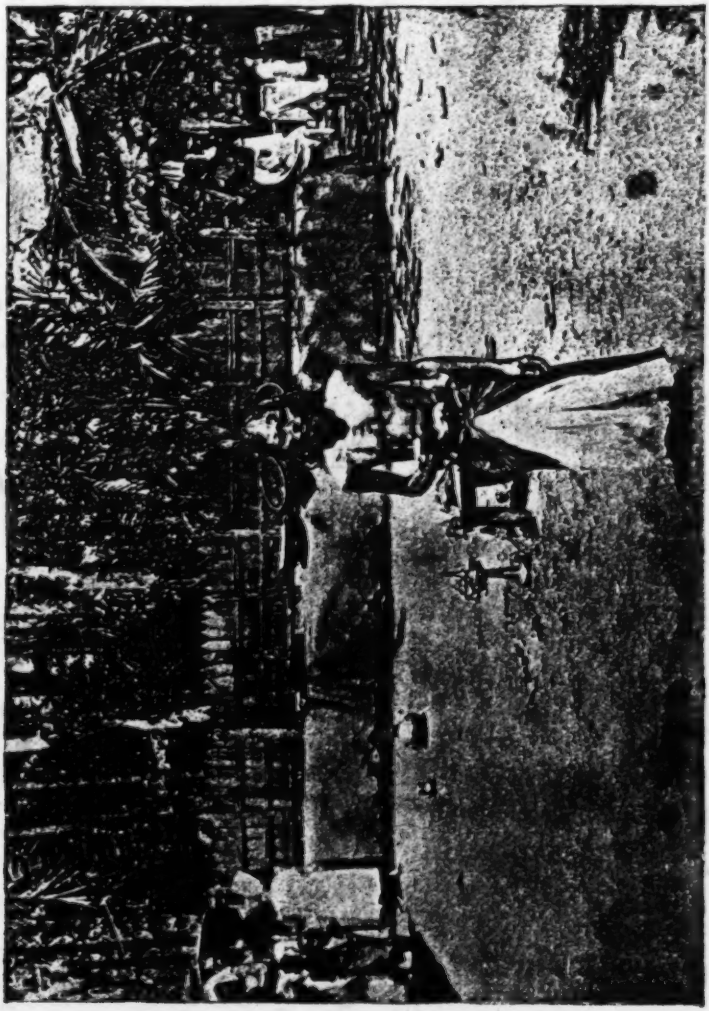

A VELICHCHAPPAD.

[Facing P. 242]

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796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

1/2 [see cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- An.]

performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera. The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velichchappâd about three days afterwards going to perform elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

* The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the school-master. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2½ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

789 [791] The Panikkars dabble also in magic. In Plates XVI, XVII are figured four yantrams, selected from a number in my possession as representative, presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver or copper plate (a yantram written on gold is the most effective), and worn on the person. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylindrical case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, or round the neck.

No. I. Aksharamâla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless; but it gives life to all others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

[782] *No. II. Sûlini.*—For protection against sorcery, or devils. This is to invoke the goddess and secure her aid. The ceremony brings a blessing to the receiver of the charm.

[776] *No. III. Mâha Sûlini.*—To be used to prevent all kinds of harm through devils, chief of whom is Pulatini—he who eats infants. May be used also as protective against enemies. Women wear it to avert miscarriage. The letter in the middle, Hûm Mâha Sûlini. That in the rim is Om.

[782] *No. IV. Kâla Bhâiravi.*—Represents the goddess. The goddess must be pleased *first* by worship. No sacrifice, which is rather odd, as this terrible goddess is generally represented in Southern India as loving blood. The letters do not form any mantram. Each letter has life in itself. Prevents all harm from enemies, and attack by devils.

Other yantrams to be used in much the same way as these are:—

[856] The *Ganapati* yantram. To increase knowledge. To put away fear and shyness.

The *Sarasvati* yantram. To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

The *Panchakshari* yantram, a square containing 81 smaller squares, in each a mystic letter; the whole representing Siva. For persons on whom medicines have no [776] effect. Also against evil spirits. A person out of whom an evil spirit has been driven is perfectly safe ever after with this carried on his person.

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The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection. 789 842 [834]

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning. 789 [755] [825]

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man. 754 [791] [564]

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain [115]

754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, [824] written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[539] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Srîparamêsvaranûm Srî Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâî Ezhunellumpôl Srî

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754 is truly human. Belief in magic and witchcraft, symbolic
789 hurts and cures, and the like, are very deep in human nature; reason and culture do not efface it. It is one of the earliest heirlooms of the human family, and it will in all probability persist to the end. We cannot think of man as being without it.* Hence the interest in investigating it.

791 But now, as Patelin's Judge said to the draper, let us return *à nos moutons*. There is nothing secret about the profession of the Panikkar. His rites are secret of course. They are *his* secret. But his profession is an honourable one. He is not ashamed of it, nor will he deny it. That is, so long as he confines his talents to the practice of *good* magic.

754 With the professor of the more lucrative *black magic*, it is quite another thing. No one will ever admit publicly that he practises *black magic*.

Black magic.—It would never do to avoid altogether the subject of black magic, which is cultivated and practised to a much greater extent in Malabar than elsewhere in the Southern Presidency. I hope to have more to say about it later on when we come to description of some of the lower races, and for the present we must be content with a rather bare description of it. We have seen already that a few Nambûtiri Brahmans practise it. A few Nâyars also do so. But as a rule the man who really works in black magic is the Parayan.
754 The old story. It is always the man of inferior race who
564 is superior in black magic. The Parayans of Malabar are not, I think, identical with the Pariahs (Parayas) of Southern India. There are obvious differences in physique. In parts of rural Malabar one may see a Parayan's little hut far away on the hill side, but one tries in vain to see and speak to its inmates, who flee into the jungle. The Parayans are complete outcastes, and their presence carries pollution to one of any superior caste within about a furlong. It is not too much to say that, as a rule, they are abhorred as the lowest of the low. They eat beef, and are there-
[262] fore quite outside the pale of Hinduism. I have
[673] heard of fairly well authenticated cases of their stealing children of Nâyars, hiding them away in the forest and

[171] * The reader who has not given much attention to the subject of Folklore, may be surprised by the evidence of the persistence of these beliefs in England, available in the publications of the Folklore Society, London. See "County Folklore," chapters on Witchcraft, etc.

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754 object to be milked; how to cure a headache; to prevent
812 bad dreams, and so on.

N.B.—A mantram must be spoken, breathed, whispered with extreme accuracy. There must be no omission or false accent. Anything of the kind, or wrong pronunciation, destroys its efficacy at once.

FAMOUS MAGICIANS OF MALABAR.

791 We will close this chapter on magic which, though painfully inadequate, is already rather too long for its purpose, by mention of some of the famous workers in the art. Those who are familiar with the west coast will at once recall to mind the names of three Brâhman families whose scions are famed throughout the land as possessors of stores of magic, and at the same time—so interwoven is magic with religion!—revered for their saintliness. The eldest member of one of these is said to be "an honoured guest throughout the length and breadth of Kêrala; and on certain State occasions in Trevandrum and elsewhere, his presence is indispensable." A well-known tradition relates how that magic came, so to speak, into the family. (It is not necessary to give the family name, even though it is a household word on the west coast).

773 Long ago in the days of the Perumals, a Brâhman and
791 his friend were belated in the Yakshi paramba (*yakshi*—
776 female demon, *paramba*—garden) near Trichur.* The place was dreary; nothing but palms around. Suddenly they were accosted by lovely damsels who asked them to pass the night under their roof, and soon they were lodged in a sumptuous house, each in a separate chamber. But in the night, the damsels who had, *Lorelei* fashion, attracted the travellers, resumed their demoniacal forms and ate the Brâhman. His friend they could not touch as he had on his person a grandha sacred to Bhagavati; but in the morning he found himself perched on the top of a palm tree underneath which lay the bones of his friend, the Brâhman.

The Brahman's widow gave birth to a son soon after the strange death of her husband. When the boy was eleven years of age, she related to him how he had been made fatherless. He vowed vengeance on the Yakshis and Gandharvas (male demons) and, like a sensible boy, set about preparation for his life-task. It was not long before he had mastered the Vedas and all learning, and having done so he retired to the jungle, where he was

* To this day people avoid this place at night.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared before him in human form and handed him a grandah, which is to this day the greatest work on magic in existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts for the prefix "Sûrya" to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case.

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talisman, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan

* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

789 magician was called in to prepare one of these. Placing
791 an ordinary style and a small sheet of copper in a box, he closed it. Presently a noise was heard inside the box; and in a few moments a sound as of the style falling. The box was opened and magic figures were found to be inscribed on the copper sheet. The lady wears the talisman now! The magician must have been in a favourable mood on the occasion, as he is said to have given an additional performance on his own account. When he had placed the style and the tiny sheet of copper in the box, taking two young cocoanuts in his hands, he kept on throwing them in the air and catching them. "What will you have in each?" he asked. "Honey in one and boiled milk in the other" was the answer. Of course these were found in the cocoanuts when they were opened by the magician, but it was somewhat gross of the Nâyar gentleman to test the quality of the milk by turning it into curds the next
[493] day. Wonderful stories are told of this man who used to be seen at night carried in a mancheel by invisible bearers, whose weary chant could be heard, but whose bodily presence was beyond the reach of human eye.

791 The last and the chief of this trio is the once famous Kandeth Nayar who departed this life about a hundred
[782] years ago. Every one knows about the Kandeth Nayar, and any one now-a-days who wants to injure another invokes his aid, and resorts to his tomb to fulfil his vow. I understand that sacrifices at his tomb are common, and that his power reaches from the land of shades in almost the same strength as when he lived.

791 The rather incoherent way in which the terms
754 warlock, magician, have been used seems to demand some explanation. Strictly speaking, the Parayan Ôḍiyan is the only warlock. Magician is scarcely the correct term for the ordinary worker in magic. Nevertheless, it is scarcely possible to avoid a somewhat indiscriminate use of these terms on account of the way in which the functions of the warlock, the magician, the astrologer, and even the priest are really interwoven one with the other. The professed magician is often also the warlock and *vice versâ*. The vernacular word, which is as catholic as that which stands for "Religion," is "mantravâḍi"—mantram man; he who is sought every day of the year by hundreds of the people of Kêrala, to relieve them of their physical troubles and infirmities, to cure their cattle, to injure their enemies, aye, even to destroy them.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

to grow up. There is one important custom (and Mr. Ananta Krishna Aiyer forgets to notice it)[1] which forbids two generations of girls being married together. When girls become mothers at sixteen, generations mingle frequently and often there may be girls younger than oneself who are one's mother's sisters and, therefore, stand logically in the same position as one's mother. The custom is that they should not undergo the ceremony together, though this is strictly kept up only in richer families.

The first step to this ceremony is a village and *enangar* council. The prominent people of the village and the *enangars* are invited and the *Kāranavan* takes counsel with them as to the various arrangements with regard to the ceremony. After the *Kaniyan*, or the medicine man (who is also the astrologer and magician), has fixed the auspicious hour for the ceremony, a *pandal*, or a decorated tent, is put up in the presence of the village elders, in the *Muttam*. In the middle of the tent so erected is kept the *Astamangalyam* (Sanskrit word *Asta*=8, *mangalyam*=happiness giving). The *Astamangalyam* consists of a measure of paddy, some rice, an absolutely white cloth (to show purity), an arrow (to show the warlike character), lighted lamp (uninterrupted prosperity), a looking-glass, and a *cheppu* (which is the Malabar equivalent of a powder puff), and a blossom of the coco-nut palm.

The ceremony of *Talikettu* can take place any time of the day, only it must be an auspicious hour. Evening is preferred because more gaiety is possible. Early in the morning the girls are taken to the family tanks by the women of the *Enangar* house, and have an oil bath. After this they are elaborately dressed. They put on various ornaments used only for that day. All the families, of course, do not possess these ornaments; generally, only one or two families in the village have them, but they are available for all on such occasions.

The tier of the *Tali*, who is generally a priest, or sometimes a Kshatriya lord, is invited, and he stops at a house near by. The day before the ceremony he goes, accompanied by the village elders on an elephant, in a procession to the nearest temple and gets the *Tali* consecrated by the priest of the temple. In these days I have seen the *Tali*-tier taken in a motor car to the temple, though the slow-moving elephant is more impressive.

At the auspicious hour the bridegroom, in a warrior's dress (with sword, etc.), arrives at the house, accompanied by a party of the villagers. He is welcomed by the male members of the family, and taken to a seat of honour. There the brother (own or collateral) of the girls washes his feet (this is a custom of extreme politeness prevalent among the Hindus). Then the brides are brought into the *pandal*. They make a *pradikshana* (go round the *pandal* by their left three or seven times). The eldest girl's father's sister's son (i.e., her marriageable cousin) gives some brand-new pieces of fine silk cloth, and then the priest or the warrior ties the *Tali* round the girls' necks. This is followed by a huge feast which goes on for four days. On

[1] *Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. ii, chapter on the Nāyars.

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Dr. Marett himself has, with great truth, insisted on as the essence of religion.[1] I have called such practices magical, not only because they lack the emotional and the psychological elements of religion, but also because the fundamental presupposition in such performances is the power wielded by the magician, the "*orenda*" which he has acquired, over the ghosts.

This is very clear from the Nāyar ideas of *Thēvar* and *Pisāchu*. *Thēvar* can be propitiated but never conquered; while a *Pisāchu* (or ghost), though superior to man in power, intelligence and will-to-do-harm, can be rendered harmless and kept under control by magical practices. The former conception is clearly Hindu and relates only to Hindu gods. The spiritual ideas of the Nāyars themselves seem to be confined to ghosts, spirits, and to a comic elf called *Kutti-Chāttan*.

Before we proceed to consider them, the position of the magician in the Nāyar community has to be made clear. It is generally taken for granted by anthropological writers that wherever social life is regulated by magical practices the *Shaman* comes to be held in reverence. It is very interesting, therefore, to notice that the Nāyars never accepted the superiority of the magician, and never accorded him any privilege. The magico-medicine man is, on the other hand, considered to be a sort of servant-in-attendance on a nobleman's family, something like a family doctor. The explanation that it is due to the warlike character of the Nāyars is clearly inapplicable, as the magician attained kingly powers among the Masai, for example, whose society is also organised for purposes of war. The fact that the *Kāniyān* (or the magico-medicine-man) is not only not venerated, but actually considered an inferior, may be more due to the effect of caste-system, which places Nāyars high among the social scale.

The *Kāniyān* is, of course, recognised as a necessary person. He gets from all the houses of the village settled remuneration, mostly in coco-nuts. He is not otherwise paid for ordinary consultation, and he is bound to attend to every case in the village without fail. For special exertions of his magical powers he has special payments settled by village custom. He has power, both inherited and acquired, to cast-off spirits, to perform preventive magic, and keep general control over ghosts.

There are supposed to be three kinds of spirits, *Prētam*, *Bhutam*, and *Pisāchu*. A *Prētam* is the spirit of a dead man. The ghosts of men who died in the ordinary course of events are not really *Prētams*, because they do not wander about to overpower people and drink their blood. It is generally the ghosts of men who died as a result of foul play, or by accidents such as drowning, or by terrible diseases such as smallpox and cholera that wander about at nights. A *Bhutam* is seen generally in marshy districts and does not always hurt people unless they go very near him. A *Pisāchu* is a general spirit of the air causing such diseases as smallpox. All these

[1] Threshold of Religion: Essays on Pre-animistic Religion, the Birth of Humility, and Is Tabu negative magic?

776 high above his reach unless, of course, there is something near by on which he could climb. He cannot untie a knot, as he does not possess fingers, though he can open the strongest lock. What rich people do to keep their money out of his reach is to tie a knot on the purse and keep it locked in a safe, the latter precaution being necessary against human hands that possess fingers.

776 *Kutti Chattan* can, of course, be tamed by magicians and bribed to do whatever
791 his patrons like. There is a story that a Brahmin landlord who was also a magician
773 tamed a *Kutti Chattan* and used him for the purpose of keeping a watch on his things. A Christian tenant of his who had gone to pay the rent, not knowing the existence of the invisible and mysterious detective, stole certain things and took them home with him. But lo! *Kutti Chattan* had followed him, and the man was found dead next morning, and the stolen things were in their place. Such is the power of *Kutti Chattan*, the household elf of Malabar.

771 Whether the practices here narrated and the belief in the existence of a "naughty elf" amount to religion depends very much upon the definition we give to it. Though they are distinctly social and possess social sanction, I do not think it can be called religion, because there is a fundamental difference in the emotional and psychic aspects of religious experience and practice, and such social beliefs and customs as I have described here.

754 But side by side with this there also exists "black magic," sinister, selfish, and
771 anti-social. It is fast disappearing, more as a result of economic pressure than be-
[178] cause of any growing disbelief in it. A young man has no time now to devote him-
self entirely to sacrificing goats and birds all night and chanting formulæ so that
[789] he might become possessed of magical power. Those young men who have devoted themselves to such practices are, however, looked upon with great fear. The community does not like such practices, and though these magicians may excite fear, they are also aware of the general belief that they will some day come to a disastrous end.

Their practices are carried on in secret and nobody knows what they do except those initiated. Their assistance is procured only by people who want to do harm to others or satisfy ignoble desires. A man often gets the help of a magician of this sort to perform his "art" so that an enemy of his who is gone on a pilgrimage may not return. They are avoided by all decent people, and society in general, though it fears their "art," considers them charlatans.

754 There are many minor superstitions that can be only briefly noticed here.

784 *The Evil Eye.*—The magical effect of the evil eye is a matter of very serious
123 concern among Nāyar women. I remember being taken to task for telling a woman how healthy her boy looked, and must add that I felt as if I had been convicted of a heinous crime when four or five days later I was told that the child was ill. The
[755] entire feminine opinion of the village was convinced that the child was suffering from my evil eye, and a good many *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, were said over it before the child was well again.

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

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776 the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular
[782] of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of
796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days.
776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kilamezhuthum Pattum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of
776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise
791 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A
796 man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round
[534] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a
[532] scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god-
[785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called,
[787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early
776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back
[532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums,
[788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession.
[231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the
[791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*tálam*) full of rice and a light placed on the
[782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other
[782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu-
778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat-
[788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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A VELICHAPADU

[facing p. 84]

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775 [881] [846] [789] [782] time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings. Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* [787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 782 [776] [791] Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machinations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil [783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire). [789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 346 775 [753] [796] In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons, the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat- [793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and [791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 225 **Worship of animals and plants.** To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

any rent for it, but on the contrary, received payment as shampooers and masseurs of their landlord. Fees for those services were, on an average, twelve annas per session, and they received the money at regular intervals from seven to fourteen or twenty one days. Four times a year (every "season"), they were also entitled to two bags of rice, food, oil for massage and a bath(?). (I am not quite clear as to what the latter item stands for, but this is what I have in my notes.)

On the 26th of November, 1949, I visited a *Tol-kollan* household, at Meitenadesam, near Ottappalam. The name of this sub-caste means literally "skin-workers", and its members are leather-workers and cobblers. The house in which this family lived was the most miserable of all those we had or were still to see. It stood in the coconut groves on the outskirts of Ottappalam, and we went there on foot. It was a broken down construction of woven palm leaves and mud walls and the thatch on the roof was in bad condition. An old lady called Kurumba (see Fig. 14), sat just outside the front door, bare breasted and with enlarged holes in the lobes of her ears so that she could accomodate the sizeable gold lumps which are inserted here in Malayalam fashion. With her was her elderly daughter, Kunji, who received us. She was very polite and insisted on offering us some fresh coconut milk.

When we asked her about polyandry, she scoffed at the idea and said that in her family at least, the practice had been given up already in the generation of her father and mother. The men quarrelled too much about the common wife, she said, and besides, the women resented it and did not want it any more. There were members of her sub-caste who were still polyandrous, but as they were few and far between it would not be easy to locate them.

Under the circumstances, it seemed useless to make out a genealogy of these people, and I did not have time to look for a polyandrous *Tol-kollan* family elsewhere.

From this house, in the evening of the same day and with the same interpreters and guides, I went on to the home of some *Kanisans* or astrologers, who are also known as *Panikkars* locally. Theirs was a better dwelling, standing hidden in a thick grove of plantains and coconut trees well shaded and pleasant. We were received by a man called Ramankuti, thirty five years old, who offered us some chairs to sit on and very readily answered our questions.

He told us that his household bore the name of Pellarmangalam, and that his *kalarikel* was similarly called. It appeared that *Kanisans* do not have *tarawads* either, and that their patrilineal clans are called "gymna-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kanisans
Manans

siums" too – for what reason, I could not find out; I could see no relation between astrology and a gymnasium. Like the *Kolla-kurups*, they also had *kiriyams* which were exogamous as the *kalarikels* were; the informant's matrilineal clan was called Manga. Inheritance was *makkathayam*.

The family living in the house here, was divided into two sections. The first, of which Ramankuti was the eldest, consisted of himself and his brother, Ticheri, three years younger than him. Their father, who was now dead, had successively had two wives, Lakshmi and Kalyany, both of them still alive and living in the house; the first section was descendant from the first wife, while the other was issued from the second. Kalyany had had six children, of which, Paru, aged thirty, was the eldest; there were four brothers, Pachu, Shanghuni, Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan, and a younger daughter called Nani, aged twelve. The interesting part of the organization was that the two sections had both contracted polyandrous marriages: Ramankuti and Ticheri with one wife, Madhevi aged twenty eight: their four half brothers with Devaki, twenty three years old. Both women were from other *kalarikels*, the first from Kangal and the other from Kavalapara. They all lived in the same house, however, with Nani, only Paru having married Krishnan of Kutiparli *kalarikel* and having gone off to live with him. Paru had three children with Krishnan, as did Madhevi with the informant and his brother. The four brothers had only one little daughter, aged one year, with Devaki. The genealogy, as it was dictated to me, is given in Table 16.

Ramankuti told me that he and Pachu were the fully-fledged astrologers of the family. Kumaran and Gopalkrishnan were studying the art. Ticheri did odd jobs as a labourer, and Shanghuni was employed as a workman in the local match factory. The house that they all lived in was rented on a *kudiviruppu* lease for which they paid eight annas a year to the *janmi* of the land upon which it stood, a Nambudri Brahmin called Totapai Mana Nilakanda Nambudripad.

On the 22nd of November, 1949, I went to Lakkidi to visit the house of a *Manan*. These people are washermen and barbers, and they play an important role in Kerala as it is they and they alone who can wash the polluted clothes of menstruating Nambudri Brahmin and Nayar women. But they are also dancers in the temple on festive occasions.

We found the house for which we were looking, in the actual village of Lakkidi, in the vicinity of the railway station, near the river. It was a moderately large, well-to-do building, standing isolated in a large compound, in which clothes had been laid out to dry on the ground.

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 210]

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Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595* Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601 to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repetition of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). [115] [551] He helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614 obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564 be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well [582] known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428] was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564 Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 421 but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465 ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564 upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 79 went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293] umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595* thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342] dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595* androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601 to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast-feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

585 184 the results of his calculations on a piece of palmyra leaf, [787] with his opinion as to the fitness or otherwise of the match, and hands it over to the bridegroom's relations. If the horoscopes agree, a day is then and there fixed for the [212] celebration of the marriage. This date is also written down on two pieces of cadjan (palm leaf), one of which is handed over to the bride's Karanavan, and the other [791] to the bridegroom's relations. The astrologer and the [574] bridegroom's party are then feasted in the bride's house, and the former also receives presents in the shape of [431] money or cloth. This preliminary ceremony, which is invariably performed at all pudamuris in North Malabar, is called pudamuri kurikkal, but is unknown in South Malabar. Some three or four days prior to the date fixed for the celebration of the pudamuri, the bridegroom visits his Karanavans and elders in caste, [584] to obtain formal leave to marry. The bridegroom on such occasion presents his elders with betel and nuts, and obtains their formal sanction to the wedding. On the day appointed, the bridegroom proceeds after sunset to the house of the bride, accompanied by a number of his friends. He goes in procession, and is received at the gate of the house by the bride's party, and conducted with his friends to seats provided in the tekkini [431] or southern hall of the house. There the bridegroom distributes presents (dānam) or money gifts to the [574] Brāhmans assembled. After this, the whole party is treated to a sumptuous banquet. It is now time for the astrologer to appear, and announce the auspicious hour fixed. He does it accordingly, and receives his dues. The bridegroom is then taken by one of his friends to the padinhatta or principal room of the house. The bridegroom's party has, of course, brought with them a quantity of new cloths, and betel leaves and nuts. The

bangle there by a messenger. An Akattu Charna Nāyar wore an amulet to keep off the spirit of a Brāhman who died by drowning. Another had a silver ring, on which a piece of a bristle from an elephant's tail was arranged." 301 789

Tattooing is said by Mr. Subramani Aiyar not to be favoured by North Travancore Nāyars, and to be only practiced by Nāyar women living to the south of Quilon. Certain accounts trace it to the invasion of Travancore by a Moghul Sirdar in 1680 A.D. In modern times it has become rare. The operation is performed by women of the Odda or Kurava caste before a girl reaches the twelfth year. 304 [177] [564]

Concerning the religious worship of the Nāyars, Mr. Subramani Aiyar writes that "Buchanan notes that the proper deity of the Nāyars is Vishnu, though they wear the mark of Siva on their foreheads. By this is merely meant that they pay equal reverence to both Siva and Vishnu, being Smartas converted to the tenets of Sankaracharya. Besides worshipping the higher Hindu deities, the Nāyars also manifest their adoration for several minor ones, such as Mātan, Utayam, Yakshi, Chattan, Chantakarnan, Murti, Maruta, and Arukula. Most of these have granite representations, or at least such emblems as a sword or a cane, and are provided with a local habitation. Besides these, persons who have met with accidental death, and girls who have died before their tāli-tying ceremony, are specially worshipped under the designations of Kazhichchavu and Kannichchavu. Magicians are held in some fear, and talismanic amulets are attached to the waist by members of both sexes. Kuttichattan, the mischievous imp of Malabar, is supposed to cause much misery. Various spirits are worshipped on the Tiruvonam day in the month of Avani (August-September), on the Uchcharam or 28th 776 [532] [778] [775] [766] [791] [789] [782]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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435 Site values of land for building are getting higher and higher in the 'town', chiefly because the Shoranur-Cochin Railway now runs through this place, the principal offices of the taluk are here, and a high school has just been opened. Rs. 500 per acre may be paid in the 'town'; Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 in the rest of the village area. But the best wet land fetches up to Rs. 1,500 per acre. Cultivable land fetches far higher prices than building land, because only land unfit for cultivation, of which there is enough, is used for building.

423 The practice of exchanging lands is unknown. Generally, though not always, holdings are continuous. Field huts, built in [343] the midst of their fields, are often used by big farmers. The seeds, the harvested paddy and other crops, the stock, the implements, etc., are kept there.

286 *Subsidiary industries.*—Weaving is not practised. In the north-eastern part of the State, however, handloom weaving of an exquisite sort and also of a rough character is practised.

285 Mat-weaving of an exquisite pattern out of certain reeds duly coloured is practised by a set of people locally known as 'Koravas.' 735 The condition of these men, however, is miserable. They have no capital, no organization or culture, but usually make their wares to order, though now and then a few enterprising middlemen avail [787] themselves of these people's skill. They talk a jargon of Tamil and Malayalam, and their females, like gipsies, beg from house to [791] house and profess themselves to be adepts in palmistry. They make mats costing from Re. 1 to Rs. 15 or Rs. 20. They yet live from hand to mouth; and I have my doubts whether they will be able to keep up their skill unless knowing people help to raise their economic condition.

564 Every village moreover contains within its borders the following castes who follow their hereditary crafts:—the Marasari (carpenter), Kallasari (mason), Tattan (goldsmith), Musari (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), and Tolkollan (leather-worker). There are a few families of each of these castes in Watakanchery also. "As their services are much in requisition and as they earn better wages than unskilled labourers, they are still engaged in their hereditary occupation. The first five groups are socially in a par with each other. They all interdine, but do not intermarry. But the Tolkollans are considered inferior in status to the rest and cannot touch them without causing pollution, probably on account of their [595] work in leather which in its raw state is considered impure. Polyandry of the fraternal type was prevalent among them, several brothers marrying one wife and the children being treated as common to all. This practice however is fast dying out, if it has [783] not already done so." (Census Reports.) One special feature in the caste-hierarchy is that these people are made to stand at a specified distance while approaching the higher castes (24 feet is the rule).

466 These castes minister to the every day needs of the community, executing their work generally to order. As they are very poor, they cannot afford to work on their own account on a commercial 326 scale. The village usually contains a recognized *desa-asari* (village smith) to whom the farmers pay a certain amount of paddy at the harvesting season of the year for the repair of their implements. None but the village-smith is entitled to this dole. These may entertain apprentices from their own caste-people, though the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 564 581 428 the Nambudri Act of 1933, the provisions of which are that younger Nambudris may marry women of their own caste and that the *illam* property can be divided, if they so wish, and inherited by these younger sons.

105 564 611 Others who observe *makkathayam* in Kerala are the south Malabar and north Cochin Thandans, the Kammalans and their associated fellow artisans and craftsmen, all the agrarian serfs and the aboriginals, the south Malabar Moslem Moplas, the Christians and the Jews.

Marumakkathayam, on the other hand, is practised by Kshattriyas, Samantans, Ambalavasis, Nayars, north Malabar Tiyas, south Travancore Iruvas and north Malabar as well as Laccadive Moplas. In the case of the Mohammedans, a distinction should be made in matters of [428] inheritance, family property (that is of the *tarawad*) being handed on through the female line alone, while self-acquisitions of the father are passed on directly to his male heirs. A visit to the Makhdun Tangal of [192] [115] Ponani, the senior Islamic religious authority in Kerala, which I made on the 24th of November, 1949, allowed me to confirm this. Originally from the Hedjaz, Sayed Mohammed Ben Mustafa Haidaros told me that this was an adaptation of Koranic law to the customs of the country and had been introduced many years back with the coming of his ancestors to the south-west coast of India.

105 564 [58] Marriage in Kerala is an arranged affair, parents or a close relative such as the maternal uncle, choosing a suitable partner for the child after the age of puberty. Once the two families involved have agreed as to what shall be paid in bride price and in dowry, the wedding is celebrated publicly with religious rites and with an appropriate display of festive spending. This is the general rule insofar as marriage within [588] the caste is concerned. Intercaste relations are, however, far from rare, and their existence has been regularized and institutionalized in a form of sexual union, mentioned above, and known as *sambandham*.

105 564 588 By this arrangement, which appears to conform to a general principle of hypergamy in Kerala, men of a higher caste are permitted to consort with women of a lower one, without incurring any of the obligations towards wife and children which they would have if they had been regularly wed. Greatly facilitating this is the fact that *sambandham* unions [428] usually take place with women of those people who follow *marumakkathayam*, for in this way, the offspring which they may have will belong to their caste and are cared for by and inherit from the maternal uncle.

Sambandham used to be the usual way in which younger Nambudri sons enjoyed the privilege of taking Nayar women to themselves and

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala
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114 *dbang Nor-pu*), who had already brought us to Kyelang from Kulu. Towards the middle of July, with some added personnel recruited from him and placed under the authority of his daughter, Dölma (*sGrol-ma*), we left for Rupchu and Ladak. (For an account of this journey, see *Chevauchée tibétaine*, by the same author, Fernand Nathan editeur, Paris, 1958.)

My first stage was the Shar Shu monastery, near Kolong, where the [1192] Wazir of Lahul and his family resided. Here we attended the annual 1196 masked dance of the lamas, and spent the night at Thakur Partap [535] Chand's fort-like castle. It was here, too, that I met the *goba* of the nomads of Rupchu; he was introduced to me by Mangal Chand, alias *amchi* Tashi Dawa, and I received an invitation to go to Korzok.

The next day, we continued to Patseo or Dozam (*rDo-Zam*) as it is called in Tibetan, and camped with Tsewang Norbu, chief of the Gyakar Kham-pa, and his people for a few days until we received the pack ponies and men which I had ordered from him.

This gave us the opportunity to attend the local fair and annual market here and to see for ourselves in what manner goods from the nomads further north were bought or exchanged for other products by the sedentary Lahulis. We also attended a local show given by travelling enter- [536] tainers from Spiti, in which they performed the ancient ceremony of breaking a large stone on the chest of a man.

The climb up over the Baralatcha pass (16,147 ft.) was strenuous, but we were soon over it, and travelling on the flat Lingti plain, along the banks of the Yunan river. We reached the Ser chu and then the Tsarab chu, which we forded to reach Spiti. A short distance further on, we crossed the south-eastern boundary of Kashmir, and continued our progress now through that State.

A few days later, we turned in a south-easterly direction so as to reach the shores of the lake called Tso (*mTs'ho*) Morari (this is the name on the map, but I heard locally that it should be more correctly *Moriri*), where the *goba* resided.

We arrived at our destination towards the beginning of August, not without difficulty because we had had to cross some very high passes, one of them the Lagnyal-la (20,600 ft.). Our caravan, both men and horses, suffered from the unusual altitude and, for some days, were quite unable to go on. But finally, we descended to relatively more reasonable heights and were received, some distance away from where we were going to stay, by the *goba* and his nephew. They were both relatives of the Karpa house in Lahul.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala
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We were taken to a camp two miles further on where we found some black, yak-hair, Tibetan tents, standing, as they do, like spiders because of their strange construction. There were flocks of sheep about, as well as a few yaks (*gYag*), animals from which our present hosts, the nomads, made their living. A tent, larger than the others, proved to be that of the *goba*, and we were taken close to it and invited to put up our own tents nearby.

Very soon after our arrival, we attended a masked dance at the monastery, and the abbot himself acted the Black Hat dancer which is the principal role. There were many spectators present, all the nomads of Rupchu taking a particular and obvious pleasure in what they saw. Another day, we witnessed a ceremony called *zor* (*Zor*) in which a *torma*, made of the head, backbone and entrails of a goat, standing on the animal's skin, was destroyed by lamas armed with great knives, as a way of exorcising devils and evil spirits.

Then came a reception in the *goba's* tent, a festive function at which there were many guests. We were entertained with *chang*, dried meat, *tsampa*, turnips and buttered tea, and the party was a very gay one in which most of the guests, the *goba* and the abbot included, got roaring drunk.

At another reception to which we were invited at the monastery before leaving and in which all our caravaneers received coloured bits of rag as talismans from the hands of the *tulku*, I was able to inform myself about the marital customs of the nomads.

The day after the reception at the *gompa*, we left for Leh, capital of Ladak (7th August, 1938). It was a cold journey as there was frost already on the high passes, and we had three to cross before we reached lower ground near Tso Kar (*mTs'ho dKar*), "the White Lake". From here, we continued down the Gya valley, where we encountered the first houses and fields again and received our first letter in many weeks, addressed to us by the Superintendent of the Moravian Mission in Ley, the Reverend Walter Asboe. A few stages further on, we crossed the Indus near Upshi, and followed its right bank past Himis and Tikse *gompas* to Sheh, one stage before our destination.

On the 22nd August, 1938, we came to Leh in the early afternoon and were received at the entrance of the town by the Moravian Missionary, the local authorities and a crowd of Ladakis, men, women and children. We were taken past the mile long *mani* walls to the Residency in the south-westerly quarter, where we had been authorized to stay during the period of our visit to Ladak. Very soon, we met those who

794 the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the
564 soil. Fourth came the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, one of which was found in each village or group of villages of the same subcaste where Nayar retainers were present.
[782] In the first two types of temples, animal sacrifice was forbidden; offerings were of flowers, fruits, incense and fire. The priests were
[793] either Nambudiri Brahmans or members of a lower landless caste called Embrandiri Brahmans who are immigrant from South Canara to the north. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which contained a temple of type (1), there was often no Nayar population at all: a group of lineages of one or more temple servant subcastes replaced them as retainers of the Nambudiris and as kanam tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of type (2), there would be one or two individual lineages of one or other temple servant caste, attached to the Nambudiri temple, but also a group of Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple. [22] In villages not headed by Nambudiri Brahmans, there might be only a Bhagavadi temple, managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might also be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple servant castes did not work in village Bhagavadi temples. Similarly in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple owned by the ruling lineage, the temple servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars, but individuals of the

other temple servant castes might come from other villages to assist at special annual ceremonies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi temples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brahman, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the temple and periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. Consistent with these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambudiris and all temple servants were vegetarians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise almost identical in general culture to Nayars, and historically were probably once Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine or intermarry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine) and above the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food from them but not give food to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servant castes and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few social relations outside the temple, and did not interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

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564 794 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matrilineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 794 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden. [782] [793] Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as permanent tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the [613] second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 794 613 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhagavadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 564 [793] [791] [782] In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman, attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

582 was made on page 83, where it was said that a woman
564 of any clan of North Malabar may not consort with a
184 man of the same clan name belonging to South Malabar. Following this principle, the man may do so. A woman of South Malabar (inferior), mating with a man of her own clan name of North Malabar (superior), would be following anulômam; but a woman of North Malabar cannot, under pain of being guilty of pratilômam, mate with a man of her own clan name of South Malabar.
564 Alliances between the people of North Malabar and
484 South Malabar seem to be extremely rare; partly, per-
784 haps, because of this custom which is all compulsive, partly because the Nâyar women of North Malabar
[628] cannot cross the river which marks the boundary between the two. Nor, as said before, can the Nâyar women of Chirakkal, the northern-most portion of Malabar, cross the river which lies between it and South Canara to the northward. Thus, they cannot go beyond their northern or southern boundaries. The origin of this interdiction to cross the river southwards has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kólattiri Rajah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut (South Malabar), there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. An explanation which is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way, but I have not
564 noted precisely what it is. Again, men of the Kurup clan of Katattanâd may mate with women of the
582 Nambiyâr clan who live in Kôttayam, but they may not mate with women of the Nambiyâr clan living in Chirakkal. The custom imputing superiority or inferiority to those of a clan inhabiting a certain locality is obscure; it has its counterpart elsewhere in Malabar.

"Except the Nambûtiri, the Nâyar has no other
793 priestly, spiritual or religious instructor; and it is for the
564 gratification of this Bhú-dévan (earth god) that the Sûdra woman, if she has any religious instruction at all, is taught that she was created." We have heard what Hamilton has said about this (see Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I). Though the first portion of this statement is not quite accurate, for we have seen that the priests and religious instructors of the Nâyars are not admitted to be, strictly speaking, Nambûtiris, yet on the whole it is not far wrong, as the Nambûtiri is esteemed as a very exalted person, and he may ply his music among the Nâyar ladies without very much restriction. As remarked before, the

custom is one which makes for improvement of the race, 793 564
bound up as it is with the Marumakkattâyam system, which, guided by the anulômam principle, has fewer hindrances in the way of natural selection than perhaps any other marital custom throughout the world.

The divine commands of Srí Parasu Râma, the 793
imputed originator of the Marumakkattâyam system 564
which is followed by 70 per cent. of the people of 773
Malabar, are supposed to be contained in the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam, a work in Sanskrit verse, written on the ordinary Malabar grantham (palm-leaf book). It purports to be a monologue "addressed by the Rishi Garga to Yudhishthira the eldest of the Pândus." Chapter XLIX relates "how certain celestial damsels were brought from Indra's world by Parasu Râma to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kêralam Brâhmans, and it relates how Parasu Râma at Vishabhadri (Trichûr), pronounced his commandment to the women (not being of the Brâhman caste) to satisfy the desires of Brâhmans, enjoining on them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was void of the least taint of sin." Unfortunately no scholar has given his opinion as to the time when this was written. Most likely it is not very ancient, and may be attributed to device of the Nambûtiris. But it is respected as authoritative. "One of the foremost Nambûtiris in Malabar in respect of wealth, rank, sanctity and learning," in common with the rest of his clan, relied absolutely on it, and informed the Commission: "The Smiriti says the Sûdras' appointed path to heaven is serving the Brâhmans." "The practice of Brâhmans . . . . . having sexual intercourse with servile
(Sûdra) women is in accordance with the Sástras." "If 564
a Brâhman wished to have sexual intercourse with a 837
Sûdra's wife, the Sûdra would be bound to gratify the wish." "A Sûdra cannot be sure of the true parentage of the children born of his wife. Hence the Sûdras cannot follow Makkattâyam"—inheritance in the male line. The Zamorin Maharajah Bahadur informed the Commission that "according to Parasu Râma . . . . chastity should not be observed by non-Brâhman females." Again, the "Ettan Tamburan," one of the senior members of the Zamorin's family, a learned Sanscrit scholar said: "It has been ordained by Parasu Râma that in Kêrala, Marumakkatâyam women need not be chaste;" and he quoted a sloka in proof that there

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a [604] year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew [302] of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the deceased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": 765 Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After 600 the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

796 564 [778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

796 564 782 793 the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple [534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As [533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophistica-
[579] ted persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is
[564] regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of
[793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri
[782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs
[532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others.
[533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

588 [564] [793] marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house
588 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times
833 when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been
178 required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma ḍi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi
782 took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to
787 the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy,
793 coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar
[831] village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the
[753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar
[782] rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must
[834] observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music.
588 On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand,
[783] they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then
[264] fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At
588 the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides,
184 though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride-
595 groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological
[765] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover
[783] and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word
[851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

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with any Nambūdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

585 793

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

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Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

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The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *taravād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children. [586]

588 564

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambūdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambūdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has [178]

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588 182 564 rank, above the political system of the kingdom, and, in religious belief, the representatives of God on earth. All of these father-figures are collectively physiological fathers of the Nayars, so that in summoning them to deflower their women the Nayars call in real or classificatory fathers as well. When the bridegroom is a higher caste man, moreover (as when Tiyyar barbers call an elder of their caste), his venerable age leaves no doubt of his paternal role.

That the ritual bridegroom should be a father-figure to the community explains my informants' memory that the Asan might deflower Nayar women, but might prefer to forgo his right for money paid by some other bridegroom. It explains why the *desavari* must be present to give permission for the Nayar rite (and the Tandan for the Tiyyar rite) and receive money 'as if to recompense him'. The preliminary gifts by the high-caste Nayar girl's family to Nambūdiri landlords, the *addhavari* and the Maharaja also bear out this hypothesis.

588 184 182 787 Among South Malabar retainer-Nayars and among Tiyyars a high-caste father-surrogate could not be obtained, so that 'they must perforce supply the priest's place themselves'. The retainer-Nayars get round this by selecting an *enangan* to represent the whole caste, who was deputed for the task by village elders and, supernaturally, by the position of the stars at his birth. Even so, the hazardous nature of the rite is indicated by the need to perform it at an auspicious time, when the astrologer (in some respects another father-figure since, though of lower caste, he was traditionally the trainer of Nayar boys in their village gymnasium, and a priest of Bhagavadi) gave the word.

588 604 184 182 Among North Malabar Tiyyars the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister might tie the *tāli*. She does this on behalf of her son, who is the proper husband for the girl, and before the marriage-pole and the sacred household lamp (divine phallic symbols). In this caste it is fitting that some kinsman or kinswoman of the bridegroom should perform the rite, because Tiyyars are not polyandrous and a girl becomes temporarily incorporated at marriage into her husband's dwelling group. Yet, if we assume the Oedipal fear, the Tiyyar bridegroom could not tie the *tāli* himself, since he is (ideally and often) a cross-cousin. If he is the mother's brother's son, he takes the girl, in this group where paternal claims offset matrilineal, from her *kāranavan* and his own father, a terrifying situation in view of his unconscious Oedipal fears. If he is the father's nephew, he takes her from her father and his own *kāranavan*, an equally dangerous situation. The problem is surmounted by permitting the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister of the girl to 'marry' her on behalf of her son.

564 [588] [305] [759] [582] The substitution of the barber-woman to tie the *tāli*, and the role of the barber as one intimately associated with the girl's passage to womanhood, may perhaps be understood by considering the general role of barbers in Tiyyar social life. The barbers cut hair for Tiyyars, and in South Malabar though not commonly in the north, their women are midwives. They rank parallel to the Tiyyar washerman with whom they are compared, since both castes have polluting occupations but take part in the rites of birth, girls' puberty, and death. In North Malabar Tiyyar men may marry barber women hypergamously, their children being barbers by matrilineal descent. Barbers are thus socially and sometimes physiologically the 'sons' of Tiyyars. They are also likened by the Tiyyars to their younger brothers. Barbers may not give food to Tiyyars but must attend Tiyyar feasts, when they sit on the left or 'younger' side of the feasting hall, the Tiyyars sitting on the right or 'older' side. Barbers address Tiyyar men as 'elder brother', but Tiyyars address older barber men by name, as they do juniors of their own caste. Despite his low rank, however, the barber is in some situations a paternal figure for Tiyyars. He assists the Tandan in his executive functions and may summon Tiyyar offenders to caste justice. An elderly barber is often a marriage-broker for Tiyyars, but he is primarily a priest for Tiyyar household rites. At a Tiyyar death he instructs the heirs to make offerings to the spirit, in the form of a mud image which he makes. On the fourteenth day, he purifies the household by anointing its members with oil

[693] [584] [793] [782] [783]

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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakti* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown 241
a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and [782] the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya [776] head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal [787] portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira:—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is cele- [356] brated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which [824] the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are [824] placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz*:—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morn- [793] ing of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out [534] preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then [783] sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 825 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 795 778 825 [782] The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 778 825 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
789 requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
782 rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machinations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[776] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn
[791] must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
783 spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil
[753] Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an offi-
793 ciating priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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764 [804] s performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, 613 sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be-764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

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On the third day after the death, all those who are related to the *tarawád* by matrimonial alliances combine and give a feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours. This is called the *Patni kanji*. On the seventh day a return feast is given by the members of the *tarawád*, to all relations and neighbours. Between the seventh and the fourteenth day after death, no ceremonies are performed, but the members of the family are under pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the *Sanchayanam*. It is the disposal of the calcined remains, the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the *tarawad* go to the place of cremation, and picking up the unburnt bones of the deceased, place them in an earthern pot which is sun-dried—not burnt in the usual way—and cover up the mouth of the pot with a piece of cloth. The eldest carries it and, followed by the rest, proceeds to the nearest river (it must be a running stream) into which it is thrown. In some places the bones are collected on the seventh and preserved in a pot which, when convenient, is carried to Benares, Rameswaram, Gaya, or to Thirunelly in Wynad and there deposited as above described. Such a disposal is called *Ashtagaya-Sradham*, and puts an end to the need of all earthly ceremonies—nor is there any need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. The belief is that the collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead gives peace to the departed spirit, which will not thereafter injure the living members of the *tarawád*.

On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony at which a man of the *Attikurissi* clan officiates as priest. In the morning the members of the family wear cloths washed by a *Vélan* (washerman) and assemble together for purification by the Nayar priest who throws on them, both before and after bathing, paddy, rice, gingelly seeds, and the holy mixture (milk, oil, etc.). The Elayad or the Brahman priest performs the *Punyáham* or purification of the house, well, etc., and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth day and the morning of the sixteenth, the priests and the villagers are sumptuously fed, and presents of cloth are made to the latter and money to the former. In the Chittur Taluk, the priestly functions are sometimes performed by the Elayad, and *Deeksha* (leaving the body unshaved for forty-one days or a year) is observed by the nephew and the son of the deceased. The one who is under this mark of mourning makes offerings of rice balls

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home. A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield 564
before them.

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakketam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tāli-kettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, [783] and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water [793] from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution.

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at [765] the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family.

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu (797) recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled.

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

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of the same caste, then decorates the girl by putting [613] on anklets, etc. The purōhit (officiating priest) called [564] Elayath (a low class of Brāhmans) then gives the tāli [793] to the Mānavālan, and the family astrologer shouts [787] muhurtham (auspicious hour), and the Manavālan, putting his sword on the lap, ties the tāli round the neck of the girl, who is then required to hold an arrow and a looking-glass in her hand. In rich families [556] a Brāhmani sings certain songs intended to bless the [533] couple. In ordinary families who cannot procure her presence, a Nāyar, versed in songs, performs the office. The boy and girl are then carried by enangans to [783] a decorated apartment in the inner part of the house, where they are required to remain under a sort of pollution for three days. On the fourth day they bathe in some neighbouring tank (pond) or river, holding each other's hands. After changing their clothes they come home, preceded by a procession. Tom-toms (native [534] drums) and elephants usually form part of the proces- [231] sion, and turmeric water is sprinkled. When they come home, all doors of the house are shut, and the Manavālan is required to force them open. He then enters the house, and takes his seat in the northern wing thereof. The aunt and female friends of the girl then approach, and give sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the [264] boy, and, after taking their meal together from the same leaf, they proceed to the booth, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavālan and girl separately in the presence of enangans and friends. The severing of the cloth is supposed to [586] constitute a divorce." "The tearing of the cloth," [184] Mr. Fawcett writes, "is confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to [765] which is that, in spite of the divorce, the girl observes

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

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The opinion was expressed by Mr. (now Sir Henry) Winterbotham, one of the Malabar Marriage Commissioners, that the Brahman tāli-tier was a relic of the time when the Nambūtiris were entitled to the first fruits, and it was considered the high privilege of every Nāyar maid to be introduced by them to womanhood. In this connection, reference may be made to Hamilton's 'New Account of the East Indies', where it is stated that [793] "when the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambūdri, or chief priest, has enjoyed her, and he, if he pleases, may have three nights of her company, because the first fruits of her nuptials must be an holy oblation to the god she worships. And some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the clergy the same tribute, but the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the priests' places themselves."

588 Of those who gave evidence before the Malabar Commission, some thought the tāli-kettu was a marriage, some not. Others called it a mock marriage, a formal marriage, a sham marriage, a fictitious marriage, a marriage sacrament, the preliminary part of marriage, a meaningless ceremony, an empty form, a ridiculous farce, an incongruous custom, a waste of money, and a device for becoming involved in debt. "While," the report states, "a small minority of strict conservatives still maintain that the tāli-kettu is a real marriage intended to confer on the bridegroom a right to cohabit with the bride, an immense majority describe it as a fictitious marriage, the origin of which they are at a loss to explain. And another large section tender the explanation accepted by our President (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) that, in some way or other, it is an essential caste observance preliminary to the forming of sexual relations."

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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534]
which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti * [354]
carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

766 613 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from 765 tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral-commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [778] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

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of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple by the northern door to the north side of the temple, and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

796 564 [193] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 578 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

796 however, no objection to myself and my companions
778 visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not acompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged
[78] during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival
[792] carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

796 Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is
788 given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri
[793] priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but
[778] the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[784] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this
[481] bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

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/Information on Nayar "snake cults" has been filed in the following categories: snake shrines and temples--778; snakes as deities--776; general beliefs about snakes--825; the "snake cult" as a part of the general religious order of the Nayars--771; ceremonial practices associated with the "cult"--796./

613 in kind, from which was deducted a small pro-
621 portion of the original cash sum. When the ori-
427 ginal sum had been exhausted the kanakkaran
566 recommenced paying full rent, or renewed the sum, or else surrendered the land. It seems likely that these sums [19] of money were traditionally paid only on the succession to headship of a new janmi or a new kanakkaran on the death of the old, or at irregular intervals convenient to both parties. Both kanam and jenmam rights could be sold, but a kanakkaran could not be evicted without the consent of the local Nayar assembly. The system allowed of a certain degree of spatial mobility and of the periodic segmentation of the Nayar property-group, some branches of which might even move to another village if lands became short. On the whole, however, kanam tenures were of long duration, and a Nayar property-group might remain stable for several generations.

566 In addition to their role as tenants, members of the retainer subcastes had other economic and also ritual relations with their landlord. [794] They were called adiyar (servants) of their janmi and must attend and participate at his household ceremonies. Women of the retainer lin-
[357] eages worked as house-servants of the janmi's family, while older Nayar men who had retired
[427] from the army might be employed as bailiffs who collected the janmi's rents and organized the labour of his serfs.

564 In addition to the Nayars, members of certain
794 other aristocratic castes were usually present in each village. These included the temple

servants, nowadays [20] collectively called Ambalavasis. The highest of these were the Chakkyars or reciters of Puranic stories, and the Pushpagans or flower-gatherers for temples. These two castes had a patrilineal descent-system of the same type as Nambudiris, and are said to have once been Nambudiris who were degraded for ritual offences. They ranked below Nambudiris and above Nayars and the matrilineal temple servant castes. These latter included Nambyars, a small caste whose work was to accompany Chakkyar recitations on a metal drum; Psharodis and Variyars, both of whom traditionally sweep the temple, clean temple vessels and make garlands for the idols; Puduvals or drummers on a drum called maddalam; and Marars or regular drummers on another drum called chenda.

The temple-servant castes were small and were chiefly congregated in villages owned by Nambudiri landlords or by large temples. Four main types of temple were owned by the higher castes of Malabar. First came large and wealthy temples owned and managed entirely by groups of Nambudiri landlords and dedicated to one of the orthodox Brahmanical male deities of India, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second came the private temple of each individual Nambudiri family in villages owned by Nambudiris; these were small replicas of the first type, dedicated to the same types of deities. Third came the large temples, one of which was associated with each royal and chiefly matrilineage. These were usually dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali, the Nayar goddess of war, small pox and the sun.

194 the Nayar goddess of war, smallpox and the
564 soil. Fourth came the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, one of which was found in each village or group of villages of the same subcaste where Nayar retainers were present.
[782] In the first two types of temples, animal sacrifice was forbidden; offerings were of flowers, fruits, incense and fire. The priests were
[793] either Nambudiri Brahmans or members of a lower landless caste called Embrandiri Brahmans who are immigrant from South Canara to the north. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which contained a temple of type (1), there was often no Nayar population at all: a group of lineages of one or more temple servant subcastes replaced them as retainers of the Nambudiris and as kanam tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of type (2), there would be one or two individual lineages of one or other temple servant caste, attached to the Nambudiri temple, but also a group of Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple. [22] In villages not headed by Nambudiri Brahmans, there might be only a Bhagavadi temple, managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar caste might also be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple servant castes did not work in village Bhagavadi temples. Similarly in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple owned by the ruling lineage, the temple servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars, but individuals of the

other temple servant castes might come from other villages to assist at special annual ceremonies. In royal and chiefly Bhagavadi temples the priest was usually a Nambudiri Brahman, though a Nayar shaman was attached to the temple and periodically became possessed by the goddess and declared her will to the people. In village Nayar Bhagavadi temples, the priest was either an Embrandiri Brahman hired by the Nayars, or a Nayar; there was in addition a Nayar shaman. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi temple were similar to those in a Nambudiri temple, but annual ceremonies involved animal sacrifice by Nayars, in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part. Consistent with these differences in ritual behaviour, Nambudiris and all temple servants were vegetarians; royal, chiefly and Nayar castes ate meat. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise almost identical in general culture to Nayars, and historically were probably once Nayars. Among temple ser vants, Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine or intermarry. They ranked roughly [23] parallel to the chiefs of districts (with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine) and above the retainer-Nayars, who might receive food from them but not give food to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servant castes and parallel to Nayars, with whom they had few social relations outside the temple, and did not interdine or intermarry.

Below all these aristocratic castes in ritual

564 rank came certain small castes of middle class,
•794 non-military Nayars whose work was connected with temples. Vattekads were oil-mongers for temples, Odatt Nayars, temple tile-makers; and Andura Nayars temple pot-makers. One Vattekad lineage was present in each village to supply oil to the temple; its members might receive good from all the higher castes but might not give to them. Often, the headman of the Vattekad lineage was also the shaman of the Na-
[791] yar Bhagavadi temple. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes, usually with one lineage to about six villages.

564 Below the middle class Nayars in rank came three castes of servant-Nayars, also non-mili-
[764] tary: Chidigans or funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes, Veluthedans or washermen
[305] of all the castes above them; and Vilakkatara-
[296] vans or barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each of these castes was usually present in each village. Chidigans ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine or intermarry.

[361] In each village, all of the castes so far mentioned (provided they were present) were called "high," "good" [24] or "clean" castes and lived in a separate portion of the village, each house in its own large garden, round the temples and the local janmi's house. Except for Nayar barbers and washermen, all might enter either Nambudiri or Nayar temples. Within this group,
[783] lower castes were forbidden to touch higher castes because of ritual pollution, but individuals of different castes might approach each other within a few feet.

000 ritual and other social cooperation.

613 (2) Ritual Cooperation in the Lineage
783 In addition to the joint performance of the prepuberty marriage rite, members of a lineage were united in ritual observances at a birth or death. On each of these occasions, all members fell for fourteen days into a condition of ritual pollution (pula) in which they might not touch, eat with, or enter into the houses of other members of their caste, enter the public temples or bathing pools of the village, enter their own ancestor shrines, sacred snake groves or other sacred places of their lineage, or take part in everyday social life. This period of ritual pollution resembled one of temporary excommunication from caste, the only difference being that those ostracized were regarded by others with special friendliness rather than hostility. It effectively set apart the lineage as a solidary group at times of crisis in its history, and gave recognition to their joint concern with increase or decrease in their membership.

613 Lineage members were also united in worship
794 of the lineage goddess or dharma devi ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, is a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi, and in this context was probably though of as a primeval ancestress of the lineage, though I lack data definitely to indicate this. Her idol was housed in a small shrine in the precincts of the oldest ancestral house, or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of

613 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of
794 misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a pre-puberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage
608 Since lineages were usually groups of actual
621 and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own subcaste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

1 [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess --- Analyst]

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lages. The men were often clerks in the palaces. In Cochin, castes 564
two and three were amalgamated and were called Swarupattil Sudra Nayars or "palace servants."

Fourth, a caste called Pallichan Nayars, both in Calicut and Cochin. Its members also were vassals in the villages of royalty, chiefs, and of the greater Brahmans. The men were often palanquin bearers as well as soldiers.

Fifth, a caste called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Illath ("Brahman house") Sudras in Cochin. The members lived in villages owned by Brahman families or on the estates of Brahmanical temples.

The mutual ritual ranking of these five castes seems to have varied 564
in different districts. In some districts they ranked in the order given, 554
and men of a higher caste might marry women of a lower caste; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the castes seem to have disputed for precedence and not to have regularly intermarried. In most areas the five castes occupied different villages or dif- [628]
ferent sections of large villages, seem to have had little communication in peacetime, and did not normally interdine. In war, however, [726]
soldiers of these different castes interdined freely and spent the night in each others' homes. It is possible that sexual restrictions between these castes were also relaxed in war, but this point is uncertain.

In each village there were normally some four to seven matrilineages 621
of the appropriate retainer caste. The separate households or property 613
groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the 564
king, to occupy stretches of garden land and to lease large plots of wet 566
paddy land on long-term tenure from the village landlord. The tenure 471
was called *kānam;* the tenant, *a kānakkaran*. In most villages the men of 427
retainer lineages also owed military service to their landlord, ultimately on behalf of the king. (The military organization is discussed below.) Retainers were called *adiyar*, a word equivalent to "vassals," of their landlord. They participated in his household ceremonies and often waited upon him. Women of retainer lineages could be summoned as serving maids in the landlord's family; men, as bailiffs to collect the landlord's rents and organize the labor of his serfs.

The Temple-Servant Castes In addition to the Nayars, other aristo- 564
cratic castes often lived in a village. These were the temple servants, 794
nowadays collectively called Ambalavasis. They are relevant to our discussion because they sometimes married Nayar women. The highest of these castes were the Chakkyars (or reciters of Puranic stories) and the Pushpagans (or flower gatherers for temples), which had patrilineal descent systems of the same type as the Nambudiris. They

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564 ranked below Nambudiris but above retainer Nayars and certain matri-
794 lineal temple-servant castes. The latter included Nambyars, Puduvals, and Marars, three castes of drummers, and Psharodis and Variyars, castes of temple stewards.

564 The temple-servant castes were small and lived chiefly in villages
794 owned by Nambudiri Brahmans or in sankētams. Four types of temples were distinguishable among the higher castes. First were the large temples of the sankētams, whose estates were managed by Nambudiris. They were dedicated to all-India, Puranic deities, usually Siva or Vishnu. Second, were the private temples of individual Nambudiri families in villages owned by Nambudiris, which were small replicas of the first type. Third were the private temples of royal and chiefly matrilineages, dedicated to Bhagavadi or Bhadrakali—the Nayar goddess of war, epidemic, land, and fertility. Fourth were the smaller Bhagavadi temples of village Nayars, each collectively managed by an assembly of Nayar retainers of one or more villages.

In the first two types of temple animal sacrifice was forbidden.
[782] Offerings were of fruit, flowers, incense, and fire. The priests were
[793] low-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans. Nayars might enter the outer courtyards of such temples but might not perform rites there. In a village which formed part of a sankētam there was sometimes no Nayar population at all; a group of lineages of one or more temple-servant castes replaced them as retainers of the Brahmans and as per-
[613] manent tenants. In Nambudiri villages containing a temple of the second type, one or two lineages of some temple-servant caste would be attached to the temple, but there would invariably also be a group of Sudra Nayar retainers with their own Bhagavadi temple.

564 In villages under a Nayar headman there might be only one Bhaga-
794 vadi temple managed collectively by Nayars. One lineage of the Marar
613 caste might be present to drum in the temple, but the other temple-servant castes did not work in Nayar village temples. Similarly, in a royal or chiefly village containing a large Bhagavadi temple of the ruling lineage, the temple-servant castes might be absent except for one lineage of Marars. Persons of other temple-servant castes might however come from nearby villages to assist at special ceremonies.

794 In Bhagavadi temples the regular priest was usually of a special low
564 subdivision of Nambudiris (Adigals). In addition a Nayar shaman,
[793] attached to the temple, periodically became possessed by the goddess
[791] and declared her will to the people. Daily rites in the Bhagavadi
[782] temple were similar to those in a Brahman temple, but annual festi-

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vals involved animal sacrifice by Nayars in which Brahmans and temple servants took no part.

Consistent with these differences in ritual practice, Nambudiris and temple servants were vegetarians and followed rules of non-violence. Royals, chiefs, and Nayar retainers were warriors and until modern times usually ate meat and drank liquor. The matrilineal castes of temple servants were otherwise culturally similar to Nayars, with whom they probably had a common origin.

Below the Chakkyars and the Pushpagans, the Nambyars, Psharodis, Variyars, and Puduvals disputed for ritual rank and would not interdine. These castes ranked roughly parallel to the district chiefs, with whom they had few social relations and did not interdine. They ranked above the retainer Nayars, who might receive food from them but might not give to them. Marars ranked below the other temple servants and parallel to retainer Nayars, with whom, however, they had few social relations outside the temple and did not interdine.

The Nayar Menials in Temples Below all these aristocratic castes came certain small matrilineal castes of menial, non-military Nayars whose work was largely connected with temples. Vattekad Nayars were oilmongers; Odatt Nayars, tile makers; Andura Nayars, temple potters. One Vattekad lineage was present in every village to supply oil for temple lamps. Often the headman of the Vattekad lineage was the shaman of the Nayar Bhagavadi temple. Vattekad Nayars also performed household tasks for Kiriattil Nayar village headmen, which ordinary Kiriattil Nayars were too proud to do. Odatt and Andura Nayars were very small castes,[3] and one lineage might serve six or eight villages.

The Nayar Servant Castes Below the temple menials came three matrilineal castes of servant Nayars with "degrading" occupations. Chidigans (called Attikurssis in the Calicut kingdom) were funeral priests of the higher matrilineal castes. Veluttedans were washermen of all the castes above them and Vilakkataravans were barbers of all the castes above them. One lineage of each was usually present in a village. Funeral priests ranked above barbers and washermen, who disputed for rank and would not interdine.

Social Relations among the Higher Castes The castes so far men-

[3] The kings permitted only Brahmans, royalty, and the greater chiefs to roof their houses and temples with tiles. Tile making was therefore a minor craft, and temple pottery was of superior quality to that used by commoners. The ordinary polluting caste of potters, Kumbarans, camped outside villages and exchanged their wares for grain.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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Each Nayar chiefly lineage, like royalty, normally counted itself a separate caste and married only hypergamously. Women of chiefly lineages married the royals or feudatory royals to whom their lineages were immediately subordinate, or wealthy Nambudiris, usually of their own district. Men of chiefly lineages married women of village headmen's lineages within their district, or women of retainer Nayar lineages, usually in their own villages. 564 613

Village headmen's lineages occasionally contracted marriages reciprocally with other village headmen's lineages of the chiefdom which had originally sprung from the same retainer caste. They also provided wives for chiefs and Brahmans and husbands for retainer women, usually of their own villages. [622]

Among temple servants, Nayar retainers, and Nayar temple menials the majority of marriages were between persons of the same caste. A few women in the Psharodi, Variyar, Poduval, and Nambyar castes married Nambudiris, especially those whose families managed the temples where they worked. A few such women also married men of the Chakkyar and Pushpagan castes, which had descent systems like that of the Nambudiris. A few men of these matrilineal temple-servant castes married women of Nayar retainer and Nayar temple-menial castes in the villages of their work. Nayar women were particularly convenient partners for temple servants and Nambudiri temple priests because of the latters' spatial distribution. Often a temple-servant lineage or a Brahman priestly family held the hereditary right of service in six or eight small temples in villages up to ten miles away. One man of the lineage might spend much of his life working away from home in one of the more distant temples. He would live on food previously offered to the deity, occupy a room attached to the temple kitchen, bathe in the temple bathing pool, and visit a local Nayar wife at nights, returning home for life crises and festivals. 564 794 613

Women of the retainer Nayar castes might receive husbands from all the castes above them. Sudra Nayar women living in Brahman-owned villages or on the estates of large temples were the most likely to form links with Brahmans and temple servants; Charna Nayars and Pallichans, with royalty or chiefs; and Kiriattil women, with village headmen. Thus hypergamous unions entered into by retainer Nayars in general followed the main lines of lord-vassal relationships. However, "odd" marriages with individuals of any higher rank in nearby villages were permitted. 564

Because the higher castes were much smaller than they were, the Nayar retainers probably gave less than 10 per cent of their women

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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769 No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities,
776 or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found
[782] throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of
[564] poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately
173 sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste
769 person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular
776 Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends
782 became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kutti-
chāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kutti-
782 chāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken
769 of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

184 I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual
776 *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are
564 grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels
796 the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local
[794] government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed
[613] either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small
[753] shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make
[787] offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

184 In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād*
776 was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults
796 of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent
564 than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that
613 ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin
782

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [554] 083 [541]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern.

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564 There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 701 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
[874] Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 701 874 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa* in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari* and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 874 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 541 701 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained, even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Patayanis* (*Pata*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 794 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine
[121] myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pānan caste (umbrella-makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan [293] umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nāyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pānan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [422] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nāyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [572] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

 794

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil 796
spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the 564
spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan [326]
as on the previous day with his little procession, and
lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The pro-
cession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, 796
which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I wit- 231
nessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, 788
had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword [793]
smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the
goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened
on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each
side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead
hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the
elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of
ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of com- [538]
paring a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs.
The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a
large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the [411]
elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand
in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam
smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its
edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells,
so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.
Just before the procession begins, there is something 796
for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having 564
with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five 794
having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and 778
east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting
and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than
anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), [273]
which is given to the temple to be used in the cere-
monies. Members of certain families only are allowed [465]
to perform in this business, and for what they do each

796 man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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796 beat the drums according to their 'science' for two or three hours. The figure of the God or Goddess is taken on the back of the middle elephant in the row. There is a display of fireworks at night.

794 A few temples in the village are managed by private people or Janmis, usually Nambudri Brahmans. Such temples have landed property managed by these Janmis who generally make use of the profits. Recently the Government has been trying to encroach upon the temple properties in its capacity of *melkoyma*; this is very much resented by the Nambudri Jánmis.

The common people as a rule have no part or lot in temple management or expenditure.

426 *State loans.*—Only one person in the village has borrowed from the Government a loan of Rs. 400 to be paid back in ten instalments of Rs. 40 each with interest at 5 per cent. The small landholders do not approach the Government for help; the mediocre landholders rent their land to others; while the few big ones have money of their own if they want to make any improvement. The fact is that agriculture is routine work with many people; no permanent improvements are thought of by the majority.

Sanitary condition.—Plague and tuberculosis are not heard of. 164 Malaria only affects those who resort for agricultural purposes to the foot of the hills four or five miles east from the village. Attacks of cholera frequently occur among the local Muhammadans, who are as a rule quite insanitary, poor, living in low and ill-ventilated thatched huts or hovels; one is sick of the stinking smell when one approaches their huts. The local Christians, though equally poor, are better in this respect. The houses of most of the Brahmans and the majority of the Nayars are decent. The hovels of the lower castes and working men again are poor and insanitary. [361] As the houses are not built in rows, but separate, each having a compound big or small, epidemic diseases such as small-pox when they come at all are easily avoided. But the case is different in the quarters of the Muhammadans and Christians, who build their houses in streets.

The chief endemic diseases are fever, rheumatism, attacks of bile.

There are plenty of snakes in the village everywhere. One 759 sometimes hears of deaths caused by snake-bites. There are however a few who pretend to cure snake-bites by incantations aided by medicines.

There is a Government free dispensary established in the 'town' where the Apothecary is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. But most people resort to native (ayurvedic) physicians or vaidyans. Ayurveda, or the Hindu science of medicine, makes use of vegetable drugs both in the raw and dried state. The physician comes to your house and prescribes a certain mixture according to the directions laid down in his code which he has committed to memory in the form of verses. The drugs can be got from the market, or from a neighbouring hill, or even from one's own compound.

This science is handed down from father to son in certain families in Malabar who form even now some of the most distinguished native physicians in Malabar. Even in a petty village

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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426 money-lenders is absorbed in no time. In the last five years the number of money-lending shops has doubled and their funds invested by this means have trebled. There is yet a demand for money which is unsatisfied.

Another method of supporting, as it were, the poor, is to lend the seed for sowing on the promise that for every 100 measures lent they will return after the first crop, i.e., after four months from the time of lending, 120 or 130 measures. This means an interest of 60 per cent per annum. The cultivators do not as a rule save their own seed, because when they have no means of living they natually use their seed for food. I am told this is the case with every paddy cultivator excepting the three rich agriculturists who are landowners. It must be confessed here that without such borrowing the cultivation itself could not at present be carried on.

The village is free from padials. The debtors only pay interest, but in the Palghat taluk the system of padials survives.

The causes of indebtedness are not far to seek. Economic backwardness is the primary cause. Waste of money on drink and evil habits is not uncommon. In some cases debt is due to ambi- [585] tious schemes which fail. Excessive display in marriage is not common in Malabar as in eastern districts. Non-Brahmans, especially the castes below the Nayars, pay only Rs. 20 or Rs. 30, according to their means, to the bridegroom, and sometimes not even that. Another Rs. 25 will raise a marriage above the ordinary level. Taking into account that a marriage will be performed in a family only once in five or six years this expenditure of Rs. 50 or so cannot be deemed great.

The ordinary labourers, who number about 500, maintain themselves by their daily work and they are never in debt. It is the agricultural classes and those who are engaged in petty trade that [427] are in debt. The only asset of the tenants is that they have to pay as advance one year's rent to the landowners and they receive for the advance 6 per cent interest. Even this is paid in some cases by borrowing.

There is no co-operative credit society in the village.

476 *Communal life.*—The Brahmans of this village have formed themselves into a society for mutual aid and convenience. This 794 organization of the society is on the model of the old village republics. It exists for social purposes only. Two persons are elected biennially to look after the affairs and the income of the society. Every house is represented by its head in the village assembly and that assembly elects the persons. The sources of income to the society are--

(1) the interest on the already existing property which is about Rs. 3,000;

(2) for all social functions such as marriage, etc., the society as a whole has a claim for a fixed sum. The total income from these two sources may be estimated at Rs. 350.

The duty of the society is to appoint the village priest, village barber, village trumpeter and other persons essential for the performance of social or religious functions.

The whole income is spent on the worship of God. The particular ways in which it should be spent have been fixed long ago, and comprise a special feast for the Brahmans once a year, provision of a burial-ground and other public and necessary places

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AWI India
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for Brahmans as a whole, and the performance of *puja* during one month in a year. 476

The two elected administrators spend the money as explained above, keep the accounts, and are responsible for the whole income. This organization is seen throughout the Brahman community in Malabar. It may be regarded as a survival of the village communal organization, the political functions of which disappeared with the advent of British rule. 794

The lower classes have appointed a family to settle caste questions and questions of excommunication, adultery, etc., and this family has been exercising this power from time immemorial. The family still holds the power and the verdict which the headman of the family pronounces about such questions is tacitly accepted by all. 692

Religious festivals are performed by the temple, and the temple *in practice* belongs to the Zamorin. It is managed by the Court of Wards at the present time, along with the Zamorin's estate. The income of the temple is the offerings of the devotees who chiefly come from distant places. The festivals which the temple performs will in a year cost more than Rs. 2,000. In addition offerings to the temple from the village itself will amount to more than Rs. 3,000. 794

The above statements of indebtedness, communal income, etc., are based on careful inquiry with well-known persons and the village munsif, and are given in round numbers as accurately as possible.

Sanitary condition.—Malaria, plague, cholera, smallpox and consumption are absent from the village. 164

The ordinary diseases of the village are fever, dysentery, elephantiasis and such like diseases. Infantile mortality is high. Out of 156 deaths 87 are infant deaths. The deaths are high among the poor, particularly the Hindu poor. It may be people cannot afford to bring up their children decently. The mothers must work for the maintenance of the family before many days have passed after child-birth. I know of a Tiyya family in which seven out of eleven children born died before they were three years old. Moreover they cannot afford medical help and they implore God to help them and resort to quack doctors. The prevalence of early marriage may be cited as one of the causes for physical deterioration. But the most potent cause especially in the case of the higher classes is the ignorance of the mothers. Domestic hygiene is a sealed book for them. Their habits are not quite sanitary. [515]

There are no venomous snakes.

There is a hospital very near the village. But the chief medical help is from the native doctors who practise privately. There are two great medical experts in the native system but there are also a large number of quacks. The experts have a tremendous business but the quacks do some injury too. 759

Wearing unclean * cloths, not keeping the house neat, using the same plate for food for the whole family, are some of the insanitary habits of the poor and the lower classes. But the higher classes are very neat and Malabar is famous for its neatness. People bathe every day. 515

* [I.e., unclean according to the Malabar standard of cleanliness, which is very high. —Ed.]

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/Information on Nayar "snake cults" has been filed in the following categories: snake shrines and temples--778; snakes as deities--776; general beliefs about snakes--825; the "snake cult" as a part of the general religious order of the Nayars--771; ceremonial practices associated with the "cult"--798./

683
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to [178]
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed. [201]
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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bringing them up as their own. The belief that they will steal children helps to some extent to make them dreaded as well as abhorred, but it is as skilled professors of black magic that they are really feared. Ôḍi is the name of the cult, and those who follow it, Parayans as a rule, are able to do many wonderful things. The ordeals to be gone through by the apprentice in the Ôḍi cult are rather trying. Some are so utterly filthy and abominable, eating human excreta being a detail, that even amongst the Parayans, themselves dirty to a degree and accustomed to anything but a high class diet, very few are able to undergo them. Many try, and are unable to proceed. But the man who has gone through them all is a terror. He can make himself invisible, and he can turn himself at will into any animal in order to accomplish his desires. There occurs now and then the death of a woman—a Nâyar or other—enceinte for the first time, the fœtus having been removed for use in black magic.*

754 564 [673] 754 564 795

The Parayan magician, or Ôḍiyan as he is sometimes called, being a pastmaster in Ôḍi, is credited with power to render himself invisible, using such a fœtus; and even without it, he may force a woman to leave her house at midnight and meet him. There would seem to be some connection, however obscure, with hypnotism and this latter. The Parayan, who turns himself into a bullock, in such guise, circumambulates a house thrice; then, still by means of magic, he compels a certain woman of the household to come out to him. If we follow up popular belief, we find that the Nâyar woman so drawn out of her house is bound to die within three days. But as it is well in a description of this kind, to proceed by illustration when possible, I will quote an authenticated story of a woman having been compelled to leave her house by night. The "walking the dæsil" by the bullock, one of those imaginative performances difficult to account for in human belief, must be left out of the story as no one is said to have seen it.

754

A Nâyar noticed that, for some days, his wife, who was (contrary to the usual custom, as we have seen it to be) living in his house, appeared to be under some occult influence; and under a premonition that something was

* Not very long ago there was a case of this kind, not far from Palghat, and not only was the fœtus removed but a wisp of straw was substituted in its place; apparently with an idea that, if the space were filled up somehow, the wretched woman would not die!

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754 going to happen he slept across the doorway, so that she could not without waking him leave the house. The door was closed and fastened, he sleeping *inside*. In the early hours of the morning he awoke, and, fearing something unpleasant had taken place as the door was open, he called his brother who was sleeping upstairs. Together they searched for the woman, and found her lying outside in the yard, unconscious. When she recovered her senses, she said that for some nights previous she felt as if she was being called outside, and she tried hard to resist the impulse to go out of the house into the night. At last she could resist no longer and, altogether against her will, unfastened the door and went out. What happened then she knew not. There was neither removal of a fœtus nor death in this case. Such is the story. It is quite possible that stories of the kind are inculcated by wary husbands to keep the women indoors and prevent their being crowned with horns. At any rate the story is one of the kind such as every Nâyar [364] believes. It is, I may say, quite plainly to be seen that, when the Nâyar constructs his house, he takes care that there are certain conveniences, so that the women need never leave the house at night. My narrator was a native gentleman in a position of authority, living at the scene of this strange story when the events related in it occurred not long ago. The persons were named, but I did not question them, as there is much objection to speak of such things to a stranger.

754 *The Ôḍi cult.*—The Parayan adepts in the magic Ôḍi
795 cult are to some extent hereditary functionaries.* They form one of those hierarchies, common enough in this
564 country, of which Europeans know so little; of which the people themselves know but little as nothing connected with them or with their system is written. It is custom pure and simple—custom which is the most difficult of all to approach and define within accuracy. We will put down what is known, in the way of popular belief of course, as may be free from error.

Those who belong to it, born into it so to speak, go through a certain novitiate, not easy; but those who wish to join it from outside the fraternity of the cult are required to *prove* themselves worthy to join it; and it is their trials as novices, terrifying and utterly filthy, which

* For much of this which follows I am indebted to Mr. U. Balakrishna Nâyar, who has kindly obtained for me matter which is in a general way, unobtainable to the European.

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are truly difficult. Members of the brotherhood are 754
bound to secrecy by solemn oaths, and the secrets of 795
their craft are not allowed lightly to pass to any out- 564
sider. A member of the brotherhood may have one or more disciples or apprentices who are in the first place bound to strict obedience. These apprentices fill vacancies in the brotherhood.

He who would be a member of the Ôḍi cult falls at the feet of him whom he would have as master, and begs for initiation into the mysteries. The master tries to dissuade him, but the would-be Ôḍiyan persists; and then, when assent is given, comes the trial. He follows his master to a lonely place by night. The master disappears in mist, and then re-appears as some terrible beast, now standing still, now rushing furiously towards the novice as if to tear him in pieces. If he stands still and unperturbed the novice is considered to have fulfilled *that* test. He is then required to pass the night alone in the forest, which he is made to believe is peopled with strange beings howling horribly. When he has satisfied the master that he is not afraid, he is subjected to other tests, and he is eventually accepted as a novice. He is introduced formally to the brotherhood on a certain selected day, when, having invited them to a feast, pûja is made to the dread spirit worshipped by them—Nîli of Kallaḍikôd or Kallaḍikôd Nîli, as she is called (Kallaḍikôd is the *place* name), through whose aid the Ôḍiyan works his devilment. Flesh and liquor are consumed, and the novice is taught how to procure the magical *Pilla thilum* (infant oil).

The principal ingredient to be used in preparing this is a fœtus of some 6 or 7 months' growth. The Ôḍiyan fixes his eye on some woman, who may be of any caste other than his own, in her first pregnancy. Then, on a selected day, usually a Friday, he proceeds to her house at midnight, provided, that is, he meets with no inauspicious omen on the way. I am not sure what omens are auspicious or the contrary; but at any rate the Ôḍiyan [787] returns home should he meet with an omen which is unfavourable, and starts out again some other night. Transforming himself into a dog, a bullock, a cat or some other quadruped, he walks thrice round the house, shaking vigorously a cocoanut-shell containing *gurusi*, a compound of turmeric water, lime and other substances, the colour of which is red. The woman whose appearance is desired comes out. She cannot help herself. If locked in she bangs her head against the wall, and yells

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795 until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like
564 a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood —vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment.
[824] A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

776 A regular working magician tells us something more
789 of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

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ground is then plastered over with cowdung. Then you mark out with rice flour an eight-cornered chakram, in the centre of which you place a small piece of cadjan leaf, and you place a similar piece at four corners. You sit with your back to the chakram, facing eastwards in the morning and westwards in the evening while performing pûja. This pûja is, I think, addressed to Karinkutti: not in any way to the sun God who is not then visible. For the pûja you must be supplied with fried grain, beaten rice, rice bran, a fowl, toddy, arrack, some flowers of three colours—one of them the tulsi *(Ocimum sanctum)* —sandalwood-paste, camphor, incense. (Note the use of the sacred tulsi in this diabolical incantation!) While the pûja, which I am unfortunately unable to describe (leaving my directions rather lame) is being performed the mûla mantram of Karinkutti is to be repeated 101 times. 776 789

In order to do all this you must bathe 7½ nazhikas (about 2¾ hours) before dawn, and complete the pûja before dawn arrives. But even before this you must stand up to your chest in water and repeat the mûla mantram 101 times. And you must repeat the whole thing *da capo* in the evening. The mantram is thus repeated 404 times in the day. You are not done yet, in fact this is only the beginning. The whole thing is done every day for 21 consecutive days; and then you will have the evil spirit Karinkutti entirely at your disposal. The person who remains continent, eats but once a day, cooking his own food, may it is said bring the spirit into obedience in less than 21 days.

Subjection of Vanni Bhâiravan is a much more difficult matter, involving much more elaborate ceremonial, details of which may well be spared the reader as the example which has been given is quite adequate.

And the good spirits—

Bhagavati.	Mûkâmi.
Bbadra kâli.	Vîrabhadran.
Hanumân.	Móhini.
Ganapati.	Sarabha Mûrti.
Subrahmanyan.	

The evil and the good spirits are truly a strange collection of beings! Their names help to illustrate what has been said already, that the Hinduism of the west coast is a strange medley of the higher Hinduism with the lower cult of the country. Bhâirava or Kâla Bhâirava (Bhâiravan of the Telugu country) is elsewhere the object of adoration of what is almost a distinct cult, a kind of [771] 771 795 776

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mixture of Hinduism with Buddhism,—the kâpâlika religion or cult, the novice in which is "taught how to worship Bhaîri dêvam (Kâla Bhâirava) with human blood, by human sacrifice, by drinking liquor from a Brâhman's skull, and by wearing wooden earrings called Kâmâkshi kundala, symbols of the female principle." * The licentious portion of the programme I will leave out, as we can but glance at the Bhâiravan of other parts of Southern India. There, Bhâirava, or by whatever equivalent he may be called, is a male entity; in Malabar, where sex in deities is not of very much moment, Bhâirava is female. Bhadra Kâli, and even Vishnu under another name, is dragged into the category of evil spirits!

The first five of the good spirits are of course, well known. It is odd to find the terrible Bhadra Kâli bracketed with the genial Ganapati and reckoned as a good spirit. Some of the others are local spirits though rated along with emanations of Hinduism.

A point to be noticed here is that the magic which has been described is of that kind which is intimately connected with religion, in that the aid of spiritual beings is sought, and mischief is wrought by their means.

But there is, of course, another side of magic; the sympathetic, which deals in symbolic hurts and cures; of quite another character, being nothing more than a "misdevelopment of natural philosophy."

These divisions of magic, though tolerably distinct, are not therefore always separated. They are sometimes blended.

It was my good fortune, not very long ago, to acquire possession of a couple of grandhas, or palm leaf books, the subject of which is ordinary magic and black magic. Like all works of the kind (these are in the Malayalam character) they are written in such a manner as to be quite unintelligible to the ordinary reader. Letters, symbols, syllables belonging to no known word are employed to express occult meaning. In fact it is more a memorandum than anything else. One of the grandhas is so obscure that translation of it is next to hopeless, for the few who can do so are altogether unwilling to help one to decipher it. The other is composed of Sanscrit and Malayalam words, spelled abominably; but though relatively clear for a book out of a "Mantravâdis" (Warlock's Magicians) library, it, too, contains many blank spaces which can only be filled up by the professional dealer in

* From an article by the writer in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. I, No. 7, 1889.

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called 825 *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát 795 Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said 778 to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent 825 from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he [782] is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a 841 woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

of the Brahmins. There are something like sixty four subdivisions of these people, from those ranking highest, in north Malabar, to the non-military, low caste ones of the south and of the Palghat taluk. Because of their very close relation to the Nambudri Brahmins which I shall describe below in detail, it can hardly be said that the Nayars are equal in caste to Sudras elsewhere in India. This is no doubt the reason for which, not only is their true position in the Hindu caste scale generally overlooked, but also why they themselves have a proud and self-assured bearing quite unlike that of the fourth and lowest caste in other parts of the country. 105 564

With the Nayars, the end of the list of caste Hindus is reached. Below come the *outcastes* who, despite their condition, are also graded in accordance with rank. First of these are the Tiyas. These bear different names in the various parts of Kerala, but there seems to be general agreement that they are really all one and the same people. Thus the name Tiya seems reserved for them in north Malabar with the exception perhaps of former north Cochin (Thiyyas); in Palghat, they are known as Iruvans, in south Malabar as Thandans and some as Irava-Panikkars; in south Cochin and north Travancore as Chovans, while in the rest of Travancore they go by the generic name of Iravas (sometimes spelt Izhuvas).

Next are the artisans or Kammalans of which there are properly only four main subdivisions. Their associates, also artisans and craftsmen, are roughly grouped into fourteen different communities. [463]

The Kammalans are followed by another category composed of farm-hands, the Cherumas and Pulayas, and a dozen or so different kinds of aboriginals, jungle and hill folk who are rarely encountered on the coast or in the cultivated area, and have to be sought for in the foothills and jungles of the Western Ghats. [563]

Non-Hindu inhabitants of Kerala include Moslems and Christians, of whom the greater number belong to the first of these two religious communities. They are both known locally as Mappillas, the first as Jonaka Mappillas and the others as Nasrani Mappillas. It is from this name, meaning "mother's son" or "bridegroom" or again "great child", that the more familiar *Mopla* for the Kerala Mohammedans has been coined. All are of the Sunni persuasion, while the Christians belong to a great number of varied denominations; some of them are Roman Catholic (the majority), others "Romo-Syrian" (Uniat), Orthodox Syrian, Malankara Syrian, Assyro-Chaldean (Nestorian), Mar Thomas, and of the Protestant United Church of south India. 105 563 795

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nayadis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that polution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every individual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be considered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

/For religious ceremonies and feasting associated with the Nayar Tali-rite, see category 588./

361 lived in bazaar streets in the towns, or some-
563 times in separate villages, where they were served by low caste Hindu labourers; alternatively small groups of them might occupy Hindu villages where they had the ritual rank of Iravas (from whom they were chiefly converted), and usually held lands on the same terms of triennial tenure from Nayar kanakker.

564 The lower polluting castes and the exterior
783 castes had their own small temples, dedicated to their own deities. They were forbidden to approach the temples of the "good" castes and
564 might not take part in daily worship there. An-
796 nually, however, a large temple festival was
571 held in each Nayar, chiefly or royal Bhagavadi temple. At such a festival, representatives of all the lower castes of the village attended and performed ceremonies and dances peculiar to their caste at approriate distances from the temple. Such festivals apparently reinforced the mutual rights and obligations of the several castes and dramatized the solidarity and also the social distance between them. In accordance with the normal range of their social relations, members of the lower castes usually attended such festivals only in their own or adjacent villages. At the festivals of the chiefly temple of the nad, however, members of "good" castes throughout the nad were required to participate; similarly, at festivals of the royal temples, representatives of the "good" castes throughout the kingdom were called to attend and express their allegiance to the ruler and his deity.

421 servants and serfs, of rents to the janmi, and
592 the receipt of rents from tenants. Today in law
672 as it was codified by the British the legal personality of the property-group is clearly recognized: suits concerning property-disputes, for example, are filed in the name of a property-group and not of its karanavan as an individual.

592 (b) Ritual Observances of the Group

Besides having important legal functions, the property-group was united in rites of various kinds. Its members acted jointly as a host-
[561] group in inviting neighbouring groups of the village to rites de passage such as name-giving (28th day), first rice-feeding (6th month) and the ceremonies associated with a death. At the tali-
[796] rite, the lineage as a whole held the ceremony in its oldest house, but expenses were divided between the property-groups and food for the feasts cooked separately in their houses. Similarly at
[764] a death, the whole lineage observed pollution and attended the cremation, gathering of bones and ashes on the 7th day, and purification and feasting on the 15th day, but members of the property-group, male and female, each made offerings of cooked rice to the spirit in their
[765] courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the man considered most closely related to the deceased - her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man next younger to him in the property-group, in the case of a man.

592 The propitiation of snakes and of dead male
782 forbears also united the group's members. The

162 the most numerous and ancient group, claim that their church was founded by St. Thomas. The Portuguese converted some of them by force to Roman Catholicism and also made many converts from the lowest Hindu castes. Christians are concentrated chiefly in Cochin and Travancore.

113 (3) For a fuller discussion of the meaning of this ceremony see Gough, "Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast", forthcoming in J.R.A.I.

(4) E. Colson and M. Gluckman, Seven Tribes of British Central Africa (1951), p. 129. [102]

787 (5) Occasionally the astrologer may divine that
753 the spirit of a recent ancestress is causing sickness to women or children. An emergency propitiation of cooked food is then made to here in the ancestor-shrine.

769 (6) In a new house there may be no stool at all,
778 unless the house was built some time before the partition by a man who died before it became occupied by the new property-group, and who thus becomes its first karanavan-spirit. If there are no stools the members of the group go back to their parent-house for ancestral propitiations for one or two generations.

212 (7) Nayar women like men could traditionally read and write Malayalam, and keep accounts.

796 (8) Onam is a harvest-festival in September; Vishu the New Year's Day, in March; and Tiruvadhira, a women's festival to Kama Devan, the Hindu god of passion.

113 (9) Murdock, Social Structure, 1949, p. 10.

(10) From the Book of Duarte Barbosa, (Hakluyt

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
789 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[153] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his 595
natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his [201]
wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* 585
(Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham 595
her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union.

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to 595
make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in 431
April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a [796]
harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, [776]
bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, [613]
and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign [586]
that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are [302]
delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials be- [262]
tween a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated [276]
with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no [584]
obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a 843
child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or 595
more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 431

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [965] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [965] [783] [835]

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obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites—most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming, first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility concerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin thereafter. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or

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The wives of her elder matrilineal kinsmen figured prominently in the life-crisis rites of a girl, performing the ritual acts done by enangar women in Central Kerala. 602 613 796

Because of residence patterns men had less contact than did women with the property groups of their spouses. They must be invited to all ceremonies and had ritual duties in those connected with their own children. As sambandhakkar of a property group, the husbands of its female members were usually consulted formally by its kāranavan before he undertook important matters such as building houses or dividing property. He was not, however, obliged to follow their advice. 613 602

Kinship Terms

A. MATRILINEAL KIN

601 184

The pattern of terms was the same as in Central Kerala. Lexically, the only difference was that MoMo and her sisters (A1) were called *acchamma* (literally, "father's mother"), a term extended to them from FaMo. This usage probably resulted from the fact that a child normally recognized FaMo earlier than MoMo and had more contact with her.

B. AFFINES AND NON-MATRILINEAL COGNATES

In North Kerala, as might be expected, there were customary kinship terms for the patrilateral kin. The terms for affines and non-matrilineal cognates were as follows.

(1) *Bhārya*. M. speaking. Wi. Reference only.

(2) *Bartāvu*. F. speaking. Hu. Reference only.

(3) *Sambandhakkar*. M. and F. speaking. Collective. Husbands of women of ego's lineage, primarily of ego's property group. Reference only.

(4) *Acchappan* ("Father's father"). M. and F. speaking. FaFa and FaFaBr. FaFaSiHu, FaMoBr, FaMoSiHu. MoFa and MoFaBr. MoFaSiHu, MoMoSiHu.

(5) *Acchamma* ("Father's mother"). FaMo and FaMoSi. FaFaBrWi, FaFaSi and FaMoBrWi. MoFaSi, MoMo, MoMoSi, MoFaBrWi.

(6) *Amma* ("Mother"). M. and F. speaking. Extended from Mo and MoSi to FaSi and FaBrWi. FaSi is called *valiya* ("big") mother or *elaya* ("younger") mother according to her age in relation to the father. FaBrWi is so designated according to FaBr's age in relation to Fa.

(7) *Acchan*. M. and F. speaking. Fa, mother's current husband,

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like the cult of lineage ghosts, are non-Sanskritic. I discuss the three categories of cults in that order, and then refer briefly to modern changes in the cults.

The Cult of Lineage Ghosts

Each traditional Nāyar house contains a room devoted to lineage ghosts. Within the shrine are placed small, low stools (*pīṭhams*). On each of these it is believed that a particular ghost comes to sit on the days when offerings are made.

In property groups of the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and district chiefs, which own more land than do commoner Nāyars, family histories recorded in palm leaf documents may contain the names and achievements of twenty or more *kāranavans* extending back over two or three hundred years. In such lineages, whose property groups divide less frequently than do those of commoner Nāyars, the *kāranavans'* spirits are housed in a special building in the courtyard south of the ancestral house. Commoner Nāyars care somewhat less for their ancestry. Sometimes they have only three or four stools for their lineage ghosts and remember by name only those who died within the last hundred years or whose lives were in some way remarkable. Remarkable *kāranavans* are those who fought bravely in battles or received honor from chief or king, those who earned property on behalf of their matrilineal groups, or those who died prematurely through accident, murder, epidemic or suicide.

Regular offerings are made only to *kāranavans*, for only *kāranavans* hold legal authority and only their names tend to appear in documents which survive for posterity. On the advice of the astrologer, however, a *taravād* may, in emergency, propitiate the ghost of an ancestress or of a man who died before becoming *kāranavan*. But such ghosts are always those who died within the lifetime of living members.

The lineage ghosts are regularly propitiated[5] on the new moon days of Karkidagam (July-August) and Tulām (October-November). Food is cooked in the kitchen by women of the matrilineal household, and a large portion is placed on a plantain leaf for each of the ghosts. It includes curried meat and vegetables, fried paddy, beaten rice, fuits, and sweet puddings of various kinds. Toddy and arrack were traditionally served along with the meal. If a dead *kāranavan* is known to have enjoyed special foods during life, he receives a large portion of these foods. Occasionally, even in the past, individual Nāyars have been vegetarians. The spirits of vegetarian *kāranavans* may not be served with meat and are housed in a separate shrine. When the dishes are prepared, they are carried quickly to the shrine so that the ghosts may partake of their essence before others have tasted or smelled them. The living *kāranavan* places the leaves before the stools in the presence of men junior to him in the property group and then closes the door of the shrine. Age-rank is observed in making the offerings. For each spirit, in addition to its own leaf, is briefly offered the food later placed before the stools of spirits junior to it. Similarly, the vegetables of vegetarian ghosts are first offered to meat eaters who were senior to them, and the vegetables (but not the meat) cooked for meat eating ghosts are first offered to vegetarian ghosts who were their seniors. After a few minutes the *kāranavan* reopens the door and distributes the food, to be eaten by all members of the *taravād*. Women take no part in offering the food and may not enter the ancestral shrine on this day. They are also forbidden to enter it during menstrual and birth pollutions, and all members are forbidden entry during the fifteen days of pollution following a death.

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravād* might

Traditionally, at the close of offerings to the ghosts, men of the *taravāds* might become drunk with toddy and arrack. In this condition, one or more young men might undergo possession by one of the ghosts. He performed a frenzied dance and called out to the assembled members with the voice of the ghost, declaring its will and thanking or threatening the *taravād* on its behalf. I heard of only one *taravād* where this custom persisted. Shamanistic possession by the goddess Bhagavatī or by the god Aiyappan is, however, still prevalent among rural Nāyars, and such religious possession is still more common among the lower castes.

In some *taravāds*, propitiation of lineage ghosts accompanies that of various deities associated with the *taravād*. Chief of these is the lineage's patron goddess (*dharma devī*). The goddess, though known by different names in different *taravāds*, is always thought of as a species of the generic goddess Bhagavadi or Bhādrakāli, the chief deity of the Nāyars. Each group of Nāyar *taravāds* in a village usually possesses in common a temple dedicated to Bhādrakāli, but each *taravād* has, in addition, its own goddess. Cults of the village goddess are more important in Cochin, and of the *taravād* goddess, in Kottayam. The village goddess is believed capable of withholding or inflicting on the population wholesale misfortunes of a kind which strike all men alike—smallpox, cholera, flood, drought, cyclone, cattle epidemic, or defeat in an intervillage feud. Such inflictions result from failure to propitiate the goddess or failure to uphold the moral laws of caste. The *taravād* goddess concerns herself with its members' private morality and inflicts such individual misfortunes as fever, barrenness in women or cattle, or grave financial loss.

In aristocratic *taravāds*, the goddess and the lineage ghosts may nowadays be housed together in an ancient gynasium (*kalari*) near the ancestral house—a building formerly devoted to the military training of the *taravād's* youth. The ghosts may then be propitiated with cooked food on the same day on which a cock is sacrificed to the patron goddess. In such rites, propitiation of both spirits and goddess are associated with the *taravād's* former martial glory. In the rites there usually figure one or more ancestral swords which the male forebears used during their lives. These swords are the property of the goddess and are propitiated by the *kāranvan* as representatives of the deity.

Lineage ghosts have some concern with the *taravād's* internal morality. If its members fail in hospitality to guests, squander their income, or neglect their property, the ghosts may inflict misfortunes on one or more members of the group. However, failure to propitiate the ghosts correctly is the offence most likely to provoke retribution. Conversely, if offerings are made correctly to the ghosts, they will help to preserve the *taravād* from misfortune.

The ghosts vary in their severity and in the wrongs which they punish. A *kāranavan* who amassed much property is most likely to resent extravagance on the part of his successors. Forebears who died prematurely are more punitive than those who died peacefully in old age. All ghosts, however, are somewhat capricious: a small offense may provoke stern retribution, and misdemeanors on the part of one adult may result in the sickness of another or of a child of the property group. In particular, a forebear who was injured or insulted by his juniors during life or after his death may wreak vengeance on the *taravād* even down to the seventh or eighth generation. One instance from a village headman's lineage in Kottayam will illustrate such retribution. In 1798, the property group was dying out for lack of women, and the *kāranavan* adopted a woman and her children from a related segment of his lineage. After the

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No clear distinction is made between alien ghosts and minor malevolent deities, or demons, which are also sometimes called *pretams* in Cochin. Some demons are found throughout Malabar. Chief of these is Kuttichāttan, a spirit capable of all kinds of poltergeist activities. Sometimes, on the advice of an astrologer, a *taravād* privately sets up a shrine to Kuttichāttan and arranges for his annual propitiation by a low caste person in the same manner as an alien ghost. Often, indeed, local myths of particular Kuttichāttans suggest that they have been derived from alien ghosts, whose legends became fancifully embroidered with miraculous elements. The story of one Kuttichāttan, in this case enshrined in a Nambūdiri Brahman garden and propitiated by a washerman, will illustrate this process. The god was said to have been born from a sacrificial fire during ancestral ceremonies in a Brahman house. The Brahman house-owner brought him up, and when he was adult sent him to graze cattle as a serf. One day the Brahman's red-horned bull was missing, and the serf admitted that he had killed and eaten it. The Brahman tied him to the rafters of the cowshed and had him beaten to the point of death. Afterwards, the serf turned into a Kuttichāttan and disappeared, but hovered above the Nambūdiri household bringing misfortune until a shrine was set up for him. Educated Nāyar informants surmised that the spirit had originally been that of an executed serf, later glorified by his propitiants as Kuttichāttan. Similarly, Kadangōtt Makkam, whose story was related above, is spoken of as a form of Bhagavadi in some *taravāds* where she is propitiated.

I have so far mentioned the kinds of alien ghosts which may be attached to individual *taravāds* in Cochin. In fact, however, cults of spirits and deities of the village are grander and more numerous in Cochin than are those of the *taravād*. This parallels the fact that the Cochin village was traditionally highly centralized as a unit of local government. In this area, the temple of the village goddess Bhagavadi is managed either by a Nāyar village headman's lineage or collectively by a village community of commoner Nāyars. Only the Nāyars and castes above them might traditionally enter the temple, but all castes owed allegiance to the deity and took part in her annual festival. The lowest castes of former serfs, and some other polluting castes such as washermen, took part in the festival through the medium of one or more minor malevolent deities or particularly important local ghosts which occupied small shrines at a distance from the main temple. Such spirits were thought of as servants of the goddess, and at her will could "sow the seeds" of smallpox or other misfortunes in the village. To avert such misfortune not only must the Nāyars and other high castes propitiate the goddess herself, but the lower castes must also assemble, bringing imitation bullocks and horses—the vehicles of the deity's demon servants—and make offerings to these demons. Selected persons from these lower castes became possessed by the village ghosts or demons and, in masked dances, made oracular pronouncements both to their own and the higher castes. During the festival, and for several weeks before it, Nāyar households must also entertain these shamans privately in the courtyards of their houses and make gifts of grain to them which warded off the demons' wrath.

In Kottayam, the village was traditionally less centralized. Each Nāyar *taravād* was an independent landowning body owing only tenuous allegiance to a chief. Cults of deities and ghosts associated with particular *taravāds* are therefore more prominent than are those of village temples, and it is in the former rather than the latter that ritual cooperation between high and low castes is most prominent. Whereas a Cochin

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taravād may enshrine only one or two alien ghosts particularly associated with it, leaving the majority of local ghosts to be propitiated at the central village temple. a wealthy Nāyar *taravād* in Kottayam builds shrines in its garden for six or eight alien ghosts and finances elaborate propitiations on their behalf. Such spirits are in Kottayam called *teyyams*. As in Cochin, the spirits are often the ghosts of Nāyar or low caste persons who died violent deaths—for example, girls who died violently before marriage, women excommunicated or executed for sexual offences, persons killed by lightning, servants executed by their masters, or warriors who died in battle. Usually, miraculous elements are interwoven into their legends. Sometimes, they become merged with common minor deities such as Vettakkorumagan, Kandhākaranan, or some species of Bhagavadi. In a few cases, they have become associated with some episode from the puranic myths and their human origin is lost sight of. As in the village temple rites of Cochin, these ghosts in Kottayam are propitiated, on behalf of the Nāyar *taravād*, by selected persons from the lower castes. These are chiefly Vannans (washermen) and Malayans (exorcists).[22] Annually, the propitiants assemble in the Nāyar courtyard and recite the myths of origin of their spirits. Later, they make and receive blood sacrifices to the spirits, and finally, while possessed by them, perform spectacular masked dances and declare the spirits' satisfaction to an assembled company of many castes. These festivals take place throughout the whole of several nights in the month of January to February and draw vast crowds from the surrounding neighborhood.[23]

I have so far dealt with modes of propitiation of, and possession by, alien ghosts. In addition, both in Cochin and Kottyam, Nāyars believe that certain persons can, through appropriate rites and spells, gain private control over alien ghosts and minor deities and engage in witchcraft or sorcery through their power. In what I call witchcraft,[24] the individual uses the power of his patron spirit in order to take the form of a bull, dog, jackal, or other animal. In this form he touches his foe in the night, causing him to fall ill with fever, to become insane, or even to die. Witches always belong to one of the lowest castes of Parayans, Pulayans, Pānans or (in Kottayam) Malayans. They usually attack persons of Nāyar or other high caste whom they themselves hate. Occasionally, however, a normal person of any caste, even a Nāyar, may hire a witch to attack a personal enemy.

A sorcerer performs rites and recites spells to an alien ghost or minor deity over which he has control and causes it to pass magically into the body of an enemy, thus bringing about fever, miscarriages in women, insanity or death. Sorcerers can also bring about the deaths of cattle. Nāyars attribute sorcery chiefly to lower caste persons. For whereas the Nāyars predominantly worship Bhagavadi and certain Sanskrit deities, the castes below Nāyars specialize in the propitiation of evil ghosts and minor deities, and it is solely with these lower supernatural beings that witchcraft and sorcery are associated. Washermen, astrologers and umbrellamakers, who specialize in exorcising ghosts from the bodies of patients, are particularly suspected by Nāyars of themselves engaging in sorcery. Nāyars do, however, occasionally suspect Nāyars of other lineages, particularly affines with whom they have quarreled, of practicing sorcery or of hiring low caste witches or sorcerers to attack them.

Witchcraft does not usually require the diagnosis of an astrologer. A Nāyar of nervous disposition simply suspects that a low caste man has bewitched him if he falls ill after encountering an animal in the night. Sorcery is usually diagnosed by an

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dons his mask and becomes possessed by his *teyyam*, he may adopt an authoritative or aggressive attitude to his Nāyar hosts, demanding gifts or threatening them with misfortune before conferring his blessing. He may not, of course, physically attack the Nāyars. Indeed, he is, while possessed, likely to solicit admiration by inflicting physical suffering on himself, usually by burning himself with torches or rolling in the red hot ashes of a fire. After the oracular pronouncements, having doffed his mask, the officiant again becomes the servant of the *taravād* and humbly accepts his fee. For the low caste officiant, therefore, these festivals permit a limited, stylized expression of aggression and a temporary assumption of authority toward their high caste masters. At the same time, the festivals underline both the need for interdependence between the castes, and ultimately, the lower castes' permanent, secular role as submissive servants.

Functions of the cults of alien ghosts. My discussion of alien ghost institutions in the general context of Nāyar handling of aggression has necessarily pointed to some of their social and psychic functions. These may, it seems, be summarized as follows. First, the cults permitted, in a harmless manner, the handling of aggression which arose in relations between castes. Second, whether or not witchcraft or sorcery were actually practiced, the belief that those whom he wrongfully harassed could arm themselves with these ritual weapons must have acted as a deterrent to the Nāyar authority who was tempted to oppress low caste subordinates, or to favor his affines at the expense of his matrilineal juniors. Through witchcraft and sorcery, alien ghosts, therefore, might help to prevent injustices which could not readily be brought before a secular authority.

Third, these institutions brought together in ritual cooperation the very categories of persons whose mutual ambivalence provided the ultimate motive force for the institutions themselves. In the case of witchcraft and sorcery, there existed a complicated interplay of hostilities and alliances which, over time, balanced each other. All Nāyars feared the harmful supernatural power of the lower castes, and this gave unity to their caste. In a particular instance, however, a Nāyar who believed himself attacked by an individual low caste practitioner, or by another Nāyar with the help of such a practitioner, could obtain relief only by engaging the ritual assistance of some other officiant from one of the suspected castes. In the case of the cults of alien ghosts institutionally attached to his *taravād* and his village temple, it seems that the Nāyar's generalized fear of and hostility to outgroups was turned outside the area of human relations and focussed upon supernatural agents feared by all. But again, only willing and friendly ritual cooperation with lower caste officiants could ward off supernatural attacks from the whole community, including the Nāyars.

It seems probable to me that one of the most important functions of all religious ritual, if not the important, is this resolution of conflict within individuals and within groups. The manner in which this is achieved varies greatly. The rituals of rebellion[25] and the initiation rites[26] analyzed by Gluckman, for example, on the surface bear little resemblance to Nāyar cults of the dead. But as Gluckman has shown, their broad social functions are the same. Institutionalized religious ritual, like the private rites of obsessional neurotics, permits to the individual a disguised expression of his aggression, while at the same time reassuring him that his control over the direct physical expression of aggression is unimpaired. But institutionalized ritual does far more than this. It has not only temporary therapeutic value for the individual, but is also interwoven

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with social, legal, and economic institutions in such a way that it resolves recurrent conflicts within them and thus affords them support. For institutionalized ritual draws into cooperation, in common acts and a common belief system, the very categories of persons upon whose mutual ambivalence the rites are founded. More than this, by bringing home to the participants a sense of their common helplessness in face of the dangers and mysteries which confront man both in his own nature and in his world, ritual appears to transmute their very hatred into sentiments of mutual dependence and love.

Modern Changes in Cults of the Dead

At the present day the cult of lineage ghosts tends to be retained in its traditional form only in the most traditional households—those having residential and economic norms most closely approximating the traditional pattern, and living in the old style of ancestral house. In the new houses built in the past twenty years there is no ancestral shrine, and varying degrees of modification and attrition are observable in ancestral and death rites in these modern types of household.

In households comprising an elementary family or a congerie of mixed matrilineal, cognatic, and affinal kin, the cult of lineage ghosts has died out in its traditional form. In some families emergency propitiations are still made to the ghosts of kinsfolk on the advice of an astrologer. But such a ghost may now be that of any relative who died in the house, and the propitiation may be carried out by any adult male resident. In one Cochin house, for example, lived an old woman, her elder widowed daughter, and her children, and her younger daughter, daughter's husband and their children. The old woman's son, who would traditionally have been *kāranavan*, had taken his share of property and gone to live with his wife. When the younger daughter's small girl fell ill with fever, the astrologer advised a propitiation of the ghost of the elder daughter's husband, who had died in this house and been buried near it three years previously. The food offering was made by the child's father in a corner of the living room. In this case neither ghost nor propitiant were members of the *taravād*. Fifty years ago neither one of them could have been concerned in this *taravād's* ancestral rites.

In some households, regular collective offerings to lineage ghosts are still made in July and October, but the form of the rites has changed. Cooked rice balls are offered as in *śrāddham* instead of the old offerings of cooked food. In Cochin in 1952 there was no prohibition of alcohol. But even so, many modern families despised the old offerings of toddy, meat, and arrack and substituted vegetarian food with coconut juice, or else performed the Sanskritic rites. Even in traditional *taravāds* whose members have not yet divided their property, educated *kāranavans* are now often unwilling to perform the old-fashioned rites. Such was the case in one wealthy *taravād* of a Kottayam village headman. The *kāranavan*, a university graduate and a politician, felt that he must maintain the old ceremonies for the sake of his *taravād's* local reputation, but would not perform them himself. Instead he persuaded his younger son to carry out the offerings to the lineage ghosts and the annual cock sacrifice to Bhagavadi. This youth was, of course, of another *taravād*. Traditionally he would not even have been permitted to enter his father's ancestral shrine. In many households there are now no ancestral propitiations, for many now deny to lineage ghosts the power to bless or harm.

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825 171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 825 171 782 778 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes. Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison, are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [766] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 825 778 796 [173] Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him and left them in their present abode. He however promised to return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

585 arecanuts and tobacco, to be given to the bride's house-
564 hold, and which are distributed to the guests. When the
613 bride's house is far away the bridegroom makes his procession thither from a neighbouring house. Arrived at
[276] the bride's house they sit a while and are again served with food, after which they are conducted to a room where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on brass or silver plates (called thâlam). The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness, hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness; and then the women, departing one by one leave the couple alone, one of them shutting the door from the outside.

[431] "The Patter Brâhmans always collect on these occasions and receive small presents (dakshina) of 2 to 4 annas each, with betel leaf and areca nut from the bridegroom, sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber; the others
[513] outside. [In a Nâyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are separate; at different ends of the
[574] house.] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house, with the men. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow Rs. 8, 16, 32 or 64, according to his means but never more than 64, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household on the ceremony. The Sambandham is now complete. The girl remains in her own Taravâd house, and her husband visits her there,
585 coming in the evening and leaving the next morning. A
564 few days after completion of the ceremony the senior woman of the bridegroom's house sends some cloths,
613 including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu
602 mundu (towels) and some oil to the bride for her use for
[431] six months. Every six months she does the same, and on festivals of the Ônam, Vishu, Thiruvathîra she sends
[796] besides a little money, areca nut, betel nut and tobacco. The money sent should amount to Rs. 4, or 8, or 16, or 32, or 64; either one of these sums. Sums of the higher numbers are very rarely sent.

"Before long the women of the husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. Again the

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683.
the Nâyar would be cut down instantly with a sword: 564
there would be no words. Now that the people of India 783
are inconvenienced with an Arms Act which inhibits [656]
sword play of this kind, and with a law-system under [178]
which high and low are rated alike, the Nâyar has to
content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for [201]
the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on unperturbed.
His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show
it in quite the same way.

Doubtless the natural habit of seclusion common to 771
Malabar, rendered easy by the wealth of vegetation of
which those who have never visited shores somewhat
alike climatically can have no conception, has favoured
the persistence of earlier forms of belief; but, whatever
may be the reason for it, there is much more of the
extremes of religious belief to be seen amongst the
Nâyars than amongst any other people or caste of
Southern India.

It has been noticed already how that the Malayalis [795]
have, practically, no sects such as obtain throughout the
rest of Southern India. Vishnu, Siva, Bhagavati, Rama—
all these names of the Hindu theogony are meaningless
to them. They do not know one from the other except in
name. Their Hinduism is not that of the rest of South-
ern India.

It is time to come to concrete example, so I will 796
attempt a description of the ceremonial observed at the
Pishâri kâvu—the Pishâri temple near Quilandy on the [773]
coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is sup-
posed in vague legend to have slain an Asura or
gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which event the
festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her followers.
It is fairly representative. The deity of the temple [776]
Bhagavati is spoken of as feminine in the spirit of accu-
racy, but it is extremely unlikely whether ten per cent.
of the crowd even thought of sex in connection with
Bhagavati. Sacrifice of goats as part of the ceremonial [782]
was at first denied: it is a mystery too awful to be the
subject of conversation. At the same time, I am inclined
to think that much the weighter reason is that the priests
who cling to this part of the ceremonial are ashamed to
let it be known to the people that they do it. They like
it to be thought that such sacrifice is appropriate to the
inferior races, but that *they* are above it and have nothing
to do with it!

The festival lasts for seven days. When I visited it
in 1895 the last day was on the 31st of March. Before

796 Before
[793] day-break of the first day the ordinary temple priests, a Mûssad, will leave the temple after having swept up and made it clean; and (before day-break also) five Nambûtiris will enter it, bearing with them "Sudhi
796 Kalasam." The Kalasam is on this occasion made of the
778 five products of the cow, *i.e.* (panchagavyam) together
[237] with some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree (Arayâl) and Darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the temple, mantrams or magic verses will
[783] have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambûtiris will then perform the usual morning worship, and either immediately after it or very soon afterwards they leave the temple, and the Mûssad, the ordinary priest, returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs
[613] to four Taravâds, and no sooner has it been purified than the Kâranavans of these four Taravâds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urâlas) present to the temple servant (known as a Pishârodi) the silver flag of the temple which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishârodi receives it and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur is given to the occa-
[201] sion by the firing off of miniature mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals; and, after the
[411] flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next few days
[788] there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple.
796 There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day
564 a man of the washerman (he is also a tailor: Vannân) caste will announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that there will be made a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple and passing round about.
[202] Like all those who are in any way connected with the
[788] temple, this man's office is hereditary and he lives to a small extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a
[425] little land on nominal terms from the temple property, in consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. The Vannân has, I believe, immense power

indirectly, in the matter of giving or not giving new cloths to women after menstruation, but my information on the point is incomplete. Each receives from the temple daily during the festival a fixed quantity of rice, and their families are fed. Thus the tailor, the goldsmith, and the blacksmith, are under obligation to work as it may be required for the temple without remuneration in the ordinary way of labour, but for the honour only. 796 564 [294] [326]

In the afternoon of the same day (the fifth) the Vannân and a Manûtan, the one following the other and not together, bring two umbrellas to the temple ; Vannân bringing one of cloth, the other one of cadjan. I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in possession of the Vannân, but think it has. At all events, when he now brings it to the temple it is in thorough repair, a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are the usual processions of Bhagavati on the elephant, encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon and at night. Nothing more is done on this day. [293]

Early on the sixth day the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisherman), who by virtue of his headship is called the 'Arayân,' together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith comes to the temple followed by an interested crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayân is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers, a silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him to be used when he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayân, and excutes on it any repairs that may be needful ; and in like manner the blacksmith looks to the sword. 796 326 226 564

In the afternoon the headman of the Tiyans called the "Tandân," comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts, an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming and a large crowd with the Tandân, and in front of him are men dancing about, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling *madly*. The sticks represent swords. Then come the blackmith and the goldsmith with the 796 564 [782] [482] [326]

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796
564 sword. The goldsmith has some responsibility connected
[326] with the sword, perhaps on account of its ornamentation, although the ordinary Malayali blacksmith is quite equal to the ordinary work of a goldsmith as well as repairing clocks and watches. Following comes the Arayân with the silver umbrella to an accompaniment of very noisy drumming; he and his umbrella in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, one behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at day-break. These six days of the festival are called Vilakku.

796 A word about the drumming. The number of instru-
534 mentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted over fifty, all Nâyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle, and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with drum-sticks, curved, not straight, thicker at the end held in the hand. The
[533] accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong stroke, was truly amazing, although the rhythm was being changed perpetually; and their crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible leader of this strange orchestra.

Early on the seventh and last day, when the morning procession is over, there comes to the temple a man of the Pânan* caste. He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella he brings should have a long handle and with this umbrella in his hand he performs a dance before the temple. The
[293] Malabar umbrella has a very long handle as a rule, in fact the correct way to carry an umbrella is with the end of the handle resting in the hand while the arm is straight at the side.

[346] The temple which is figured in the plate[1] is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste

* Pânan, a caste numerically small, and inferior. They make umbrellas of cadjan and perform at temples.

[1] [See Plate XII, facing P. 252, Category 116--Analyst]

below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into this hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives a certain quantity, about 10 lb. of raw rice for his performance.

In the afternoon a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple carrying with them swords, not very dangerous ones, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing salt.* These baskets are carried slung on a pole as before. These men dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly, under the influence of these spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayân as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword.

It is explained by the Malayalis that the individuals of the various castes who hold the office of tailor, goldsmith and so on to the temple, do so, not for the sake of what they receive from the temple but in order to mark their position of superiority in their caste. The ceremonial allotted to each also no doubt marks his position in the ladder of caste.

The procession in the evening of this the seventh and last day is a great affair. Eight elephants which kept line beautifully, took part in this when I witnessed it. One of them very handsomely caparisoned had on its back a priest (Mûssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. Up to this time, when she is represented by a sword, it will be remembered she has been represented by an image. The elephant bearing the priest with the sword is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament.† He bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nâyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind

* The use of salt here is obscure as to the purpose. I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol was knocked down and salt was put in the place where it should have stood. The act was looked on as most insulting.

† The discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mappila poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breast to these cup-like discs.

called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

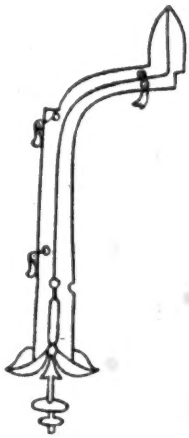

But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

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pit, then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the goddess ere going away. 796 564

And now the procession starts out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate, and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayalis the two most intimate are "Kuttichchâttan" and "Gulikan," who are supposed to have assisted Kâli (who is scarcely the Kâli of Brâhmanism by the by) in overcoming the Asura, and on the occasion of this festival these two demons dance before her. "Gulikan" is represented by the Vannân and "Kuttichchâttan" by the Manûtan who have been mentioned already, and who are under like restrictions with the nine Tîyans. I saw poor "Gulikan" being made up, the operation occupying five or six hours or more before his appearance. I asked who he was and was told he was "a devil." He looked mild enough; but then his "make up" had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the northern entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, his hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; his head and neck was swathed and decorated; a wooden platform arrangement from which hung a red ornamented skirt was fastened to his hips; there was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales's feathers arrangement (made of plank) the top of which reached five feet above his head; and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchâttan was treated in much the same manner. 796 776 536

As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his three minutes' dance, preparation for which occupied all the afternoon, was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he moved at all, let alone dance.

The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchâttan gives his dance,

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776 round by south to the westward, and leaving the enclosure proceeds to a certain banyan tree under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preced-
796 ing the procession at a distance of 50 yards are the nine
564 men of the Tîyan caste, mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate—*larger* than the plates used when encircling the fire pit—on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents on this occasion as well as before is called talapôli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tîyan women following,
[782] carrying their kalasams and talapôli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of "devil dancers" garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these "devil dancers" who (never ceasing his gyrations, mad-like gestures and contortions), presently seizes its head, wrings it off, and flings it high in the air.
[755] The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment.

The procession passes through the temple yard, the enclosure, from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tîyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let us note here as we go along the curious distribution of this rice which is heaped in the fire pit. Two-thirds of it go to the four Tîyans carrying the Pû (flower) kalasams and one-third to the five who carried the Jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy, and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is the measure of rice and the measure of paddy covered with plaintain leaves as before, beside them

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a small lamp or burning wick, and the devil dancer throws a handful towards the house. It then finds its way to the tree to the west under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp; some Brâhmans* repeat mantrams and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three, are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely, a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple where the priest descends quickly from the elephant and is taken inside the temple by the Mûssad priests. He who has been carrying the sword all this time places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for 15 minutes! until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam, fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil dancers will with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions say, in the way of oracle, whether the Dêvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance he falls in a sort of swoon, and every soul, excepting only the priests and the temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, the senior members of the Taravâds who stand in the position of owners and who, by the way, have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest; and as soon as they have done so they too depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mûssads, one drummer (Marayar) and two temple servants: no others. These Mûssads are commonly called Brâhmans though the Nambûtiris do not admit them to be such. The reason for all this secrecy seems to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mûssad priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a preliminary to the sacrifice. Then

[778] 796 782 564 [793] [534] [789] [793]

* East Coast Brahmans (Pattar) I think: perhaps Mûssads.

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782
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the chief priest dons a red silk cloth and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a a small bill-hook—while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room as there are to it but two walls, running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south; the chief priest stand to the east of a goat facing west as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams and the goats never flinch,—the effect of the mantrams! Several cocks are then sacrified in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron powder and lime water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mûssads only see the sacrifice, a part of the rite supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple [534] by the northern door to the north side of the temple; and from this place one of the temple servants, *who is blind-folded*, drags it three times round the temple, the Mûssads following closely repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him and does not know what is being done. After the third round the drummer and the temple servant go away and the three Mûssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice when cooked is taken to the kâvu (grove), to the north of the temple, and there the Mûssads again ply their mantrams. As [533] each mantram is ended a handful of saffron powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer who by this time has returned, the only one present with the priests, keeps up an *obligato pianissimo* with his drum, using his fingers: he faces the north and the priests face the south. Presently, having done with the mantrams, the priests run (*not walk*) once round the temple carrying the cooked rice and scattering it wide as they go, repeating their mantrams. They enter the temple and remain within until day-break. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mûssads go out and the five Nambûtiris again enter before sunrise and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day. For this one day only. The next morning the Mûssad priests return and resume their duties.

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Men and women who have taken part in the festival are considered to have undergone spiritual purification each in his or her own caste, and to have marked their position in it as well as in the social scale. 796 564 [554] [083]

Beyond noting that the weirdness of the human tumult busy in its religious effusion is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nâyar women looking on from the garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination for the present, while we must be content with such accuracy as we may attain on all points: neither fancy nor beauty shall allure us from the dull path of precision, for the mere features of the ceremonial are one real concern. [541]

It will have been noticed that the Nambûtiris hold aloof from the festival: they purify the temple before and after, but no more.

The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. How the squabble arose, how indeed there could have arisen a squabble on such a point as seniority between an uncle and a nephew amongst Mukkuvans, whose descent is reckoned from father to son, I know not, but during the festival one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about 50 miles distant), paid some fees and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella. 794 578 564

There are points of resemblance between this festival and the village festival of Southern India where the buffalo "devoted" to the goddess of the village is sacrificed, where there is the slaughter of the lamb by the strong teeth of a man, the dressing up in leaves, the man naked and blindfolded going round outside the village while cooked rice and blood are scattered wide, the blindfolded man falling senseless before the goddess at the end of it.* 796 [171]

There are many festivals in Malabar description of which would be very interesting, but information in detail is wanting in my notes, so I must perforce rest content with what has been related of the festival at the 796 114

* Described at length by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay" some eight years ago.

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796 Pishâri Kâvu which represents one of moderate im-
114 portance and truly one of the people, and its narration is fairly complete. It seems to express the religion of the Nâyars as it is when not tacked on to that of the Brâhmans: as they formulate it of themselves entirely in their own way.

796 An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpâti inhabited
184 entirely by Pattar Brâhmans from the east; but it is not a true Malayali festival and it suffices to mention its existence for it in no way represents the religion of the Nâyar. The dragging of cars on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath, at Pûri in Orrisa, to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar excepting only at Kalpâti which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar. The Kalpâti
782 festival is the only "car festival" in Malabar.

[131] Near Chowghât (Chavagât), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, an arm of the
[346] sea and separated from it by a thin strip of land between the rivers, at a place called Guruvayûr, is a very important temple the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited this festival on one occasion and saw there much which was of interest but which must find place in the account of regions of others
[126] than Nâyars. Here purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of
[532] vows. A very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man—the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by a silver
[326] string as long as the giver is tall! Goldsmiths working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the gate of the temple ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering.

The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here.* A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself (it is not necessary to go to a temple for the purpose of vowing) to give a silver image of a child, a silver

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[113] * The subject of vows generally, including description of a Roman Catholic shrine at Cochin somewhat akin to that at Guravayûr, was treated by me in an article which appeared in the 'Calcutta Review' for January 1899.

leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire. The offering is never an adjunct of the prayers; it is always something done for benefit received. The thing to be noted is that a vow is *always* fulfilled; fulfilled as well as the vower can possibly fulfil it; it is never forgotten or overlooked. 782

> " When the devil was sick the devil a saint would be
> " When the devil was well the devil a saint was he "

is a couplet inapplicable to the Nâyar, or, indeed, to any people in Southern India, where vows, of objects to be given or animals to be sacrified, are treated always with the utmost sacredness even by people who perhaps in no relation of life behave for an hour with common honesty.

A true Malayali festival is that held at Kottiôr, in North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynâd hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. The average rainfall at Kottiôr in July is probably 60 inches at least, so the devotees generally get a good ducking. Though it is a festival for high and low these do not mix at Kottiôr. The Nâyars go first, and after a few days, the Nâyars having done, the Tîyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march; and not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exhuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. 796 [132] [564]

I have not been able to ascertain with that definiteness which would enable me to offer more than an opinion, the connection between this violence of language and physical force against innocent people who are met *en route*, and the object of worship at Kottiôr, so will leave that part of the subject alone. The other day I visited the Gangamma festival at sacred Tirupati in North Arcot, and observed, together with conduct the most truly religious vows being carried out with the strongest disregard to personal comfort, the use of language truly filthy and obscene *towards the goddess herself!* "Gangamma! You have a—— (using a filthy word for the vagina) as big as a basket." "She is a whore" said another; and each one in the little crowd of votaries, evidently from the same village, as they approached the shrine, tried to out-do the other in insult and vituperation of the goddess to whom they had 796 782 [178]

796 come to pay their vows for some good done them by her.
782 Obscenities which need not be described were done—these chiefly by people of very low caste let it be said—by people who felt that neither gesture in the dance nor word could be gross enough to express the violence of their feelings. Yet these people, men and women, rolled, or were rolled, for they soon become unconscious, many times round the temple, their arms stretched towards it, their hair, their clothes (scanty enough) and persons generally thick with the dust. A piteous sight. And
796 there were to be seen men carrying over their heads an
782 ornamented wooden canopy, the whole (and no light
785 weight) held up, fastened to the person by the ends of the supports of the canopy, being stuck through the skin of the back and of the chest. Nothing resting on the shoulders or held in the hand. I saw a man who, to fulfil a vow to this goddess who was abused so vilely, had done this every year for over twenty years, and this year handed on performance of the painful vow to his son, a growing lad. The bearers of these canopies danced continuously as if trying to make the points in their flesh as hurtful as possible. So that, together with vituperation of the goddess, there was much veneration, and there is no hesitation in expressing this through bodily discomfort and pain.

796 Content for the present with this example from another part of the Presidency, we will return now to Kottiôr
[346] which I visited in November 1894. One sees a temple of Isvara, there called Perumâl (or Perumâl Iswara) by the people; a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was the shrine which, I was not
[793] permitted to see. There were some Nambûtiri priests who came out and entered into conversation. Their life far away in the forest must be a lonely one. The refreshment which they offered, butter-milk and sugar, was
[574] accepted thankfully. The Nambûtiris, very unsophisticated persons and much wrapped up in their personal sanctity, placed the milk and sugar on the ground, and invited us graciously to partake. A large piece of cocoanut which they threw to my dog was, strange to say, eaten greedily by the beast.

796 The festival is not held at the temple but in the forest
778 about quarter of a mile distant. This spot is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was, however, no objection to myself and my companion visiting it: we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a

Nâyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about 30 yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot of the festival, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not accompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place unless during the few days of the festival when it is safe: at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. How much this belief has to do with Iswara need not be commented on! Nothing on earth would have persuaded either the Nâyar or the Kurichchin to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno had not embarked on so fearful a journey! About a hundred yards beyond the stream we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. Why this uncomfortable place was chosen I know not; in the rains when the festival is held it is usually under water, and the people have to stand in water. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. By the same token the lingam had been broken and displaced a few days previously by some Mâppilas searching for treasure which they thought was there. *Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds in which the people had lodged during the festival. Grass and weeds were growing high, and the sheds were dilapidated and looking as if they had not been used for years; but then the rain in Malabar brings about destructive effects with astonishing rapidity. 796 778

Pilgrims going to this festival carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. I am not [782] [788]

* The circle of stones is specially interesting. Near the Angadipuram-Manjery road, between Vellila and the ferry is a monolith in the centre of a piled up platform circled with stones, the circle 30 feet in diameter. Apparently one of the many pre-Hindu remains in Malabar. Description of the ancient remains in Malabar, which are specially interesting, must be made later on. Just now let me note that stone circles are common. And I find in my notes the following: "On the hill side just about the Tirunelli temple (North Wynâd forests), where there is a clearing in the forest and the ground is somewhat flat, is a circle of stones 12 feet in diameter, and filled up with earth so as to make a raised platform nearly 2 feet in height; in the centre a small upright stone 10 inches high. To the north-east, three flat upright stones . . . . and a flat place, rudely square about 11 feet from the circle, evidently an old sacred place of some of the jungle folk."

796 778 sure what the Nâyars take; perhaps the same. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm.

796 788 782 A shrine to which the Malayalis, Nâyars included, resort is that of Subramania in Palni, in the north-west corner of the Madura district, about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near Palghat. Not only are vows [765] paid to this shrine, but men, letting their hair grow for a [302] year after their father's death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he is carrying is called a kâvadi. There are two kinds of kâvadi: a milk kâvadi (one containing milk in a pot) and a fish kâvadi (one containing fish). The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kâvadi and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the role of beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow; leaves his kâvadi and his hair and a small sum of money.

Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nâyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nâyar as expressed under certain circumstances; for between the Nâyars and these there is in this respect little if any differenee. It was at Guruvayûr in November 1895. On a high raised platform under a peepul tree were a number of people under vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed for him (on his behalf) that if he were cured he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck and a like string on his right arm (these were in some way connected with the vow). His head was bent and he sat motionless under his kâvadi, leaning on the bar, which when he carried it rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.) and milk,—no rice. Now he had had the [776] long-looked-for dream, and he was about to start. As an instance of the Malayali's ignorance of the Hindu theogony, this youth said he was going to the god "Sri Krishnan" in Palni. It is well known that god there is not Krishna.

[See Plate XI, facing p. 230, Category 116 -- Analyst]

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Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of silver over the lower portion of the forehead almost covering his eyes; his tongue outside his teeth, kept in position by a silver skewer through it. Had been fasting two years. Much under the influence of the god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. Several of the pilgrims wore a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock (a wide silver band over the mouth, the ends reaching over the cheeks, a skewer through both cheeks keeping the ends together * and, of course, the mouth open); and he sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about 3 feet high. People fed him with milk, &c., but he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. 796 788 785 [782]

Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pujâris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pujâris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock. 796 788

The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nâyars when they assume the pilgrims' robes and set out for Palni, and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked going off on a pilgrimage to that place.

Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallûr in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, along the coast, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar and is much frequented by the Nâyars. Kodungallûr is near Cranganore, the old Dutch Settlement, where was, probably, the Musiris of the Greeks. Tiruvangaikalam, close by, will probably turn out to be the long lost site of the capital of the Chêra kingdom. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars 796 184 788

* The mouth-lock is not peculiar to Malabar. A description of this form of vow in another part of the Presidency was made by me in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," Vol. II, No. 2 (1890). [171] [113]

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796 of the festival, so make the following excerpt from
184 Mr. Logan's well-known "Manual of Malabar." "It takes
788 the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts 'Nada-a Nada-a' of the pilgrims to the favourite shrines, chief of which is that at Cranganore (Kodungallûr) in the Native State of Cochin. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine the cry of 'Nada-a Nada-a' (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys
[564] of opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman caste, styled *Kûli Muttatta Arayan*, has the privilege of being the first to begin the work of polluting the *Bhoot*
[782] or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary to enter; cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nâyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tîyars and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years." It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans (fisher caste) opens the festival by solemnly making a fœcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling.

Leaving now the religion, expression of which may be seen at temple festivals and during pilgrimages to these scenes of religious fervour, we will turn to that which we see in the house of the Nâyar at home.

791 Plate XII shows a man standing with a sword of the shape known as Nândakam. He is an individual called a Velichchappâd, and as he stood to be photographed by me his forehead and face streamed with blood from a self-inflicted wound on the head. The Velichchappâd is a
771 familiar character in Malabar. His profession illustrates the very mixed character of the Hinduism of the Nâyar, partaking as it does of much of the lower cult,—animism,

½ [see cat. 116, plate facing p. 242 -- An.]

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and deification of ancestors, worship of snakes and kites, 771
ceremonies connected therewith, sacrifice, magic, witch-
craft and sorcery—together with the purest form of Vêdic
Brâhmanism known in Southern India, of which there is
the highest expression in the temples attached to the
wealthy Nambûtiri Illams, to which the Nâyar goes daily
to pray, to purify his mind after having purified his body
by bathing. There is very little to be seen of prayer in 771
Southern India outside Malabar. The great mass of the 171
people (I exclude the Brâhmans, a very minute percentage
of the whole) never dream of going to a temple daily to 782
pray; in fact prayer for its own sake scarcely exists.
People go in crowds to a temple on the occasion of a
festival to make obeisance to the god, and in a vague way
to pray, or they will go to fulfil a vow; but going merely
to pray by way of self purification of spirit is certainly
rare, for this denotes a phase of religion to which the
great mass of the people of Southern India has not
reached.

Far away in, as it may be said, rural Malabar, I wit- 796
nessed the ceremony in which the Velichchappâd exhibi-
ted his quality. It was in the courtyard of a Nâyar house,
to which thronged all the neighbours (Nâyars), men and
pretty women, boys and girls. The ceremony lasts about
an hour. The Nâyar said it was the custom in his family
to have it done once a year, but could give no account of
how the custom had originated: most probably in a vow;
some ancestor having vowed that if such or such benefit
be received, he will for ever after have an annual perform-
ance of this ceremony in his house. It involved some [465]
expenditure, as the Velichchappâd had to be paid, and
the neighbours had to be fed. Somewhere about the [357]
middle of the little courtyard, always as clean as a
dinner table, the Velichchappâd placed a lamp (of the [354]
Malabar pattern) having a lighted wick, a kalasam, which
he had prepared, some flowers, camphor, saffron and other
paraphernalia. Bhagavati was the deity invoked, and the
business involved offering flowers, and waving a lighted
wick around the kalasam. The Velichchappâd's move- 787
ments became quicker, and suddenly seizing the sword
he ran round the courtyard (*against* the sun, as the sailors 796
say) shouting wildly. He is under the influence of the
deity who has been induced into him, and he gives
oracular utterance to the deity's commands. What he
said I know not, and no one else seemed to know or care
in the least, much interested though they were in the

787 performance. As he ran, every now and then he cut his
796 forehead with the strange misshapen sword, pressing it
[785] against the skin and sawing (vertically) up and down. The blood streamed all over his face. Presently he became wilder and wilder, and whizzed round the lamp, bending forward towards the kalasam. Evidently some deity, some spirit, was present here, and spoke through the mouth of the Velichchappâd. This, I think, undoubtedly represents the belief of all who were present. When he had done whizzing round the kalasam, he soon became a normal being and stood before my camera.
[465] The fee for this self-inflicted laceration is one rupee and some odds and ends of rice, etc. I saw the Velichchappâd about three days afterwards going to perform
791 elsewhere. The wound on his forehead had healed! The
796 careful observer can always identify a Velichchappâd by the triangular-like patch over the forehead where the hair will not grow, and where the skin is somewhat indurated. The Velichchappâds seem to get used to cutting their foreheads as the eels to skinning.

We shall find the oracle again when we come to the lower races. I have seen a fine demonstration of it amongst the Paniyans of Wynâd when engaged in a regular corrobboree. An extremely interesting example of this combination of this phase of the lower Dravidian cult which is in no way Hindu, with the Brâhmanic religion, is to be seen at Mailâr in the Bellary district. There the oracle is bound up with a story about Rishis and Asuras, an incarnation of Siva and Pârvati, and many thousands assemble yearly to hear the oracle delivered by a man on the top of a huge affair representing Siva's bow, speaking the words of the god.

769 Before concluding the subject of religion, allusion
782 must be made to the worship of ancestors. Cremation of the dead, as in the case of the Nambûtiris, is done in the garden or compound surrounding the Taravâd house, in the south or south-west corner of it; so the Nâyar has the ashes and spirits of his ancestors with him always. We have seen already how that pacification of the spirits of those who have passed from view, and who are in the land of the shades, pervade the lives of the living. They are worshipped every new moon day, but especially on the new moon of Karkitakam,* of Tulâm and of Kumbham

[113] * The names of the Malayali months have been given already—see Nambûtiris (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 2).

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776 shape. It is overgrown with trees of various kinds, and shrubs,
778 and sometimes medicinal plants also. In the middle of this quasi-circular shrine images usually made of laterite after specified shapes are arranged in certain established methods and a passage is opened to the seat of these images from outside. This spot is so scrupulously reserved, that not even domestic animals are allowed to stray therein. No trees from the place are to be felled down, nor any plant whatever for that matter with any metal or more particularly iron weapons; for these are unholy things, the introduction alone of which inside the sanctified area, not to say the actual cutting down of the tree, is regarded as exceedingly distasteful to these serpent gods. They [564] are not to be desecrated by the touch or even by the approach of [793] a low-caste man. Once in every year at least poojah offerings are made to these gods through the medium of the Numbûdri [782] priests.

"Periodical ceremonies called Pāmbantullel are performed to
796 propitiate them. These are resorted to only on special occasions
776 for the purpose of averting serious visitations from the family.
782 The ceremony is a long complicated process. Any individual drawn from among the Nairs themselves is capable of acting the part of priests on these occasions. A day is fixed for the opening of the ceremony; and a particular plot of ground in the house yard is cleansed and preserved for the performance of the poojahs [532] incidental to the ceremony. Then on the spot certain square figures are drawn, one inside another, and these are tastefully diversified by the interpolation of circular figures and others inside and about them, based on geometrical principles. A peculiar symmetry is observed in the matter of these figures. The figures used in the drawings are usually of various colours, red, white, black and others. Ordinary rice-flour, then again such flour mixed with a combination of chunnam and turmeric powder, thereby making the flour pure red, and burnt paddy husk are chiefly employed. Then a number of other accessories are also required for the ceremony in the shape of lamps, cocoanuts, eatables of various sorts prepared from paddy and rice and some other cooked things, such as rice, bread made of rice, and others. [533] These are properly arranged in the place and poojah is offered by the priest with the slow recitation of *mantrams*, and some holy songs or ballads in memory of these gods. Then a number of Nair women, with perfect purity and cleanliness of person are seated close to each other in a row or two. These women are to preserve sanctity and purity of their persons by a total abstinence from animal food, intoxicants and anything else of an exciting nature for a prescribed period of time; and it is only after the lapse of this period that they become worthy of being admitted to

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

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by the big cadjan umbrellas of the female inmates of the Illam. On the third day the door is opened, and whatever remains in the vessel of the dough and milk placed there is thrown into a tank as unfit for human use. The mixing up of noorum palum and the performing of the poojahs are done by the eldest female member of the Illam. The noorum palum is made of rice-flour, saffron powder, cow's milk, water of the tender cocoanut, fruit of the Kadali plantain, and ghee. In the Nálukettu of the house, offerings of noorum palum and cooked rice, as well as kuruthi (a red liquid composed of flour, saffron and chunam), take place every Ayilyam (star) day. Every morning the king and queen of serpents are washed, and an offering of fruit and milk is made to them; in the noon offerings of Vellanivedyam (cooked rice) and afterwards of fried grain (malar) follow. During the month of Kartika, a special poojah called navakom and offering of noorum palum are daily observed. On the Sivarátri day, in the month of Másí, the customary five poojahs and navakom are performed, and in the evening of the same day sacrificial offerings to the serpents and kuruti, as stated above, are made, and at the conclusion of the day's poojahs the idols are taken in procession round the temple. On Ayilyam (star) days, in the months of Purattási and Alpasi, all the serpent idols in the grove and the temples therein are taken in procession to the Illam, and offerings of noorum palum, kuruti and cooked rice are made there in propitiation of the serpent gods. The person who carries the idol of the Nágarája is the eldest female member of the Illam, and the procession is conducted with great pomp and rejoicings. According to my informant, the eldest female member of the house, though married, is expected to lead a celibate life when she becomes the oldest female in the family. During the festive days at Mannārsāla, about 5,000 people assemble to worship and propitiate the serpent gods, and their offerings include gold and silver coins, and gold, silver, copper or stone effigies of snakes, grains of all kinds, pepper, salt, saffron, tender cocoanuts, bunches of Kadali plantain, melons, oil, ghee, sandalwood, silk and other pilgrims. On the day previous to the Ayilyam ceremonial, about two or three thousand Brahmans are fed. The annual expense of this institution and worship at Mannārsāla is estimated at about 2,000 rupees. The kâvu has its own paddy fields and gardens, from the revenues of which it is maintained.

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THE ÔNAM FESTIVAL.

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The popular festival of Malabar is the Ônam, occurring in the last days of August or early in September. [43] It is the great occasion for general rejoicing, when every one gives and receives presents, when the children are to be seen roaming everywhere gathering flowers, to make the flower carpets which are a distinctive feature of this happy season. For the Ônam is not merely a one-day festival. It lasts three days at least, and the ten days preceding it are occupied in preparations and in games—Ônam games. A writer (a Malayali evidently), in the "Calcutta Review" for January 1899, thus describes the Ônam season:—

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"There are a great many of these Ônam ballads; but most of them are of a piece with the specimen given. It is a delight to hear them chanted in the early morning hours by bands of light-hearted children with clear bell-like voices;—

Chembil house maiden, little maiden,
What did he give you who yesterday came?
A new dress he gave me, a small dress he gave me,
A lounge likewise on which to recline,
A tank to disport in, a well to draw water from, a compound
To gambol in, a big field to sing in.
Freshen up flowers, oh freshen for me.
On the south and the north shore, in the compound of Kannan, there grew up and flourished a thumba flower plant.
Out of this plant were fifty boats gotten; at the head of each boat a banyan tree grew.
From the banyan there grew a tiny little babe, and a drum and a stick for the baby to play with.
The drum and the drum-stick, the household domestic, all together they flew away and they vanished.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.
A measure and a half measure, and elephant's chains and earrings, who goes under the flower tree beneath which the elephant passes?
It is no one at all, it is no one at all; it is the Kuttikat baby god; when we went forth to pluck of ripe fruit, a mischievous urchin sprang up and bit us.
With bitten foot when we went to the Brahmin's, the Brahmin lady, we found, had been injured.
With bitten foot then we went to the house of Edathil, whose lady with fever lay stricken.
Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

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At noon of Attam day a bamboo fresh sprouted, and therewith we made us a good fish trap. 796 539

And when to the tank a fishing we went, we baited a minnow.

By its tail did we hold it, on the *bund* did we dash it, and of cocoanuts, with milk full, eighteen we ground.

With elephant pepper we dressed it; with asafœtida we filled it, right up to the elephant's head.

Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

Having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the little children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M.; and then the daily decorations begin. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers and one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. Among the flowers that contribute to the exquisite design may be named the common red, as well as the rarer variegated, lantana, the large red shoe flower *(Hibiscus rosa sinensis)* an indispensable feature of the cultivated vegetation in a Malayali's homestead, the yellow marigold, the yellow aster, the scarlet button flower, the sacred *tulsi (Ocimum sanctum)*, the wee, modest *thumber* (a vermifugal member of the Nepetæ tribe), the common *tagara* (yellow wild Cassia), the beautiful bluebell, and another common species of Cassia which the natives call the "Ônam flower." In addition, various little violet and purple wildlings that adorn the margins of rice fields, and beautiful specimens of the lily and allied orders of tropical plants are requisitioned by the weavers of these remarkably handsome, but, alas, quickly perishable, carpets. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork. This object is peculiar to the naturally well favoured province of Kéralam; and it serves to remind us that the people who possess the refined taste to produce such a pretty work of art must have long enjoyed a very high order of civilisation." 796 824

It has been noticed already under description of Nambûtiri Brahmans (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1), that the cloths given as "Ônam presents" are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sunworship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest 796 431 796

796 festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy is [132] harvested. As a rule the Ônam season is one of bright sunshine following the almost continuous rain of June, July and August.

526 I once witnessed a very interesting game called êitû 796 (êiththu), played by the Nâyars in the Southern portion of Kurumbranâd during the ten days preceding Ônam. [184] Curiously, the locality and the period are, so to speak, fixed. There is a semi-circular stop-butt, about two feet in the highest part, the centre, and sloping to the ground at each side. The players stand 25 to 30 yards before the concave side of it, one side of the players to the right, the other to the left. There is no restriction of numbers as to "sides." Each player is armed with a little bow made of bamboo about 18 inches in length, and arrows or what answer for arrows, these being no more than pieces of the midrib of the cocoanut palm leaf, roughly broken off, leaving a little bit of the leaf at one end to take the place of the feather. In the centre of the stop-butt, on the ground, is placed the target, a piece of the heart of the plantain tree, about 3 inches in diameter, pointed at the top, in which is stuck a small stick convenient for lifting the "cheppu" as the mark which is the immediate objective of the players is called. They shoot indiscriminately at the mark, and he who hits it (the little arrows shoot straight and stick in readily) carries of all the arrows lying on the ground. Each "side" strives to secure all the arrows and to deprive the other side of theirs. A sort of "beggar my neighbour." He who hits the mark *last* takes all the arrows; that is, he who hits it, and runs and touches the mark before any one else hits it. As I stood watching, it happened several times that as many as four arrows hit the mark, while the youth who had hit it first was running the 25 yards to touch the "cheppu." Before he could touch it, as many as four other arrows had struck it; and, of course, he who hit it last and touched the mark secured all the arrows for his side. The game is accompanied by much shouting, gesticulation, and laughter. Those returning after securing a large number of arrows turned somersaults, and in saltatory motions expressed their joy.

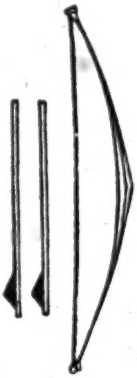

In the south-east of Malabar, in the neighbourhood of Palghat, the Ônam games are of a rougher character, the tenants of certain jenmis (landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing which would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power. We may safely assume that the "3,000 lbs. of pepper" which Alarie demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar.*

Before ending this very incomplete account of customs of the Nâyars, mention must be made of two more of these, both odd. Ever since Châraman Perumal departed from the west coast of India in A.D. 825, setting sail for Arabia and Mecca, having divided up his kingdom, His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore when ascending his throne says: "I ascend the musnud, and will rule until my uncle returns." The "uncle" is Châraman Perumal, the last sovereign of the west coast, who, having embraced the Muhammadan religion which was brought to his shores by Arab traders, proceeded to carry out a wild idea—so goes the legend—of receiving instruction from the Prophet himself! He never returned. To one princeling was given the territory now known as Travancore, and his surviving successor (through the female line of course) is the present Maharajah of Travancore. To another he gave Cochin, the ruler of which State also inherits through the female line. To the ancestor of the Zamorin of Calicut the Perumal gave no territory, as to the others, but he gave him his sword (it is still in existence) with the advice "to die and kill and annex." That he annexed is quite clear, as he was the sovereign not only of Calicut but of the country round about when modern Europeans first visited the west coast of India. Like the Maharajah of Travancore, the Zamorin repeats the formula that he rules until his uncle returns, but in his case it forms part of an elaborate and costly ceremony. The fort, which was the official residence of the Zamorin,

* See Madras Government Museum Catalogue No. 2, Roman Coins, by Mr. Edgar Thurston, Superintendent of the Museum.

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therefore one belonging to the community at large—in South Malabar, at any rate. The system of inheritance through females as it obtains amongst the Nâyars, relieves the woman from that undignified position which she occupies throughout the civilized world as the personal chattel of her husband. It gives her a relative superiority, and she carries this elsewhere. Coitus haud ita fit ut supina mulier viro morem gerat, immo etiam supino viro insidens illa, facie in eum conversâ genibusgue hic atqus illic dispositis negotium illud perficere solet. Hanc veneris figuram feminis ineundiorem, atque idcirco ab iis vindicatam esse perhibent periti. The well-known *jape* by which Iago hoped to arouse Brabantio into activity would be altogether inapplicable here.

Two more excerpts from Mr. Gopal Panniker's little book will be made, with his permission, descriptive of the other two most important national or popular festivals of Malabar.

"THE VISHU FESTIVAL.

"Vishu, like the Onam and the Thiruvathira Festivals, is a remarkable event amongst us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mêtam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day on which it falls. It is practically the Astronomical New Year's Day.* This was one of the periods when in olden days the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in Malabar under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their New Year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the said customary and time-conscerated demands was visited with royal displeasure resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The British Government finding this was a great burden pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790, a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently it is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents (explained further on) which tenants and dependants bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu.

"Being thus the commencement of a New Year, native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity in life depends upon

* See Madras Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1, pp. 57 and 58.

796 777 the nature, auspicious or otherwise, of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon on this particular morning. According to Nair and even general Hindu Mythology there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance ashes, firewood, oil and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as, reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold and such like ones on the morning of the next New Year. Whereas wholesome and favourable consequences can be produced by the sight of auspicious objects like those just enumerated. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sight-worthy objects on the New Year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known, in native phraseology, as a *kani*. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A Grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed clothe, some "unprofitably gay" flowers of the *Konna* tree, a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps filled with cocoanut oil "clear as diamond sparks" are kept intensely burning and a small plank of wood or some other seat is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house and takes them blindfolded so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the Kani. The members are seated one after another in the seat and are then and not till then asked to open their eyes and carefully look at this Kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers which they have bought [735] and stored for the occasion. The Kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the carelessly confused noise of the crackers the morning breaks and preparations are begun for the morning [264] meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice-kanji with a [262] grand appendage of other eatable substances and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on grand scales.

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"Immediately the day dawns the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household and to wives and children, money-presents varying from 4 as. to a rupee or two. Children preserve these presents to serve as their pocket money. In the more numerically large families similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. These presents are intended to be the forerunners of incomes to them more splendid all the year round.

"But one other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities with some other accessories to the family-workmen, whether they live on the family-estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals, &c., in ways such as their respective circumstances might permit.

"With the close of the noon-meal the festival practically concludes, and nothing remains of it for the next day or for the same evening, for that matter. In some families after the noon-meals are over, dancing and games of various kinds are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

"THE THIRUVATHÎRA FESTIVAL.

"Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayalam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kamadevan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Puranas, Kamadevan was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our Divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed as having only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive amongst us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about 4 in the morning every young female member of Nair families with pretensions to decency, gets out of her bed and takes her bath in a tank. Usually, a fairly large number of these young ladies collect themselves in

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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796 the tank for the purpose. Then all or almost all of these plunge
533 in the water and begin to take part in the singing that is pre-
[515] sently to follow. One of these then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction and struck against its surface. So that the water is completely ruffled and is splashed in all directions producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound and then the leader stops a while for the others to follow her in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza, with another at the same time beating on the water and so on until the conclusion of the song. Then all of them make a long pause and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn when they rub themselves dry and come home to dress themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee; and sometimes with a superficial coating of antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks lower down the middle of their foreheads close to the part where the two eyebrows near one another. They also chew betel and thus redden their mouths
[526] and lips. Then they proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro, on what is usually known as an Uzhinjal.*

796 "On the festival day after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal and in the noon the family-dinner is voraciously
264 attacked; the essential and almost universal ingredients of which
262 being ordinary ripe plantain fruits and a delicious preparation
[535] of arrow-root powder purified and mixed with jaggery or sugar and also cocoanut. Then till evening dancing and merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in.

796 "The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening as they are bound
[586] to do on the Onam and Vishu occasions; failure to do which is looked upon as a step or rather the first step on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separation or divorce from the
[132] wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which commonly the festival falls, heightened inevitably by the
[515] constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths and their frolics in water. The biting cold of

* A swing made of bamboo.

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else.

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar."

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight

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vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol.

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I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son.

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My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet.

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796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nddusari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
78 ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted
182 in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low-caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
881 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted'
182 bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their
831 girls to womanhood.

Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint
613 ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man. These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emo-
564 tional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-05) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

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unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home. 621

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*. [346] 621

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship). 622 [874] [576]

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends. 622 [796] [623] 622 585 626

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village 264 564 626

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241 market. All that is necessary is grown in the compound. The great difficulty of village life, effective sanitation, becomes an easy matter.

241 56 Rice cultivation is still based on serf-labour. The Pulayas were the slaves of Nāyars till nearly fifty years ago, when slavery was abolished. But the abolition of slavery has only changed the legal status of the Pulaya. He still remains a landless labourer effectively bound by his former chains, by the great social barrier of caste and the greater difficulty of poverty and ignorance. The Pulaya is an agricultural labourer and nothing else. As long as he remains attached to one family he receives certain sums of money in times of distress, pieces of cloth and food on auspicious occasions, extra payment at childbirth, etc. He loses all this for an insecure wage and a nominal freedom if he leaves his old master. The Pulayas, therefore, have mostly remained serfs in spite of the abolition of slavery.

241 In fertile districts the ordinary methods of cultivation are followed. In the less fertile parts the system of leaving the farms fallow in alternate years, or occasionally once in three years, is followed.

241 796 The harvest time is between April and May. Naturally the gayest part of the Nāyar year is in May and June. The great festivals of all the temples from one end of Malabar to another fall in this part of the year. The festival in a temple extends to ten days, but the last two days are the most important. Very seldom these festivals overlap, and therefore for two full months the Nāyars enjoy an almost uninterrupted carnival. In these places poets from the length and breadth of Malabar come to meet their confrères, artists to exhibit their work, musicians to display their art, astrologers to practise their tricks, in short anybody who has wares to exhibit or sell. No one below a Nāyar in the hierarchy of caste can go to these places. They are, of course, admitted and entertained free. In some places even the food is supplied by the temple. The greatest of all these festive occasions is the *Puram* at Trichur, in Cochin State, which falls at the end of April or the beginning of May. Then there is the *Astamay* at Vaikom a little earlier in the year.

463 [44] The Nāyars, as we noticed at the beginning, are mainly an agricultural people; but a good many of them also go into trade. There are in these days Nāyars very high in Indian commercial circles.

The educated people generally choose the learned professions. In medicine, in law, in journalism, and in public life, they have been very successful. Especially in journalism it is interesting to note that a fair percentage of the editorial staff of the papers in India, whether European or Indian, is drawn from them. The only Indian member of the Viceroy's Cabinet is a Nāyar gentleman, Sir C. Sankaran Nāyar.

434 *Distribution of Wealth, Poverty, etc.*—The distribution of wealth among the Nāyars does not show the same great inequality as among other communities of India. There are moderately rich families having an average income of £10,000 a year, but extreme poverty is unknown. This is mostly due to two reasons:

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upon with contempt. It must be noted that they live separately, having little or nothing in common with the other classes, and that the institution is dying a silent and natural death. 536 [554] [182]

Songs.—There have been very many songs current among the Nayars even from a very remote period; and they are chiefly composed and sung in honour of deities, and are mostly prayers addressed to them. A translation of these is not here attempted, for they lose much of their beauty, but the following, however, are the most important of them:— 533 [182]

Bhadrakali Páttu:—These are songs which are sung in honour of Káli, and are supposed to have been composed by the Sudras of Palghat long before the Malayalam era. Certain dramatic songs also appear to have been composed about the same time, and refer to the deities on the hills as well as to the kings of the period. They are sung in towns and villages, between Anamala and Trichur in the east, and the Walayar forests on the other side. The ancient name of these localities was Cheranad, and it was the first place to be occupied by people, when Kerala was a marshy tract. As evidence of this, remains of houses are still to be seen at the foot of the hills. In a place of such historic importance were composed and sung these songs, which are so full of the ideas of the Vedanta and Yoga philosophies, and which give a clue to the nature of the people who once lived there. There is also another variety of songs referring to *Dárikavadham*, (murder of the demon Dárikan), and they are sung by a class of men called the *Kurippans*. There are also other old songs such as the *Sásta páttu* (songs in honour of Sásta). [173] [172]

Ganapati páttu (songs in honour of Ganapati) and serpent songs:—Among the old songs, those referring to agriculture, and composed during the third century of the Malayalam era, occupy a prominent place, and the agriculturists of the northern parts of the State even to-day follow the precepts laid down in these songs. But excepting, the song commemorating the deeds of *Meppayil Kunji Othenan*, the Robinhood of North Malabar, there are no songs which sing of the deeds of brave men.

The chief festivals.—(1). *Onam*:—This is an important national festival, which falls in the second half of August or the first half of September, and is celebrated in commemoration of Mahábali, an *Asura* king, whose reign is believed 796 773

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796 to have been a period of uninterrupted peace, plenty, and pros-
773 perity. Growing jealous and apprehensive of the glory and greatness of this great king, the Dévás entreated Vishnu to quell the pride of this earthly potentate; and Vishnu, thereupon, appeared as *Vámana* (dwarf, his fifth incarnation) to request him for a plot of three feet of earth. The prayer was readily granted by the sovereign, who found to his cost that he could not satisfy him; for, large as his kingdom was, it was found to be very small when measured by the *Vámana*, who eventually placed his foot upon his head and pushed him down to the regions below. Grieved at the loss of their dear king, his subjects prayed to Vishnu to allow him to re-visit the earth once a year, and this is popularly believed to happon on the *Tiruvónam* day.

796 The festival is celebrated in honour of his re-appearance, and with it the return of happy days. It is practically confined to four days which are observed as holidays throughout Kérala, and people of all ranks from the prince to the peasant acknowledge them as such. Ten days before *Tiruvónam*, signs of the approaching festival are visible in every Nayar house, which, by its neatness and cleanliness all around, puts on a gay appearance. A portion of the front yard of the house, opposite to the store-room, is selected, and there a temporary stall of mud is put up for the royal visitor to sit upon. Flowers are strewn over it and on the night previous to the auspicious
[532] day, pyramid-shaped images of the king made of wood or clay, called *Trikkákarappan*, are placed upon it amid the deafening cheers of the members of the family who assemble at the gate to greet him. *Pujas* are daily made both in the morning and evening before the inmates take their meals, and this con-
[431] tinues up to the closing of the festival. In respectable families the festival opens with the presents of cloths by the *hiranavans* to the junior members of the family as well as to other close relations, servants, and others. This is also the occasion when tenants make gifts of curry-stuffs, chiefly banana, for the celebration of the festival, and they are often rewarded with
796 cloths and also fed. A feast is held on a large scale, all the
574 four days, while the essential element in it is the consumption of
[262] bananas or *nentranpazham*. The fruits are cut into two or three pieces, boiled in water, and are eaten alone or with *pappadam*,

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Another peculiar feature of this festival is that all the male and female members of the family sit apart at meals. By mid-day the principal meal is over, and each goes dressed in fine attire now, seeks the amusement most congenial to him. Field-games, such as hand-ball or rounders, personal combats, games of chess, dice, and cards, dancing by females, and music parties constitute the leading forms of enjoyment from morning until evening.

Hand-ball matches.—A small stick is planted at a fixed spot, and the young men divide themselves into two rival parties. A member of one party stands at the post, while the others stand away from it. The ball which is usually made of coir rope is thrown by a member of one of the opposing party, and on its being struck by the man at the post, the others attempt to catch it before the bounce or stop its onward career. If the ball hits the post, or if any member of the opposing party catches the ball before it has touched the ground, that player's turn is over. Another man takes his place and so on, until all the members of one party have had their turn. Then the rival section begins to play exactly in the same manner and under the same rules as before.

Combats are of two kinds, namely, those between single adversaries, and those held in batches. In the first, the people of one locality divide themselves into two parties. When the match is opened, the leader of one group brings forward a trained pugilist who goes into the intervening open space, between the two groups, challenging any one from the opposite camp to meet him in fair fight. A little while after, some one from the other party takes up the challenge, and then the combat begins. The victor is rewarded with presents of cloths and money by the rich and generous members of the community assembled there. The same process is continued till the close of the day. In Palghat the *Onam* games are of a rougher character; the tenants of certain landlords turn out each under their own leader and engage in sham fights in which there is much rough play.

There is also another amusement, in which a peculiar bow, formed of a strong and slightly elastic wood with a split bamboo finely polished for the string, is used. By means of a

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvâtira* :—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvâtira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Kâma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvâtira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil, seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and
[431] relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu* :—Next in importance to the two great national festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam
[777] (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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Kani with their eyes shut, and, when they are near it, are directed to open them and look at it. It is taken from house to house for the benefit of the poor. The *kāranavan* of the family gives small presents of money to the children, servants, and tenants. It is also the time honoured custom of the State that on this day the chief officials shall pay their respects to His Highness the Raja at his residence at Tripunattura, and receive presents of varying amounts. In former times, it was customary for all the subjects of the ruling princes to pay their respects to their royal masters with some new year's gifts. This custom has disappeared, and in its place small presents are made by tenants and dependents to their landlords which generally consist of cocoanut, plantains, and other curry-stuffs —intended probably as a contribution to the celebration. The day is marked by a grand feast for the members of the household as well as for the tenants and other dependents. To the Pulayans (the family workmen) are given paddy or rice, oil, etc., on the previous day to enable them to have their own celebrations.

(4). The *Dasara* or *Ayutha Puja*, called also as *Saraswati Puja*, falls in Kanni (September-October) at the autumnal equinox. It is a festival observed in honour of the Goddess *Saraswati*, and every man worships on the last day the implements of his craft and keeps the day a holiday. It is a nine day's festival and is called *Navaratri*.

(5). *Sivaratri*, which falls in Kumbham (February-March), is also an important festival which is observed in common with the members of other higher castes.

Important local festivals.—Of the festivals connected with the temples of the State, the most important is the cock-festival (Bharani) at the Cranganore Kali temple, an account of which is given in my notes on the Valans.[1]

In addition to the *Utsavams* (festivals) held once a year in all important temples in the State, there are other popular festivals such as the *Pūrams* at Arattupuzha and Trichur, and the *Kongapada* at Chittur. A short account of the latter is given in the following pages.

The Kongapada festival of Chittur.

The name signifies 'war with Kongan'. The festival falls on the Monday succeeding the Wednesday which immediately follows the new moon in the month of Kumbham (February-March) every year. It will

1. Vide Vol. I, page 278.

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A PARTY OF NAYARS: TIMING ON BOWSTRINGS DURING ONAM FESTIVAL.

[facing p. 71]

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796 184 come off, therefore, either in the latter part of Kumbham or in the former part of the next following month of Meenam according as the new moon in Kumbham occurs earlier or 796 later. The festival is said to be celebrated in commemora- 184 tion of the victory obtained by the local deity, Bhadrakali, 773 widely known by the local designation of Chittur Bhagavati, 776 in a battle fought with the Kongans, the people of what was known in ancient days as the 'Kongu Desam' comprising the localities included in the present British District of Coimbatore, and lying to the north and east of the Chittur Taluk. The final engagement was fought in the eastern out-skirts of the present town of Chittur, and in it the Kongu chief called in the old songs by the simple name of 'Kongan' was slain by the Goddess with her own hand. The place of engagement is now marked by a small extent of rocky surface, on which is cut the figure of the Bhagavati's sword with which Kongan's head was cut off. The rock also shows two holes nearly a foot in depth, and six inches in diameter. These holes are pointed out by old people as having been made by the hoofs of the fore-legs of the Kongan's mount, which is described as a magnificent buff-bull, when the animal jumped on to the rock in the excitement caused by the fall of its master from its back slain by the Goddess. The buff-bull was also slain on the spot. The whole of the Kongu army was completely routed, and all stampeded to their country in utter confusion. In the course of the battle a few men on the side of the Bhagavati were also killed or wounded, among whom were four important persons belonging to four ancient families in Chittur, who appear to have been the leaders of the local militia. The dead bodies of these four and the wounded were taken from the field of battle and carried to the town and handed over to the respective families, the procession being led by the Goddess, who afterwards commanded the people to celebrate the victory every year, and after 173 entering the temple disappeared into her image within. Tra- 796 dition speaks thus of the origin of the war. The wealth of the 184 'Kongu Desom' chiefly consisted of chillies, turmeric, corian- [439] der, cumin seed, mustard, areca nut, etc. These commodities used to be exported for sale, in return for paddy, from Kongu [492] Desom to Chittur, Palghat, and other places in large quantities

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laden on the backs of mules, asses, bullocks and buffaloes. 796 When once a large caravansary of Kongu laden with such com- 184 modities was passing through Chittur, the people of the four [439] *desams* of Chittur, *viz.*, Chittur, Nallepilli, Tattamangalam, [492] and Pattancheri, robbed the Kongans of all their animals and goods. The chief of Kongu, on receiving the information, naturally felt indignant, and despatched an ultimatum to the *Pramánakkars* of Chittur, demanding the surrender of the animals and the articles, failing which, it was said, he would overrun the four *desams*, destroy the houses, and kill all people even including women and children. On receiving the ultimatum, the people went to the temple of the Goddess, and there read the document before the image of the Goddess. It was so read by a member of the Chittedath house, in whose custody, it is said, the original document, written in a copper plate, is still preserved. The reading of the ultimatum, transcribed in a piece of cadjan, before the Bhagavati, is one of the essential functions performed on the night of the Kongapada festival every year, and it is always done by a member of the Chittedath family, who dresses himself up in the fashion of a Kongan and acts the part of the Kongu chief. When the document [776] was read and the people prayed to their Goddess in one voice for protection, the Goddess commanded from within the temple that her 'children' need not fear and that when the Kongan took steps to enforce his ultimatum, she would protect them. On receiving no reply to the ultimatum, the Kongan mobilized his men and crossed the Walayar river, the northern boundary of the Chittur Taluk. The information about the crossing of the [314] boundary was first carried to the Chitturians by the Izhuvans [273] of the vicinity, who were up the palmyra trees early in the morning for the purpose of tapping for toddy, and they in a body climbed down the trees, and without removing their breast protecting leather straps, tapping knives, mallets and ladders, ran to the four *desams* all in excitement. In view [564] of the above fact, the advance portion of the day procession of the Kongapada festival is even to this day made up of a number of persons, mostly of the Chetti caste, belonging to the four *desams*, dressed up in the full toddy-tapping kit of the Izhuvans. They do so every year in pursuance of religi- [782] ous vows made by them for the attainment of particular

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796 objects, such as recovery from illness, success in litigation,
184 birth of children, etc.

[782] When the information of the crossing of the Walayar by the chief of Kongu was communicated to the people of the four *desams* by the Izhuvans, they repaired to the temple in excitement and consternation, when Lo! the temple gates opened of themselves and a beautiful female form dressed in full battle armour, brandishing a shining sword and shedding a resplendent divine light, suddenly emerged out of the image within and marched off direct to meet the advancing army of the Kongan, followed by all the brave men among the people. The battle was fought with the result already mentioned. This battle is enacted on the night of the Konga-
796 184 pada festival as one of its essential functions, accompanied by the beating of numerous Pariah drums, blowing of horns, racing of horses, torch-light processions, besides, of course, the usual mischief-making among the youngsters, but the elders generally control them and stop excesses. In the course of the sham fight, some act as the wounded, some even as the dead and fall down on the field of action. These dead and wounded are immediately taken up and carried by the youngsters to their supposed respective houses in the town accompanied with torch-lights, beating of drums, beating of breasts, and crying and weeping. No outsider is allowed to take part in this sacred function. If an outsider, being possessed with any sudden fit of enthusiasm, attempts to take part in this function, 'woe be to him.' This battle function takes place at about 10 o'clock in the night and lasts for two or three hours. At the end of it, the night procession of the festival begins from the battle-field and moves through the Nayar quarters to the temple, where it reaches just before day-break, when there is a display of fireworks. After day-break, the chief of the place or *Náduvázhi* represented by the Chambath house, accompanied by the people, go to the Goddess' temple to offer prayers of love and gratitude to the Bhagavati. The festival is wound up by a performance on the following night called '*Devendra pallu*' in which all the "one hundred Nayars"[1] of Chittur are

[101] [174] 1. The Nayar community of Chittur is collectively called by the name of "Chittur Nooru Nayar." It shows that the original village organisation of Chittur consisted of one hundred Nayar houses or families. Although there is a considerable increase in the number of Nayar houses at present, the appellation 'Nooru Nayar' is still used.

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supposed to take part under the supervision and guidance of the Srikandath Panikkar, whose family is the military instructor and leader of the people of Chittur. The Panikkar's duty is to train the youths of the 100 houses in the military arts. The performance referred to is, more or less, an exhibition of the bodily prowess of the youths trained by the Panikkar, and at the end of it he receives presents from the *Nâduvizhi* and one hundred fanoms—one fanom for each house—from his pupils. The amount of one hundred fanoms is still paid to him every year, and is defrayed out of the collection made for the Kongapada festival for which the Panikkar's family is exempted from the payment of all subscriptions. The training of the youths of the place is begun a few weeks before the Kongapada festival in the *kalari* (military gymnasium) of the Srikandath Panikkar, and the Panikkar takes a prominent part in all the functions connected with the festival from beginning to end.

The "Pana" festival of Chittur.

Once in a few years and commencing on an auspicious day after *Vishu*, this ceremony is performed on a grand scale, in which the Nayars of the town (one male member from almost every house) organised themselves into parties, one party for singing songs in praise of the Goddess Bhagavati, another for dancing before her, and the third for playing on musical instruments. These men have, during this period, to bathe early in the morning, cook their own food and remain under a vow to be ever in devotion to the deity. Preliminary to the celebration of the actual festival, which sometimes run for a number of days, the men are given 41 days' training in the several courses of dancing in the Porayattu family house, one of the four *Pramânakkars* (leading members) of the place, and the final performance takes place in the Pokkumarath house.

In the court-yard of the latter house a large pandal supported on 64 posts, is put, up and in its middle is drawn a floral diagram (*padmam*) over which a lighted brass lamp, and in front of it a stool, are placed with a metal pot of water surmounted by a full pod of cocoanut flowers and a washed cloth arranged in the form of a beautiful crown. The Goddess, who is supposed to be located therein by means of holy *mantrams*, is propitiated every night between 9 and 12 P. M., with offerings and *pujas*, to the accompaniment of drumming, singing,

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velicha-* [789] *pad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which

Agricultural ceremonies.

[787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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776 [782] the malignant propensities of those spirits. The most popular of the festivals is the *Mandalam*, which begins on the first of 796 Vrischigam (middle of November) and lasts for forty-one days. 776 In addition to the daily *pújas* to the image of Bhagavati by Brahman priests, special rites and ceremonies (*Kúlamezhuthum Pattum*) are also performed by a particular class of Sudras to the figure of the goddess made on the floor by means of 776 coloured powders, while the devotees sing songs in her praise 796 to the accompaniment of lute-like musical instruments. A [534] man in a fantastic dress with an array of jingling bells round [532] his loins, heavy sounding bell-metal anklets on each foot and a scythe-shaped sword in his hand impersonates the goddess and dances to the sound of tom-toms round the figure of the god- [785] dess Bhadrakáli on the floor. The *Velichapád*, as he is called, [787] becomes highly excited and in his frenzy sometimes even cuts his forehead and causes it to bleed. He speaks, or rather the deity speaks through him, in broken yet commanding tones wholly unlike his own and makes oracular responses to the enquiries addressed to him.

796 On a night in the latter part of the month of Dhanu (early 776 in January), a golden image of the goddess is placed on the back [532] of a big decorated elephant, and, amidst the beating of drums, [788] the firing of pop-guns and crackers, is taken out in procession. [231] The elephant with the goddess is supported on each side by elephants whose numbers vary according to the means of the [791] villagers. The *Velichapád* is indispensable and is accompanied by a group of well-dressed women and girls, each carrying in her hand a plate (*Idlam*) full of rice and a light placed on the [782] top of it. The festival ends with a display of fire-works, and the ceremony closes with the sacrifice of goats or fowls. On the same principle but on different lines are celebrated various propitiatory and sacrificial festivals in honour of the other [782] aforesaid deities. Generally, after the harvests, the *Velichapáds* are taken out in procession to the Hindu houses in each village to receive offerings of a measure of paddy and small coins.

776 *Sásta* or *Ayyappan*.—According to Keralólpathi, Parasu- 778 rama with the object of protecting the newly created country (Kérala) is said to have established many temples and dedicat- [788] ed them to this deity. The most important of these is at Sabarimala in the Chengannur Taluk of Travancore, which

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A VELICHAPADU

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
[789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
[783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil
[753] Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
[793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
225 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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the caste or the grown-up women cook and serve the food to the inmates who sit in the dining hall with their own dishes or with plantain leaves placed before them. In ordinary and poor families the cooking and serving are done by women alone.

In grand festivities in which food is served to a large number of the caste-men, the preparations are similar to those served at Brahman feasts, a full account of which will be given when I deal with them.

Social status.

The Nayars rank below the Ambalavásis and above the polluting castes. Even among themselves there are various grades of social precedence, and the members of higher sub-castes do not freely mingle with those of the lower. Men of the higher sub-castes may sometimes eat with those of the lower, but their women never take their meals with those lower to them in the social scale. It is curious to note that in grand feasts and on ceremonial occasions, good many formalities have to be observed in the allocation of seats in the dining hall for guests according to their social status, and any violation of the caste rules or etiquette will end in their abruptly leaving the hall. The touch of the Nayar pollutes the Brahmans, and they themselves in turn are polluted by the touch of the low caste Sudras. The consumption of meat does not entail loss of caste, though many abstain from eating it. They may take or drink water from the wells belonging either to their own caste or the three castes above them. Elayathús are their priests, but sometimes their caste-men also officiate as such, and Nambuthiris give *punnyáham* (holy water) to the Nayars under pollution. Being in close contact with the Brahmans, they learn to conduct themselves as the Brahmans do, and their morning and evening baths and their worship in temples are as punctual as those of the priestly class.

Dress.

Clothing is of considerable hygienic importance in the life of a nation, and hygiene plays a considerable part in the dress of a Nayar. A piece of cloth, two to two-and-a-half yards long and one-and-a-half yards broad, is worn round the loins. It must touch the ground or very nearly so, and this method of wearing the cloth gives a simplicity and dignity most suitable to their classic features. A small upper garment is also worn while at home A Nayar always carries an umbrella while walking in the sun, but there is no covering for the head.

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's
advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
591 supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where
182 they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
591 the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
602 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
182 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
602 were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma, the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
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12:Peter E-5 (1939,1949)1963 AW11 Kerala
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114 *dbang Nor-pu*), who had already brought us to Kyelang from Kulu. Towards the middle of July, with some added personnel recruited from him and placed under the authority of his daughter, Dölma (*sGrol-ma*), we left for Rupchu and Ladak. (For an account of this journey, see *Chevauchée tibétaine*, by the same author, Fernand Nathan editeur, Paris, 1958.)

My first stage was the Shar Shu monastery, near Kolong, where the [192] Wazir of Lahul and his family resided. Here we attended the annual [196] masked dance of the lamas, and spent the night at Thakur Partap [535] Chand's fort-like castle. It was here, too, that I met the *goba* of the nomads of Rupchu; he was introduced to me by Mangal Chand, alias *amchi* Tashi Dawa, and I received an invitation to go to Korzok.

The next day, we continued to Patseo or Dozam (*rDo-Zam*) as it is called in Tibetan, and camped with Tsewang Norbu, chief of the Gyakar Kham-pa, and his people for a few days until we received the pack ponies and men which I had ordered from him.

This gave us the opportunity to attend the local fair and annual market here and to see for ourselves in what manner goods from the nomads further north were bought or exchanged for other products by the sedentary Lahulis. We also attended a local show given by travelling enter- [535] tainers from Spiti, in which they performed the ancient ceremony of breaking a large stone on the chest of a man.

The climb up over the Baralatcha pass (16,147 ft.) was strenuous, but we were soon over it, and travelling on the flat Lingti plain, along the banks of the Yunan river. We reached the Ser chu and then the Tsarab chu, which we forded to reach Spiti. A short distance further on, we crossed the south-eastern boundary of Kashmir, and continued our progress now through that State.

A few days later, we turned in a south-easterly direction so as to reach the shores of the lake called Tso (*mTs'ho*) Morari (this is the name on the map, but I heard locally that it should be more correctly *Moriri*), where the *goba* resided.

We arrived at our destination towards the beginning of August, not without difficulty because we had had to cross some very high passes, one of them the Lagnyal-la (20,600 ft.). Our caravan, both men and horses, suffered from the unusual altitude and, for some days, were quite unable to go on. But finally, we descended to relatively more reasonable heights and were received, some distance away from where we were going to stay, by the *goba* and his nephew. They were both relatives of the Karpa house in Lahul.

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We were taken to a camp two miles further on where we found some 114
black, yak-hair, Tibetan tents, standing, as they do, like spiders because of their strange construction. There were flocks of sheep about, as well as a few yaks (*gYag*), animals from which our present hosts, the nomads, made their living. A tent, larger than the others, proved to be that of the *goba*, and we were taken close to it and invited to put up our own tents nearby.

Very soon after our arrival, we attended a masked dance at the [792]
monastery, and the abbot himself acted the Black Hat dancer which is [796]
the principal role. There were many spectators present, all the nomads [535]
of Rupchu taking a particular and obvious pleasure in what they saw. Another day, we witnessed a ceremony called *zor* (*Zor*) in which a [796]
torma, made of the head, backbone and entrails of a goat, standing on [789]
the animal's skin, was destroyed by lamas armed with great knives, as a way of exorcising devils and evil spirits.

Then came a reception in the *goba's* tent, a festive function at which [574]
there were many guests. We were entertained with *chang*, dried meat, *tsampa*, turnips and buttered tea, and the party was a very gay one in which most of the guests, the *goba* and the abbot included, got roaring drunk.

At another reception to which we were invited at the monastery before leaving and in which all our caravaneers received coloured bits of rag as talismans from the hands of the *tulku*, I was able to inform myself about the marital customs of the nomads.

The day after the reception at the *gompa*, we left for Leh, capital of Ladak (7th August, 1938). It was a cold journey as there was frost already on the high passes, and we had three to cross before we reached lower ground near Tso Kar (*mTs'ho dKar*), "the White Lake". From here, we continued down the Gya valley, where we encountered the first houses and fields again and received our first letter in many weeks, addressed to us by the Superintendent of the Moravian Mission in Ley, the Reverend Walter Asboe. A few stages further on, we crossed the Indus near Upshi, and followed its right bank past Himis and Tikse *gompas* to Sheh, one stage before our destination.

On the 22nd August, 1938, we came to Leh in the early afternoon and were received at the entrance of the town by the Moravian Missionary, the local authorities and a crowd of Ladakis, men, women and children. We were taken past the mile long *mani* walls to the Residency in the south-westerly quarter, where we had been authorized to stay during the period of our visit to Ladak. Very soon, we met those who

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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Zin-ud-din * noticed the fact that, if a chieftain was slain, his followers attacked and obstinately persevered in ravaging the slayer's country, and killing his people till their vengeance was satisfied. This custom is doubtless that which was described so long ago as in the ninth century A.D. by two Muhammadans, whose work was translated by Renaudot (Lond., 1733). 'There are kings who, upon their accession, observe the following ceremony. A quantity of cooked rice was spread before the king, and some three or four hundred persons came of their own accord, and received each a small quantity of rice from the king's own hands after he himself had eaten some. By eating of this rice they all engage themselves to burn themselves on the day the king dies or is slain, and they punctually fulfil their promise.' Men, who devoted themselves to certain death on great occasions, were termed Amoucos by the Portuguese; and Barbosa, one of the Portuguese writers, alluded to the practice as prevalent among the Nāyars. Purchas has also the following:—'The king of Cochin hath a great number of Gentlemen, which he calleth Amocchi, and some are called Nairi: these two sorts of men esteem not their lives anything, so that it may be for the honour of the king.' The proper Malayālam term for such men was Chāver, literally those who took up, or devoted themselves to death. It was a custom of the Nāyars, which was readily adopted by the Māppillas, who also at times—as at the great Mahāmakkam, twelfth year feast, at Tirunāvāyi †—devoted themselves to death in the

* The author of Tahafat-ul-Mujahidin or hints for persons seeking the way to God, as it is frequently translated, or more literally an offering to warriors who shall fight in defence of religion against infidels. Translated by Rowlandson. London, 1833.

† See Manual of the Malabar district, 164, sq., and Fawcett, Madras Museum Bull., III, 3, 1901.

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175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
● 796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this
ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
184 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite
died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of
them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in
defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually
carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows,
arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the
kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the
kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried
governors, and with one another. They are very smart
men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . .
These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to
be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with
whom they live, and until they have been so equipped
they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats
of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for 175
that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their 868
childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction.
. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from 175
other people on their estates which are fenced in. When 564
they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they 683
may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and 175
well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to 564
know how to please men. They have a belief amongst 831
them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise."

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * 175
that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) 643
to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died 762
before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony 175
I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom 178
is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 643
796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

175 proclaimed throughout his dominion at the end of twelve
178 years, and a tent is pitched for him in a spacious plain,
643 and a great feast is celebrated for ten or twelve days with
796 mirth and jollity, guns firing night and day, so at the end of the feast any four of the guests that have a mind to gain a crown by a desperate action in fighting their way through thirty or forty thousand of his guards, and kill the Samorin in his tent, he that kills him succeeds him in his empire. In Anno 1695 one of these jubilees happened, and the tent pitched near Ponnany, a sea-port of his about fifteen leagues to the southward of Calicut. There were but three men that would venture on that desperate action, who fell on, with sword and target, among the guards, and, after they had killed and wounded many, were themselves killed. One of the desperadoes had a nephew of fifteen or sixteen years of age that kept close by his uncle in the attack on the guards, and, when he saw him fall, the youth got through the guards into the tent, and made a stroke at his Majesty's head, and had certainly dispatched him if a large brass lamp which was burning over his head had not marred the blow, but, before he could make another, he was killed by the guards, and I believe the same Samorin reigns yet."

175 It is noted by Sonnerat * that the Nāyars "are the
564 warriors; they have also the privilege of enjoying all the
683 women of their caste. Their arms, which they constantly carry, distinguish them from the other tribes. They are besides known by their insolent haughtiness. When they perceive pariahs, they call out to them, even at a great distance, to get out of their way, and, if any one of these unfortunate people approaches too near a Nair, and through inadvertence touches him, the Nair has a right

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

In a recent note, Mr. K. Kannan Nāyar writes * :588 "Almost every Nāyar officer in Government employ, [648] when applying for leave on account of the kettukalliānam of his daughter or niece, states in his application that he has to attend to the 'marriage' of the girl. The ceremony is generally mentioned as marriage even in the letters of invitation sent by Nāyar gentlemen in these days. . . 796 588 This ceremony is not intended even for the betrothal of the girl to a particular man, but is one instituted [779] under Brāhman influence as an important kriya (sacrament) antecedent to marriage, and intended, as the popular saying indicates, for dubbing the girl with the status of Amma, a woman fit to be married. The saying is Tāli-kettiu Amma āyi, which means a woman has become an Amma when her tali-tying ceremony is over."

In summing up the evidence collected by him, Mr. 588 L. Moore states † that it seems to prove beyond all reason- 178 able doubt that "from the sixteenth century at all events, 174 and up to the early portion of the nineteenth century, the relations between the sexes in families governed by marumakkattayam were of as loose a description as it is possible to imagine. The tāli-kettu kalyānam, introduced by the Brāhmans, brought about no improvement, and indeed in all probability made matters much worse by giving a quasi-religious sanction to a fictitious marriage, which bears an unpleasant resemblance to the sham marriage ceremonies performed among certain inferior castes elsewhere as a cloak for prostitution. As years passed, some time about the opening of the nineteenth century, the Kērala Mahatmyam and Keralolpathi were concocted, probably by Nambūdris, and false and pernicious doctrines as to the obligations laid on the

* Malabar Quart. Review, VII, 3, 1908. † *Op. cit.*

585 served with food, after which they are conducted to a
574 room, where betel and other chewing stuff is placed on
[276] brass or silver plates called thālam. The chewing over, sweetmeats are served, and then all go to the bridal chamber, where the women of the house and others are assembled with the bride, who, overcome with shyness,
585 hides herself behind the others. Here again the bridegroom and his party go through more chewing, while they chat with the women. After a while the men withdraw, wishing the couple all happiness, and then the women, departing one by one, leave the couple alone, one of
[431] them shutting the door from the outside. The Pattar Brāhmans always collect on these occasions, and receive small presents (dakshina) of two to four annas each, with betel leaves and areca nuts from the bridegroom, and sometimes from the bride. A few who are invited receive their dakshina in the bridal chamber, the others outside.
[513] Those of the bridegroom's party who live far away are given sleeping accommodation at the bride's house [in a Nāyar house the sleeping rooms of the men and women are at different ends of the house]. About daybreak next morning the bridegroom leaves the house with his party, leaving under his pillow 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees, according to his means, which are intended to cover the expenses of the wife's household in connection with the ceremony. The sambandham is now complete.
[591] The girl remains in her own taravad house, and her
[613] husband visits her there, coming in the evening and leaving next morning. A few days after the com-
[431] pletion of the ceremony, the senior woman of the
[796] bridegroom's house sends some cloths, including pavu mundu (superior cloths) and thorthu mundu (towels), and some oil to the bride for her use for six months. Every six months she does the same, and, at the Ōnam,

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Vishu, and Thiruvathīra festivals, she sends besides a 585
little money, areca nuts, betel and tobacco. The money [431]
sent should be 4, 8, 16, 32, or 64 rupees. Higher sums [796]
are very rarely sent. Before long, the women of the 585
husband's house express a longing for the girl-wife to be 574
brought to their house, for they have not seen her yet. [787]
Again the astrologer is requisitioned, and, on the day
he fixes, two or three of the women go to the house of
the girl, or, as they call her, Ammāyi (uncle's wife).
They are well treated, and presently bring away the girl
with them. As she is about to enter the gate-house of
her husband's taravad, the stile of which she crosses right
leg first, two or three of the women meet her, bearing a
burning lamp and a brass plate (thālam), and precede
her to the nalukattu of the house. There she is seated [788]
on a mat, and a burning lamp, a nazhi (measure) of rice,
and some plantains are placed before her. One of the
younger women takes up a plantain, and puts a piece
of it in the Ammāyi's mouth; a little ceremony called
madhuram tital, or giving the sweets for eating. She [431]
lives in her husband's house for a few days, and is then
sent back to her own with presents, bracelets, rings or
cloths, which are gifts of the senior woman of the house.
After this she is at liberty to visit her husband's house
on any day, auspicious or inauspicious. In a big taravad, 613
where there are many women, the Ammāyi does not, as 596
a rule, get much sympathy and good-will in the house- 585
hold, and, if she happens to live temporarily in her [591]
husband's house, as is sometimes, though very rarely
the case in South Malabar, and to be the wife of the
Karanavan, it is observed that she gets more than her
share of whatever good things may be going. Hence
the proverb, 'Place Ammāyi Amma on a stone, and grind
her with another stone.' A sambandham ceremony at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those who know the past, present, and future. It is due to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made bold by its means to predict even the future of his father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him, are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally believed in. In the category of good omens are placed the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf, married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey, a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient, cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans, are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad. On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, which takes place in the last week of August, or first week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merriment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

796 eighteenth century, observes that about the tenth of September the rain ceases in Malabar. All nature seems then as if renovated; the flowers again shoot up, and the trees bloom. In a word, this season is the same as that which Europeans call spring. The Ōnam festival is said, therefore, to have been instituted for the purpose of soliciting from the gods a happy and fruitful [237] year. It continues for eight days, and during that time the Indians are accustomed to adorn their houses with [825] flowers, and to daub them over with cow-dung, because the cow is a sacred animal, dedicated to the Goddess Lakshmi, the Ceres of India. On this occasion they also put on new clothes, throw away all their old earthenware, and replace it by new. Ōnam is, according to some, the annual celebration of the Malabar new year, which first began with Cheraman Perumal's departure for Mecca. But, with the majority of orthodox Hindus, it is the day of the annual visit of Mahabali to his country, which he used to govern so wisely and well before his overthrow. There is also a belief that it is Maha-Vishnu who, on Ōnam day, pays a visit to this mundane universe, for the just and proper maintenance of which he is specially responsible. In some North Malabar title-deeds and horoscopes, Mr. Logan says, the year is taken as ending with the day previous to Ōnam. This fact, he notes, is quite reconcileable with the other explanation, which alleges that the commencement of the era coincides with Perumal's departure for Arabia, if it is assumed, as is not improbable, that the day on which he sailed was Thiruvōnam day, on which acknowledgment of fealty should have been made. Ōnam, it may be observed, is a contraction of Thiruvōnam which is the asterism [824] of the second day of the festival. Throughout the festival, boys from five to fifteen years of age go out

early in the morning to gather flowers, of which the kadali is the most important. On their return, they sit in front of the tulasi (sacred basil) mandapam, make a carpet-like bed of the blossoms which they have collected, and place a clay image of Ganapati in the centre. A writer in the Calcutta Review * describes how having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M., and then the daily decoration begins. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers, and one or two varieties of foliage of different tints, are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art, accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal (booth), hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork." 796 824 [532]

"Various field sports, of which foot-ball is the chief, are indulged in during the Ônam festival. To quote Paulinus once more, the men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into parties, and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted, but exceedingly strong, and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans." 796 526 [171]

* January, 1899.

shouting, gesticulation and laughter. Those returning, 526
after securing a large number of arrows, turned somersaults, and expressed their joy in saltatory motions." In a note on this game with bows and arrows in Kurumbranad, Mr. E. F. Thomas writes that "the players form themselves into two sides, which shoot alternately at the mark. Beside the mark stand representatives of the two sides. When the mark is hit by a member of either side, on his representative shouting 'Run, man,' he runs up the lists. His object is to seize the mark before it is hit by any one belonging to the other side. If he can do this, his side takes all the arrows which have been shot, and are sticking in the stop-butt. If, on the other hand, the mark is hit by the other side before he reaches it, he may not seize the mark. A member of the other side runs up in his turn to seize the mark if possible before it is hit again by the first side. If he can do this, he takes out, not all the arrows, but only the two which are sticking in the mark. If, while number two is running, the mark is hit a third time, a member of the first side runs up, to seize the mark if possible. The rule is that one or three hits take all the arrows in the stop-butt, two or four only the arrows sticking in the mark. Great excitement is shown by all who take part in the game, which attracts a number of spectators. The game is played every fortnight by Nâyars, Tiyans, Mâppillas, and others. I am told that it is a very old one, and is dying [178]
out. I saw it at Naduvanur."

The Ônam games in the south-east of Malabar, in 796
the neighbourhood of Palghat, are said by Mr. Fawcett 526
to be of a rough character, "the tenants of certain jenmis 184
(landlords) turning out each under their own leader, and engaging in sham fights, in which there is much rough play. Here, too, is to be seen a kind of boxing, which

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would seem to be a relic of the days of the Roman pugiles using the cestus in combat. The position taken up by the combatants is much the same as that of the pugiles. The Romans were familiar with Malabar from about 30 B.C. to the decline of their power.* We may safely assume that the 3,000 lbs. of pepper, which Alaric demanded as part of the ransom of Rome when he besieged the city in the fifth century, came from Malabar." Swinging on the ūzhinjal, and dancing to the accompaniment of merry songs, are said to be characteristic amusements of the womankind during Ōnam festival, and, on the Patinaram Makam, or sixteenth day after Thiruvonam. This amusement is indulged in by both sexes. It is noted by Mr. Fawcett that "the cloths given as Ōnam presents are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sun-worship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest festival, about the time when the first crop of paddy (rice) is harvested."

Concerning another important festival in Malabar, the Thiruvathira, Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar writes as follows.† "Thiruvathira is one of the three great national occasions of Malabar. It generally comes off in the Malayālam month of Dhanu (December or January) on the day called the Thiruvathira day. It is essentially a festival in which females are almost exclusively concerned, and lasts for but a single day. The popular conception of it is that it is in commemoration of the death of Kāmadēvan, the Cupid of our national mythology. As recorded in the old Purānas, Kāmadēvan

* See Thurston. Catalogue of Roman, etc., Coins, Madras Government Museum, 2nd ed., 1894.

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

796 [776] [773]

was destroyed in the burning fire of the third eye of Siva, one of the chief members of our divine Trinity. Hence he is now supposed to have only an ideal or rather spiritual existence, and thus he exerts a powerful influence upon the lower passions of human nature. The memory of this unhappy tragedy is still kept alive among us, particularly the female section, by means of the annual celebration of this important festival. About a week before the day, the festival practically opens. At about four in the morning, every young female of Nair families with pretensions to decency gets out of bed, and takes her bath in a tank. Usually a fairly large number of these young ladies collect at the tank for the purpose. Then all, or almost all of them, plunge in the water, and begin to take part in the singing that is presently to follow. One of them then leads off by means of a peculiar rhythmic song, chiefly pertaining to Cupid. This singing is simultaneously accompanied by a curious sound produced with her hand on the water. The palm of the left hand is closed, and kept immediately underneath the surface of the water. Then the palm of the other is forcibly brought down in a slanting direction, and struck against its surface, so that the water is completely ruffled, and is splashed in all directions, producing a loud deep noise. This process is continuously prolonged, together with the singing. One stanza is now over along with the sound, and then the leader stops awhile for the others to follow in her wake. This being likewise over, she caps her first stanza with another, at the same time beating on the water, and so on until the conclusion of the song. All of them make a long pause, and then begin another. The process goes on until the peep of dawn, when they rub themselves dry, and come home to dress

796 themselves in the neatest and grandest possible attire. [302] They also darken the fringes of their eyelids with a sticky preparation of soot mixed up with a little oil or ghee, and sometimes with a superficial coating of [276] antimony powder. They also wear white, black, or red marks down the middle of their foreheads. They also chew betel, and thus redden their mouths and lips. [526] They then proceed to the enjoyment of another prominent item of pleasure, viz., swinging to and fro on what is usually known as an uzhinjal, or swing made [262] of bamboo. On the festival day, after the morning bath is over, they take a light meal, and in the noon the family dinner is voraciously attacked, the essential and almost universal ingredients being ordinary ripe plantain fruits, and a delicious preparation of arrowroot powder purified and mixed with jaggery (crude sugar) or sugar, and also cocoanut. Then, till evening, dancing and [593] merry-making are ceaselessly indulged in. The husband population are inexcusably required to be present in the wives' houses before evening, as they are bound to do on [586] the Ōnam and Vishu occasions. Failure to do this is looked upon as a step, or rather the first step, on the part of the defaulting husband towards a final separa- [132] tion or divorce from the wife. Despite the rigour of the bleak December season during which the festival commonly falls, heightened inevitably by the constant blowing of the cold east wind upon their moistened frames, these lusty maidens derive considerable pleasure from their early baths, and their frolics in the water. The biting cold of the season, which makes their persons shiver and quiver, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. The two items described above, viz., the swinging and beating of the water, have each their own distinctive

significance. The former typifies the attempt which 796
these maidens make in order to hang themselves on [776]
these instruments, and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity Kāmadēvan. The beating on the water symbolises their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death."

Yet another important festival, Vishu, is thus described by Mr. Gopal Panikkar. "Vishu, like the Ōnam and Thiruvathira festivals, is a remarkable event among us. Its duration is limited to one day. The 1st of Mētam (some day in April) is the unchangeable day, on which it falls. It is practically the astronomical new year's day. This was one of the periods when, in olden 796
days, the subjects of ruling princes or authorities in 651
Malabar, under whom their lots were cast, were expected to bring their new year's offerings to such princes. Failure to comply with the customary and time-consecrated demands was visited with royal displeasure, resulting in manifold varieties of oppression. The [648]
British Government, finding this was a great burden, pressing rather heavily upon the people, obtained as far back as 1790 a binding promise from those Native Princes that such exactions of presents from the people should be discontinued thereafter. Consequently the [178]
festival is now shorn of much of its ancient sanctity and splendour. But suggestive survivals of the same are still to be found in the presents, which tenants and dependents bring to leading families on the day previous to the Vishu. Being the commencement of a new year, 796
native superstition surrounds it with a peculiar solemn importance. It is believed that a man's whole prosperity [777]
in life depends upon the nature, auspicious or otherwise, [787]
of the first things that he happens to fix his eyes upon

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on this particular morning. According to Nair, and even general Hindu mythology, there are certain objects which possess an inherent inauspicious character. For instance, ashes, firewood, oil, and a lot of similar objects are inauspicious ones, which will render him who chances to notice them first fare badly in life for the whole year, and their obnoxious effects will be removed only on his seeing holy things, such as reigning princes, oxen, cows, gold, and such like, on the morning of the next new year. The effects of the sight of these various materials are said to apply even to the attainment of objects by a man starting on a special errand, who happens for the first time to look at them after starting. However, with this view, almost every family religiously takes care to prepare the most sightworthy objects on the new year morning. Therefore, on the previous night they prepare what is known as a kani. A small circular bell-metal vessel is taken, and some holy objects are systematically arranged inside it. A grandha or old book made of palmyra leaves, a gold ornament, a new-washed cloth, some 'unprofitably gay' flowers of the konna tree (*Cassia Fistula*), a measure of rice, a so-called looking-glass made of bell-metal, and a few other things, are all tastefully arranged in the vessel, and placed in a prominent room inside the house. On either side of this vessel two brass or bell-metal lamps, filled with cocoanut oil clear as diamond sparks, are kept burning, and a small plank of wood, or some other seat, is placed in front of it. At about 5 o'clock in the morning of the day, some one who has got up first wakes up the inmates, both male and female, of the house, and takes them blindfolded, so that they may not gaze at anything else, to the seat near the kani. The members are seated, one after another, in the seat, and

are then, and not till then, asked to open their eyes, and carefully look at the kani. Then each is made to look at some venerable member of the house, or sometimes a stranger even. This over, the little playful urchins of the house begin to fire small crackers, which they have bought and stored for the occasion. The kani is then taken round the place from house to house for the benefit of the poor families, which cannot afford to prepare such a costly adornment. With the close of the noise of the crackers, the morning breaks, and preparations are begun for the morning meal. This meal is in some parts confined to rice kanji (gruel) with a grand appendage of other eatable substances, and in others to ordinary rice and its accompaniments, but in either case on a grand scale. Immediately the day dawns, the heads of the families give to almost all the junior members and servants of the household, and to wives and children, money presents to serve as their pocket-money. In the more numerically large families, similar presents are also made by the heads of particular branches of the same family to their juniors, children, wives and servants. One other item connected with the festival deserves mention. On the evening of the previous day, about four or five o'clock, most well-to-do families distribute paddy or rice, as the case may be, in varying quantities, and some other accessories to the family workmen, whether they live on the family estates or not. In return for this, these labourers bring with them for presentation the fruits of their own labours, such as vegetables of divers sorts, cocoanut oil, jaggery, plantains, pumpkins, cucumbers, brinjals (fruit of *Solanum Melongena*), etc., according as their respective circumstances permit. With the close of the midday meal the festival practically concludes. In some families, after

796 In some families, after
526 the meal is over, dancing and games of various kinds
535 are carried on, which contribute to the enhancement of
[524] the pleasantries incidental to the festival. As on other prominent occasions, card-playing and other games are also resorted to."

264 On the subject of religion, Mr. Fawcett writes as
515 follows. "No Nāyar, unless one utterly degraded by the exigencies of a Government office, would eat his
782 food without having bathed and changed his cloth. It
783 is a rule seldom broken that every Nāyar goes to the
[512] temple to pray at least once a day after having bathed;
[564] generally twice a day. The mere approach anywhere near his vicinity of a Cheruman, a Pulayan, or any inferior being, even a Tiyan, as he walks to his house from the temple, cleansed in body and mind, his marks newly set on his forehead with sandal-wood paste, is pollution, and he must turn and bathe again ere he
[683] can enter his house and eat. Buchanan tells us that in his time, about a century ago, the man of inferior caste thus approaching a Nāyar would be cut down instantly
[656] with a sword; there would be no words. Now that the people of India are inconvenienced with an Arms
[671] Act which inhibits sword play of this kind, and with a
[178] law system under which high and low are rated alike, the Nāyar has to content himself with an imperious grunt-like shout for the way to be cleared for him as he stalks on imperturbed. His arrogance is not diminished, but he cannot now show it in quite the same way.

796 "I will attempt a description of the ceremonial
[773] observed at the Pishāri kāvu—the Pishāri temple near Quilandy on the coast 15 miles north of Calicut, where Bhagavati is supposed in vague legend to have slain an Āsura or gigantic ogre, in commemoration of which

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event the festival is held yearly to Bhagavati and her [796] followers. The festival lasts for seven days. When I [773] visited it in 1895, the last day was on the 31st of March. Before daybreak of the first day, the ordinary temple priest, a Mūssad, will leave the temple after having swept it and made it clean; and (also before daybreak) [793] five Nambūtiris will enter it, bearing with them sudhi kalasam. The kalasam is on this occasion made of the [237] five products of the cow (panchagavyam), together with [779] some water, a few leaves of the banyan tree, and darbha grass, all in one vessel. Before being brought to the [789] temple, mantrams or magic verses will have been said over it. The contents of the vessel are sprinkled all about the temple, and a little is put in the well, thus purifying the temple and the well. The Nambūtiris [793] will then perform the usual morning worship, and, either immediately after it or very soon afterwards, they leave the temple, and the Mūssad returns and resumes his office. The temple belongs to four taravāds, and no [613] sooner has it been purified than the Kāranavans of [783] these four taravāds, virtually the joint-owners of the temple (known as Urālas) present to the temple servant (Pishārodi) the silver flag of the temple, which has been in the custody of one of them since the last festival. The Pishārodi receives it, and hoists it in front of the temple (to the east), thus signifying that the festival has begun. While this is being done, emphasis and grandeur [411] is given to the occasion by the firing off of miniature [201] mortars such as are common at all South Indian festivals. After the flag is hoisted, there are hoisted all round the temple small flags of coloured cloth. For the next [788] few days there is nothing particular to be done beyond the procession morning, noon, and night; the image of Bhagavati being carried on an elephant to an orchestra

796 of drums, and cannonade of the little mortars. All those who are present are supposed to be fed from the temple. [564] There is a large crowd. On the morning of the fifth day, a man of the washerman (Vannān) caste will [203] announce to the neighbours by beat of tom-tom that [788] there will be a procession of Bhagavati issuing from the gates of the temple, and passing round about. Like all 794 those who are in any way connected with the temple, 796 this man's office is hereditary, and he lives to a small 564 extent on the bounty of the temple, *i.e.*, he holds a little [428] land on nominal terms from the temple property, in [425] consideration for which he must fulfil certain requirements for the temple, as on occasions of festivals. His office also invests him with certain rights in the community. In the afternoon of the fifth day, the Vannān and a Manūtan, the one following the other, bring two umbrellas to the temple; the former bringing one of cloth, and the latter one of cadjan (palm leaves). I am not sure whether the cloth umbrella has been in the possession of the Vannān, but think it has. At all events, when he brings it to the temple, it is in thorough repair—a condition for which he is responsible. The cadjan umbrella is a new one. Following these two as they walk solemnly, each with his umbrella, is a large crowd. There are processions of Bhagavati on the elephant encircling the temple thrice in the morning, at noon, and at night. [326] Early on the sixth day, the headman of the Mukkuvans (fishermen), who by virtue of his headship is called the Arayan, together with the blacksmith and the goldsmith, comes to the temple followed by a crowd, but accompanied by no orchestra of drums. To the Arayan is given half a sack of rice for himself and his followers. A silver umbrella belonging to the temple is handed over to him, to be used when

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he comes to the temple again in the evening. To the blacksmith is given the temple sword. The goldsmith receives the silver umbrella from the Arayan, and executes any repairs that may be needful, and, in like manner, the blacksmith looks to the sword. In the afternoon, the headman of the Tiyans, called the Tandān, comes to the temple followed by two of his castemen carrying slung on a pole over their shoulders three bunches of young cocoanuts—an appropriate offering, the Tiyans being those whose ordinary profession is climbing the cocoanut palm, drawing the toddy, securing the cocoanuts, etc. This time there will be loud drumming, and a large crowd with the Tandān, and in front of him are men dancing, imitating sword play with sticks and shields, clanging the shields, pulling at bows as if firing off imaginary arrows, the while shouting and yelling madly. Then come the blacksmith and the goldsmith with the sword. Following comes the Arayan with the silver umbrella to the accompaniment of very noisy drumming, in great state under a canopy of red cloth held lengthways by two men, one before, the other behind. The procession of Bhagavati continues throughout the night, and ceases at daybreak. These six days of the festival are called Vilākku. A word about the drumming. The number of instrumentalists increases as the festival goes on, and on the last day I counted fifty, all Nāyars. The instruments were the ordinary tom-tom, a skin stretched tight over one side of a circular wooden band, about 1½ feet in diameter and 2 or 3 inches in width, and the common long drum much narrower at the ends than in the middle; and there were (I think) a few of those narrow in the middle, something like an hour-glass cut short at both ends. They are beaten with curved drum sticks, thicker at the end held in the hand.

534 796 [533] The accuracy with which they were played on, never a wrong note although the rhythm was changed perpetually, was truly amazing. And the crescendo and diminuendo, from a perfect fury of wildness to the gentlest pianissimo, was equally astonishing, especially when we consider the fact that there was no visible 796 leader of this strange orchestra. Early on the seventh 794 and last day, when the morning procession is over, there 564 comes to the temple a man of the Pânan caste (umbrella-[293] makers and devil-dancers). He carries a small cadjan umbrella which he has made himself, adorned all round the edges with a fringe of the young leaves of the cocoanut palm. His approach is heralded and noised just as in the case of the others on the previous day. The umbrella should have a long handle, and, with it in his hand, he performs a dance before the temple. The temple is situated within a hollow square enclosure, which none in caste below the Nâyar is permitted to enter. To the north, south, east, and west, there is a level entrance into the hollow square, and beyond this entrance no man of inferior caste may go. The Pânan receives about 10 lbs. of raw rice for his performance. In the afternoon, a small crowd of Vettuvars come to the temple, carrying with them swords, and about ten small baskets made of cocoanut palm leaves, containing [422] salt. These baskets are carried slung on a pole. The [685] use of salt here is obscure.* I remember a case of a Nâyar's house having been plundered, the idol knocked [578] down, and salt put in the place where it should have [786] stood. The act was looked on as most insulting. The Vettuvans dance and shout in much excitement, cutting their heads with their own swords in their frenzy. Some

* The Vettuvans were once salt-makers.

of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Mūssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Māppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

796 man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

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788
demons dance before her. Gulikan is represented by 796
the Vannān and Kuttichchāttan by the Manūtan who 776
have been already mentioned, and who are under like
restrictions with the nine Tiyans. I saw poor Gulikan 796
being made up, the operation occupying five or six 776
hours or more before his appearance. I asked who 536
he was, and was told he was a devil. He looked mild 788
enough, but then his make-up had just begun. He was lying flat on the ground close by the north-east entrance of the enclosure, where presently he was to dance, a man painting his face to make it hideous and frightful. This done, the hair was dressed; large bangles were put on his arms, covering them almost completely from the shoulder to the wrist; and his head and neck were swathed and decorated. A wooden platform arrangement, from which hung a red ornamented skirt, was fastened to his hips. There was fastened to his back an elongated Prince of Wales' feathers arrangement, the top of which reached five feet above his head, and he was made to look like nothing human. Kuttichchāttan was treated in much the same manner. As the procession issues from the northern gate of the temple, where it is joined by the elephants, Gulikan stands in the northern entrance of the enclosure (which he cannot enter), facing it, and a halt is made for three minutes, while Gulikan dances. The poor old man who represented this fearful being, grotesquely terrible in his wonderful metamorphosis, must have been extremely glad when his dance was concluded, for the mere weight and uncomfortable arrangement of his paraphernalia must have been extremely exhausting. It was with difficulty that he could move at all, let alone dance. The procession passes round by east, where, at the entrance of the enclosure, Kuttichchāttan gives his

796 788 776 536 dance, round by south to the westward, and, leaving the enclosure, proceeds to a certain banyan tree, under which is a high raised platform built up with earth and stones. Preceding the procession at a distance of 796 564 788 fifty yards are the nine men of the Tiyan caste mentioned already, carrying kalasams on their heads, and a crowd of women of the same caste, each one carrying a pewter plate, larger than the plates used when encircling the fire pit, on which are rice, etc., and the burning wick as before. The plate and its contents are on this occasion, as well as before, called talapōli. I could not make out that anything in particular is done at the banyan tree, and the procession soon returns to the temple, the nine men and the Tiyan women following, [782] carrying their kalasams and talapōli. On the way, a number of cocks are given in sacrifice by people under a vow. In the procession are a number of devil-dancers, garlanded with white flowers of the pagoda tree mixed with red, jumping, gesticulating, and shouting, in an avenue of the crowd in front of the elephant bearing the sword. The person under a vow holds the cock towards one of these devil-dancers, who, never ceasing his gyrations and contortions, presently seizes its head, wrings [755] it off, and flings it high in the air. The vows which are fulfilled by this rude decapitation of cocks have been made in order to bring about cure for some ailment. The procession passes through the temple yard from west to east, and proceeds half a mile to a banyan tree, under which, like the other, there is a high raised platform. When passing by the temple, the Tiyan women empty the contents of their plates in the fire pit as before, and the nine men hand over the arrack in their kalasams to the temple servants. Let me note here the curious distribution of the rice which is heaped in the fire pit.

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Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

796 [787] in a sort of swoon, and everyone, excepting only the priests and temple servants, leaves the place as quickly as possible. The sheds which have been erected for 796 782 temporary habitation around the temple will be quickly demolished, and search will be made round about to make sure that no one remains near while the mystic rite of sacrifice is about to be done. When the whole place has been cleared, the four owners of the temple, who have stayed, hand over each a goat with a rope tied round its neck to the chief priest, and, as soon as they [793] have done so, they depart. There will remain now in the temple three Mūssads, one drummer (Marayar), and two [534] temple servants. The reason for all this secrecy seems [794] to lie in objection to let it be known generally that any sacrifice is done. I was told again and again that there was no such thing. It is a mystic secret. The Mūssad 796 789 priests repeat mantrams over the goats for an hour as a 782 preliminary to the sacrifice. Then the chief priest dons 793 a red silk cloth, and takes in his hand a chopper-like sword in shape something like a small bill-hook, while the goats are taken to a certain room within the temple. This room is rather a passage than a room, as there are to it but two walls running north and south. The goats are made to stand in turn in the middle of this room, facing to the south. The chief priest stands to the east of the goat, facing west, as he cuts off its head with the chopper. He never ceases his mantrams, and the goats never flinch—the effect of the mantrams. Several cocks are then sacrificed in the same place, and over the carcasses of goats and cocks there is sprinkled charcoal powder mixed in water (karutta gurusi) and saffron (turmeric) powder and lime-water (chukanna gurusi), the flow of mantrams never ceasing the while. The three Mūssads only see the sacrifice—a part of the rite which

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is supremely secret. Equally so is that which follows. 789
The carcass of one goat will be taken out of the temple 782
by the northern door to the north side of the temple, 793
and from this place one of the temple servants, who is blindfolded, drags it three times round the temple, the Mūssads following closely, repeating their mantrams, the drummer in front beating his drum softly with his fingers. The drummer dare not look behind him, and does not know [534] what is being done. After the third round, the drummer and the temple servant go away, and the three Mūssads cook some of the flesh of the goats and one or two of the cocks (or a part of one) with rice. This rice, when cooked, is taken to the kāvu (grove) to the north of the temple, and there the Mūssads again ply their mantrams. As each mantram is ended, a handful of saffron (turmeric) [533] powder is flung on the rice, and all the time the drummer, who by this time has returned, keeps up an obligato pianissimo with his drum, using his fingers. He faces the north, and the priests face the south. Presently the priests run (not walk) once round the temple, carrying the cooked rice, and scattering it wide as they go, repeating mantrams. They enter the temple, and remain within until daybreak. No one can leave the temple until morning comes. Before daybreak, the temple is thoroughly swept and cleaned, and then the Mūssads go out, and the five Nambūtiris again enter before sunrise, and perform the ordinary worship thrice in the day, for this day only. The next morning, the Mūssad priests return and resume their duties. Beyond noting that the 796
weirdness of the human tumult, busy in its religious 564
effusion, is on the last night enhanced by fireworks, [541]
mere description of the scene of the festival will not be attempted, and such charming adjuncts of it as the gallery of pretty Nāyar women looking on from the

796 564 [793] garden fence at the seething procession in the lane below must be left to the imagination. It will have been noticed that the Nambūtiris hold aloof from the festival; they purify the temple before and after, but no more. 796 793 577 The importance attached to the various offices of those who are attached to the temple by however slender a thread, was illustrated by a rather amusing squabble between two of the Mukkuvans, an uncle and nephew, as to which of them should receive the silver umbrella from the temple, and bear it to the house of the goldsmith to be repaired. During the festival, one of them made a rapid journey to the Zamorin (about fifty miles distant), paid some fees, and established himself as the senior who had the right to carry the umbrella.

796 184 "An important local festival is that held near Palghat, in November, in the little suburb Kalpāti inhabited entirely by Pattar Brāhmans from the east. But it is not a true Malayāli festival, and it suffices to mention its existence, for it in no way represents the religion of the Nāyar. The dragging of cars, on which are placed the images of deities, common everywhere from the temple of Jagganath at Pūri in Orissa to Cape Comorin, is quite unknown in Malabar, excepting only at Kalpāti, which is close to the eastern frontier of Malabar.

782 [131] [346] [635] [126] [532] "Near Chowghāt (Chavagāt), about 30 miles to the southward of Calicut, on the backwater, at a place called Guruvayūr, is a very important temple, the property of the Zamorin, yielding a very handsome revenue. I visited the festival on one occasion, and purchase was made of a few offerings such as are made to the temple in satisfaction of vows—a very rude representation of an infant in silver, a hand, a leg, an ulcer, a pair of eyes, and, most curious of all, a silver string which represents a man, the giver. Symbolization of the offering of self is made by

a silver string as long as the giver is tall. Goldsmiths 782
working in silver and gold are to be seen just outside the [326]
gate of the temple, ready to provide at a moment's notice the object any person intends to offer, in case he is not already in possession of his votive offering. The subject of vows can be touched on but incidentally here. A vow is made by one desiring offspring, to have his hand or leg cured, to have an ulcer cured, to fulfil any desire whatsoever, and he decides in solemn affirmation to himself to give a silver image of a child, a silver leg, and so on, in the event of his having fulfilment of his desire.

"A true Malayāli festival is that held at Kottiyūr in 996
North Malabar, in the forest at the foot of the Wynād hills rising 3,000 to 5,000 feet from the sides of the little glade where it is situated. It is held in July during the height of the monsoon rain. Though it is a festival for high and low, these do not mix at Kottiyūr. The Nāyars [564]
go first, and after a few days, the Nāyars having done, the Tiyans, and so on. A curious feature of it is that the people going to attend it are distinctly rowdy, feeling that they have a right to abuse in the vilest and filthiest terms everyone they see on the way—perhaps a few days' march. And not only do they abuse to their hearts' content in their exuberant excitement, but they use personal violence to person and property all along the road. They return like lambs. At Kottiyūr one sees [346]
a temple of Īsvara, there called Perumāl (or Perumāl Īsvara) by the people, a low thatched building forming a hollow square, in the centre of which is the shrine, which I was not permitted to see. There were some [793]
Nambūtiri priests, who came out, and entered into conversation. The festival is not held at the temple, but in the forest about a quarter of a mile distant. This spot [778]
is deemed extremely sacred and dreadful. There was,

796 778 however, no objection to myself and my companions visiting it; we were simply begged not to go. There were with us a Nāyar and a Kurichchan, and the faces of these men, when we proceeded to wade through the little river, knee-deep and about thirty yards wide, in order to reach the sacred spot, expressed anxious wonder. They dared not acompany us across. No one (excepting, of course, a Muhammadan) would go near the place, unless during the few days of the festival, when it was safe; at all other times any man going to the place is destroyed instantly. Nothing on earth would have persuaded the Nāyar or the Kurichchiyan to cross that river. Orpheus proceeding to find his Eurydice, Dante about to enter the Inferno, had not embarked on so fearful a journey. About a hundred yards beyond the stream, we came upon the sacred spot, a little glade in the forest. In the centre of the glade is a circle of piled up stones, 12 feet in diameter. In the middle of the pile of stones is a rude lingam. Running east from the circle of the lingam is a long shed, in the middle of which is a long raised platform of brick, used apparently as a place for cooking. Around the lingam there were also thatched sheds, in which the people had lodged [788] during the festival. Pilgrims going to this festival [792] carry with them offerings of some kind. Tiyans take young cocoanuts. Every one who returns brings with him a swish made of split young leaves of the cocoanut palm."

796 Of the Kottiyūr festival, the following account is 788 given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "The Nambūdiri [793] priests live in a little wayside temple at Kottiyūr, but [778] the true shrine is a quarter of a mile away in the forest across one of the feeder streams of the Valarpattanam river. For eleven months in the year, the scene is

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inconceivably desolate and dreary; but during the month 796 Edavam (May-June) upwards of 50,000 Nāyars and 788 Tiyans from all parts of Malabar throng the shrine for the twenty-eight days of the annual festival. During the rest of the year, the temple is given up to the revels of Siva and Parvati, and the impious Hindu who dares to intrude is consumed instantly to ashes. The two great ceremonies are the Neyyāttam and the Elanīrāttam, the pouring of ghee (clarified butter) and the pouring of the milk of the green cocoanut. The former is performed [564] by the Nāyars, who attend the festival first, and the latter by Tiyans. In May, all roads lead to Kottiyūr, [785] and towards the middle of the month the ghee pourers, [783] as the Nāyar pilgrims are called, who have spent the previous four weeks in fasting and purificatory rites, assemble in small shrines subordinate to the Kottiyūr temple. Thence, clad in white, and bearing each upon his head a pot of ghee, they set forth in large bodies headed by a leader. At Manattana the pilgrims from all parts of Malabar meet, and thence to Kottiyūr the procession is unbroken. However long their jour- [195] ney, the pilgrims must eat only once, and the more filthy their language, the more orthodox is their conduct. As many as five thousand pots of ghee are poured over the lingam every year. After the Neyyāttam ceremony, the Nāyars depart, and it is the turn of the Tiyans. Their preparations are similar to those of the Nāyars, and their language *en route* is even more startling. Eruvatti near Kadirūr is the place where most of them [782] assemble for their pilgrimage, and their green cocoanuts are presented gratis by the country people as an offering to the temple. The Elanīrāttam ceremony begins at midnight, and the pilgrims heap up their cocoanuts in front of the shrine continuously till the evening of the

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788 same day. Each Tiyan then marches thrice round the heap, and falls prostrate before the lingam ; and a certain Nāyar sub-caste removes the husks preparatory to the [789] spilling of the milk. The festival finally closes with a mysterious ceremony, in which ghee and mantrams play a great part, performed for two days consecutively by the presiding Nambūdiri, and Kottiyūr is then deserted for another year."

"A shrine," Mr. Fawcett continues, "to which the Malayālis, Nāyars included, resort is that of Subramania at Palni in the north-west corner of the Madura district about a week's march from the confines of Malabar near [765] Palghat. Not only are vows paid to this shrine, but men, [302] letting their hair grow for a year after their father's [782] death, proceed to have it cut there. The plate shows an ordinary Palni pilgrim. The arrangement which he 796 is carrying is called a kāvadi. There are two kinds of 788 kāvadi, a milk kāvadi containing milk, and a fish kāvadi 782 containing fish, in a pot. The vow may be made in respect of either, each being appropriate to certain circumstances. When the time comes near for the pilgrim to start for Palni, he dresses in reddish orange cloths, shoulders his kāvadi, and starts out. Together with a man ringing a bell, and perhaps one with a tom-tom, with ashes on his face, he assumes the rôle of a beggar. The well-to-do are inclined to reduce the beggar period to the minimum ; but a beggar every votary must be, and as a beggar he goes to Palni in all humbleness and humiliation, and there he fulfils his vow, leaves his kāvadi and his hair, and a small sum of money. Though the individuals about to be noticed were not Nāyars, their cases illustrate very well the religious idea of the Nāyar as expressed under certain circumstances, for between the Nāyars and these there

is in this respect little if any difference. It was at Guru- 796
vayūr in November, 1895. On a high raised platform 788
under a peepul tree were a number of people under 782
vows, bound for Palni. A boy of 14 had suffered as a child from epilepsy, and seven years ago his father vowed on his behalf that, if he were cured, he would make the pilgrimage to Palni. He wore a string of beads round his neck, and a like string on his right arm. These were in some way connected with the vow. His head was bent, and he sat motionless under his kāvadi, leaning on the bar, which, when he carried it, rested on his shoulder. He could not go to Palni until it was revealed to him in a dream when he was to start. He had waited for this dream seven years, subsisting on roots (yams, etc.), and milk—no rice. Now he had had the long-looked-for dream, and was about to start. Another pilgrim was a man wearing an oval band of 796
silver over the lower portion of the forehead, almost 788
covering his eyes; his tongue protruding beyond the 785
teeth, and kept in position by a silver skewer through it. The skewer was put in the day before, and was to be left in for forty days. He had been fasting for two years. He was much under the influence of his god, and whacking incessantly at a drum in delirious excitement. Several of the pilgrims had a handkerchief tied over the mouth, they being under a vow of silence. One [782]
poor man wore the regular instrument of silence, the mouth-lock—a wide silver band over the mouth, and a skewer piercing both cheeks. He sat patiently in a nice tent-like affair, about three feet high. People fed him with milk, etc., and he made no effort to procure food, relying merely on what was given him. The use of the mouth-lock is common with the Nāyars when they assume the pilgrim's robes and set out for Palni;

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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796 788 [785] and I have often seen many of them garbed and mouth-locked, going off on a pilgrimage to that place. Pilgrims generally go in crowds under charge of a priestly guide, one who, having made a certain number of journeys to the shrine, wears a peculiar sash and other gear. They call themselves pūjāris, and are quite *au fait* with all the ceremonial prior to the journey, as well as with the exigencies of the road. As I stood there, one of these pūjāris stood up amidst the recumbent crowd. He raised his hands towards the temple a little to the west, and then spread out his hands as if invoking a blessing on the people around him. Full of religious fervour, he was (apparently at any rate) unconscious of all but the spiritual need of his flock.

796 788 184 "Brief mention must be made of the festival held at Kodungallūr near Cranganore in the northernmost corner of the Cochin State, as it possesses some strange features peculiar to Malabar, and is much frequented by the Nāyars. I have been disappointed in obtaining particulars of the festival, so make the following excerpt from Logan's Manual of Malabar. 'It takes the people in great crowds from their homes. The whole country near the lines of march rings with the shouts "Nada-a Nada-a" of the pilgrims to the favourite shrine. Of what takes place when the pilgrims reach this spot perhaps the less said the better. In their passage up to the shrine, the cry of "Nada-a Nada-a" (march, march away) is varied by terms of unmeasured abuse levelled [195] at the goddess (a Bhagavati) of the shrine. This abusive language is supposed to be acceptable to her. On arrival at the shrine, they desecrate it in every conceivable way, believing that this too is acceptable; they throw stones and filth, howling volleys of

opprobrium at her house. The chief of the fisherman 796
caste, styled Kūli Muttatta Arayan, has the privilege of 788
being the first to begin the work of polluting the Bhoot 184
or shrine. Into other particulars it is unnecessary [564]
to enter. Cocks are slaughtered and sacrificed. The [782]
worshipper gets flowers only, and no holy water after paying his vows. Instead of water, he proceeds outside and drinks arrack or toddy, which an attendant Nāyar serves out. All castes are free to go, including Tiyars [564]
and low caste people. The temple was originally only a Bhoot or holy tree with a platform. The image in the temple is said to have been introduced only of recent years.' It is a pity Mr. Logan is so reticent. My information is that the headman of the Mukkuvans opens the festival by solemnly making a fæcal deposit on the image. Here again there is the same strange union of everything that is filthy, abusive, foul and irreverent, with every mode of expressing the deepest religious feeling."

Of the cock festival at Cranganore, the following 796
account is given by Mr. T. K. Gopal Panikkar* in his 778
interesting little book on Malabar and its folk. "In 776
the midst of its native charms is situated a temple dedicated to Kali, the goddess who presides over the infectious diseases, cholera and small-pox. She is a [753]
virgin goddess, whom no quantity of blood will satisfy. The temple is an old-fashioned one, presenting no striking architectural peculiarities. The priestly classes [564]
attached to it are not, as usual, Brāhmins, but a peculiar [795]
sect called Adigals, of whom there are but three families [793]
in the whole of Malabar. The Brāhmins are purposely excluded from participation in the poojah ceremonies,

* Malabar and its Folk, Madras, 1900.

776 lest their extreme sanctity might increase the powers
796 of the goddess to a dangerous extent. Poojahs are
778 daily offered to her. An annual festival known as the
[793] Bharani, connected with this goddess, plays a most
[782] important part in the religious history of Malabar. It comes off in the Malayalam month of Meenam (about
788 March or April). Pilgrimages undertaken to the temple
796 on this occasion are potent enough to safeguard the pilgrims, and their friends and relations, from the perilous attacks of cholera and small-pox. Hence people resort thither annually by thousands from almost all parts of Malabar; and, the more north you go, the stronger will you find the hold which the goddess has
[782] upon the popular imagination. The chief propitiatory offering on the occasion is the sacrifice of cocks. In fact, every family makes a point of undertaking this sacred mission. People arrange to start on it at an auspicious moment, on a fixed day in small isolated bodies. Preparations are made for the journey. Rice, salt, chillies, curry-stuffs, betel leaves and nuts, a little turmeric powder and pepper, and, above all, a number of cocks form an almost complete paraphernalia of the pilgrimage. These are all gathered and preserved in separate bundles inside a large
[293] bag. When the appointed hour comes, they throw this bag on their shoulders, conceal their money in their
[481] girdles, and, with a native-fashioned umbrella in the one hand and a walking-stick in the other, they start, each from his own house, to meet the brother pilgrims at the rendezvous. Here a foreman is selected practically
[533] by common consent. Then commences the vociferous recitation of that series of obscene songs and ballads, which characterises the pilgrimage all along. The foreman it is that opens the ball. He is caught up by others

in equally loud and profuse strains. This is continued 788
right up till the beginning of their homeward journey. 796
Nobody whom they come across on the way can successfully escape the coarse Billingsgate of these religious zealots. Even women are not spared. Perhaps it is in their case that the pilgrims wax all the more eloquently vulgar. A number of cock's feathers are stuck or tied upon the tip of a stick, and with this as a wand they begin to dance and pipe in a set style, which is extremely revolting to every sense of decency. Some of the pilgrims walk all the distance to the temple, while others go by boat or other conveyance; but in neither case do they spare any passer-by. Hundreds of gallons of arrack and [273]
toddy are consumed during the festival. The pilgrims reach the temple in their dirty attire. The temple premises are crowded to overflowing. The worship of 788
the goddess is then commenced. The offerings consist 796
of the sacrifice of cocks at the temple altar, turmeric 782
powder, but principally of pepper, as also some other objects of lesser importance. A particular spot inside the temple is set apart for the distribution of what is called manjal prasadam (turmeric powder on which divine blessings have been invoked). The work of doling it out is done by young maidens, who are during the process subjected to ceaseless volleys of vile and vulgar abuse. Now, leaving out of account the minor ceremonies, we come to the principal one, viz., the sacrifice of cocks. The popular idea is that the greater the number of cocks sacrificed, the greater is the efficacy of the pilgrimage. Hence men vie with one another in the number of cocks that they carry on the journey. The sacrifice is begun, and then there takes place a regular scramble for the sanctified spot reserved for this butchering ceremony. One man holds a cock by the

788 trunk, and another pulls out its neck by the head, and, in
796 the twinkling of an eye, by the intervention of a shar-
782 pened knife, the head is severed from the trunk. The blood then gushes forth in forceful and continuous jets, and is poured on a piece of granite specially reserved. Then another is similarly slaughtered, and then as many as each of the pilgrims can bring. In no length of time, the whole of the temple yard is converted into one horrible expanse of blood, rendering it too slippery to be safely walked over. The piteous cries and death throes of the poor devoted creatures greatly intensify the horror of the scene. The stench emanating from the blood mixing with the nauseating smell of arrack renders the occasion
796 all the more revolting. One other higher and more
788 acceptable kind of offering requires more than a passing
755 mention. When a man is taken ill of any infectious
782 disease, his relations generally pray to this goddess for his recovery, solemnly covenanting to perform what goes by the name of a thulabharum ceremony. This consists in placing the patient in one of the scale-pans of a huge balance, and weighing him against gold, or more generally pepper (and sometimes other substances as well), deposited in the other scale-pan. Then this weight of the substance is offered to the goddess. This is to be performed right in front of the goddess in
788 the temple yard. The usual offerings being over, the
796 homeward journey of the pilgrims is begun. Though the festival is called Bharani, yet all the pilgrims must vacate the temple on the day previous to the Bharani
[776] day. For, from that day onwards, the temple doors are all shut up, and, for the next seven days, the whole place is given over to the worst depredations of the countless demons over whom this blood-thirsty goddess holds sway. No human beings can safely remain there, lest

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. 788 In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror 796 in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, [776] all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and [783] sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respec- [431] tive homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, 526 "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time 875 when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice 564 physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in 526 a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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566 [462] work connected with the harvesting, separating the paddy from the stalks, etc. They are employed as a rule throughout the year by their masters; in leisure days however they are paid a little less than the stated wage.

[262] They take kanji (rice boiled in water) and toddy in the morning, toddy in the afternoon, cooked rice at night; they eat also fish and flesh. They behave well, are obedient and honest and loyal to their masters, very earnest about their work, but are completely illiterate. There are no schools for them in the village. [778] [796] They worship spirits in the shape of stocks and stones; and on the occasion of the festivals of their Gods and Goddesses they take a good dose of toddy and with drums and bugles and priests dance in the premises of the 'temple'.

564 There are sub-divisions among the Pulayas, Cherumas, Paraiyas, Nayadis, Malayas and others, who form separate castes among themselves and are restricted in their intercourse with one another.

[361] The Cherumas dwell in colonies of two or three families each, in low, small thatched huts near the land of their masters. It must be admitted that they are not treated properly by the high caste Hindus, though they form the backbone of agricultural labour in these parts. They are low paid and underfed and treated with contempt and sometimes with harshness by the other castes and their masters. It is a wonder that they still cherish obedience to their masters and earnestness in their work. There are a few who try to get rid of the yoke by running away, but the majority are contented and stay with their masters. They are experts in practical agricultural work and can face any sort of weather.

311 *Land and Occupation of land—*

	ACRES.
Area of wet lands	653·24
" dry lands	937·21
" lands watered by wells	...
" common waste	18·81
Pasture other than common waste	33·94
Woods and forests	1,912·35
Fruit trees and scattered shade trees ...	301·48

312 There are altogether five public tanks in the village, most of which are not used for irrigation purposes at all, but for bathing, which is done by all at least once a day. There are no public wells. The cultivation of rice solely depends on the rains of the South-West Monsoon (June—September) which are copious, and of the North-East Monsoon in November. Every house however contains a well, from which water is drawn for drinking purposes and for watering the compound gardens in the summer. Water can be obtained at a very slight depth in most parts except at the foot of the hills. The sides of the tanks, usually not very large in size, are paved step by step with granite or laterite stones by which people can step down into the water for bathing. Water is lifted from the wells by means of pots for drinking purposes, but for watering gardens lifts of various sorts are used.

406 The water wheel, which costs about Rs. 35, is very rarely used except in *kol* fields where water has to be lifted out of the land.

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Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being no openings for the same. 454

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substantial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming. 426 [691] [582] [871]

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out. 621 653

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival. 796

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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•796 beat the drums according to their 'science' for two or three hours. The figure of the God or Goddess is taken on the back of the middle elephant in the row. There is a display of fireworks at night.

794 A few temples in the village are managed by private people or Janmis, usually Nambudri Brahmans. Such temples have landed property managed by these Janmis who generally make use of the profits. Recently the Government has been trying to encroach upon the temple properties in its capacity of *melkoyma*; this is very much resented by the Nambudri Jánmis.

The common people as a rule have no part or lot in temple management or expenditure.

426 *State loans.*—Only one person in the village has borrowed from the Government a loan of Rs. 400 to be paid back in ten instalments of Rs. 40 each with interest at 5 per cent. The small landholders do not approach the Government for help; the mediocre landholders rent their land to others; while the few big ones have money of their own if they want to make any improvement. The fact is that agriculture is routine work with many people; no permanent improvements are thought of by the majority.

Sanitary condition.—Plague and tuberculosis are not heard of.
164 Malaria only affects those who resort for agricultural purposes to the foot of the hills four or five miles east from the village. Attacks of cholera frequently occur among the local Muhammadans, who are as a rule quite insanitary, poor, living in low and ill-ventilated thatched huts or hovels; one is sick of the stinking smell when one approaches their huts. The local Christians, though equally poor, are better in this respect. The houses of most of the Brahmans and the majority of the Nayars are decent. The hovels of the lower castes and working men again are poor and insanitary.
[361] As the houses are not built in rows, but separate, each having a compound big or small, epidemic diseases such as small-pox when they come at all are easily avoided. But the case is different in the quarters of the Muhammadans and Christians, who build their houses in streets.

The chief endemic diseases are fever, rheumatism, attacks of bile.

759 There are plenty of snakes in the village everywhere. One sometimes hears of deaths caused by snake-bites. There are however a few who pretend to cure snake-bites by incantations aided by medicines.

There is a Government free dispensary established in the 'town' where the Apothecary is a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. But most people resort to native (ayurvedic) physicians or vaidyans. Ayurveda, or the Hindu science of medicine, makes use of vegetable drugs both in the raw and dried state. The physician comes to your house and prescribes a certain mixture according to the directions laid down in his code which he has committed to memory in the form of verses. The drugs can be got from the market, or from a neighbouring hill, or even from one's own compound.

This science is handed down from father to son in certain families in Malabar who form even now some of the most distinguished native physicians in Malabar. Even in a petty village

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423 are sublet to the actual cultivators, who are a rack-rented peasantry. The Kanom tenant, even when he does not himself cultivate the
435 land, gets a higher return than the janmi on his capital; this is probably due to the insecurity of his tenure and his assumption of risks in relation to the actual cultivators. The renewal fees are heavy and many people contract debt to pay them. Some unscrupulous janmis or their agents arbitrarily enhance the rents payable by the Kanomdar and turn him out if he refuses to pay. The principal landlord of this village does not belong to this class.

796 The village spends between Rs. 150 and Rs. 200 annually on religious festivals. This is the common expenditure and is raised by subscription. It excludes small individual expenditures.

The village temple was built many years ago. No new one has been built.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—Malaria is unknown, but other fevers are occasionally seen. Cholera visits the village at rare intervals. Plague is unknown. Tuberculosis may be rarely met with. Small-pox also visits the village at rare intervals. From 125 to 150 out of every 1,000 children born die in their first year. Thus in 1915 while 81 children were born 10 died before completing one year. This is the figure given in the village register. It needs some correction and the figures should be slightly higher. The rate of infantile mortality varies with the seasons, etc. A few cases of snake-bites are recorded, but fatality owing to this cause is not high. I hear that sometimes the Hon'ble Moopil Nayar of Kavalappara (our representative in the Legislative Council) gives free medical help in such cases.

759 No reliable medical assistance of an effective kind is available. There are no English doctors in or near the village and few could afford to pay their fees even if they did exist. There are one or two ayurvedic physicians, whom one should more correctly call quacks.* They have no scientific knowledge and cannot properly diagnose. They take advantage of the simple credulity and superstition of the ignorant villagers and give an air of mystery to their art by the practice of superstitious rites akin to witchcraft. I believe there is much preventible disease in the village. Some remedy is badly needed. It would be a useful reform that the village officers and the village schoolmasters should know something of medicine, hygiene, and sanitation. Then they could at least instruct the villagers as to what ought not to be done in the care and treatment of the sick. There is a proposal now to found an ayurvedic college and laboratory at Shoranur, near our village. When it is accomplished a better state of things is hoped for, as the physicians would be really capable men and reliable, though practising the ayurvedic system, in which the people have faith.

273 Insanitary habits are rare. The Cherumas and other depressed
276 classes drink. Chewing of tobacco and betel is common, but this can hardly be called insanitary.

* This remark does not apply to real students and practitioners of the indigenous system of medicine, but only to the unworthy representatives of the science in the village. There is high official and non-official testimony to the real worth of ayurveda as it *ought* to be practised, and as it is practised by many learned persons all over the country.

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lage; and bow makers, each with about one to ten houses per village. Tiyyars, astrologers, washermen, and barbers had double unilineal descent: localized patrilineages with dispersed exogamous matrilineal clans. Artisans and bow makers had patrilineages only.

The polluting castes worked for each other and for the higher castes. Tiyyars held land on a sub-tenure from landlords and Nayar tenants. Astrologers and artisans gave services to the higher castes, to each other, and to the Tiyyars, who ranked above them. Barbers worked for all the higher polluting castes but not for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar barber. Washermen laundered for all the higher polluting castes but not regularly for the "good" castes, who employed the Nayar washerman. However, the low-caste washerman's lineage owed services to the "good" castes at death, menstruation, and childbirth. Bow makers served Nayars and Tiyyars. Each of the polluting castes was endogamous and interdined only within the caste.

THE LOWER POLLUTING CASTES

On the outskirts of the village, in separate small hamlets, lived the very low castes of Parayas and Pulayas. Parayas were a small caste of basket and umbrella makers. Two or three households had a village right to serve all castes above them. Pulayas were until 1850 the agricultural serfs of Nayars, temple servants, and Brahmans (Buchanan, 1807: 370–372). As highly polluting castes, Pulayas and Parayas were theoretically forbidden to approach the high castes within a distance of sixty-four feet. They might not enter the "good" area of the village or walk on the main paths.

OTHER RELIGIOUS GROUPS

Muslims, called Mappillas, were concentrated in the Zamorin's kingdom, where they followed patrilineal descent. In 1931 they formed about 15 per cent of Kerala's population. Their presence dates from the ninth century, when Arab traders began to make converts, probably mainly from the Tiyyars and the coastal caste of fishermen. From the Arabs and from these converts there sprang a flourishing trading community which increased greatly in the fourteenth century (Logan, 1951, I: 192–197). The Zamorins derived a large measure of their power from the Muslims through taxes and naval support (Ayyar, 1938: 54). Muslims lived mainly in the ports and at inland trading posts on the banks of rivers. They were partly outside the village ranking system, which had its basis in differential land rights, and were theoretically outside the Hindu religious hierarchy. Nevertheless, Muslims were in some contexts accorded a rank ritually and socially between that of Nayars and Tiyyars.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the Infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll

ponderable evil, the reputation of which is great outside its boundaries.

5. POLYANDRY IN KERALA

During my stay in Kerala, I found that the following castes practise polyandry in the state: Nayars, Thandans, and Tiyas (Thiyyas) of north Cochin, Kammalans such as Tathans (goldsmiths), Karuwans, or Perinkollam (blacksmiths), Asaris (carpenters) and Puri-asaris (laterite-cutters), Musaris (bell-metal smiths of braziers); also the allied castes to these of Kolla-kurups (shampooers, masseurs, and leather-shield makers) and Vil-kurups(bow-makers), Tol-kollans (leather workers), Kanisans (astrologers), Mannans (washermen and barbers), Panans (exorcists and umbrella-makers), Pulluvans (herbalists and *nag* worship songsters). All follow *makkathayam* except the Nayars, who are *marumakkathayam* from one end of Kerala to the other.

Today, Nayars in Kerala are said, as we have seen (p. 92), to have ceased the practice of polyandry. Not only do they say so themselves, but other castes are emphatic on this point as well. Since, with the disappearance of the petty chieftains, Nayar militias no longer exist, the customs that were closely linked to these organizations have also faded away. The Mysore invasions perhaps had something to do with it, too, for Tipu Sultan was grimly determined to eradicate the Nayar armies and made this his principal objective. In 1788, before invading Malabar, in a proclamation which was intended, among other things, to be a warning to the people, he said: ". . . and since it is the practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery; and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts in the fields: I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices and to be like the rest of mankind; and if you are disobedient to these commands, I have made repeated vows to honour the whole of you with Islam." (quoted by C. A. Innes, I.C.S. in *Malabar and Anjengo*, Madras District Gazeteers, p. 72). Many of the Moplas today, especially inland, are descendants of Nayars whom Tipu thus did "honour with Islam". They were forcibly circumcized and regaled with beef. Many, however, reconverted themselves later, but lost caste in the process and were never considered the same again.

In spite of it being said that Nayars are no longer polyandrous in Kerala, I was able to find, as I shall show further on, some families left

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

conclusions, to which I may add those observations of mine in the field that appear to me to bear out his contentions most fully. 177 [127]

In 1792, after the defeat of Tipu Sultan of Mysore by the British, the latter took over the direct administration of Malabar. As we have seen, they began by farming out the collection of revenue to the local rajas; very soon, however, they found this system unsatisfactory and took over the task themselves. A corps of British administrators was formed and put in charge of the work; from then onwards, cultural conditions in Kerala underwent a very great change. [648]

The term "Europeanism" has been used to cover all those aspects of Western foreign influence which have since then profoundly affected the local people's lives. This foreign influence has been followed since 1947 by recent reforms due to the policy of the present Congress Party Government of India, although these, too, have been inspired to a large extent by contact with the West. Today, a new force is making itself felt. Since the last elections in 1957, Kerala has been ruled by a government of the Communist Party, whose accession to power is, however, too recent for me to be able to give here any appreciation of the alterations it is seeking to impose on the State. [665]

"Europeanism" includes many varied and subtle innovations in the everyday life of the inhabitants of Kerala, some of which can be put down as gains and some of which, on the contrary, must be considered as losses. Aiyappan has attempted to establish a balance sheet of these for the Irava community (to be found on p. 126 of his book *Iravas and Culture Change*). As far as the whole of the Kerala population is concerned, it can be said that the term mainly covers such principal items as the following.

First of all, the displacement of traditional rulers and their replacement by European officials. This took place throughout the area, and only the maharajas of Cochin and of Travancore were retained; later, a resident responsible to the Madras government was attached to them. The new officials were scant respecters of caste. While obliged, by force of circumstance, to take into consideration the innumerable compartments into which native society was divided and subdivided, they nevertheless were inspired, in their dealings with the people and in their choice of assistants, by the Christian ideals of equality and individual merit, whereby they brought about a revolution in traditional methods of government. Only Islam, with the arrival of the Arab traders on the Malabar coast nearly one thousand years before, can be said to have brought anything similar to bear on the static outlook of the people; 177 631 177 [79]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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as their attendants, to carry their sword and shield 564 before them.

10. Vandikkāran.—A name, meaning cartmen, for those who supply fuel to temples, and cleanse the vessels belonging thereto.

11. Kuttina.—The only heiress of a Svarupam tarwad is said to have been a maid-servant in the Vadakketam Brāhman's house, and her daughter's tāli-kettu ceremony to have been celebrated in her master's newly-built cowshed. The bride was called kuttilachchi, or bride in a cowshed, and her descendants were named Kuttina Nāyars. They intermarry among themselves, [783] and, having no priests of their own, obtain purified water [793] from Brāhmans to remove the effects of pollution.

12. Matavar.—Also known as Puliyattu, Veliyattu, and Kāllur Nāyars. They are believed to have been good archers in former times.

13. Otatu, also called Kusa. Their occupation is to tile or thatch temples and Brāhman houses.

14. Mantalayi.—A tract of land in the Kalkulam taluk, called Mantalachchi Konam, was granted to them by the State. They are paid mourners, and attend at [765] the Trivandrum palace when a death occurs in the royal family.

15. Manigrāmam.—Believed to represent Hindu [797] recoveries from early conversion to Christianity. Manigrāmam was a portion of Cranganore, where early Christian immigrants settled.

16. Vattaykkatan, better known in Travancore as Chakala Nāyars, form in many respects the lowest sub-division. They are obliged to stand outside the sacrificial stones (balikallu) of a sanctuary, and are not allowed to take the title Pillai. Pulva is a title of distinction among them. One section of them is engaged

595 As to the present existence or non-existence of polyandry I must call recent writers into the witness-box. The Rev. S. Mateer, Mr. Fawcett writes,* "informed me ten years ago—he was speaking of polyandry among the Nāyars of Travancore—that he had 'known an instance of six brothers keeping two women, four husbands to one, and two to the other. In a case where two brothers [797] cohabited with one woman, and one was converted to Christianity, the other brother was indignant at the [177] Christian's refusal to live any longer in this condition.' I have not known an admitted instance of polyandry amongst the Nāyars of Malabar at the present day, but there is no doubt that, if it does not exist now (and I think it does here and there), it certainly did not long [564] ago." Mr. Gopal Panikkar says † that "to enforce this social edict upon the Nairs, the Brāhmans made use of the powerful weapon of their aristocratic ascendancy in the country, and the Nairs readily submitted to the Brāhman supremacy. Thus it came about that the custom of concubinage, so freely indulged in by the Brāhmans with Nair women, obtained such firm hold upon the country that it has only been strengthened by the lapse of time. At the present day there are families, especially in the interior of the district, who look upon it as an honour to be thus united with Brāhmans. But a [178] reaction has begun to take place against this feeling, and Brāhman alliances are invariably looked down upon in respectable Nair tarwads. This reactionary feeling took shape in the Malabar Marriage Act." Mr. Justice K. Narayana Marar says: "There is nothing strange or to be ashamed of in the fact that the Nāyars were originally of a stock that practiced polyandry, nor if the

* *Op cit.*

† Malabar and its Folk, 1900.

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
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there will be a specialist for diseases of children, an eye specialist, 759
an ordinary vaidyan who cures all common diseases, and a *mantravati* (hymn-chanter) who pretends to cure diseases by chanting certain hymns within himself, and who is believed in by the masses. There is also a *visha-vaidyan*, or expert in curing snake-bite, in some villages.

The Sub-Assistant Surgeons in charge of Government hospitals are, I am afraid, affected by red tape and carelessness born of security of employment and income.

In rural parts especially I am pained to note that their treatment is getting discredited, for the apothecaries take little pains to know the exact nature of the diseases of the poor persons who resort to the hospital and to prescribe proper medicines for the same. There are of course noble exceptions to this, but it is deplorable that there should be any irregularities at all in this most humane of all charities. The native vaidyans, on the other hand, have a local interest, their families living in the village for generations together and they are very keen to keep up their reputations; while the Government Surgeon is a bird of passage, who comes and goes, none of the villagers knowing whence or whither.

Malayalis, as a rule, are very clean, most of them bathe twice a 515
day; their clothes are kept neat and clean. But there is much scope for the spread of modern ideas on sanitation in very many fields. At child-birth the mother is usually kept in the worst possible room in the house. Children too might be brought up in a more sanitary environment; the education of females on these matters is a very crying necessity. It is also deplorable that Brahmans are gradually neglecting the morning-bath and exercise on which their ancestors insisted. The local Muhammadans are extremely insanitary. They are filthy, their children are filthy, their habits too are filthy.

The habit of keeping the stock very near the house should be avoided. Again except in well-to-do Nayar families kitchens are in the houses; they should be in a different building.

Among the Brahmans, a girl has to be married before the age 582
of puberty, generally 12. Among no other caste is this compulsory, [797] •
though a few people, including the Indian Christians, marry their girls before puberty. These Christians are generally converts from low caste * Hindus, and change of religion has not changed their custom in this respect.

The local Muhammadans do not, as in the east of the peninsula, 562
observe purdah; their women freely talk to any person, work for others as coolies and stir abroad. Most of them are converts from low caste Hindus, and so there is no fanaticism, nor such strict observance of the rules of Islam as elsewhere. Nayar ladies are quite free, and among them descent in the female line (Marumakkattayam) prevails. Brahman ladies (not Nambudris) can go out, and be seen by others, but they are subject to their husbands and are not allowed to speak to Brahman men, and Brahman men are not allowed to speak with the women. A newly married Brahman bride is neither allowed to see nor to speak to her husband until she actually joins her husband after the nuptials. But these

* [M. L. K. Anandakrishna Ayyar, Cochin State Anthropologist, informs me that the Syrian Christians of Cochin are mainly the descendants of converts from *high* caste Hindus.—Ed.]

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AWll Kerala AWll
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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

form of a contest between the bridegroom and the bride's 518
relatives, and which are symbolic survivals of marriage 184
by capture. The Manavālan and the girl next partake of food together in the inner pandal—a proceeding which obviously corresponds to the ceremonious first meal of a newly-married couple. The assembled guests are lavishly [574]
entertained. The chief Kovilagans and big Nāyar houses will feed 1,000 Brāhmans as well as their own relations, and spend anything up to ten or fifteen thousand rupees on the ceremony."

Concerning the tāli-kettu ceremony in Travancore Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes as follows. "After the age of eleven, a Nāyar girl becomes too old for this ceremony, though, in some rare instances, it is celebrated after a girl attains her age. As among other castes, ages [801]
represented by an odd number, *e.g.*, seven, nine, and eleven, have a peculiar auspiciousness attached to them. Any number of girls, even up to a dozen, may go through the ceremony at one time, and they may include infants under one year—an arrangement prompted by considerations of economy, and rendered possible by the fact that no civil or religious right or liability is contracted as between the parties. The duty of getting the girls of the tarwad 'married' devolves on the karanavan, or in his default on the eldest brother, the father's obligation being discharged by informing him that the time for the ceremony has arrived. The masters of the ceremonies at [622]
a Nāyar tāli-kettu in Travancore are called Machchampikkar, *i.e.*, men in the village, whose social status is equal to that of the tarwad in which the ceremony is to be celebrated. At a preliminary meeting of the Machchampikkar, the number of girls for whom the ceremony is to be performed, the bridegrooms, and other details are settled. The horoscopes are examined by the village [787]

613 in the larger houses), and, if there is not, is taken to the
[351] front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandalwood paste and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is then done what is called the Potavekkuka ceremony or placing new cotton cloths (kóti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the (deceased's) Taravâd followed by all the other members, also sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse when being taken to the place of burial or cremation. In some parts
[184] of Malabar the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried (well covered in the cloths) by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is
[804] removed there is done another ceremony called Para Virakkuka (filling up pâras—a pâra is a measure nearly as big as a gallon). All adult male members of the Taravâd take part in it under the direction of a man of the Atikkurissi clan (who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisite all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit). It consists in filling up three pâra measures with paddy, and one edangâli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pâra) with raw rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a (burning) lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela villâku. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before removal for cremation.

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end, one in the middle; on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased, tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist, and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist a piece of iron, generally a

* The eldest male member of the Malabar Taravâd is called the Kâranavan, as noted already (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1); all male members, brothers, nephews and so on, who are junior to him are called Anandravans of the Taravâd.

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
774 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[795] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804] * Ærua lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ad Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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342 351 823 372 [564] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses.

If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends: in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times.

Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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796 stick, it is possible to produce a kind of musical tone, for
[534] which a party is organised to play on it. This entertainment is much admired, and interests the people very much.

(2). *Tiruvátira*:—This is another important national festival, which falls on the *Tiruvátira* day in Dhanu (December-
[776] January). This concerns the Nayar women, and is said to commemorate the death of *Káma Déva*, the cupid of Indian mythology, by the burning fire of the third eye of the God
[533] Siva. Before day-break the festive day, the young women of the Nayar families hasten to the nearest tank or river for bathing, and during the bath, they amuse themselves with *Tiruvátira pittu*, songs accompanied by regular splashing of water, supposed to be symbolical of beating of the breast, on account of their grief for Kama's death. At day-break, they return home, and, gaily dressed and adorned, they
[526] go to the nearest temple for worship. After a slight breakfast, they proceed to enjoy the *Uzhinjal* (a swinging apparatus made of bamboo and attached to a horizontal branch of a tree).
[264] Immense pleasure is taken in this game. The family dinner
[262] is at noon, when bananas, sliced and fried in cocoanut-oil,
[431] seasoned with salt, are freely distributed among the friends and relatives assembled there. Ripe plantains, and the sweet pre-
[263] paration of arrow-root flour purified and seasoned with jaggery or sugar and cocoanuts, also form one of the chief items of the feast.

[804] (3). *Vishu*:—Next in importance to the two great national
[777] festivals just described, comes *Vishu* on the first of Medam (March-April), which is the astronomical new year's day; and a man's prosperity during the year is believed to depend on his seeing some good and lucky thing on the *Vishu* morning. It is the custom to prepare on the night previous, what is known as *Kani*. A bell-metal vessel (*uruli*) is taken, and in it are arranged a *grantha* or cadjan manuscript, a gold ornament, a new washed cloth, some flowers of the *konna* tree (Cassia fistula), some coins in a silver cup, a cocoanut cut into two, a cucumber, some mangoes, and a jack-fruit. On either side of the vessel, are also placed two lamps burning, while there is a plank of wood or some other seat placed in front of it. These are placed in the chief room inside the house, and in the morning, the members of the family, one by one, are taken to the

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore 824
transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one 539
of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning.

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those 764
of children under two or three years of age [766].
as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point 763
of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this. [778]
they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the [823]
water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed.

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed 764
from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at [824]
the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para* [804]
Nirakkuka (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon)

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764 [804] is performed. All the members of the family take part in this ceremony under the direction of the priest who belongs to the [793] *Athikurussi* class. The ceremony consists in filling up three [564] *para* measures with paddy and one *edangali* of raw rice, and placing them near the corpse together with a burning lamp of local manufacture.

[351] A mango tree is cut, and as much fuel as is necessary for the burning of the dead is collected and placed at the south-eastern corner of the compound which is always set apart for the burning or burial of the dead. A small pit about the size of the dead body is dug. Across this are placed three long stumps of the plantain tree, one at each end and one in the middle, and on these the foundation of the pyre is laid. The dead body which is placed on a bamboo bier is carried to the cremation ground and placed on the pyre with its head to the south, then fuel is laid over it, together with a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghee, if the family can afford the expense. Be- 613 764 fore the body is placed on the pyre, the *anandaravan*, the member of the family immediately junior to the deceased, tears from the new cloths laid on the corpse, a piece sufficient to go round his own loins. He wears it round his waist and holds in his hand or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. It must be noted here, that all those members of the family who are older than the deceased may not take any part whatsoever in the funeral ceremony or in any subsequent ceremony after the cremation or burial, but all adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the [593] pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or in his absence, his nephew (sister's son), sets fire to the pyre [604] beginning at the head of the corpse; but if a son is left by the deceased, he sets fire to the pyre beginning at the feet. In the case of a woman, the son has to set fire to the pyre, or in his absence, one junior in age to her has the right to do so. It is a matter of great importance that the whole pyre should burn at once, and great care towards that end is taken. While the corpse is being consumed, all the members of the family go and bathe in a tank (there is always one in the compound of a Nayar house). The eldest man who has the piece of cloth and the key carries a pot of water, and all return to the place of cremation. When the body is almost consumed by fire, the senior member carries the pot of water thrice round it, letting

Transport

5.46 The entire coastline of Kerala is well served by the railways. From Trivandrum to Kayankulam and from Tirur to Manjeswar, a total distance of 220 miles, the tracks are only two to three miles from the sea coast. In addition, there is a motorable road running almost all along the entire coastline. Head loads, bicycles, motor lorries, all these modes are employed for the transportation of fish to the markets depending on the distance of the landing sites from the consuming centres. 489 439 496 491

5.47 The State Fisheries Department operates four insulated vans. In addition, the Department operates two insulated carrier boats, one from Cochin and the other from Azhikode. These boats transport iced-fish through the inland waters to the interior places. For the marketing of fish in the interior areas, the Indo-Norwegian Project operates eight refrigerated vans. 438 494 605

5.48 It is estimated that the State will require about 60 road vehicles and 20 carrier vessels during the next 10 years. The capital expenditure on these is expected to be about Rs. 40 lakhs, of which Rs. 15 lakhs would be required during the Third Plan. The trucks and carrier vessels should, as far as possible, be owned and operated by Fishermen's Cooperative Societies. Expansion of insulated wagon facilities on the railways will be equally necessary. Insulated wagons should be provided on routes connecting the major production centres with the consumption centres. 433* 438 489

Marketing

5.49 The marketing of fish in Kerala is not well organized. At present it is controlled by a few moneylenders and fish merchants. The fishermen are very poor and have generally to depend on borrowings during the off season. A departmental survey reveals that in 1958 the fishermen in Kerala had total assets of only about Rs. 30 lakhs against a total debt of Rs. 135 lakhs. Only a small percentage of the fishermen in Kerala own the boats and nets they use. Most of them work as employees under few boat-owner fishermen. In the pay-off period the boat-owner advances small amounts to the fishermen for their day-to-day needs. The catch is auctioned at the landing centres. The bidders include the fish curers, the retailers and lorry owners, who generally supply fish to the retailers. 442 535 426 471 465 437

5.50 Fish prices fluctuate considerably even in the course of the day. Fish is never weighed in the market. They are measured by standards such as heap, basket, and number, and these vary from market to market. The important wholesale fish markets in the State are located at Trivandrum, Kottayam, Tonur, Trichur, Kozhikode, Alwaye, Changanacherry and Athirumpuzha. 435 804 366 103

5.51 Changanacherry, Athirumpuzha and Vaniyankulam are the most important markets for cured and salted fish. In the coastal areas the consumption of dried fish is confined mostly to the off-season when fishing totally stops. In the interior of the State, owing to lack of transport facilities, cured fish is sold for the major part of the year. The State has a number of retail fish markets, every town or a group of villages having at least one. 366 257 262 443 366

5.52 Fish marketing in Kerala requires a great deal of improvement, both 433* 442 443

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans
Tiyas

* 595 601 could get Panju to say at first was that she "did not look after us enough". However, when I insisted, I heard that she did not satisfy them sexually, which again might be either that Ramon got the lion's share of the marriage or that the two younger men did not find their elder brother's wife very attractive. Anyhow, they asked their maternal uncle (their father had died in the meantime) to find them another wife. After a show of resistance in which he said that it was not right and that they should remain with Kuniyama as tradition dictated, their mother's brother again gave in and got Nani for them; they married her when they were twenty and fifteen respectively. They were now forty and thirty five, and their common wife was thirty five. They had put up a separate household, to leave Raman and Sankara in the main building, and theirs was the smaller house on the other side of the yard, wholly within the same compound, however, so that the *tarawad* property was not completely torn asunder.

423 The land upon which the family lived was theirs, and not rented. After the death of their father, their mother inherited it, and when she died, it was divided up between the sons. Mayadi was also gone, but Raman junior, his son, and the four surviving brothers, Raman senior, Sankara, Panju and Narayana, each received one fifth of the whole. There was a meeting in the big house, they told me, about a year after the death of their mother (they presumably inherited the property undivided until then), and it took them three days to come to an agreement. Influential neighbours, the elders of the *tarawad* and the two brothers-in-law, Kunyadi and Maniken, also attended. The whole property, paddy fields, cattle, grain and seeds, agricultural tools, implements, the house and the household requisites and furniture, was evaluated in money and divided into five equal shares. Panju and Narayana did not split their shares; they kept the two fifths they received undivided, as they constituted a polyandrous household. The women did not inherit anything because they had been married off to others. Women among the Thandans can inherit from their parents, I heard, if there are no male heirs.

* [595] On the 27th of October 1949, I visited a Tiya (Thiyya) polyandrous family at Kadevelur in Tallapilli taluk of north Cochin. These people [427] were *kanam* tenants of a Nambudri Brahmin, to whom they paid thirty rupees a year in rent, plus eight hundred measures of rice per crop.[1]

[804] [1] I was told eight hundred *parahs*, but this is hardly possible as: 1 Cochin *parah* = 10 *edangalis* = 40 *nalis* = 1,720 *tolas*; as 42½ Cochin *tolas* = 1 lb., 1 Cochin *parah* = c. 40½ lbs. Eight hundred *parahs* would then = 40½ × 800 = 32,400 lbs. The measure may have been a smaller one, an *edangali* or even a *nali*.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

*595 the cross-roads of the main Shoranur-Palghat highway of the road to
564 Lakkidi, a few furlongs down the latter, on the right hand side. In con-
[361] trast to the Thandan houses to which we had been, although not to the
Tiya (Thiyya) houses of the Cochin labourers, the place looked rather
[342] miserable. It was a thatched palm-leaf house, standing on a red laterite
loam platform, in the middle of some paddy fields. There were signs
[241] about that these Tathans were not only goldsmiths but that they now
[231] also practised agriculture. There was paddy lying about to dry in heaps
in the yard, and there were stalls for bullocks at the back.

*595 We interviewed a man called Raman and his brother Kochen, aged
[601] fifty four and fifty two respectively, who lived polyandrously with their
wife, Kurumba, forty five years old. They seemed rather impressed by
[579] us, and were reluctant to speak. They observed the outward forms of
hospitality, however, and presented us with fresh coconuts for us to
drink the milk.

Raman told us that the household's name was Padijarehil, meaning "Western", and that it was part of five others which constituted the
[611] Uzhugaparekil *tarawad*. The latter was *makkathayam*, as we expected,
[614] and exogamous, as was also their *kiriyam*, although, here too, they only
observed the rule in matters which concerned those members of it whom
*595 they knew. They had two and a half acres of paddy fields, in simple
427 *verumpattam* lease from a Nambudri Brahmin janmi called Kodiertha-
243 mana. For this they paid five rupees a year and handed in a part of the
harvest – five hundred *parahs*, I have in my notes, three hundred from
the *kanni* crop and two hundred from the *magaram*.[1] As it was an ordinary *verumpattam*, there was no renewal fee. They had a deficit this
year of forty *parahs* (roughly lbs. 866⅓) and they were wondering what
they could do to make it good. Last year they had done "other work"
[464] (presumably such as hiring themselves out as labourers) in order to
raise the cash needed to compensate for the deficiency in grain, and
*595 they might do the same thing now. When I asked them what kind of
[326] goldsmith's work they did, they laughed and said that they had given
[436] this up; how could they carry on with their traditional profession, they
asked, when the sovereign which was once worth Rs. 25 had reached
Rs. 77?

[601] Raman and Kochen had had eleven children in their polyandrous

[1] This again seems too much. It is equivalent to lbs. 10,830 (1 Palghat *parah* = 10 *edengalis* = 40 *nalis* (1 *nali* = *tolas* 21⅝ in s. Walluvanad and Palghat) = 866,40 *tolas*; as 40 *tolas* = 1 lb. in s. Malabar, 1 *parah* = 866,40 : 40 = 21⅝ lbs and 500 = lbs 10,830).
[804]

764 persons who have died of cholera or small-pox. When
[766] preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse
[351] is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house, if there is one (there always is in the larger houses); and, if there is not, is taken to the front yard, where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is washed and anointed, the usual marks are made with sandal paste
764 and ashes as in life, and it is neatly clothed. There is
613 then done what is called the potavekkuka ceremony, or placing new cotton cloths (kōti mundu) over the corpse by the senior member of the deceased's taravād followed by all the other members, and also the sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and all relatives. These cloths are used for tying up the corpse, when being taken to
[184] the place of burial or cremation. In some parts of Malabar, the corpse is carried on a bier made of fresh bamboos, tied up in these cloths, while in others it is carried, well covered in the cloths, by hand. In either case it is carried by the relatives. Before the corpse is removed, there is done another ceremony called pāra-
[804] virakkuka, or filling up pāras. (A pāra is a measure
[564] nearly as big as a gallon.) All adult male members of the taravād take part in it under the direction of a man of the Attikkurissi clan who occupies the position of director of the ceremonies during the next fifteen days, receiving as his perquisites all the rice and other offerings made to the deceased's spirit. It consists in filling up three pāra measures with paddy (unhusked rice), and one edangāli ($\frac{1}{16}$ of a pāra) with raw
[782] rice. These offerings of paddy and rice are placed very near the corpse, together with a burning lamp of the kind commonly used in Malabar, called nela vilaku. If the taravād is rich enough to afford one, a silk cloth is placed over the corpse before its removal for cremation.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Two-thirds of it go to the four Tiyans who carried the pūkalasams, and one-third to the five who carried the jannakalasams. Returning to the procession, we find it at the raised platform to the east of the temple. On this platform have been placed already an ordinary bamboo quart-like measure of paddy (unhusked rice), and one of rice, each covered with a plantain leaf. The principal devil-dancer takes a handful of rice and paddy, and flings it all around. The procession then visits in turn the gates of the gardens of the four owners of the temple. At each is a measure of rice and a measure of paddy covered with plantain leaves, with a small lamp or burning wick beside them, and the devil-dancer throws a handful towards the house. The procession then finds its way to a tree to the west, under which, on the platform, is now a measure of paddy and a lamp. Some Brāhmans repeat mantrams, and the elephant, the priest on his back and the sword in his hand, all three are supposed to tremble violently. Up to this time the procession has moved leisurely at a very slow march. Now, starting suddenly, it proceeds at a run to the temple, where the priest descends quickly from the elephant, and is taken inside the temple by the Mūssad priests. He, who has been carrying the sword all this time, places it on the sill of the door of the room in which it is kept for worship, and prostrates before it. The sword then shakes itself for fifteen minutes, until the chief priest stays its agitation by sprinkling on it some tirtam fluid made sacred by having been used for anointing the image of the goddess. This done, the chief amongst the devil-dancers will, with much internal tumult as well as outward convolutions, say in the way of oracle whether the dēvi has been pleased with the festival in her honour, or not. As he pronounces this oracular utterance, he falls

796 564 788 [804] [778] 796 787

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

163 There are 440 houses in the "town," and more than double that
[361] number in the whole village. The statistics of births and deaths
165 are kept separate for the part of the village outside the town and the town; they stand thus for the last five years:—

Years.	Village.									Town.								
	Births.				Deaths.					Births.				Deaths.				
	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Hindus.	Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.	Infants.
1910-11	93	10	23	126	60	8	5	73	33	86	17	23	126	54	21	5	80	39
1911-12	75	6	29	110	71	6	24	101	38	86	34	23	143	83	17	19	119	57
1912-13	40	7	7	54	33	4	6	43	17	72	24	17	113	66	13	18	97	48
1913-14	50	5	6	61	43	2	5	50	17	66	22	23	111	64	8	24	96	37
1914-15	35	3	4	42	20	...	6	26	6	49	27	17	93	29	6	12	47	15

"Infants" include all under the age of three.

The figures for the "town" can be taken as fairly accurate while those of the village cannot be relied on; for the village officers rarely take the trouble of entering the latter correctly, while every dweller in "town" is made to tender accounts of births and deaths on penalty, and these are also within the close purview of the village officers. Note especially the rate of infant mortality in both the town and village. Nearly 50 per cent of the deaths
[361] occur among the infants.* Muhammadans and Christians, who are invariably engaged in petty trade, are more numerous in the "town" than in the "village."

566 *Paracheri.*—The Pulayas (Cherumas and Paraiyas) in the State and of Malabar form a category by themselves. The State made an enquiry into their social and economic condition last year which I here utilize. There are nearly 300 Pulayas in the village. They are more or less serfs attached to the soil. They are agricultural workers only, and have no sort of proprietorship in the land.
[465] They are paid daily wages in kind and that in very low measures. The following is the daily rate:—Men 2 edangalis † of paddy per day; women 1½ edangalis of paddy, boys 1 edangali. In addition, 5 edangalis of paddy are given to men and 4 edangalis to women on certain festive days in the year, and once a year every male and female member of the family is presented with a pair of
566 cloths ‡ 2 yards and 3½ yards respectively by the master. The
462 men plough, tend cattle, water the gardens, gather fuel, etc., while the women pluck the paddy seedlings to replant them, and do

* [The figures show an average infantile death-rate of 284 per 1,000 births for the area outside the "town," and of 336 for the "town"—Ed.]

[804] † 10 Cochin edangalis = 1 para = 8 Madras measures. [Therefore 1 edangali of paddy weighs 2 lb.—Ed.].

‡ These cloths are nearly one yard wide.

234 castes very rarely use these products. The cows too are not brought up on a scientific basis, and are consequently of a weak [804] build and generally yield from 4 nalis * to 6 or 8 nalis of milk per day.†

Male buffaloes are used in ploughing and sometimes to draw loaded carts. These too are of weak build.

Cow buffaloes are used mostly for milking, but sometimes in ploughing. The milk they yield is greater in quantity but inferior in quality to that of the cows.‡

231 Very little care is taken of the young of the above species. The young calf or calf-buffalo is not usually reared with the object of getting strong or vigorous oxen or buffaloes, but allowed to grow haphazardly. Some die off young, and especially the buffalo-calf since the buffalo can be milked without its young and not so the cows.§ The official figures in this respect (vide above) are instructive. The usual practice is to buy cows or buffaloes from a fair for milking purposes and to dispose of them, buffaloes especially, unless needed for ploughing, when the milk dries up.

The only use to which the horse is put is to drive jutkas, but as jutkas are rare in this village, horses are seldom seen here.

Donkeys and mules too are few.

Sheep and goats are used for their mutton which is in demand among the lower castes, but more for their milk, which is considered to be medicinal.

Pigs are reared for their flesh by the local Christians; the Muhammadans consider it to be a sacrilege even to utter the name.

Cows, oxen and buffaloes are made to stand in stalls, two or more being allowed to be in the same stall. Bundles of rice straw form the chief food, but green grass is used during the rainy season. Rice dust and poonac (copra from which the oil has been extracted) mixed in water is given. Cows are let loose during the daytime under care of a keeper to feed in the fields or near the hills.

241 Cattle-dung mixed with cattle urine is used as manure in the paddy fields. This is scattered in the fields during the hot season 237 (April-May). The percentage of cattle-dung will approximately be 25 per cent of the total manure used. Dung is also used as fuel. Women are becoming averse to making varatties and use more wood.

Sheep dung is sometimes used.

241 But green manure consisting of leaves of certain plants and trees is scattered in the fields after they have been well ploughed in the first fall of the monsoon rains. Green manure is never grown, but is obtained from the neighbouring hills.

351 Every house without exception has a compound big or small surrounding it in which there are coconut palms, arecanut palms, mango trees, jack fruit trees, plantains, etc., and sometimes pepper. During the hot months (March-April-May) vegetables

* [1 nali (nari or nazhi) = ¼ of a Madras measure and very nearly = 9 fluid ounces or nearly half a pint.—Ed.]

† I.e., one or two quarts of milk per day. A Madras cow yields up to five quarts per day.

‡ [I.e., it is less valued. Buffalo's milk is very rich.—Ed.]

§ [It is a fact that an Indian cow refuses to give milk without the calf. If the calf dies the dairyman stuffs the skin and makes an imitation calf. This serves the purposes. —Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

smiths, masons, etc., four annas a day. But a skilful artisan earns 465
6 annas a day. But these people do not generally work at the customer's house, but they are given orders for the things and when they bring them are paid the price. Sometimes they are given the metal and the wages for each particular kind of work.

The making of ornaments is one of the weaknesses of Indians 465
and consequently goldsmiths are in no difficulty to get work. In 326
Malabar in former days costly ornaments were confined to Brahmans, but nowadays all classes are imitating the Brahmans in that respect. It is to be deplored. The number of goldsmith families has steadily increased from two to seven within ten years. They are always given the metal and given the wages for the particular kind of work, ranging from Re. 1 to Rs. 30 for the most complicated work which may employ one man for a whole month. A ring may cost Rs. 2 in wage. The same is the case of coppersmith. The wages depend upon the art and the size of the vessel. A big vessel may fetch him Rs. 20.

In kind.—The chief labour of the agricultural classes for which 465
wages are paid in kind is the climbing of coconut trees and felling the fruit, and the sowing of paddy. One coconut is given if a man climbs four trees. An ordinary man can climb forty trees a day and he can earn ten coconuts, which according to the present price may bring him 8 annas. This has been the custom for a long time and this rate of wage has shown no sign of improvement since the labourers themselves do not demand more; because the price of coconuts has steadily increased and with that rise their wages also must rise.

The sowing of paddy is generally done by women who receive [442]
as wage one-tenth of the quantity of paddy sown.

It may be remarked here that throughout the whole of Malabar the Pariyas and other untouchables such as Cherumas, Nayadis, etc., are always paid 2 Edangalis of paddy for men (1½ Edangalis for women) whatever kind of work they do, per day. This has been their wage from time immemorial.

Current prices of staples.—A bag of rice containing 8 paras * 435
costs Rs. 12-4-0, if of inferior sort, Rs. 10. Fish 1 pie † for five [804]
small fishes, salt 2 annas for 1 Madras measure.

It may be noticed here that the Muhammadan and Christian labour costs more than the Hindu labour, since those two classes can perform a greater quantity of work because of their superior physical strength.

Savings and debts.—The number of families which have made 454
savings may be estimated as between 75 and 100, of whom ten to fifteen may be Muhammadans, fifteen to twenty of lower castes, and the remainder of higher castes. But the persons who have lost their money are very numerous, probably between 200 and 300. Some lost through trade, many through litigation. But the primary cause of loss of property is the peculiar tenure of land as explained above. Perhaps all or nearly all the savings of the higher classes are used as loans to neighbours. The amount may be estimated at Rs. 50,000.

About Rs. 2,000 a year is spent on jewellery.

The estimated income from land and from other sources for 434
this village is Rs. 2,50,000 a year for a population of 7,596, out of

* [180 lb.—Ed.] † [12 pies = 1 anna = 1 *d.*—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

other lowest classes pay in paddy for their purchases of salt, chillis, onions, kerosene oil and so on. Nearly 1,000 paras of paddy per annum are received in this way. The Cherumas probably spend about as much also in the toddy shop, and at least Rs. 600 worth of paddy is sold in the village to Cherumas, Panans, etc. The sale of paddy is not confined to the shop. The most important sales take place at the houses of the persons who have surplus paddy to sell. It is mostly purchased by Muhammadan traders and others from outside the village. 432

Economic condition.—Money wages range from three to six annas per day according to the nature of the work and the efficiency of the labourer. 465

The labourer cannot earn these wages regularly throughout the year, as employment is irregular and cannot be obtained at all during certain seasons. Though rice in the staple food, the poor cannot afford a full meal of solid rice a day; instead, they take it in the form of a thin gruel, occasionally supplemented by a better meal as after harvest or during the *Onam* festival, which is the great national festival of Malabar. In harvest time labourers get extra wages for reaping and threshing—usually 10 per cent of what they reap and thresh. A competent man then earns from one to one-and-a-half paras * of paddy a day for a few days. [804]

When wages are paid in kind it is usual to give from three to five edangalis. † Agricultural labourers are paid less. There is a sort of agricultural serfdom, the Cherumas being the victims. Of course it is not legally recognized and is breaking up. These Cherumas who do the greater part of agricultural work, are paid from one and half to two edangalis of grain, supplemented by certain allowances during sickness, festive occasions, women's lying-in, etc. A sort of feudal or patriarchal relationship prevails between these and their employers. They are attached to certain families and get work, or at any rate are paid, throughout the year. The standard of life among them is very low and most of them drink the toddy made in the village. They live in miserable hovels, and are physically and mentally very inefficient. But they are, to some extent, looked after by their masters, to whom in spite of ill-treatment, they are often very much attached. I have heard farmers saying that if these Cherumas left them they would be ruined, since the success of their cultivation, i.e., its profitableness under existing conditions, depends, they believe, on their cheap labour. In very recent times some of these Cherumas have begun to emigrate to other places attracted by the higher wages and better conditions of work. But this is uncommon owing to the covert opposition of their masters. 566

The Muhammadan coolies, who are superior both in skill and strength to the Hindus, earn higher wages, both because their labour is worth more, and because they are more independent. But their usual wages cannot be stated, as they contract for each job. Such work as splitting rocks, digging wells, splitting logs, and 563 463

* [By Mr. Wood's tables (op. cit. p. 6), a para of paddy in this taluk weighs 22½ lb. Mr. Sundara Aiyar calculates it at 20 lb.—Ed.]

† [I.e., about 10 lb. weight of paddy, yielding about 7 lb. weight of raw rice.—Ed.]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bâli.

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 551 are perpetuated as indices of status—to the extent, indeed, that with the matrilineal Thangal group, who also claim patrilineal descent from the Prophet, an elaborate combination of patronymics and matronymics has been developed (1959, p. 501).

CONCLUSION

121 171 In view of the great number of communities that have remained untouched, the evidence considered in detail may seem to offer only a very narrow theoretical base. This is not so. We have attempted to show that the general structural model may be connected to a great variety of descent patterns. Only a few cases would be sufficient to demonstrate the point. We have found many more. We have also noted the interesting balance in the customary recognition given to the formal claims of the paternal and maternal relatives upon the children of the marriage. In structures such as the Tanjore Brahman, 121 593 where the father-son relationship is assured by common residence and inheritance, it is precisely the rights of the MB which are elaborated [604] [764] at all *rites de passage*, and the ZS has formal obligations at this man's funeral.

121 593 764 In the matrilineal structure of Malabar and Ceylon we find in contrast that the great proliferation of ceremonial is concerned with the rights and obligations of the father. Quite apart from the entire complex of *Tali kettu kalyanam* in Malabar, we may note that the obligations of the son at this father's funeral receive special emphasis, particularly among the Nayar. As Fawcett notes in connection with Nayar [604] funerals: "The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the foot of the corpse" (Thurston, 1906, p. 209). At this most solemn occasion the Nayar and the Kandyan [171] Sinhalese agree on balancing the obligations of the offspring of brother and sister, for with the Sinhalese, too, the ZS as well as the son must partake in the final rites of a man.

121 593 605 There is always the emphasis on the connections between the children of the brother and the sister. Brother and sister must be separated, but their offspring must also be united. Dumont writes of the double principles of consanguinity and affinity, but it seems that the 121 602 two must be intermeshed to protect and perpetuate the purity of the family. Perhaps this is an aspect of the union of those divine crea- 171 tive principles which one hears so much about in Indian philosophy: 812 male and female, man and wife, the Brahman Lord and his consort, 771 Shiva and Shakti. These are two, but they are also one.

[601] Even the terminology of kinship exemplifies the idea of the union

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
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of the two principles in one. Thus, such terms as *massina* (Sinh. and Tamil) and its variants *maittunan* or *maccinan* (Tamil) and *maiduna* (Kannada), all of which carry the implication of cross-cousins who are expected to unite, appear to be derived from the Sanskrit *maiduna* or *mithuna* which also refers to the sexual intercourse between the god Shiva and the goddess Shakti, who are both one and two.[10] The depiction of them in the very act of union (*mithuna*) is one of the intriguing motifs in Indian religious sculpture, a form of art which in its formal beauty and religious expressiveness is almost unmatched.

These ideas are not intended to be mysterious. They are simply the logical implications of caste principles carried to their very limit in the highest caste. There should be no doubt at all that Indian thinkers, great logicians and great mystics, should have been concerned with the ultimate origin of purity.[11]

A conception such as this, the union of man and wife, who are also the children of a brother and sister, allows us to observe the principle of *jati* ("caste," but also birth, category) from the inside. The narrowest circle is the individual. Then the couple, ideally cross-cousins. Then the small circle of kin who intermarry with one another. And going on from this, wider and wider concentric circles and the more inclusive categories of caste. The patterns of North India are likely to be different, but the principles of caste endogamy are intimately related to the family in South India and Ceylon.

Our itinerary has now been completed. We started from a mountain village in Ceylon and widening our investigations have ended up in South India. Behind the great differences in thought and behavior, we have found that the general principles of kinship appear to have considerable uniformity in this region. Ostensibly, kinship systems can be classified as matrilineal, patrilineal, hypergamous, and bilateral in Ceylon: a rapid journey through the Tamil-speaking parts, the Nilgiri Hills, and the Malabar coast has made us aware that a similar classification is possible in South India. But all these variations appear to exist within the framework of principles common to all the groups we have considered.

It is to be hoped that it will be possible in the future to carry the work farther north in order to learn whether South Indian structures are transformed into North Indian structures. In the realm of kin structure in South India and Ceylon, we appear to be dealing with

[10] On the etymology of the terms see Karve (1953), p. 209.

[11] It seems possible that one of the simplest and most frequent ritual acts in Ceylon and South India—the splitting of a coconut into two and allowing the liquid inside to run out—may be a part of *mithuna* symbolism. For the coconut has a *male* and a *female* end: in the act the male and the female are split. This is an idea of wide prevalence in Ceylonese ritual; see Yalman (1966).

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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776 821 [184] during that night for fear of calumny. There, the men do not care much. We will now bid adieu to Mr. Gopal Pannikar, but not without thanking him for all he has told us about his own people.

241 Uchâl (Uchaval) is the term used for the first three days of the Malayalam month Makaram, usually falling between the 15th and 20th January. All over Malabar, [243] with the exception of Wynâd, above the ghâts, there are two crops of rice every year, one with the south-west, one [132] with the north-east monsoon. Elsewhere in Southern India rice land is always irrigated, but in Malabar there [776] is no such thing, practically, as irrigation, the heavy rainfall rendering it unnecessary, and the earth goddess—Bhûmi Dêvi—brings forth her fruit under the stimulus of the rain from heaven. She produces the crops as a female produces her children, and from the 1st of the month Makaram, she rests until the cultivator again begins to disturb her, three months later, when the showers preceding the south-west monsoon fall. Uchâl is the period of three days when the earth goddess menstruates. Granaries and all receptacles of grain are closed during Uchâl—they are not even visited. Paddy is not sold. No implement of cultivation is touched. The rice to be used during the three days is pounded out beforehand and kept separate. But it is no season of gloom; 241 rather is it one of festivity. As particular forms of food 252 partaken on specific occasions have an interest of their own, we must not omit description of the Uchâl cake— 262 the Pâla Ata. (Pâla—spathe of the areca-palm, Ata—cake). A paste is made of rice flour and water and spread thickly (about an inch thick) on one side of two pieces of the spathe of the areca-palm, each piece being from 2 to 3 feet in length and about 8 inches wide. Powdered jaggery, scraped cocoanut, powdered ginger, a little garlic and other condiments, are then put in small quantities on the paste. The two pieces of the spathe are then placed together, and they are stitched all round the edges. The whole is covered over with soft red mud and put into a fire where it is kept until the mud covering cracks. The cake is then cooked and ready for eating. It is cut and distributed to members of the family and friends.

564 In parts of Malabar the Tîyan tenants present these 262 cakes to their Nâyar landlords as a token of allegiance or submission. Rice is the only article of food which if 466 prepared by a Tîyan the Nâyar cannot eat; so the Nâyar 241 has no caste scruples about eating the Pâla Ata prepared

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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the school-master. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2½ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
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the child was well again. With this idea of evil eye is bound up what is known as *Kari-Nakku*, or black-tongue. When a man with *Kari-Nakku* utters anything it has effect at once. When the evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* are combined, then it has "much *orenda*" as an Angotkin would say. If your newly built house is looked upon with an evil eye and some good expression used by such a man about it, a lightning might set fire to it and destroy it the same night. If your mango tree is full of fruit this year and a man with an evil eye and *Kari-Nakku* looks at it and says "how fortunate," it might happen that for years to come it would bear no more fruit. If an envious woman, aroused by the green-eyed monster of jealousy, remarks how pretty a girl is, her hair might begin to fall off, her colour might fade, her cheeks might lose their bloom. 754 784

The fact to notice with regard to this is that you have to say complimentary things to effect evil. If you said how ugly a pretty girl is it would not affect her. You must say, out of your heart, how beautiful she is and then it might have effect. Everything is supposed to depend on whether it is said with or without design. If anything is said with design there would be no effect. Only when such exclamation comes out of the heart has it the power to do evil.

Koti.—Another evil-working power is *Koti*. The word literally means desire, but as an evil force it works only when a hungry person sees a rich and healthy fellow eating a good meal. If a poor man sees you eat, and his mouth waters at the delicacies before you, you are sure to suffer from his *Koti*, you will get stomach-ache and even dysentery. It is the particular look of the hungry man that has the evil effect. When once a man begins to suffer from another's *Koti* the only way to get over it is to eat some salt over which some *mantrams*, or magical formulæ, have been repeated. 754 [755]

The tabus which are prevalent among the Nāyars are too many to be described in detail here. A few examples will show how, even in the most important matters, life is regulated in primitive society. The reason for such prohibitions, as M. Reinach points out, is to live at peace with the spirits that are supposed to surround you. 784

You are prohibited from eating your food at dusk. It is supposed to be an awful sin, because everything is considered to be in "a state of suspended animation" in the very short period which marks the transition from a hot tropical day to a cool and breezy night. You cannot do anything at that time except bathe or pray. There are tabus on what you may do on particular days of the week : [262] [828]

> "*Ezhacha Kulichalum*
> *Vyazacha Kulikkaruthu.*"

784 772 [539]

This is a typical example of the Nāyar tabu. Its meaning is this : "Even if you have an oilbath on the seven days of the week, don't do it on a Thursday." Though there is no reason assigned for such a prohibition, there is a sufficiency of

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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342 351 823 372 [524] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses. If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends: in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times. Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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771 824 [778] [301] [782] From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus [278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 538 **Folk tales.** The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 [821] The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] [825] [823] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 539 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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During the exile of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, they 825 lived chiefly by hunting. One day, when Sita was drying some 539 pieces of flesh, a crow accidentally pecked at one of Sita's ruddy toes, taking it for one of the blood red pieces of meat. She thereupon told her husband about it, who shot an arrow at the crow and blinded it in one eye, and thenceforth its descendants have been blind in one eye.

When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea, for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asuras*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

Ari-praven or the common house-dove has a story told of it. These birds, male and female, are always found in pairs together. Once, it is said, they were quarrelling about a game, and the quarrel ended in the desertion by the male bird of his mate, who recognizing the mistake called for him, and her cries are said to be ever calling out for her mate.

Rain, Thunder and Lightning:—In the aërial regions are 539 huge monsters of extraordinary strength (*Kallaméghattanmár*) [821] who are supposed to possess two horns with the aid of which [776] all the water from the earth is drawn up during the summer, to be spat out in the rainy season at Indra's (Rain God's) bidding. Lightning is caused by the friction of the horns, while engaged in the task of spitting out water. Another version of the story as to the origin of lightning is, that it is caused by the brandishing of Indra's sword, while engaged in ordering the monsters to supply the earth with water.

It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger [825] every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that [826] organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined.

Evil spirits are believed to have the power at times of [776] changing men into tigers, such being distinguished by having [825] no tails.

The claws and even the teeth of the tiger are used as [789] charms against witchcraft and the evil-eye. They may frequently be seen set in silver, and worn round the necks of [825]

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [824] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [827].
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

765 of boundaries. With the observance of the Pinda Atiyantaram or feast of pindams, there is involved the Dîkṣha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for 41 days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between 41 days [184] or a year. Forty-one days is permissible as the period for the Dîkṣha, but a year is correct. The 41-day period is the rule in North Malabar.

[593] I have seen many who were under the Dîksha for a [604] year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the Taravâd bears [302] the mark of mourning by his growth of hair, remarkable enough in Malabar where every one as a rule, excepting the Mâppila Muhammadans (and they shave their heads), shaves his face, head (except the patch on the crown) chest and arms, or at any rate his wrists. He who is under the Dîkṣha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly seeds to the spirit of the decased every morning after [784] his bath; and he is under restriction from women, from alchoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also tobacco. When the Dîkṣha is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year there is observed every month a ceremony called * Bali. It is noteworthy [821] that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the Dîksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and [805] sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.

793 For the * Bali, a man of the Elâyatu caste officiates. 564 It has been said already ("Nambûtiri Brâhmans": Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I), that the Elâyatus are priests for 765 the Nâyars. They wear the Brâhman's thread, but they are not Brâhmans. They are not permitted to study the Vêdas, but to the Nâyars they stand in the place of the ordinary Purôhit. The officiating Elâyatu prepares the rice for the Vêli when the deceased, represented by Karuka grass, is offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds and some other things. The Elâyatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under Dîkṣha himself is familiar with the required ceremonial.

765 The last day of the Dîksha is one of festivity. After the * Bali the man under Dîkṣha is shaved. All this over

* Or Bali.

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635 occasionally adopted this mode of escape from the cha-
527 grin of not being re-elected by their adherents." He goes on to say what Mr. Jonathan Duncan wrote about this festival, of which his account appears in the first volume of the Transactions of the Bombay Literary Society.

635 The festival was held last in 1743.

"Those who acknowledged the Zamorin's suzerainty sent
527 flags in token of fealty; and the places where these flags used to
175 be hoisted at festival times are still pointed out. The Valluvanād Raja, who is still represented in the management of the Tirunāvāyi temple by one of the four Brahman *Kārdlars*, instead of sending a flag used to send men called *Chāvers* (men who have elected to die) whose office it was to endeavour to cut their way through the Zamorin's guards to his throne in a manner presently to be described. If they had succeeded in killing him—as on the occasion cited by Hamilton, whose statement except as to date, is moreover corroborated by tradition—it is uncertain what would have happened; but probably if a capable Raja had been ruling in Valluvanād at such a time, popular opinion would have endowed him with suzerainty, for the Nâyar militia were very fickle, and flocked to the standard of the man who was fittest to command and who treated them the most considerately.

"With the kind assistance of the present Zamorin, Maharaja
[127] Bahadur, the records of his family have been examined and a complete account obtained of the events attending the festival held in 1683 A.D., the festival next preceding that alluded to by Hamilton.

"The festival used to continue for twenty-eight days every
[821] twelfth year when the planet Jupiter was in retrograde motion in the sign of *Karkadagam* or Cancer or the Crab, and at the time of the eighth lunar asterism in the month of Makaram the festival used to culminate.

"On the occasion in question the Zamorin some months beforehand sent orders for the preparation of the necessary timber and bamboos for the temporary buildings required at *Tirunāvāyi* and the materials were floated down stream from the Aliparamba Chirakkal lands.

"Then exactly two months before the opening day he sent out a circular to his followers worded as follows:—

'Royal writing to the *Akampati Janam* (body-guards).

'On the 5th Makaram 858 is *Mahāmakha Talpuyam* (time of the eighth lunar asterism in the festival season), and the *Lōkars* (chief people of each locality) are required to attend at Tirunāvāyi as in olden times.

'Mangātt Raman and Tinayancheri are sent to collect and bring you in regular order for the Mahāmakham.'

"The Zamorin timed himself to arrive at Tirunāvāyi on the day after that appointed for the arrival of his followers, and the

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lucky moment for the setting out on this particular occasion on the last day's stage of the journey was at the rising of the constellation of Aquarius.

"The *Tirunāvāyi* temple stands on the north bank of the Ponnāni river close to the present line of railway. Passengers by train can catch a glimpse of it by looking across the level expanse of paddy-fields which lie south of the sixth telegraph post on the three hundred and eighty-second mile of the railway. There is a modest clump of trees on the river bank hiding the temple, the western gateway of which faces a perfectly straight piece of road a little over half a mile in length stretching from the temple gateway westwards to the elevated ridge hemming in the paddy-fields on the west. This road is but little raised above the level of the paddy flat. Directly facing this straight piece of road as the elevated ridge is reached there are three or perhaps four terraces, the outlines of which may still be traced in the face of the precipitous bank.

"A little to one side of the upper terrace are the ruins of a strongly built powder magazine, and on the flat ground above and on both sides of the fine avenue shading the public road at this place is ample space for the erection of temporary houses.

"In a neighbouring enclosure under cultivation is a disused well of fine proportions and of most solid construction.

"From the upper terrace alluded to a commanding view is obtained facing eastwards of the level rice-plain at foot, of the broad placid river on the right backed by low hills, of higher flat-topped laterite plateaus on the left, their lower slopes bosomed in trees, and, in the far distance, of the great chain of Western Ghâts with the Nilgiris in the extreme left front hardly distinguishable in their proverbial colour from the sky above them. It was on this spot, on a smooth plateau of hard laterite rock, raised some 30 to 40 feet above the plain, that the Zamorin used several times in the course of the festival to take his stand with the sword of Chēramān Perumāl, the last emperor, in his hand.

"The sword is and has been for centuries, slowly rusting away in its scabbard, but it is not alone on it that the Zamorin depends for his safety, for the plain below him is covered with the 30,000 Nâyars of Ernâd, the 10,000 of Polanâd and numberless petty dependent chieftains, each counting his fighting men by the hundred or the thousand or by thousands. Away on the right across the river are the camps of the second prince of the Zamorin's family and of the dependent Punnattūr Raja; the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth princes' camps too are close at hand in the left front behind the temple, and behind the terrace itself is the Zamorin's camp.

"The whole scene is being made gay with flags as an elephant is being formally caparisoned with a chain of solid gold

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family to compass the death of a member of the slayer's family. 627
This custom was called *kudippaka* (literally, *house feud*), or in an abbreviated form, *kuduppu*. One curious fact connected with 627
this custom was that the chieftain of the district intervened 634
when a man was slain, and the body of the deceased was by him taken to his enemy's house, and the corpse and the house were burnt together. It is understood that an out-house was usually selected for this purpose, but it was a common phrase to say—

'the slain rests in the yard of the slayer.'

"Again when mortal offence was given by one man to 627
another, a solemn contract used to be entered into before the 634
chieftain of the locality to fight a *duel*, the chieftain himself 578
being the umpire. Large sums (up to a thousand fanams or [525]
two hundred and fifty rupees) used to be deposited as the battle- [652]
wager, and these sums formed one source (*ankām*) of the chieftain's revenue, and the right to levy them was sometimes transferred along with other privileges appertaining to the tenure of the soil. A preparation and training (it is said) for twelve years preceded the battle in order to qualify the combatants in the use of their weapons. The men who fought were not necessarily the principals in the quarrel—they were generally their champions. It was essential that one should fall, and so both men settled all their worldly affair before the day of combat."

The origin of the duo-decimal period is obscure, but 423
to this day it obtains in Malabar (and in Malabar only) 427
in relation to all agricultural affairs. The land, in contradistinction to the rest of the Presidency (as a rule), is the absolute property of the landholders—the whole of Malabar is; the landholders let out their land under certain conditions for periods of twelve years. This is [178]
the ordinary period of tenure; now a days, much of the land is leased informally on a yearly tenure. Tenants must renew their right to possession of their land every twelve years. The subject of land tenure in Malabar is [821]
a very extensive one, and we will not discuss it, resting satisfied with having noted the observance of the twelve yearly cycle in connection with it. It is supposed to be governed by the cycle of Jupiter.*

* Friar Jordanus, Bishop of Quilon in the 14th century, said that [782]
people make a vow, and to fulfil it cut off their own head before an idol.
"Barbosa says that the king of Quilaene or Coliacaud (Calicut). . . [764]
after reigning 12 years, always sacrificed himself to an idol in this way."—
"Madras Manual of Administration," vol. iii, page 643.

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight 77% [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping [825]
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet [822]
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow,
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still [782]
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [813]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravāḍ*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravāḍ* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravāḍ* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pēdham*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *emar*.

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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality. [1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas; and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-19.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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342 351 823 372 [564] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses. If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharva, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times. Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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486 564 784 has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstru- 562 ation. While in her period she may not eat or drink 178 with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. 783 Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is 841 effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* 564 it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, 613 as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving 486 her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." [123] It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

564 The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna 178 clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more 562 liberty than was formerly possible.

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* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

777 rhyme, and I must say that I never knew anyone who took an oil bath on a Thursday,
784 except people who take it every day.

513 The tabus extend to the way in which you sleep. You are not supposed to sleep
775 with your body north to south or west to east. The reason, I believe, is that the spirits
784 of the dead are supposed to live in the south and in the east, and if you lie with your
823 head facing them you might become possessed of them.

There are certain days of the lunar month on which no one may start on a
484 journey :
777
784
[539]

Yama Rudrāhi Muppōram
Trkelta iva ēzhu Naal
Vitakkil viliyā Bhōmi
Pōkunnakil avan varā.

On the seven days presided over by the seven stars thus enumerated, if a land is sowed no seed will sprout, if anyone starts on a journey he will not return.

777 I remember a curious story connected with this. Some four months before
484 leaving for England I had to see the Inspector of Schools in Travancore to get my
123 Leaving Certificate. The only day available for me was one of these tabu days,
784 and in spite of the protests of everybody else in the house, I set out on my business. When I reached the capital of the state the Inspector of Schools had left on circuit an hour before to the place where I started from. I followed him there, but when I arrived he had left the place, and, as a result of continuous journeying and bad food, I was laid up in bed through a physical breakdown. It was true that if I had not started on that tabu day, but had had the patience to wait for another twenty-four hours the Inspector of Schools would have come to the town where I was living ; it was also true that I came back very ill. Everyone, therefore, took it for granted that all this ill-luck was due to my starting on a bad day. Many are the stories that are told of people suffering great misfortunes due to starting on these bad days, and there is, as M. Reinach would say, " a vast oral tradition of leading cases " connected with it. I daresay my case will go down as a most authentic one, as the facts are undoubtedly true ; only the explanation is doubtful.

784 Tabus like this can be mentioned without end ; but it is useless to do so, as they all seem to have the same " rationale " : that is, you will break your peace with the world of demons and ghosts that surround you and bring down upon yourself their wrath if you break any one of these rules. Tabu among the Nāyars is essentially an arrangement to keep the ghosts and spirits pacified : for it is clear to them from the tested experience of past ages that to break any of these rules is to challenge those who have power to do them great harm

711 In whatever is said here, it should be understood that I have tried to eliminate
777 from the Nāyar beliefs those elements which are indubitably Hindu. As I have pointed out at the start, there are a good many devout Hindus among the Nāyars, but it is an interesting fact that the practices and beliefs above described are pre-

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partly guided by the influence of the monsoon. In regard to the serpent grove or religious shrine, a square plot just in the middle of the south-west portion is considered the most auspicious. A typical Nayar house is quadrangular, with an open space (*mittam*) in the centre; the western portion of it is the granary, while the rest of it is partitioned into rooms. The northern portion comprises the store-room and the kitchen at the western and the eastern extremities, with the dining room in the middle, while the western and eastern portions are kept as open halls for gatherings on important occasions. The house so constructed must face the rising sun—the east—and yet rather inconsistently it is called the *patinjattupura* or the western roof or building. The reason of this is that the *patinjattu muri*—the central chamber or the honoured guest chamber in the house, sanctuary of the ancestors of its occupants—must be so placed as to admit of entrance through its doorway the sun's earliest rays. Behind one or more of the rooms above mentioned is a *chaippu* forming a kind of enclosed verandah room. Another type most commonly met with consists of a portico serving as a reception-hall, the other portions of the building corresponding in details, more or less, with the quadrangular edifice just described. The rigid adherence to the science of architecture is confined not only to the Nayars and other high caste-men, but also to the generality of the Native Christians and Mahomedans who, before construction, always consult some expert in the choice of a proper site and the formation of a ground plan of the house. Misfortunes or even calamities are often attributed to the violation of these principles, and very often a newly built house is either altered to remedy the defects or even pulled down. There are again houses, where the two types are combined. The huts of the poor classes consist generally of one or two small, dark and ill-ventilated rooms with a kitchen at one end, and a verandah either in front or on all sides of the main building. With the increase of population, and with the demand for more houses, the old notions and *sastraic* injunctions are being overlooked as a matter of necessity, and the old fashioned houses are displaced by those erected on sound sanitary principles. The wood-work of the buildings is solid and substantial, and is in some cases beautifully carved. The walls are generally of laterite, brick or mud, and roofs which till

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There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality. [1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas: and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-17.

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342 351 823 372 [564] having been well plastered with mud, a saucer of unbaked earth filled with ghee and four lighted wicks is placed therein, for testing the quality of the soil. If the wicks burn brightly in all four directions, the ground is fit for all the castes including Brahmans and other caste-men. If the wicks do not burn, it will not suit any of the four castes.

342 804 777 822 Auspicious times for the construction of houses.

If the house is constructed by a person in the month of Medam (April-May) he gets disease: in Edavam (May-June) he gets money and jewel: in Mithunam (June-July) there will be death: in Ashad or Karkadakam (July-August) he gets servants and jewels, but no beasts; in Chingam (August-September) friendship; in Kanni (September-October) loss of friends; in Thulam (October-November) death of his wife; in Vrischigam (November-December) money and crops; in Dhanu (December-January) he will become a devotee; in Makaram (January-February) there will be fear from enemies and thieves, but the builder will know of profits from many directions: in Kumbham (February-March), danger of fires; in Meenam (March-April) gold and sons.

The following asterisms are auspicious for commencing a building:—Aswini, Rohini, Mulam, the three Uttaras, Mrigasirsha, Swathi, Hasta, Anuradha. All days of the week, except Sunday and Tuesday, are auspicious. A house should be commenced at auspicious moments known as *muhurtas*: Sveda, Mitra, Mahendra, Gandharvâ, Rohini and also Raja Sävitra. The erection of the pillars should be performed at auspicious *lagnas*, moments when the sun and the moon are favourable; other moments should be avoided.

342 777 821 Inauspicious times.

Building operations should not be commenced in the rainy season nor at the end of the third part of the dark fortnight, and in the first and second part of the bright fortnight. Of the phases of the moon, the fourth, ninth, and fourteenth should be avoided. Tuesday is also to be omitted; for working on that day brings injury or bad luck. Days marked with dangers natural or any other, arising out of the earth, sky, or heavenly bodies and other calamities, such as the death of a friend, and those made ominous by the influence of some planets are considered inauspicious. A well informed person should do his work when the moon and the stars are favourable.

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The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi), 824
or *peràl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant on the west, *nàga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayàl* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peràl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arayal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343]
east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

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From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. Among the trees used for *pujas* or sacrifices are the sandal-wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

Folk-tales.

The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning.

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those of children under two or three years of age as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed.

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon)

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484

841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction
223 has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does
784 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

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has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corresponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a complete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

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are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824]
bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823]
about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613]
enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764
removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824]
(a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613]
lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775]
that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613]
the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766]
children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

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As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghī (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravād. Here must be stated the invariable rule that no member of the taravād, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

764 613 [824] [782] [823] [561]

* The eldest male member of the taravād is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravād.

mouth. With the breaking of a cocoanut, and the offering 764
of some powdered rice, betel leaf, areca nut, etc., the 184
body is taken to the pyre. The members junior to the deceased go round the pyre three, five, or seven times, throw paddy and rice over the dead body, put scantlings of sandal wood, prostrate at the feet of the corpse, and then set fire to the pyre. When the body is almost wholly consumed, one of the male members carries a pot of water, and, after making three rounds, the pot is broken and thrown into the pyre. The death of an [766]
elderly male member of a family is marked by udakakriya and sanchayanam, and the daily bali performed at the bali kutti (altar) planted in front of the house, or in the courtyard in the centre of the house, where there is one. The Ashtikurissi Nāyar officiates as priest at all such obsequies. On the morning of the fifteenth day, the 765
members of the family wear cloths washed by a Vēlan, 783
and assemble together for purification by the Nāyar 184
priest, both before and after bathing, who throws on them paddy and rice, and sprinkles the holy mixture. The Elayad or family purōhit then performs another punnayaham or purification, and on the sixteenth day he takes the place of the priest. On the evening of the fifteenth [574]
day, and the morning of the sixteenth day, the purōhits and villagers are sumptuously feasted, and presents of cloths and money are made to the Elayads. In the [564]
Chittūr tāluk, the Tamil Brāhman sometimes performs [793]
priestly functions in place of the Elayad. Dīksha is [769]
performed for forty-one days, or for a whole year, for the benefit of the departed soul. This last ceremony is invariably performed on the death of the mother, maternal uncle, and elder brother."

In connection with the habitations of the Nāyars, Mr. 342
Fawcett writes as follows. "A house may face east or [823]

342 west, never north or south; as a rule, it faces the east. [823] Every garden is enclosed by a bank, a hedge, or a fencing 351 of some kind, and entrance is to be made at one point only, the east, where there is a gate-house, or, in the case of the poorest houses, a small portico or open doorway roofed over. One never walks straight through this; [184] there is always a kind of stile to surmount. It is the same everywhere in Malabar, and not only amongst the 342 Nāyars. The following is a plan of a nālapura or four- 556 sided house, which may be taken as representative of the houses of the rich :—

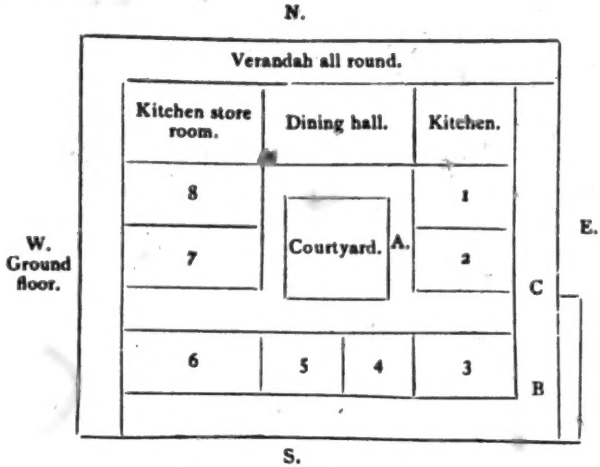

Numbers 6 and 7 are rooms, which are generally used for storing grain. At A is a staircase leading to the room of the upper storey occupied by the female members of the family. At B is another staircase leading to the rooms of the upper storey occupied by the male members. There is no connection between the portions allotted to the men and women. No. 8 is for [532] the family gods. The Karanavans and old women of [613] the family are perpetuated in images of gold or silver, [735] or, more commonly, brass. Poor people, who cannot

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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and other female friends of the girl then approach, and give 564 sweetmeats to the couple. The girl then serves food to the boy, 613 and after taking their meals together from the same leaf, they 588 proceed to the pandal, where a cloth is severed into two parts, and each part given to the Manavâlan and girl separately in the presence of Enangans and other friends. The severing [586] of the cloth is supposed to constitute a divorce."

If, as has been said, the "páttu" sung by the [533] Brâhmani, in "*Rig Vêdaswaram*" is in substitution for the Vêdas sung at the Nambûtiri's wedding—because the Vêdas cannot be used by any but Brâhmans—this part of the ceremonial seems to indicate imitation of the Nambûtiris. The Brâhmani is not however a "Brâhman lady" but merely represents one. In North Malabar she is of the Nambîsan caste.

The ceremony is much more analogous to that obtain- [171] ing in the Bellary district and round about it, through which women, called Basivis, are, after an initiatory ceremony of devotion to a deity, compelled (under certain conditions) to follow no rule of chastity, but whose children are under no degradation, than to the initiation of the Dêvadâsi in her career of harlotry.* It must be [735] said, however, that the ceremony, more especially as modified by poor people, when the Manavâlan is repre- [184] sented by a clay figure adorned with flowers, the handiwork of the girl's mother, looks very like it. But what demands consideration now is the position of Manavâlan to the bride. Does the ceremony confer on him any of the rights of a husband? There is much diversity of opinion on the point. Some say it does, while some say it does not. It seems certain that, as a rule, there can be no cohabitation between the two as a mere corollary of the tâli-tying ceremony. Should there be three girls in a family, *i.e.*, in the same taravâd house, aged, say, 9, 5 and 3, the ceremony is always done for all three at the same time. The only condition as to age of the girl is that the ceremony must be done before she reaches puberty. The bridegroom (to call him so) is selected after consulting agreement between his horoscope and the girl's. He is seated beside her in the marriage pandal, [824] and he invests her with the tâli. They eat of the same plantain leaf (used as a plate throughout Malabar). They [415] are placed in the same chamber, to go through the fiction

* An account of the Basivis, their devotion to deities, etc., by the writer will be found in the "Journal of the Anthropological Society of Bombay," [113] Vol. II., 6 (1891).

595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

001 Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, per- [787] formed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is [824] fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste."

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead.

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil.

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

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When the cremation has been done by night, the duty of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit) must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to this. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ; Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct

* Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ½ a pint.

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824 765 782 613

to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the Taravâd is ensured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them, plucked on their way back to the house, some grass (karuka pullu): they kneel in front of the piece of palmyra, with the right knee on the ground. Some of the grass is spread on the ground near the piece of leaf, and rings made with it are placed on the ring finger of the right hand by each one present. The first offerings consist of water, sandalwood paste and leaves of the cherîla: the eldest of the Anandravans leading the way. Boys need not go through the actual performance of offerings; it suffices for them to touch the eldest as he is making his offerings. The half-boiled rice is made into balls (pindams) and each one present takes one of these in his right hand and places it on the grass near the piece of palmyra leaf. Some gingelly seeds are put into the curd, which is poured so as to make three rings round the pindams. It is poured out of a small cup made with the leaf on which the half-boiled rice had been placed. It should not be poured from any other kind of vessel. The whole is then covered with this same plantain leaf, some lighted wick is waved, and some milk is put under the leaf. It is undisturbed for some moments, and the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand. The leaf is then removed and torn in two at its midrib, one piece being placed on either side of the pindams. The ceremony is then over for the day. The performers rise, and remove the wet clothing they have been wearing.

The eldest of the Anandravans should, it was omitted to mention, be kept somewhat separated from the other Anandravans while in the courtyard, and before the corpse is removed for cremation; a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law, or some such kind of relation remaining, as it were, between him and them. He has had the piece of cloth torn from the covering of the corpse tied round his waist, and he has had the piece of iron (usually a key) in the folds of his cloth, or stuck in his waist during the ceremony which has just been described. Now, when it has been completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice (pindams) are removed by women and girls of the Taravâd who âre junior to the deceased. They

[764] [607]

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
[825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[23] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
613 been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
574 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
783 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
824 place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
[431] bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
612 the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no
[783] ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

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At noon of Attam day a bamboo fresh sprouted, and therewith we made us a good fish trap. 796 539

And when to the tank a fishing we went, we baited a minnow.

By its tail did we hold it, on the *bund* did we dash it, and of cocoanuts, with milk full, eighteen we ground.

With elephant pepper we dressed it; with asafœtida we filled it, right up to the elephant's head.

Freshen up, flowers, oh freshen for me.

Having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the little children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M.; and then the daily decorations begin. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers and one or two varieties of foliage of differing tints are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. Among the flowers that contribute to the exquisite design may be named the common red, as well as the rarer variegated, lantana, the large red shoe flower *(Hibiscus rosa sinensis)* an indispensable feature of the cultivated vegetation in a Malayali's homestead, the yellow marigold, the yellow aster, the scarlet button flower, the sacred *tulsi (Ocimum sanctum)*, the wee, modest *thumber* (a vermifugal member of the Nepetæ tribe), the common *tagara* (yellow wild Cassia), the beautiful bluebell, and another common species of Cassia which the natives call the "Ônam flower." In addition, various little violet and purple wildlings that adorn the margins of rice fields, and beautiful specimens of the lily and allied orders of tropical plants are requisitioned by the weavers of these remarkably handsome, but, alas, quickly perishable, carpets. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal, hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork. This object is peculiar to the naturally well favoured province of Kéralam; and it serves to remind us that the people who possess the refined taste to produce such a pretty work of art must have long enjoyed a very high order of civilisation." 796 824

It has been noticed already under description of Nambûtiri Brahmans (Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1), that the cloths given as "Ônam presents" are yellow, or some part of them is yellow. There must be at least a yellow stripe or a small patch of yellow in a corner, which suggests a relic of sunworship in a form more pronounced than that which obtains at present. It is a harvest 796 431 796

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754 persons have the evil eye by nature. Potta Kannu, blind eye it is called. A person having the evil eye may, while *thinking evil*, infect man, woman or child by simply looking at them. Those who have the evil eye are generally women: men rarely. The cause is in the eye itself. No evil spirit is in any way connected with it. A woman may affect her own child. A person having the evil eye, looking at a beautiful or a healthy child, will affect it without intending to do so. The injury done through the eye is often unintentional. The power of the eye to do mischief is altogether beyond the volition of its possessor; but it is excessively virulent when mischief is really intended. Colour of the eye matters nothing. Nor is possession of the evil eye confined to [564] any caste. He knew a Nambûtiri who had it. The effect of it on a child is that it becomes lean, feverish, loses its well-favoured appearance, and cries in its sleep. Men and women suffer from headaches and pains in the limbs. Animals are disposed to lassitude and eat little. Cows will not give milk.

791 The Malayan drives away all these unpleasant ail-
755 ments by invoking an evil spirit Vuḍikandan by name: male, having no wife. By means of magic he *forces* [776] Vuḍikandan to do what he requires of him. But how? The process he would not tell. It is secret. That is, all but the drumming. No one outside the Malayan caste may be initiated into the fearsome mysteries. The spirit Vuḍikandan is used for no other rite. The Malayan also drives out evil spirits.

755 Châtu presented me with a mantram, a magic verse, written with a style on a cadjan leaf, the common [824] stationery of Malabar, and told me that whenever any [212] part of my person becomes affected by the evil eye, I should whisper the mantram over a piece of string and tie the string round my leg, or other limb or part of the body which suffers, and cure will take place instantaneously.

He works by day: never by night. A whole day is occupied in driving away injury through the evil eye in a bad case. He need not be starving; in fact has a good meal before he begins. The generous Châtu presented me also with a couple of mantrams such as would cure an easy case of harm through the evil eye, and explained their use.

[532] (1) "Ôm: Namo: Bhagavatôm Srîparamêsvaranûm Srî Pârvati yum Pallivêṭa Nâyaṭinnâî Ezhunellumpôl Srî

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until she is allowed to go out. Once out, she rushes like a mad thing into the arms of the Ôḍiyan. He takes her by the hand and leads her to the courtyard or outside it. At once she is stripped naked. The choru kindi (blood—vessel: the shell) being placed near it, the womb expands, and the fœtus is easily removed in a moment. A few leaves of the mailôsika plant (Polycarpæa spadicea*) are placed as was the other instrument of magic, and the womb contracts to the normal dimensions.

No wonder the Ôḍiyan is feared. By means of this *pilla thilum* he may render himself invisible; in fact he is able to do anything, according to popular belief.

SPIRITS, EVIL AND BENEFICENT, HOW SUBDUED.†

A regular working magician tells us something more of these. The most important of the evil spirits (Dûr murti) are—

Karinkutti.	Bhâiravan.
Kuttichchâttan (we have met him before).	Vanni bhâiravan.
Mâranakutti.	Chotâla bhadra kâli.
Kallâti mûttam.	Dûmapati.
Parakkutti.	Narasihmamûrti.
Ôḍikkutti.	Kâla bhâiravan.
Kuttu bhâiravan.	Ôḍi bhâiravan.

Nearly every man, woman and child in Malabar wears some protective charm against evil spirits. Such charms are also very commonly tied round the necks of cattle, goats and even dogs.

Here follows the recipe for subjection of the spirit Karinkutti into one's service. Of course each spirit is treated always in a totally different way. First you bury a dead black or reddish buffalo. You must not catch your buffalo and kill him. You must find him dead. If you say this is far from easy, I can only remark that the subjection of an evil spirit is not an easy matter. Having buried your buffalo—assuming for the moment that you are a magician, such as the instructions are intended for—you bathe, and while your cloths are wet and clinging to your body, draw the figure chakram, which corresponds to a magic circle, on the ground over the buried buffalo. The

* I am not sure that the correct name is here given for this plant. It may be Alpinia Allughas, the aromatic rhizomes of which are used by natives medicinally.

† For this note, too, I thank Mr. Balakrishna Nâyar.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *reppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the [842] arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were 588 184 178 796 too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves fie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he [613] could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 713 564 184 833 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
301 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a
789 silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

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291 184 richer classes go in for Benares silk. This is wound round the loins and extends to the feet. The upper part of the body is seldom covered by the commoner folk, though most of them carry a second piece of cloth with them. Among the titled classes of the Nāyars it is customary to put on a long piece of laced muslin on the upper part of their body.

Mostly the Nāyars go barefoot, though expensive and elaborately-made sandals are used by the richer classes.

824 302 *Scents, Flowers, etc.*—The Nāyars use a lot of scented things. Sandal-wood paste, which has a beautiful aroma, is generally used on various parts of the body. Musk is also used, generally by ladies. Jasmine is the favourite flower. It is worn in clusters by women in their hair. It is very difficult to find an old Nāyar house which has not got a jasmine plant in its garden. Its scent is delightful, and when strung together as a garland it makes the most delightful, as well as the most welcome, present to a lady. Jasmine is also strewn in the bridal bed.

415 412 326 *Household Utensils.*—Household utensils, plates, pots, etc., are mostly made of bronze. Very few Nāyar families have got what is spoken of as household silver. The material they use is generally made with great taste, but the praise for this does not belong to them. The workers in bronze are hereditary craftsmen. Their life is devoted to designing and making these things, and naturally they have acquired great efficiency in it. The only praise that the Nāyars deserve for using them lies in the fact that, in spite of a strong temptation to go in for aluminium ware, which is much cheaper, they persist in using the costly, but better made and more artistic bronze things.

121 178 What is the future of this people? Will they become patrilineal and merge into the vast ocean of Hindu population, or will they remain matrilineal, while adjusting their social relationships and economic organisations to suit the changing conditions of life in India? Will they break up their *Tharawad* (the joint family) and abandon the primitive system of classificatory relationship? These are questions difficult to answer, but some new tendencies may here be noticed.

178 611 One thing I must say to start with. There is no chance of the system of matriliny undergoing any fundamental change in Malabar. The reason for this is twofold. Firstly, the economic interest is too large to submit to any change in the order of things dictated by purely theoretical reasons. Even if we could establish that the patrilineal system of life is superior to the matrilineal, the change from the latter to the former would not take place in Malabar, because it would mean a social revolution of some magnitude. Secondly, as long as there is the Brahmin marriage system it is not only the Nāyars that are interested in its upkeep, but also the Nampudiris.

178 564 Another reason is this. There is in Malabar what may be called a strong caste war. There is first of all the Nampudiri class, mostly landlords with great social and religious influence. Their rivalry is not of great importance. There are, then, the Nāyars. Thirdly, we have the Syrian Christians, who are an extremely intelli-

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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342
The construction of a house on the left or back of a Vishnu 777
temple, on the right of a Siva or Durga temple, or by the right 778
side of a Sastha temple, will cause calamities to the occupants; 823
but that on the opposite side will bring prosperity.

Houses should not be constructed near temples, paddy flats, hermitages, the sea, hills, or cow-shed; if constructed near temples, they should be lower in height than the religious edifices.

Houses, constructed on a dry-land (*paramba*) with an ele- 342
vation to the north-west, will last for eighteen years; and if on 823
an elevation towards the east, south and south-east, a hundred years; if, however, they are built on a ground with an elevation to the north-east, they will last for a thousand, if to the west, twelve years, and to the north, eight years. Houses built on grounds sloping to the north with *athi* (Ficus racemosa) near them, those sloping to the east with *arayal* (Ficus religiosa) growing thereon, those with an inclination to the west, with Peràl (Ficus Indica) growing thereon, and grounds with *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) are fit for the occupation of the members of the four castes.

The following trees, namely, *elanni* (Mimusops Elangi) 824
or *peràl* (Ficus Indica) growing on the eastern side of a house, 342
athi (Ficus racemosa) or *puli* (Tamarindus Indica) on the 351
southern side, *arayal* (Ficus religiosa), *pala* (Echites scholaris) 823
or milk plant on the west, *nâga* tree (Trichosanthes anguina) and *ithi* (Ficus Venosa) on the north, will bring prosperity to the occupants. Jack and mango trees cocoanut and areca palms may grow on all sides of a house. *Arayâl* (Ficus religiosa) growing on the eastern side of a house will cause it to take fire, while *peràl* on the western side will give cause for fear from enemies. *Athi* on the northern side of the house will bring on abdominal complaints to the occupants. *Arâyal* growing near a house must be cut off, unless the distance between the house and the tree be twice the height of the latter. A cow-shed may be erected either to the [343] east or the west of the main building; and a similar one to the south of it for bullocks and buffaloes. There are certain ceremonies performed both at the commencement of construction and at its various stages, as well as before the occupation of a house, a detailed description of which will be found in the account of the Brahmans.[1]

1. Chandrika.

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by [564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some 852 rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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796 184 and dancing. This nightly routine of *pujas*, offerings, dancing, [782] etc., is thus continued for the prescribed number of days.

On the morning following the last day, the votaries purify [535] themselves by a bath and fetch branches of *pala* trees, and a [776] dancing procession is organised, which wends its way through the Nayar streets, accompanied by the Goddess manifested through her *Velichapad*, to the temple of the Goddess, and from there disperse to their respective houses before evening after singing songs of praise and thanks-giving in honour of the Goddess. A pit, 15 feet long, 5 feet broad and 3 feet deep, is then made and filled with ten to fifteen cart-loads of fuel which is burned and reduced to glowing red hot charcoal. [787] Here also is performed a *puja*. At about 4 A. M., the *Velicha-* [789] *pad* through whom the Goddess manifests herself, the priests, the votaries, and lastly the caste-men, all walk over the fire several times.

[782] The day dawns and the senior member of the Porayattu family sitting on the stool consecrated to Bhagavati, and covering his head with the silk cloth of the deity, propitiates [753] her with offerings of fruits, cocoanuts, and fowls. The whole ceremony is thus brought to an end. The object of this pro- [789] pitiation is to protect people from the attacks of cholera, small-pox, and other epidemics.

241 Before closing this part of the subject, it may be noted that the agricultural year begins with the *Vishu* (first of Medam, about the middle of April) at which [787] the hot weather is supposed to terminate. In families where the members pursue agriculture as a profession, they send for the local *Kaniyan* (astrologer), who estimates by astronomical calculations the agricultural prospects and the probable quan- [824] tity of rain during the ensuing year. He is also asked to choose an auspicious day for ploughing, and on that day the master of the house goes to the seed-store with his Pulayan slaves and takes out a small quantity of each variety of seed, which he puts in a cup made of the leaves of the *kanniram* (nux vomica); he then places the cups in a basket near a lamp in the yard and places a small heap of rice around or near it. A new ploughshare fastened to a plough, and a pair of oxen are also brought, and these are painted with rice water. They are then taken in procession to the field, on reaching which the

Agricultural ceremonies.

[i.e., The Goddess Bhagavati -- Analyst]

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Pulayan head-man raises a mound of earth on which are thrown a little manure and a handful of seed. He then yokes the cattle to the plough and turns a square plot of ground, taking care to have furrows made in it, and the plough dropped on the right. Ganapati is then propitiated with offerings, and the master throws the seed in the furrow, when the Pulaya head-man invokes the blessings of the gods and the deceased ancestors on the seeds that have been sown broadcast, on the cattle that are let loose, and also on the members of the family, and prays them for a good crop, much sunshine, and a good harvest. A cocoanut is then cut on the ploughshare, and if the hind portion is larger than the front one, it predicts an excellent harvest. If the nut is cut into two equal portions, the harvest will be moderate; if the cut passes through the eyes of the nut or if no water is left in the cut portions, misfortune is foreboded. The portions of the cocoanut are then picked up with the milk inside them and a leaf of the *tulsi* plant (Ocymum sanctum) is dropped into each; if the leaf turns to the right, a prosperous harvest is assured; if to the left, the contrary. The ceremonial concludes with loud shouts and invocations to the gods of husbandry; and the unused seeds are distributed among the workmen.

Nira :—The bringing in of the first fruits (*Nira*) is celebrated at the end of Karkadagam (August), previous to which the doors and windows of the houses are cleansed with the leaves of a tree called *paragam* (Ficus hispida) and decorated with rice flour, while the walls are white-washed, and the yard smeared with cow-dung. On the gates of the houses are placed various kinds of flowers together with their leaves and branches, *viz* :—*athi* (Ficus racemosa), *ithi* (Ficus venosa), *arayil* (Ficus religiosa), *peral* (Ficus Indica), *illi* (young bamboo leaves), *nelli* (Phyllanthus Emblica), *jack* (artocarpus integrifolia), and *mango* (manganefera indica). On the morning of the ceremonial day, the priest of the temple comes out preceded by a Marar blowing a conch-shell, when a bunch of the ears of paddy already placed by the Pulayans outside the outer wall of the temple is taken by him to the temple with the same Marar blowing the conch. Every house-holder then sends out to the fields a man duly purified by a bath and smeared with ashes to gather some rice. As he brings it to

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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824 the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being
[778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck.
[301] Among the trees used for *pújas* or sacrifices are the sandal-
[782] wood, the *plásu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrúksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus
[278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

77 The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that
538 Folk tales. cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

539 The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or
[821] moon by the huge serpent Ráhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on
[775] their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a
[821] kind of precious stone (*mánikka kallu*) from the mouths of
[825] serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have
[823] acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were
539 asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a portion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The [789] nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykatta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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prevailed on him to cease his work. The head was therefore transformed into a cocoanut which was henceforth to be one of the most useful of all trees in the vegetable kingdom, and was dedicated to Ganésa, the patron of science and learning. 824 539

Funeral customs.

The Nayars generally burn their dead bodies, while those of children under two or three years of age as well as those of persons who have died of small-pox or cholera are buried. When a Nayar is at the point of death, the members of the house-hold and friends who may be present, one by one, pour into his mouth a few drops of Ganges or other holy water or *kanji* water, from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the *tulsi* plant. While doing this, they hold in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring and the water is supposed to touch the gold, before it enters the mouth of the dying person. Sometimes, a *fanam* or gold piece is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. 764 [766] 763 [778] [823]

As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed and carried to the *vadakkini*, a room at the northern end of the house, where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor, and while it is there, a lamp is kept burning both day and night. One member of the family holds the head in his lap, while another the feet in the same way, and here it is that the neighbours come to have a last look at the dead. All the while, the names of gods or sacred texts are loudly recited in the hope that the soul may quit the world with recollections of God which would serve as a passport to Heaven. Immediately death occurs, the members of the house and the relatives assembled there burst out into loud lamentations, announcing the sad event to the caste-men of the village who attend at once. When preparations for the funeral have been made, the dead body is carried to the *nadumittam* or central yard of the house, or if there is no central yard, to the front yard where it is again laid on plantain leaves. It is then washed, anointed and neatly clothed, and the usual marks of sandal-wood paste and ashes, as in life, are made. The senior member of the deceased's family along with others including the sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and all the relatives, place new cotton cloths over the dead, and these are used for tying up the corpse before being taken to the cremation ground. Before removal, another ceremony called *Para Nirakkuka* (filling up *para*, a measure thrice the size of a gallon) 764 [824] [804]

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks 613
round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on 764
the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made [532]
out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (mak- 765
ing offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the 782
second day after death and continues for seven days, the parti- 613
culars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chíthayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the 824
belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in 826
the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prínan*, *Apánan*, *Sa-* 764
mánan, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Déva-* 774
dathan and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brah- [789]
man sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the [775]
palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 782

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned care- 824
fully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 765
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surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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below it, to cover the upper part of the body, and traces of the same custom can still be found among other Dravidian tribes, some of them being people who are anything but uncivilized. The prohibition applies both to males and females. Men moreover cannot wear caps, turbans or shoes, and must divest themselves of these luxuries, when they meet their elders, even though the meeting takes place in the middle of the road. Until 1865, it was forbidden by law for women of the Chóvans and of those of the lower castes to wear any clothing above the loins. The present generation of Nayar women, except perhaps the servants and the poor, have taken to the use of an upper garment and petticoat, in the same way as the Nayar males now freely use a second cloth. Young girls wear a piece of cloth round the loins, while those of four and five years of age wear a small strip of cloth, or a piece of the bark of areca palm. Generally young children of both sexes go about naked.

The subject of hair-dressing and personal adornment is more psychological and ethnological than hygienic. The Nayar women take special care in the growth and preservation of their hair. They use a kind of medicinal oil to improve its growth, and to keep it smooth and shiny. Many a young woman's plait of hair reaches the knee or even lower, and this adds greatly to her beauty. The hair is parted in the middle and tied either tight to the ears or twisted up in front in a sort of cone or sometimes tied into a knot behind.

Jewellery.

The Nayar women are fond of jewellery. They are no doubt partial to gold, but unlike their Brahman sisters they wear very few ornaments for daily use. The oldest ornament of the Nayar lady is the *nágapatam* or serpent's hood, so called from the shape of the pendant. The ear-ornament is the *thóda*, which is a double convex disc, the front surface of which is either plain or set with rubies, for the wearing of which the ear-lobes are sufficiently dilated. This dilating process begins at a very early age, and the ear-lobes, in the case of a majority of the women, become so far distended as to make it possible to wear *thódas* of more than an inch in diameter. The tendency at present is to wear small ones which do not require much dilation. Then come the ornaments for the nose which are *múkkuthi* and *nathu*. These do not find favour with the young women of these days, and what is called the nose-screw set with a ruby has taken their place.

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Appendix 5

Lists of Trees and other Produce Found in Kerala Along with their Present Uses

E denotes Evergreen; *D* denotes Deciduous; *H* denotes Hardwood; *S* denotes Softwood

Malayalam name	*Botanical name*	*E* or *D*	*S* or *H*	*Uses*
1	2	3	4	5
1. *Teak*	*Tectona grandis*	D	H	Construction, furniture
2. *Mathi (Thembavu)*	*Terminalia tomentosa*	D	H	Construction, sleepers, etc.
3. *Marudu*	*Terminalia paniculata*	D	H	-do-
4. *Venteak*	*Larger stromia Lanceolata*	D	H	Boat-building, ceilings
5. *Venga*	*Pterocarpus Marsupium*	D	H	Building construction good substitute for teak
6. *Manjakadamba*	*Adina cordifolia*	D	H	Bobbins and furniture
7. *Rosewood*	*Dalbergia latifolia*	D	H	Furniture, plywood, export size above 72" midgirth
8. *Chadachi (Unnam)*	..	D	H	Furniture
9. *Kunnivaga*	*Albizia Odoratissima*	D	H	Building construction
10. *Aruni or (Anjili)*	*Artocarpus hirsuta*	E	H	-do-, Good substitute for teak, boat-building furniture
11. *Irimbagam or (Nanga)*	*Mesua Ferrea*	E	H	Sleepers
12. *Mahogany*	*Swietina antocarpa*	E	H	Furniture
13. *Wattle*	*Acacia molissima*	D	H	Being introduced for tan bark
14. *Ambazham*	*Spondeas mangifera*	D	S	Packing cases
15. *Cheeni*	*Tetramolus nudiflora*	E	S	Packing cases
16. *Mani Maruthi*	*Lagerstromia flosreginae*	E	S	Building construction
17. *Cherapine*	*Hardwickiia binata*	D	H	Packing cases, plywood
18. *Chuvvangil*	*Cedrela toona*	D	H	Furniture

(*Continued*)

[PP 313-328 not Processed]

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Appendix 5 (Continued)

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824

1	2	3	4	5
19. *Mola*	*Dendrocalmus*			Bamboos for cheap housing, raw material for paper and rayon
20. *Pala*	*Alstonia scholaris*	E	S	Packing cases
21. *Irool*	*Xylia Xylocarpa*	D	H	Railway sleepers, building construction
22. *Kalpine*	*Dipterocarpus indicus*	E	S	Plywood
23. *Konna*	*Cassia fistula*	D	S	Tanning
24. *Vellangil* (white cedar)	*Dysoxylum malabaricum*	E	H	Plywood and furniture
25. *Nellika*	*Phyllanthus emblica*	E	H	Fruits for pickling and for Ayurvedic medicines
26. *Maruetti*	*Hypocarpus wighkana*	E	H	Soap-making, oil used for lighting purpose
27. *Eta reed*	*Ochlandra Travancoria and Reedi*			Raw material for paper
28. *Padiri*	*Stereospermum Chelonoidis*	E	S	Packing cases
29. *Pilavu*	*Artocarpus integrifolia*	D	H	Building construction, boat-making, furniture, etc.
30. *Poola* (*Elavu*)	*Salmalia Malabaricum*	D	S	Matchwood, cotton used for pillows
31. *Pocoam*	*Schleichera trijuga*	D	H	For lac cultivation
32. *Punna*	*Calophylum tomentosa*	E	H	Plywood and cheap timber for construction purposes
33. *Kanliegum*	*Hopea parviflora*	E	H	Building construction, sleepers, etc.
34. *Vakkai*	*Sterculia Villosa*			Cember Bark (fibre) used for making ropes for timber dragging purposes
35. *Chakkuta*	*Colonia excelsa*	E	S	Plywood
36. *Vellapine*	*Vatteria indica*	E	S	A favourite plywood species
37. *Mathi*	*Ailanthus malabaricum* (*excelsa*)	D	S	Matchwood
38. *Puli*	*Palaquim Elipticum*	E	S	Plywood
39. *Kulamavu*	*Machilus Macrantha*	E	S	-do-
40. *Mavu*	*Mangifera indica*	E	S	Plywood, boat-building, packing cases
41. *Kalamacha*	*Anacolosa densiflora*	E	S	Plywood
42. *Kayari* (*chera*)	*Callinia excelsa*	E	S	-do-
43. *Shweli*	*Hardwicka Pinnata*	E	S	-do-

(Continued)

11: India , G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Appendix 5 (Continued)

1	2	3	4	5
44. ..	*Eucalyptus grandis*	E	S	Pulp timber
45. *Blue gum*	*E. Globulus*	E	S	Pulp timber
46. *Cashew*	*Anacardium Occidentale*	E	H	Nuts and apple
47. *Kodukka*	*Terminalia Chebula, and belerica*	D	H	Myrobalans
48. *Punnappamaram*	*Delenia pentagyna*	D	H	House construction
49. *Vekkali*	*Anogeissi latifolia*	D	H	Mine props
50. *Nedunar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	S	Masts and packing cases
51. *Nedunar*	*Polialthia fragrans*	E	H	Cabinet-making and furniture
52. *Malavappu*	*Chukrasia tabularis*	E	H	-do-
53. *Chenkurunthi*	*Elattrawanceria*	E	H	-do-
54. *Venkotta*	*Lophopetlum wightianum*	E	S	Plywood
55. *Puli*	*Tamarindus indica*	D	E	Fruit good glue material, Bobbins
56. *Aval*	*Holoptelea integrifolia*	E	S	Box and packing cases
57. *Black dammar*	*Canarium strictum*	E	S	Packing cases
58. *Papitta*	*Sterculia compaulata*	E	S	Matchwood, packing cases
59. *Kambli (Nasakam)*	*Evodia roxburghiana*	E	S	Matchwood
60. *Vella Kamadamba*	*Hyrmodicton excelsa*	D	S	Bobbins
61. *Poovarsu*	*Thespesia populnea*	D	H	Shuttles
62. *Datapala*	*Wightia tinctoria*	D	H	Combs, and carvings
63. ..	*Gmelina arborium*	D	H	Musical instruments
64. *Pungu*	*Pongamia glabra*	D	H	Oil seeds
65. *Mukayini*	*Bridelia retusa*	D	H	Tans and dyes
66. *Chandu*	*Caulpinia sappan*	D	H	Dyes
67. *Udi*	*Odina wodier*	D	H	Gum used for curving fishermen's nets

SOURCE: Department of Forests, Government of Kerala.

313
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824

588 death pollution when her Manavālan dies. The same
[765] Manavālan may tie the tāli on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time, and he
[793] may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brāh-
[564] man, who receives a small present for his services. The girl may remove the tāli, if she likes, after the fourth day.
[184] In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavālan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into sambandham with her."

588 Of the tāli-kattu kalyānam in Malabar, the following
184 detailed account, mainly furnished by an Urāli Nāyar of Calicut, is given in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "An auspicious time has to be selected for the purpose, and the preliminary consultation of the astrologer is in itself the occasion of a family gathering. The Manavālan or quasi-bridegroom is chosen at the same time. For the actual kalyānam, two pandals (booths), a small one inside a large one, are erected in front of the padinhātta macchu or central room of the western wing. They are decorated with cloth, garlands, lamps and palm leaves, and the pillars should be of areca palm cut by an Asāri
[778] on Sunday, Monday, or Wednesday. The first day's
[789] ceremonies open with a morning visit to the temple, where the officiating Brāhman pours water sanctified by mantrams (religious formulæ), and the addition of leaves of mango, peepul and darbha, over the girl's head. This
[354] rite is called kalasam maduga. The girl then goes home, and is taken to the macchu, where a hanging lamp with five wicks is lighted. This should be kept alight
[352] during all the days of the kalyānam. The girl sits on a
[824] piece of pala (*Alstonia scholaris*) wood, which is called a mana. She is elaborately adorned, and some castes
[301]

Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534]
which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti * [354]
carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack [602] (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

184
on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782]
juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824]
waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564]
of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764]
lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825]
woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of [824]
the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828]
superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613]
pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayûr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorûn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mârayan caste among Nâyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mârayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

thorns. The wires or thorns are left in the ears. In 304
the case of girls, the hole is subsequently gradually [301]
distended by the insertion of nine different kinds of thorns or plugs in succession, the last of which is a bamboo plug, till it is large enough to admit the characteristic Malayāli ear ornament, the boss-shaped toda."

Of the death ceremonies among the Nāyars of Malabar, 763
the following detailed account is given by Mr. Fawcett. "When the dying person is about to embark for that [824] bourne from which no traveller returns, and the breath is [823] about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one, pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring, the idea being that the person should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the taravād is rich [613] enough to afford it, a small gold coin (a rāsi fanam, if one can be procured) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is 764 removed from the cot or bed and carried to the vatakkini [824] (a room in the northern end of the house), where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and, while it is in the room, whether by day or night, a [613] lamp is kept burning, and one member of the taravād holds the head in his lap, and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. As the Malayālis believe [775] that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of [613] the taravād, male or female, are burned, those of [766] children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all

As much fuel as is necessary having been got ready at 764
the place of cremation, a small pit about the size of 613
the corpse is dug, and across this are placed three long stumps of plantain tree, one at each end, and one in the middle, on which as a foundation the pyre is laid. The [824]
whole, or at least a part of the wood used, should be that of the mango tree. As the corpse is being removed to the pyre, the senior Anandravan * who is next in age (junior) to the deceased tears from one of the new cloths laid on the corpse a piece sufficient to go round his waist, ties it round his waist and holds in his hand, or tucks into his cloth at the waist, a piece of iron, generally a long key. This individual is throughout chief among [782]
the offerers of pindam (balls of rice) to the deceased. The [823]
corpse is laid on the bier with the head to the south, with the fuel laid over it, and a little camphor, sandal-wood and ghi (clarified butter); if these things are within the means of the taravâd. Here must be stated [561]
the invariable rule that no member of the taravâd, male or female, who is older than the deceased, shall take any part whatever in the ceremony, or in any subsequent ceremony following on the cremation or burial. All adult males junior to the deceased should be present when the pyre is lighted. The deceased's younger brother, or, if there is none surviving, his nephew (his sister's eldest son) sets fire to the pyre at the head of the corpse. If the deceased left a son, this son sets fire at the same time to the pyre at the feet of the corpse. In the case of the deceased being a woman, her son sets fire to the pyre ; failing a son, the next junior in age to her has the right to do it. It is a matter of greatest

* The eldest male member of the taravâd is called the Karanavan. All male members, brothers, nephews, and so on, who are junior to him, are called Anandravans of the taravâd.

291 "if the Census Commissioner had enjoyed the privilege of living among the Nāyars, he would not have accused them of an 'excess of females.' The most beautiful women in India, if numerous, could never be excessive." Concerning Nāyar females, Pierre Loti writes* that "les femmes ont presque toutes les traits d'une finesse particulière. Elles se font des bandeaux a la Vierge, et, avec le reste de leurs cheveux, très noirs et très lisses, composent une espèce de galette ronde qui se porte au sommet de la tête, en avant et de côté, retombant un peu vers le front comme une petite toque cavalièrement posée, en contraste sur l'ensemble de leur personne qui
515 demeure toujours grave et hiératique."] The Nāyars are particularly cleanly. Buchanan writes that "the higher ranks of the people of Malayala use very little clothing,
[824] but are remarkably clean in their persons. Cutaneous
[302] disorders are never observed except among slaves and the lowest orders, and the Nāyar women are remarkably careful, repeatedly washing with various saponaceous plants to keep their hair and skins from every impurity."
296 The washerman is constantly in requisition. No dirty
292 cloths are ever worn. When going for temple worship, the Nāyar women dress themselves in the tattu form by drawing the right corner of the hind fold of the cloth between the thighs, and fastening it at the back. The cloth is about ten cubits long and three broad, and worn
301 in two folds. The oldest ornament of the Nāyar women is the necklace called nāgapatam, the pendants of which resemble a cobra's hood. The Nāyar women wear no ornament on the head, but decorate the hair with flowers. The nāgapatam, and several other forms of neck ornament, such as kazhultila, nalupanti, puttali,

* L'Inde (sans les Anglais).

796 eighteenth century, observes that about the tenth of September the rain ceases in Malabar. All nature seems then as if renovated; the flowers again shoot up, and the trees bloom. In a word, this season is the same as that which Europeans call spring. The Ōnam festival is said, therefore, to have been instituted for the purpose of soliciting from the gods a happy and fruitful [237] year. It continues for eight days, and during that time the Indians are accustomed to adorn their houses with [825] flowers, and to daub them over with cow-dung, because the cow is a sacred animal, dedicated to the Goddess Lakshmi, the Ceres of India. On this occasion they also put on new clothes, throw away all their old earthenware, and replace it by new. Ōnam is, according to some, the annual celebration of the Malabar new year, which first began with Cheraman Perumal's departure for Mecca. But, with the majority of orthodox Hindus, it is the day of the annual visit of Mahabali to his country, which he used to govern so wisely and well before his overthrow. There is also a belief that it is Maha-Vishnu who, on Ōnam day, pays a visit to this mundane universe, for the just and proper maintenance of which he is specially responsible. In some North Malabar title-deeds and horoscopes, Mr. Logan says, the year is taken as ending with the day previous to Ōnam. This fact, he notes, is quite reconcileable with the other explanation, which alleges that the commencement of the era coincides with Perumal's departure for Arabia, if it is assumed, as is not improbable, that the day on which he sailed was Thiruvōnam day, on which acknowledgment of fealty should have been made. Ōnam, it may be observed, is a contraction of Thiruvōnam which is the asterism [824] of the second day of the festival. Throughout the festival, boys from five to fifteen years of age go out

early in the morning to gather flowers, of which the kadali is the most important. On their return, they sit in front of the tulasi (sacred basil) mandapam, make a carpet-like bed of the blossoms which they have collected, and place a clay image of Ganapati in the centre. A writer in the Calcutta Review * describes how having set out at dawn to gather blossoms, the children return with their beautiful spoils by 9 or 10 A.M., and then the daily decoration begins. The chief decoration consists of a carpet made out of the gathered blossoms, the smaller ones being used in their entirety, while the large flowers, and one or two varieties of foliage of different tints, are pinched up into little pieces to serve the decorator's purpose. This flower carpet is invariably made in the centre of the clean strip of yard in front of the neat house. Often it is a beautiful work of art, accomplished with a delicate touch and a highly artistic sense of tone and blending. The carpet completed, a miniature pandal (booth), hung with little festoons, is erected over it, and at all hours of the day neighbours look in, to admire and criticise the beautiful handiwork."

796 824 [532]

"Various field sports, of which foot-ball is the chief, are indulged in during the Ōnam festival. To quote Paulinus once more, the men, particularly those who are young, form themselves into parties, and shoot at each other with arrows. These arrows are blunted, but exceedingly strong, and are discharged with such force that a considerable number are generally wounded on both sides. These games have a great likeness to the Ceralia and Juvenalia of the ancient Greeks and Romans."

796 526 [171]

* January, 1899.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

342 tertaining friends, or sleeping when they were not visiting their wives. [343] A cowshed a few yards from the residential buildings completed the arrangements in a normal retainer homestead. In village headmen's 342 and chiefly households whose women often had Brahman husbands 556 a separate building with its own kitchen was set aside to entertain the men when they visited their wives.

[357] The buildings and outer courtyard were surrounded by a shady garden of coconut, jack, cashew, and mango trees. Chiefs and village [312] headmen had a private bathing pool with stone steps round it in their own gardens. Retainers more often bathed in the large public bathing [515] pools attached to the temples and reserved for "clean" castes of the village. Men and women bathed and swam daily on opposite sides of the pool.

357 In the southwest corner of the garden an open space was set aside 613 as the property group's cremation ground, entered only at funerals. [764] In another corner was a dense shrubbery devoted to the snake gods [776] of the group. Offerings were made there to small stone images of [782] cobras, and if real cobras appeared they were regarded as manifesta- [825] tions of these deities.

A high bamboo fence surrounded the whole establishment. It was entered through a wooden gatehouse within which armed men might 592 sit on guard in time of war.

Economic Activities The property group obtained almost all of its 241 subsistence from garden and paddy lands held on tenure from the 427 village landlord and cultivated by Tiyyar sub-tenants or by Pulaya 613 serfs. The property group surrendered part of its produce in kind as 433 dues to the landlord. It retained part for maintenance, stored part for repayment to its serfs as daily subsistence, and gave portions twice annually to the village servant households. Tiyyar tenants retained enough for their own needs, but gave the bulk of their produce to their Nayar masters. Increasingly during the period of European trade [439] the property group also sold spices and coconuts to Muslim middle- [432] men in exchange for cash or cloth. The cash was used to buy brass and silver vessels, gold ornaments and jewelry, and other luxury goods [431] from the towns. The property group gave some cloth to its serfs and tenants at festivals once a year.

613 The kāranavan managed all these transactions and controlled the 592 group's estate. He might allocate specific tasks of management to [465] juniors, but no payment was made on behalf of the group, no crops were sold, and no goods were consumed without his consent. Junior men serving in the king's wars received small daily cash sums on an

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Nambudiri Brahmans

eldest son also traditionally observed *dīkṣā* for his father along with the matrilineal heir.

Age-rank within the *taravād* finds expression in the rites. Among Nambūdiri Brahmans, if an unmarried but initiated boy dies, his father may perform his funeral and anniversary rites. For the souls of father and son are dependent upon one another for salvation. But among Nāyars, a man may not take part in funeral rites for one junior to him in the *taravād*, for respect toward juniors is inappropriate. A Nāyar who dies leaving no junior old enough to act as chief mourner is therefore buried without ceremony and no rites are performed for his ghost.

Nāyars have adopted the Brahmanical belief that funeral and anniversary rites assist the spirit in its passage to another world, and that immersion of the ashes in sacred water affords it peace. Like the Brahmans, they acknowledge the theory of rebirth, and hold that a spirit which is correctly propitiated after death is likely to be eventually reborn in a high estate. As in the case of the Brahmans, the theory of *karma* provides the Nāyars with a moral rationale for their high position in the caste system, and it is chiefly in this connection that I have heard it quoted. It is difficult to discover how old are Sanskritic beliefs concerning the soul among Nāyars, and they are not uniform at the present day. Most Nāyars use the word *pretam* to refer to the ghost or the soul in all contexts. This is a Sanskrit word (*preta*) for a malevolent ghost, but it is used by Nambūdiri Brahmans only for alien malevolent ghosts. A few Nāyars stated that that aspect of the soul which is reborn is the *ātmā*. This Sanskrit word is used by Brahmans for the soul in connection with rebirth and with union with the universal soul, called *paramātmā*. The *ātmā*, these Nāyar informants say, is neither malevolent nor beneficent. It cannot be understood by ordinary people and is a subject for philosophers. The *pretam*, by contrast, is the punitive ghost of an ancestor or of one who died violently. It can be only too easily understood even by the ignorant and does not require deep study. This belief in two souls, or in a soul and a ghost, may be modern, for it was given by only a few younger informants.

At all events, the Sanskritic rites of death are customarily adapted by Nāyars to belief in a malevolent *pretam*, for at every step fear of the *pretam* is referred to. Whereas Brahmans perform the rites ostensibly in order that the soul may be at peace, Nāyars have traditionally performed them in active fear of the ghost's retaliation should its comfort not be ensured. During the days of pollution, Nāyars offer rice balls before a palmyra stem set up in the yard before the ancestral house. The *pretam* of the deceased is believed to enter this stem, and it is believed that it will attack the *taravād* with further death or with sickness if the offerings are not satisfactorily performed. During the offerings each Nāyar propitiant in turn wears round his waist a piece of cloth torn from the wrapper of the corpse in order to associate himself with the spirit. But inside this cloth Nāyars also tuck a knife, blade uppermost, to ward off the spirit's attack. After the offerings are made, both Brahmans and Nāyars clap their wet hands to summon crows to eat the rice balls. If the crows do not come, it is believed that the spirit has not received the offering. This may then be repeated on the advice of the astrologer. In Tanjore, Brahmans seemed to regret the miscarriage of the offering only for the sake of the spirit. But Nāyars regard it as an extremely evil omen, and fear the ghost's retaliation in the form of a second death within the *taravād*. The Brahmanical ceremonies themselves contain rites of segregation from the deceased which are susceptible to the interpretation that those who perform them wish to be rid of him. Such, for example, is the rite of dashing a pot of water at the head end of

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SNAKE WORSHIP AMONG THE NAYARS OF SOUTH INDIA

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NO species of animal has impressed mankind to the same extent as the snake apparently has. Startling indeed is its power of sudden appearance and disappearance; and its gliding motion, without appendages, gives it an eerie quality. The lightning suddenness of its bite and the tragic consequences, coupled with its amazing swiftness, place the snake in a category of its own. Above all its habit of casting off its skin periodically endows it with a supposed immortality which becomes the cause of its extreme veneration. Snake worship is very widespread in the world and is attended by varying rites and ceremonies. In India, where many species of snakes abound, the cult is very widespread. Perhaps due to the variety of species and the consequent danger and damage involved, snake worship in India may have had a local origin, though J. Tod traces its origin to a Central Asian tribe called Tak.[1]

[114]

It is significant that in the very rude and low cultures, among tribes like the Veddahs and Andamanese, and to some extent among the Australians, snake worship is not found. The Australians do have totemic clans named after snakes, but no special veneration is paid to snakes as such. In West Africa, on the other hand, among the Dahomey tribe the monster python Dahu Sio is worshipped as a great god, and is propitiated for favourable weather, for oracles and for wealth. Even in the Palaeolithic period snakes were held in esteem, judging from the carved snake figures on the batons de commandment, and also during Mesolithic period as evinced by snake paintings on the painted pebbles of Mas-d-Azil.

E. W. Hopkins observes that in the Vedic Age snake worship was widely prevalent in India, and references are made

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to Abibuduya, the serpent of the deep. Further, an inscription at Banavasi in Kanara in South India, records the erection of a cobra stone in the middle of the 1st century A.D. 825 171

In Chamba district the 'golden snake' is offered milk.[8] In Bengal the snake goddess Manasa is worshipped widely, and this is supposed to give protection from snake-bite. Manasa is represented by an earthen pot with vermilion marks. Among the Meithies of Manipur the snake is believed to be the manifestation of a dead ancestor and is accordingly venerated and worshipped. A cult of the snake god is found among the Khasis of Assam, which however is diminishing now-a-days. Among the Khasis a mythical snake called U Thlen is worshipped and is propitiated by the offering of human blood.[9] It is believed that the Thlen attaches itself to homes and families and is the bestower of wealth, prosperity, fame and well-being to its hosts. However, it needs regular and periodic propitiation by the offering of human blood, and in the event of its being neglected it brings disease, ill luck and ruin to the unlucky family which has angered it.

In South India and particularly among the Nayars the worship of snakes is an established cult. Snake groves or *kavus*, which are clumps of wild trees festooned with creepers, abound in plenty, usually near the homes of Malayali Hindus. These groves are called *vishathum kavu* (poison shrine) or *nagakotta* (snake shrine). Usually a block of granite is carved into the shape of a cobra's head, called *chitra kutta kalu* and is consecrated at the spot. 825 778 171

In Quilon district, Travancore, near Haripad is a big snake worship centre in the form of the Manarsalil temple. One of the important snake shrines is called *bernie kavu* situated in Chenganur taluk of the Quilon district. In Trivandrum is the great temple of Padmanabha Swami and here one of the important deities worshipped is Ananta, the mighty serpent, upon whose great coils Lord Vishnu reclines on the ocean of milk.[4] Further, in Tirunelveli a temple dedicted to Shankar and the goodess Gomiti called Sankaranianar Koil has a snake mound where worship is offered to serpents in the hope that chronic stomach ailments will be cured by propitiating the 825 171

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825 171 deity. Besides these, there are innumerable private snake shrines, particularly in pious households.

753 825 171 782 778 All diseases or misfortunes are due to the neglect of snakes. Leprosy, itches, sterility of women and deaths due to poison, are attributed to the anger of snake gods. The remedy for snake-bite lies in the propitiation of serpents through worship at the snake shrine. If no such shrine exists, then a diligent search is made and a 'snake stone' is dug up from the vicinity. Thereafter this accidental find of the snake stone is duly consecrated and worshipped, and all the erstwhile troubles are attributed to the inadvertent neglect of the sacred stone. The person [746] dying of snake-bite is taboo, because his body is supposed to be occupied thereafter by the snake god, and it needs to be disposed of in a special manner with particular reverence and specific rituals.

771 825 778 796 [173] Among the Nayars of South India snake worship assumes unique importance. It is popularly believed that in early times a Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmin brought the serpents with him and left them in their present abode. He however promised to return one day but never did. Strangely enough, in Travancore, a Pambakattu Nambutiri family still resides and is not permitted to enter the Manarsalil temple for fear that the snakes might leave the area and follow the brahmin to his abode. In a special ceremony called *kavu muttam* or the shifting of the snake shrines from one place to another in the compound of the house—if accidentally the shrine is awkwardly situated in a plot of land where construction is to begin—the Pambakattu Nambutiri is called specially to do the necessary shifting ceremony. He purifies the new area and transfers the shrine to the newly consecrated spot, to the accompaniment of sacred incantations. Thereafter there is feasting and the brahmin is paid money and is presented with a set of new clothes. This is in striking coincidence with the legend of origin, and lends credence to the story of the origin of snake worship, particularly in Manarsalil temple in Quilon, as being connected with Pambakattu Nambutiri brahmins.

778 The plans of snake shrines have much in common, though some are small and some big. The Manarsalil temple

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is surrounded by a series of concentric circles as it were, on the outside is a wide road where fairs are held and much commerce goes on on festive days. The low castes cannot go beyond this outer fringe. Lodged within, is the garden where the snakes are to be seen in their natural habitat. In this area is a sacred tank, the water of which is rather dirty due to falling vegetation, but which is reputed to be medicinal in property. Here too is a very large vessel into which milk is poured by the priest so that the snakes might be well fed. Within this belt of vegetation and bushes is the shrine itself. There is a verandah with a central hall called *mandapa* with an open space in front, and in the centre is the platform where the snake deities are enshrined. There are two images here, one of Nag Raj with five heads and the other of a serpent with only one head. This is the inner sanctuary where only the priest enters. In Manarsalil temple a virgin priestess conducts the most sacred rites and is considered to be the guardian of the serpents.

A similar position pertains among the Meitheis of Manipur, where a priestess looks after the serpent god called Pak-hangba.[8] Near the verandah is a sacred well from which water is drawn as offering to the deities and is afterwards distributed to the devotees as holy water. It is believed that only pious people can see the snakes in the forest and the wicked cannot. The devotee considers himself blessed if he is able to catch a glimpse of the snake while on his way to the temple.

The common private snake shrine in Travancore lies within the compound of the house, often near the boundary, and away from the main building, in order to best preserve its sanctity and to avoid accidental pollution by inadvertent trespass by some members of the family. The abode of the snake god is called *sarpa kavu*, and this is usually a raised patch of land surrounded by bushes and trees. In the foliage there must be a plant yielding milky sap and in the absence of such a plant, one is planted near the shrine. The trees near the shrine are never cut and the area in the vicinity of the *sarpa kavu* is kept very clean. Often granite images of many-headed snakes with spreading

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hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

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showered on it, and it is often garlanded. Incantations and *mantras* are recited by the priest during the ceremony.

Bell-metal oil lamps are lit in front of the images and their number is usually 3, 5 or 7. In each lamp there are 5 to 7 wicks pointing in different directions. Only coco-nut oil or *ghee* is used in these ceremonial lamps. In front of these lamps are placed three banana leaves with the cut end of the leaf facing the image and the tip pointing away from it, facing north or east. On one of the leaves some uncooked rice is placed and a husked coco-nut is kept over it, while in the other leaf unhusked paddy is heaped with a coco-nut placed on it. The eyes of the coco-nut are away from the snake idol and are towards the tip of the banana leaf. On the third leaf are placed a few small bananas of a special variety called *kadali*, because *kadali* is referred to in the Vedas.

The boiled rice offering is then placed near the shrine and some money is offered to the idol by dropping it in the oil of the lamp. These preparations are offered to the snake god who is supposed to partake of them. Thereafter the *prasad* or the offering is distributed among the members of the family, and the priest gets half of it. The *prasad* must not be eaten by a crow or dog as this is a bad omen. After the worship, the contents of the leaves are given to the priest who therefore takes great pains to see that this particular ceremony is well conducted.

Once a month or once every three months, low caste Hindus called Pulluvans visit the houses which have snake shrines. Usually they come on Tuesdays or Fridays, and they sing songs in praise of the snake gods. This is done in a rather crude manner to the accompaniment of crude single-stringed instruments called *veena kunju*. For this invocation, an oil lamp is lit before the shrine, and the above-mentioned three banana leaves and their respective contents are placed before the image of the serpent. Usually a woman accompanies the male singer and joins in the chorus, playing the while upon a crude drum. After the praise has been adequately rendered, the ceremony is brought to a close and the musician gets his share of money and materials. This ceremony is meant to propitiate and

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please the serpent god and to flatter him so that he may bear the welfare of the host in mind, and guard the family against disease, misfortune and harm accruing from human or supernatural agencies.

There are three important ceremonies in connection with serpent worship called *sarpa yaga*, *sarpa tulal* and *sarpa preeti*. They are conducted either at home or in the temple, usually on Sundays, since it is held that the serpents are most powerful and lenient on that day and are in a benign mood for granting favours.

Sarpa preeti is conducted in the house whenever misfortune occurs. The astrologer is consulted who decrees that a curse is upon the house and the serpents are angry. Thereupon elaborate worship is conducted with much ritual, and propitiation of the angered deities is effected and normalcy returns.

Sarpa tulal is a form of divine cure of the afflicted. The unfortunate victims of leprosy, mental or other diseases gather to worship the serpent gods praying for a cure. The priest conducts the worship and the afflicted go into a trance-like state and dance in religious fervour. Thereafter the priest throws consecrated turmeric powder on their heads and faces. The devotee feels blessed and cures are believed to occur.

Sarpa yaga is an annual festival in which many families jointly contribute to hold the ceremony. It is held usually for the collective prosperity of the village and lasts for two or three days. The afflicted and diseased persons dance in a trance for a long time and are given coco-nut water by the priest. At the end of the *puja* the priest sprinkles turmeric powder over the heads of the devotees and pours out holy water thrice in the palm of their hands.

One of the special attributes of snakes is their power over disease. The snake deities are specifically importuned for the prevention of skin diseases, stomach disorders, mental disturbances and for sterility. Leucoderma and leprosy are specially regarded as due to the curse of snakes who might have been angered by some unwitting disrespect shown towards them, or by accidental misdemeanour on the part of the inadvertant devotee. Of particular impor-

824 place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was
765 boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and
782 leads the way to a tank, on the banks of which the rice is
613 thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat it; for
[775] if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's
[825] spirit is pleased with the offering; but if somehow it is
[231] thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away.

765 When the ceremony which has been described has
613 been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day
574 after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the
783 ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the
[824] place of cremation. During these seven days no member of the Taravâd goes to any other house. The house of the dead and all its inmates are under pollution: no outsider enters it but under ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days the Kâranavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses.

[184] It is said that in some parts of Malabar the visitors
[431] bring with them small presents in money or kind to help the Kâranavan through the expenditure to which the funeral rites necessarily put him.

765 To hark back a little, it must not be omitted that on
613 the third day after the death, all those who are related by marriage to the Taravâd of the deceased combine and give a good feast to the inmates of the house and to the neighbours, who are invited, one man or one woman from each house. The person so invited is expected to come. This feast is called Patni Karigi. On the seventh day a return feast will be given by the Taravâd of the deceased to all relatives and neighbours.

[783] Between the seventh and fourteenth day after death no ceremony is observed; but the members of the Taravâd remain under death pollution, and then on the fourteenth day comes the Sanchayanam. It is the disposal of the calcined remains; the ashes of the deceased. The male members of the Taravâd go to the place of cremation and, picking up the pieces of unburnt bones which they find there, place these in an earthen pot which has been sun-dried—not burnt by fire in the usual way—cover up

All this over

the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual 769
shraddham, or yearly funeral commemorative rite. Rice
balls (pindams) are made and given to crows. Clapping
of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being [825]
thrown for them, and, should they come at once and eat
it, it is obvious that the spirit of the deceased is pleased
with the offering, and is not likely to be troublesome.
But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat, it
is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the Taravâd
had better look out.

The ceremonial connected with the funeral rites which 771
have been described, illustrates the immense difference
which exists, as it does in the case of all peoples more or
less cultured, between the primitive belief of the race, and
the higher, the more abstract, religion which they believe
they believe. With races, as with children, the earliest
associations are the strongest, and persist through the life
of the race as through the life of the individual. The
higher power of reasoning which comes with higher
development does not disperse them altogether. The 775
people who practise these rites are good Hindus, and,
according to the theory of their Hindu religion, the spirit
which is emancipated from the body at death at once
inhabits another body, for suffering or for enjoyment
measured by the deserts of the bodily existence which
has just ceased. This is the higher religion. And yet
they admit that the spirit is connected with the shadow, [822]
not with the breath;—and feel in their hearts that it still [782]
lingers in the house and absorbs the essence of the
ingredients of the food offered to it; that it must be
propitiated or it will cause harm to the living. This is the
primitive religion. It is supposed that the spirits of those
whose ashes are deposited at Benares or other place of
sanctity, and for whose sake alms are given to Brâhmans,
remain at those holy spots, and become more and more
god-like. This is a mixture of both. We are here
concerned with facts rather than theories and, as much
has been said already of this side of the subject of
comparative religions, we may proceed with our facts.
The spirits of those who have committed suicide or met [766]
death by any violent means are always particularly vicious [613]
and troublesome to the Taravâd, their spirit possessing
and rendering miserable some unfortunate member
of it. Unless pacified they will ruin the Taravâd, so [782]
Brâhman priests are called in and appease them by means
of Tilahômam, a rite in which sacrifical fire is raised, and
ghee, gingelly and other things are offered through it.

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this ceremony. Thus having purged their bodies of all worldliness they are taken into the ceremony and are seated as described before. Now by means of the *mantrams* and poojah the serpent gods are propitiated and in consequence they manifest themselves in the bodies of these female representatives of theirs. The entrance of the gods into their bodies is characterised by a fearful concussion of their whole frame, gradually developing into a ceaseless, shaking, particularly the upper parts. A few minutes afterwards, they begin to speak one by one and their speeches are regarded as expressions of the god's will. Sometimes the gods appear in the bodies of all these females and sometimes only in those of a select few or none at all. The refusal of the gods to enter into such persons is symbolical of some want of cleanliness and purity in them; which contingency is looked upon as a source of anxiety to the individual. It may also suggest the displeasure of these gods towards the family in respect of which the ceremony is performed. In either case, such refusal on the part of the gods is an index of their ill-will or dissatisfaction. In cases where the gods refuse to appear in any one of those seated for the purpose, the ceremony is prolonged until the gods are so properly propitiated as to constrain them to manifest themselves. Then after the lapse of the number of days fixed for the ceremony and after the will of the serpent gods is duly expressed the ceremonies close.

"One other small item of offering to these gods consists in certain ballads sung by the Pulluvar females going about from house to house at stated seasons of the year. They take a pretty large pitcher, close its opening by means of a small circular piece of thin leather which is fastened on to the vessel by means of strings strongly tied round its neck. Another string is adjusted to the leather cover which when played on by means of the fingers, produces a hoarse note which is said to please the god's ears, pacify their anger and lull them into sleep. This vessel is carried from house to house in the day time by these Pulluvar females; and placing the vessel in a particular position on the ground, and sitting in a particular fashion in relation to the vessel, they play on the string which then produces a very pleasing musical note. Then they sing ballads to the accompaniment of these notes. After continuing this for sometime they stop, and getting their customary dues from the family, go their own way. It is believed that these notes and the ballads are peculiarly pleasing to the serpent gods, who bless those for whose sakes the music has been rendered. In consequence of the halo of sanctity that has been popularly thrown round the serpent it is considered a sin of a most heinous nature to kill one of these deified reptiles. The killing of a cobra is regarded with the utmost concern amongst us. In such case the carcase is taken and duly burned with all

776 the necessary solemn ceremonials. Sandalwood is the fuel used
766 sometimes. A small pit is dug which is covered with sandalwood
825 pieces and they are set fire to. When the flame burns intensely the body is quietly placed in it, and reduced to ashes together with, in some cases, incense and myrrh. This is believed to mitigate the dangers consequent on the death of the serpent.

776 "The popular conception of the family cobra is that it is a
825 tiny little thing with a full developed hood, and fangs, and possessing a golden tinge; which shine brilliantly in the rays of the sun. At the sight of human beings it gets away to its holy shrine exhibiting a reeling motion on its way thither. It never gets far away from its abode of which it is the perennial guardian.

564 "One striking phase of serpent worship in Malabar relates
776 to the family of Pappanmakkat Nambudris and the singular
825 and effective control they exercise over serpents in general. Their powers are handed from father to son. It is said that this Nambudri household is full of cobras which find their abode in every nook and corner of it. The inmates can scarcely move about without placing their feet upon any one of these serpents. Owing to the magic influence of the family the serpents cannot and will not injure them. The serpents are said to be always at the beck and call of the members of this Nambudri family and render unquestioned obedience to their commands. They watch and protect the interests of the family in the most jealous spirit. In short, these reptiles live, move, and have their being as freely as if they were domesticated animals imbued with supernatural powers.

[755] "Cases of cobra-poison are generally taken to this Brahman family and the headman sometimes summons before him the identical animal which caused injury and it is said successfully effects a cure as if by some mystic and magic influence.

825 "The serpent also plays a conspicuous part in contracts
425 between citizens. The family serpent is in old deeds the
776 subject-matter of sale. The sale of a house compound extends also to the family serpent. The stipulation in these documents invariably is that the family serpents are sold along with the properties; and even in cases of division of family property amongst its several branches of members, the family-serpent is included in the division. Such is the sacred prominence which has been given to the serpent amongst us. Their anger
[753] is said to manifest itself in some member of the family being
[982] struck down with leprosy or some other loathsome disease; while by their propitiation they can be converted into the guardian angels of our households, powerful enough to preserve the prosperity of the inmates as well as to vouchsafe their complete immunity from the attacks of virulent diseases and sometimes even from death."

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782 776 778 made periodically to the serpent gods in the kavoos. The one I am describing here is one of the most important in Travancore. This is known as Mannārsāla. 173 Once upon a time, so says tradition, a male member of this Illam married a girl of the Vettikkòttu Illam, where 776 the serpents were held in great veneration. The girl's 778 parents being poor could give her nothing in the way of dowry. They, therefore, gave her one of the stone idols 825 of the serpent, of which there were many in their house. This stone idol the girl was counselled to take care of and regularly worship; subsequently it is said the girl became a mother and brought forth a boy and a snake, whereupon the snake-child was located in the underground cellar of the house and brought up. The Illam prospered from that day. The woman and the snake are believed to be the cause of the affluence of the family, and to this day to the surname of the male members of that Illom are added, by way of distinction, the names of the serpent-god and that of the female. [115] Thus my informant, the present head of the family, is called Vasaki Sridévi Krishnan Nambyadi. To this gentleman I am indebted for the following further details on the snake-worship at Mannārsāla:—He says the name Mannārsāla means the 'unburnt ground.' This refers to an ancient tradition that when the great Khandava-vanam was burnt by Agni, the god of fire, this small oasis was spared on the prayer of the serpents, who were the progeny of the serpent offspring of the lady of this Illam. As the Illam could not well accommodate the large number of the serpents that had multiplied, they were removed to a spot on the south of the house, where a magnificent grove has since been grown. In this spot are stone idols put up for the king and queen of snakes known as Nágarája and Nágayekshi, and for various members of the family which, according to my informant, number about 3,000. There are as many stone 778 images in this grove now. In the cellar of the house, as well as in the grove where the stone images are placed, 776 a solution of noorum palum is offered once a year, that 782 is, on the day following the Sivarátri in the month of Másí. The same kind of offering is made to the Chittrakoodom also. About 12½ Edangalies of dough and milk are mixed together and kept in the cellar. Thereafter the door of the cellar is shut for three days, and lest anybody pry into what passes within the cellar, the women of the household cover the crevices and holes of the door

778 All the land about it, measuring a mile square, is said to
423 belong to it. This would be enormous property, as the
[635] taluk where this kavoo is situated is one of the richest in Travancore. A trifle is given by the Sircar every year. If more funds are required, the Nambiyadi is expected to meet them from his own private income. The grove and its temples cover an immense oblong space measuring about 16 acres in extent. The inmates of the Illam are
[688] the poojaries of the gods in this grove. It is believed
[825] that whenever the poojah is not performed with the strictest personal purity or care to small details, the serpent gods get offended, which feeling is exhibited by
778 the largest cobras coming out of the grove. It should be
776 remembered that, as a rule, the serpents are not seen out
825 of their holes, though hundreds of them are known to exist in these large groves. When any is seen, especially if a real cobra, the village astrologer is consulted, who readily finds out the cause of the wrath of the serpent gods, and steps are taken immediately to pacify them by propitiatory ceremonies. The people believe in these ceremonies most implicitly. That is not a mere form with them. In a house in North Travancore, where
776 I lived some years, there used to be seen now and again
825 snakes of all kinds, and in answer to my request to the servant of my landlord to keep the kavoo neat, he invariably said, "Please, sir, order some lights and milk to the kavoo," for this man most sincerely believed that this was the only effective way of keeping out the snakes from view. He did not seem to believe that there was any good in keeping the premises neat and clean. It should here be noted that a true Hindu population never pelt at or harm the snakes when they are seen. They are objects of worship. One of our retired officials told me that some years ago, when he was young and new to the place, he was puzzled by some of the parties present at his cutcherry telling him that the 'god was coming.' The crowd made way, and on rising, this official was horrified to see that the god referred to was a live cobra. This village he spoke of, even now abounds with serpents, but strange to say, these reptiles
[23] seldom harm man. They are evidently become domesticated animals, for we seldom hear of snake-bites in that village, though the general belief is that there are more snakes there than rats. The people also seem to be quite at home with them, for they do not get put out when they see these reptiles."

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the season which makes their persons shiver and quiver like aspen-leaves before the breeze, becomes to them in the midst of all their ecstatic frolics an additional source of pleasure. In short, all these merely tend to brace them up to an extent the like of which they can scarcely find anywhere else. 796 [515]

"The two items described above, viz., the swinging process and the beating on the water, have each its own distinctive significance. The former typifies the attempt which these maidens make in order to hang themselves on these instruments and destroy their lives in consequence of the lamented demise of their sexual deity, Kamadevan. It is but natural that depth of sorrow will lead men to extreme courses of action. The beating on the water symbolizes their beating their chests in expression of their deep-felt sorrow caused by their Cupid's death. Such in brief is the description of a Nair festival which plays a conspicuous part in the social history of Malabar." [776]

Mr. Gopal Pannikar's chapter on "Local Traditions and Superstitions" ("Malabar and its Folk") has special value, for in it he recounts existing popular belief. He tells us that to demon labourers are attributed the existence of old dilapidated wells and buildings, demons who perform Herculean tasks under orders of a chief. One day these demons having finished their task disturbed their chief when he was playing a game of chess, coming to ask for more work, so he told them to count the waves of the sea; and this is why they are still at work. He tells us why the crow has a long life and the fowl a short one, and how that the former has but one eye, rolling in a socket; how it is that the common squirrel is marked on the back by the fingers of Vishnu; and much that is of interest about the screech owl, the lizard, the crocodile, and many other things. He recalls to my mind the popular belief accounting for the unluckiness which will follow should one see the moon on the Chadûrti night, which I have heard in North Malabar. My note was somehow mislaid. It is that the big-bellied god Ganapati was once upon a time returning home in the moonlight after a repast so generous that his person was much distended, and unable to see his feet, he tripped and stumbled. He looked around to see whether any one had observed his discomfiture. There was no one but the moon. The moon laughed, whereupon he cursed the moon. Hence the belief that whoever sees the moon on that night will be unlucky, probably defamed. Mr. Gopal Panniker, a native of South Malabar, does not mention it, but in North Malabar women are scrupulously careful not to see the moon or be for a moment in the moonlight 776 [825] [777] [821] 776 821 [184]

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The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection. 789 842 [834]

The *Srî Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning. 789 [755] [825]

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man. 754 [791] [564]

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain [115]

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magic. Fortunately, by the kindness of Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar, these blanks have been filled up in the translation which he has obtained for me—from *one who knows.* 789 212

I will give here an excerpt from it, which is fairly representative of the sympathetic side of magic such as is common in Malabar. It is not, I think, concerned with sympathetic or symbolic magic exclusively, as, unless I am much mistaken, an evil spirit is here also invoked. It is within the domain of black magic, in which, I think, an evil spirit is always made to help if not to work the evil. 754 212

It describes how to cause certain pains in the body of another. A mantram is written (here, I think, an evil spirit is called up, though such does not appear to be said), on the stem of the kâitha plant. The stem should be the length of eight fingers. A figure representing the person to be injured is (also) drawn on the stem. A hole is bored to represent the navel. The mantram is repeated, and at each repetition a certain thorn (kâra mollu) is fixed into the limbs of the figure. The name of the person and of the star under which he was born are written on a piece of cadjan leaf, which is stuck into the hole representing the navel. The thorns are stuck in 21 times; that is, removed and replaced 21 times. Two magic circles are drawn below the nipple on the figure. The stem is then hung up in the smoke of the kitchen. A pot of toddy and some other accessories are procured, and with these certain rites are performed by the warlock. When he has concluded them, he moves three steps backwards. He shouts aloud thrice, fixing in again the thorns, thinking all the while of the particular mischief with which he would afflict the person to be injured.

When all this has been done, the person whose figure has been drawn on the stem and pricked with thorns, feels pain as if *he* were being pricked with thorns.

The grandha describes also how an enemy may be stuck dumb. The head of a dark coloured fowl is cut off. The head is then split, and a piece of cadjan on which are written a mantram, the name of the person to be injured, and the name of the star under which he was born, is stuck into the split head which is then sewn up, taking care to stitch the tongue to the beak. The head is then inserted in a certain fruit, which, after being tied up with a withe of a certain creeper nine spans in length, is deposited under the enemy's gateway. [825]

In it, too, we are told how to win over a man, or a quarrelsome husband; how to quiet refractory cows which

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101 is from the Sanskrit work *Nayaka*, meaning leader. As such a derivation flatters the national vanity of the community it has been accepted without question. The utter absurdity of the idea that the people who call themselves Aryans (as the Brahmins of Malabar still do) and look down upon the rest from a point of view of racial superiority, can have given them this proud title, never seems to have suggested itself. Moreover, the Aryan settlers of Malabar asserted a spiritual as well as temporal superiority over the Nāyars, which goes far to disprove the theory of the derivation of the word from *Nayaka*, or Lord.

101 It seems unquestionable, on the other hand, that the word *Nāyar* is the same as
614 *Nagar*. As the totem names seem to have been imposed on the community from
174 outside it seems reasonable to suppose that this serpent-worshipping people were called by their neighbours *Nagar* or serpent-men. That the Nāyars in ancient days
825 were a totemic clan, is easy to see from the fact that every Nāyar family still
771 holds the serpent sacred. Thus it will not cut down a *Kavu*, or serpent grove, as it is the place where the family serpents reside. It is, of course, natural that in a
[161] community of 3¼ million souls the same solidarity of totemic feeling, as it exists, say, among the turtle clan, cannot have existed.

M. S. Reinach, in defining totemism as distinct from fetishism, says that the totem is a class of objects regarded by a tribe or clan as tutelary or protective in the widest sense of the word. Take the case of a clan with a serpent totem; the members will call themselves serpents, claim descent from a serpent, abstain from killing serpents, etc. Not only do the Nāyars still show traces of having done all this, but they continue to perform with undiminished zeal *Nagathān* (*thān* is an honorific suffix) *pattus*, or prayers and songs, to the sacred serpents. When anything goes wrong the astrologer generally finds something done to offend the sacred ser-
[784] pents. There is one singular case where a man, without heeding the warnings of all his people, went and cleared a serpent grove, and the result was that he died six days later. In popular opinion, this was without doubt due to the wrath of the serpents.

101 From all this it seems quite clear that before the Aryan invasion the Nāyars
174 were a community with a *Naga* or serpent totem. This is supported by evidence from Ceylon also. Ceylon chronicles mention that when the Buddha visited the island for the second time (second century B.C.) he found the northern part peopled by Nagas who were fighting with the Yakshas, or the original inhabitants of the land.[1] This is without doubt an emigration of S. Indian people to Ceylon, probably as a result of Aryan pressure from the North. The descendants of these Nagas of Ceylon, it must be noticed, bear a close similarity to the Nāyars in matters of social life. Among their customs may be specially noticed: (*a*) the elasticity or rather the slenderness of the marriage tie which permits the discarding, without any disgrace attached to it, of undesirable husbands or wives; (*b*) the remarriage of such widows

[1] See Parker, *Ancient Ceylon*. London, 1909, p. 16.

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and one with less than that number was called a *Désavázhi*. There were in those days no taxes levied from the people, and the chief from the Rajas down to the *Désavázhi* possessed demesne lands for their support which were cultivated either by themselves or leased to *kudiyáns* or tenants; but the following were the chief sources of income, based upon feudal rights and privileges. The rulers levied custom duties upon exports and imports, taxes upon houses of fishermen, tradesmen and professional men. Criminal fines went to fill their coffers, and succession duties were levied upon the estates of deceased persons, especially those who held offices of State or rights over land. Outcast women were made a two-fold source of profit. Lewd adulterous women were made over to the chiefs with a premium for the trouble of looking after them, and the chiefs used in turn to sell the women to foreign merchants as slaves or wives to *Chettis*. The estates of persons who died without heirs were escheated, nor could an heir be adopted without the Raja's consent, for which a fee was generally levied. Protection fees from strangers and merchants were levied under various names and customary presents were the ruler's dues on occasions of feast or funeral. Wrecks were his perquisites, and various animals his monopoly. Concerning the former, Marco Polo wrote about the kingdom of Eli, "And you must know that if any ship enters the estuary and anchors when she has been bound for some other port, they seize her and plunder the cargo. They say that you are bound somewhere else, and it is God that sent you hither to us, so we have a right to all your goods, and think it no sin to act thus. This naughty custom prevails all over the Provinces of India, to wit, that if a ship be driven by a stress of weather into some other port than that to which it is bound, it is sure to be plundered. But if a ship came bound originally to the place, they received it with all honour and gave it protection."[1] The custom of the taking of ships and cargoes lasted down to recent times, until the English factory at Tellicherry entered into agreements with three of the country-powers for the exemption of English vessels from such seizures.

Among the animals that became the property of the Raja were cows with three or five dugs, cattle that has killed a man or other animals, cattle with a white spot near the corner of

1. Yulies Marco Polo, page 374.

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643
the eye, buffaloes with white tips to their tails, wild elephants 422
caught in traps and wild hogs that had fallen into wells. 825

Even in social matters, these chieftains had supreme 634
powers. In the settlement of marriages in any part of the
country, the Nayars had to obtain the chieftain's sanction 585
who held sway over the particular locality. The custom is even [182]
now in vogue though in a visibly weakened form. In the [431]
celebration of a *Kettu kalyánam* or *sambandham* in any part of the country, the parties concerned visited the chieftain and bought his consent with presents. For without such consent no settlement and celebration thereafter could be arranged. His [574]
consent had to be procured even for the holding of festivals.

The chieftain's powers were so great that, if a wife living 595
with her husband proved an object of attraction to another,
adequate presents to the chieftain would buy him a formal writ, 634
giving him the rights of a husband over that woman. Thus even so late as only a generation or two ago, the chieftain's power was exercised in the encouragement of polyandry.

When a tali-tying ceremony had to be performed for a 588
girl of any decent family in a locality, she was taken to the 634
local chieftain with a nuzzar or *tirumulkáshcha* and other 421
things prepared for the festival that was to follow. In return the girl was given a golden bracelet which she was authorised to wear in his presence. No girl who had not received such a one could wear it.

In certain parts of the State people were afraid to erect 634
buildings of more than one storey, lest they should incur the 342
inexorable wrath of the chieftain; nor were they allowed to tile thatched houses. Departures from these customs were allowed only with the consent of the chieftain, embodied in a writ issued by him. In rural parts even to this day such restric- [369]
tions are not totally inoperative. In the State His High- [182]
ness the Raja gives his sanction in regard to some social 643
matters even to this day and Nambutiri landlords exercise a 566
similar authority among the tenants occupying their lands.
Certain kinds of conveyances such as palanquins and dholies 634
were reserved only for chieftains while the *Pallichans* were the [493]
only people who were employed to carry them. Various titles[1] [564]
[553]

1. Vide pages 18-20.

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belief in animism, and all these are largely mixed up with the 564
religion of the Nayars. Animism refers to the belief that man 771
passes through life surrounded by a ghastly company of 776
powers, elements, and tendencies, impersonal in character, mere shapeless phantoms of which no image can be made and no idea can be formed. Most of these have departments or spheres of influence of their own—one presides over cholera, another over small-pox, yet another over cattle disease, some dwell in rocks, others haunt trees, and others again haunt rivers, whirlpools and waterfalls. All of them require to be diligently propitiated by reason of the ills and calamities which they bring about, and the essence of these practices is magic. [782]

Evidence of a wide-spread belief in the worship of ancestors is to be seen in the kistavens (*thoppi kallús*)—the rock caves containing the sepulchral urns found in the jungles and other parts of the State—in the ceremonies performed and the offerings made for the spirits of the dead. They are worshipped even now in special *kávús*, sometimes even in small out-houses or special rooms in the house on new moon days or *Sankrántis*, and there are also periodical commemorations on the anniversaries of the ancestor's death. Dead ancestors are also represented by stones or small images of gold or silver kept in the middle room of the Nayar houses, and offerings of food and drink are made to them on new moon and *Sankránti* nights. Animistic again is the worship of Káli or Bhagavati who presides over small-pox, cholera, and the thousand maladies that flesh is heir to, the worship of animals and plants and lastly the belief in exorcism and witchcraft in which Brahmans also share. 769 [532] 771 776 [789] [754]

Serpent shrines (*Nágattún kávús* or *Nagakóttas*) are to be found in the compounds of every Nayar house in the Cochin State, and their worship occupies a prominent place in the religious life of the Nayars and other castes. The following mythical origin is ascribed to the adoration of serpents in the Keralólpathi. 771 778 825

Serpent worship.

The first Aryan colonists settled by Parasurama found Kerala absolutely uninhabitable, and finding it impossible to improve their condition, returned to their old country. After their departure, the Nágas (or serpent gods) of the lower world or *Páthála* took possession of the partly reclaimed land and settled 773 778 825 [776]

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773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a 825 low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and [776] periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 795 778 825 [782] The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for 778 snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and 825 water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to [532] sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

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made even of gold or silver and consecrated for worship in Brahman houses. They are also presented to Brahmans by those on whose date of birth an eclipse falls, and this is done to mitigate the wrath of Ráhu.

Cases of snake bite are of frequent occurrence in the northern parts of the State where snakes abound; and nowhere else is the Hindu treatment so skillfully practised as to effect a radical cure by medicines and incantations. When information regarding snake bite isconveyed to a physician, or a bitten man is taken to him, the latter can, by the chirping of a lizard or other tokens, make out the nature of the case and also whether it is curable or not. It is said that physicians should not go to a patient's house, and the following story is given in explanation :—

Once when the emperor Parikshit was ordained to be bitten by the great serpent Takshaka, the latter set out in the disguise of a Brahman. On his way he met another Brahman, who, on enquiry, turned out to be a physician on his way to cure the king. With a view to test his ability, Takshaka bit a tree which was at once reduced to ashes, but the physician removed the poison, and the tree regained its former state. Takshaka, admiring his ability, loaded him with immense wealth and dissuaded him from going to the king. He also made him promise that he should never volunteer his services in such matters unless patients were taken to him. In some families the profession is hereditary, the most prominent among them beingt he families of Kokkára Nambuthiri and Máliyakal Karta.

Tutelary deities.

In every village are to be found guardian deities that protect the villagers from the malevolence of demons which are supposed to occupy an intermediate place between gods and men. The temples of the Nayars in which are enshrined these village deities or *Grámadévatas* are far less imposing than those of the Brahmans and are callad *kávus*. The deities commonly represented are the consort of Siva or some manifestation of that female divinity, and Ayyappan or Sasta; and these are supposed to keep in subjection the demons and spirits which are ever prone to do harm to the people of the village. Thus, though the demons are objects of worship, the propitiation of the guardian deities and the festivals held in their honour are considered to be sufficient to curb

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775 time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women
[881] are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings.
[846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most
[789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron
[782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála*
[787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of
782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machi-
[776] nations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to
[791] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil
[783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire).
[789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons,
346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in
775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon
[753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments
[796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat-
[793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and
[791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is
● 825 not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

Worship of animals and plants.

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with the hand which is, in token of veneration, then raised to the head. Milk, curd, ghee, urine and dung are mixed together and used for purificatory ceremonies; and the images of gods are anointed with this holy mixture called *panchagavyam*. Small doses of it are even taken internally, and it is considered an antidote against poison, besides being prescribed as a *prâyaschit* or expiation for offences against caste, whereas the sprinkling of water mixed with dung removes sin or pollution from all persons, places, or things, and purifies them. The bull, the vehicle of Siva, is also held sacred, and a statue of it in granite is either placed in front of the image of Siva or in a separate shrine, and is worshipped as a God. The lizard associated with Siva, the monkey with Hanumán, the Garuda (the brahmany kite) with Vishnu, and the peacock of Subramania are a few of the other animals of Hindu veneration.

Of the birds of ill omen, one species of owl called *pullu* is much dreaded because of the belief that it causes an illness to children which results in emaciation. At the sound of its screeching, children are taken into a room to avoid its injurious gaze. Various are the propitiatory ceremonies performed by specialists to secure its good-will and to prevent its doing harm to babies; and amulets are worn by children as a preventive against its evil influences. Its hideous screeches are always associated with death.

Among trees, some are worshipped while others are used for *pûjas* or sacrifices. Among the former may be mentioned the pipal (Ficus religiosa), a tree which is held in veneration by the Hindus. Persons afflicted with maladies or whose planets are unfavourable, go round a pipal tree, seven, twelve, forty-one, or one hundred and eight times, muttering prayers and burning camphor and other incense at its foot or perchance engage Brahmans to do so, in the belief, that it will cure disease or counteract evil influences. The *vilva* (Ægle marmelos), whose leaf of triple form is supposed to represent the three eyes of Siva, and symbolise his triple function of production, destruction, and re-production, and the *tulsi* (Ocymum sanctum), which is sacred to Vishnu, are also worshipped. In front of every house, generally on the eastern side, or in the central yard of a quadrangular structure, is a stone or mud altar, on which *tulsi* or the *vilva* is planted and watered every day, and is worshipped by the inmates of the house. From

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From the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck. Among the trees used for *pûjas* or sacrifices are the sandal-wood, the *pâsu* (Butea frondosa), the *rudrâksham* (Elæocarpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (Poa cynosuroides), the *karuka* (Agrostis linearis), the *thumba* (Leucas Indica), *chembarutti* (shoeflower, Hibiscus Rosa sinensis), *erikku* (Calotropis gigantea), *thechi* (Chrysanthemum), and the several species of lotus and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used for medicinal purposes.

Folk-tales.

The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some of which are given below:—

The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or moon by the huge serpent Râhu, and while it lasts, a kind of pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous properties.

People who hear stories of Rámáyana, while lying on their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a kind of precious stone (*mânikka kallu*) from the mouths of serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths, and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though apparently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is connected with a strange myth.

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During the exile of Rama, Lakshmana and Sita, they lived chiefly by hunting. One day, when Sita was drying some pieces of flesh, a crow accidentally pecked at one of Sita's ruddy toes, taking it for one of the blood red pieces of meat. She thereupon told her husband about it, who shot an arrow at the crow and blinded it in one eye, and thenceforth its descendants have been blind in one eye. 825 539

When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea, for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asura*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

Ari-pravu or the common house-dove has a story told of it. These birds, male and female, are always found in pairs together. Once, it is said, they were quarrelling about a game, and the quarrel ended in the desertion by the male bird of his mate, who recognizing the mistake called for him, and her cries are said to be ever calling out for her mate.

Rain, Thunder and Lightning:—In the aërial regions are huge monsters of extraordinary strength (*Kálaméghattanmár*) who are supposed to possess two horns with the aid of which all the water from the earth is drawn up during the summer, to be spat out in the rainy season at Indra's (Rain God's) bidding. Lightning is caused by the friction of the horns, while engaged in the task of spitting out water. Another version of the story as to the origin of lightning is, that it is caused by the brandishing of Indra's sword, while engaged in ordering the monsters to supply the earth with water. 539 [821] [776]

It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined. [825] [826]

Evil spirits are believed to have the power at times of changing men into tigers, such being distinguished by having no tails. [776] [825]

The claws and even the teeth of the tiger are used as charms against witchcraft and the evil-eye. They may frequently be seen set in silver, and worn round the necks of [789] [825]

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539 [789] children. Tiger's whiskers have also the same efficacy against [825] demoniacal influence. The flesh is eaten as medicine, while the skin boiled in gingelly oil and strained into the ear, re- [757] moves deafness.

539 There is a common belief that, should the nest of a brah- 825 many kite be found, and one of the young ones be attached to it by a string, the squall breaks away, generally leaving a por- [789] tion of the line attached to the nest as it becomes strong. The nest which is formed of sticks should then be thrown into a running stream, when, if any of the sticks that compose it float against the current, they will, on being applied to any fetters, cause them immediately to fly into a thousand fragments.

[171] The owl which is an emblem of wisdom in Europe, and the goose that of stupidity, completely change their respective places in the east, the former becoming a symbol of stupidity, the latter that of wisdom.

[787] The hooting of the owl heard at night, has, in all parts of the world and in all ages, been considered ominous of [763] evil, and is consequently much dreaded. In Cochin, it is generally believed, that the hooting of an owl betokens an impending calamity or even the death of an individual near whose abode its loathsome cry is heard; and so, dwellers in the neighbouring houses at once turn out and drive it away.

824 Jack-o'-lantern:—These are called *Kollykatta Pisáchus* 539 (ghosts which emit fire from their mouths), and make their [776] appearance on the side of tanks, rivers, and marshy places during rainy or foggy nights. They fly away or disappear at the sight of men and are much dreaded by the people.

Preëminent among the trees in the town of Cochin, and towering above all others along the sea-shore and sides of the back-water are the cocoanut palms (cocos nucifera linn), every portion of which, from the leaves to the roots, may be turned to some useful purpose.

[776] There is a tradition that the Raja of Benares, who was a stre- [643] nuous worshipper of one supreme God, and rejected the custom of making offerings to inferior divinities, became, in course of time, almost equal to the Gods, and created many of the grains now in common use. As his powers increased, so did his ambition, and he meditated creating another species of human beings very superior to anything then existing in the world. But after he had completed its head, the demi-gods became alarmed and

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824 765 782 613 surface. The men, when they return from their baths, bring with them some harialli grass (*karukapullu*); and making an obeisance with the right knee on the ground, they spread some grass near the strip of palmyra leaf, and rings made of the leaf are also worn by all those present. The eldest of the *anandaravans* or nephew then makes offerings of water, turmeric and leaves of the *cherula*, as well as balls of boiled rice with a few gingelly grains and curds poured over it. As boys are forbidden to make the offerings, should the nephew chance to be a boy, it is considered sufficient for him to touch one of the elders who, under those circumstances, makes the offerings. The whole is then covered with a plantain leaf, a lighted wick is waved near it, and some milk is poured under the leaf. This is left undisturbed for some seconds, after which the leaf is tapped gently with the back of the fingers of the right hand; it is then removed and torn in two at its mid-rib, one piece being placed on either side of the *pindams*. And now the ceremony is over for the day. The agnates rise and remove their wet clothing, sometimes even bathe again. The torn cloth is tied round a pillar near the basket covering the leaf, and the leaf is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour for the performance of the ceremony. At the end of each day's ceremony the offerings of rice balls left are unguarded for a short time to allow the crows to feed on them; after which they are removed by the female members of the *tarawád*, who are junior to the deceased, and the eldest of them carries the offerings to the side of a tank [825] and throws them into the water. It is believed that if the [775] crows take them, the spirit is pleased. Should the crows leave [231] any remains, they must be thrown into the water, as dogs must not eat the offerings.

765 783 613 574 During the seven days the house of the deceased and all its inmates are considered to be under pollution, and the members of that *tarawád* may not go to any other house nor can members of other *tarawáds* visit them without polluting themselves; but this pollution can be removed by bathing. During this period, however, as a rule, the *káranavan* of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is at home on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Here it must be said, that in some cases, the visitors bring with them small presents in money or in kind to help the *káranavan* with the expenditure to which the funeral rites put him.

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765 613 [782] and gingelly seeds every morning after his bath to the departed spirit, and he must abstain from women, meat, alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel and tobacco. When the *Deeksha* is observed, the ashes of the dead are not deposited as described above until the last day of *Deeksha*, the forty-first or the 365th day after death. When *Deeksha* is observed for a year, the ceremony called *bali* is performed every day. The last day of *Deeksha* is one of festivity, and after *bali*, the man under *Deeksha* 769 is shaved. Then at the end of every year, the annual *Sradha* [782] or the commemorative rite is performed for the deceased. Rice ball offerings are made and given to the crows, when [825] clapping of hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and should they come and eat it, it is considered that the spirit of the deceased is pleased with the [613] offering and is not likely to be troublesome. But, on the other hand, should they not come and eat it, it is evident that the spirit is displeased and the *tarawád* had better be on the look 766 out. In the case of those who have committed suicide or met 775 death by violent means, the spirits are always particularly 613 vicious and troublesome to the *tarawád*, invariably rendering 782 miserable some unfortunate member of it. Unless the spirits are pacified, they will ruin the family, so a Brahman priest is invited to satisfy them by means of *Tilahómam*, a rite in which sacrificial fire is raised, and ghee and gingelly seeds are among the offerings.

184
on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782] juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824] waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564]
of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764] lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825] woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824] Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828] superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613] pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

which has just been described. Now, when it has been 764
completed, he ties the piece of cloth to the pillar of the 613
house nearest to the piece of palmyra leaf which has 782
been stuck in the ground, and puts the piece of iron in a 775
safe place. The piece of palmyra leaf is covered with a basket. It is uncovered every day for seven days at the same hour, while the same ceremony is repeated. The balls of rice are removed by women and girls of the taravād who are junior to the deceased. They place them in the bell-metal vessel in which the rice was boiled. The senior places the vessel on her head, and leads the way to a tank, on the bank of which the rice is thrown. It is hoped that crows will come and eat [825]
it; for, if they do, the impression is received that the deceased's spirit is pleased with the offering. But, if somehow it is thought that the crows will not come and eat it, the rice is thrown into the tank. Dogs are not to be allowed to eat it. The women bathe after the rice has been thrown away. When the ceremony which has been described has been performed for the seventh time, *i.e.*, on the seventh day after death, the piece of palmyra leaf is removed from the ground, and thrown on the ashes of the deceased at the place of cremation. During 765
these seven days, no member of the taravād goes to any 613
other house. The house of the dead, and all its inmates 783
are under pollution. No outsider enters it but under 574
ban of pollution, which is, however, removable by bathing. A visitor entering the house of the dead during these seven days must bathe before he can enter his own house. During these seven days, the Karanavan of the family receives visits of condolence from relatives and friends to whom he is "at home" on Monday, Wednesday or Saturday. They sit and chat, chew betel, and go home, bathing ere they enter their houses. It is said

766 613 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from 765 tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun- [834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral-commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

776 [782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans [825] and Vēlans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a [821] large share of adoration. The sun is an object of [782] universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from 538 an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the [517] time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmayana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmayana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Rāvana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per- 178 formed here is the kūttam. This is a village council, 574 held at the beginning of every month for the administration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

the present day, a sumptuous feast at the cost of each 178
villager in rotation, and partaken of by all assembled, 574
and a small offering to the temple, are all that remains
to commemorate it. Astrology is believed in, and some 787
of its votaries are spoken of as Trikalagnas, or those
who know the past, present, and future. It is due
to a curse of Siva on the science of his son, who made
bold by its means to predict even the future of his
father, that occasional mistakes are said to occur in
astrological calculations. Sorcery and witchcraft are 754
believed to be potent powers for evil. To make a
person imbecile, to paralyse his limbs, to cause him
to lavish all his wealth upon another, to make him deaf
and dumb, and, if need be, even to make an end of him,
are not supposed to be beyond the powers of the
ordinary wizard. Next to wizardry and astrology, 787
palmistry, omens, and the lizard science are generally
believed in. In the category of good omens are placed
the elephant, a pot full of water, sweetmeats, fruit, fish
and flesh, images of gods, kings, a cow with its calf,
married women, tied bullocks, gold lamps, ghee, milk, and
so on. Under the head of bad omens come the donkey,
a broom, buffalo, untied bullock, barber, widow, patient,
cat, washerman, etc. The worst of all omens is [825]
beyond question to allow a cat to cross one's path. An
odd number of Nāyars, and an even number of Brāhmans,
are good omens, the reverse being particularly bad.
On the Vinayaka-chaturthi day in the month of Avani, [827]
no man is permitted to look at the rising moon under
penalty of incurring unmerited obloquy.

"The chief religious festival of the Nāyars is Ōnam, 796
which takes place in the last week of August, or first
week of September. It is a time of rejoicing and merri-
ment. Father Paulinus, writing in the latter half of the

796 eighteenth century, observes that about the tenth of September the rain ceases in Malabar. All nature seems then as if renovated; the flowers again shoot up, and the trees bloom. In a word, this season is the same as that which Europeans call spring. The Ōnam festival is said, therefore, to have been instituted for the purpose of soliciting from the gods a happy and fruitful [237] year. It continues for eight days, and during that time the Indians are accustomed to adorn their houses with [825] flowers, and to daub them over with cow-dung, because the cow is a sacred animal, dedicated to the Goddess Lakshmi, the Ceres of India. On this occasion they also put on new clothes, throw away all their old earthenware, and replace it by new. Ōnam is, according to some, the annual celebration of the Malabar new year, which first began with Cheraman Perumal's departure for Mecca. But, with the majority of orthodox Hindus, it is the day of the annual visit of Mahabali to his country, which he used to govern so wisely and well before his overthrow. There is also a belief that it is Maha-Vishnu who, on Ōnam day, pays a visit to this mundane universe, for the just and proper maintenance of which he is specially responsible. In some North Malabar title-deeds and horoscopes, Mr. Logan says, the year is taken as ending with the day previous to Ōnam. This fact, he notes, is quite reconcileable with the other explanation, which alleges that the commencement of the era coincides with Perumal's departure for Arabia, if it is assumed, as is not improbable, that the day on which he sailed was Thiruvōnam day, on which acknowledgment of fealty should have been made. Ōnam, it may be observed, is a contraction of Thiruvōnam which is the asterism [824] of the second day of the festival. Throughout the festival, boys from five to fifteen years of age go out

length was 5 cm. or over. In one individual the iliac 141
bone was much higher at the right side than on the left. 564*

Face.—A few individuals were noted thus—

(1) Deep nasal notch. Nasal point slightly elevated. Helix of ear very thin; the Darwin's point in the centre of the curve on the left and high up on the right.

(2) Deep nasal notch. Chin receding. Lips thick.

(3) Slight nasal notch. Supraciliary arches developed at outer edges. Chin recedes.

(4) Supraciliary arches and glabella in one marked ridge. Nasal point somewhat raised. Nasal notch.

(5) Very deep nasal notch. Very wide and thick eyebrows.

Figure.—More than half are marked as slight—a few of them "very slight"; the rest "medium." None "stout."

Hair.—As a rule, to which exceptions are very few, 142
hair on the head is thick and wavy: curly in the case of 564*
one individual. The hair of a man of 70 was noted as "very thin and grey." A man of 31 also had hair which was "thin and grey," but he was exceptional. The growth of hair on the cheeks—whiskers—was observed in almost every subject.

Hair on the chest.—The average is "moderate."

On the arms.—The growth of hair in half of the subjects was "slight to very slight"; in the other half, "moderate to thick."

On the legs.—It was noted as "moderate" to "thick" in more than three-fourths of those examined; in a few, "slight."

The growth of hair of a few individuals is here specified—

(1) Aged 54. Hair on the head moderately thick and grey. Hair on the face white. Growth of hair on the cheeks. Hair all over chest grey. Very long thick hair on the back. Hair on the legs and arms thick.

(2) Aged 36. Hair on the head moderately thick and wavy. Glossy black. On chest and middle line of abdomen, moderate. On the arms and legs moderately [302]
thick. Shaves the head (except the crown), face, chest, abdomen, wrists and hands, about every 15 days.

(3) Aged 28. Hair on the head thick and wavy. Growth of hair on cheeks; on the chin it is very thick. On the chest, moderate; on the arms, very slight; on the legs, thick. Does not shave his chest, as doing so [302]
would make him weak; on the other hand, if he does [753]
not shave his head and face, he will become sick. [826]

765 When the cremation has been done by night, the duty
782 of Sêshakriya (making offerings to the deceased's spirit)
613 must be begun the next day between 10 and 11 A.M. and is done on seven consecutive days. In any case the time for this ceremony is after 10 and before 11 and it continues for seven days. It is performed as follows. All male members of the Taravâd younger than the deceased go together to a tank and bathe, *i.e.*, they souse themselves in the water, and return to the house. The eldest of them, the man who tore off the strip of cloth from the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there has been placed ready by an Enangan—(one of the Taravâd—of the same clan or sub-clan as that of
[582] the deceased : marriage must be admissible between the two Taravâds)—some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherûla,* some curds, a smaller measure † of paddy, and a smaller measure ‡ of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it knotted ; the knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice
824 and other things are offered to this. The belief concern-
826 ing this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus : There
764 are in the human body ten humours :—Vâyús ; Prânan ;
714 Apânan ; Samânan ; Udânan; Vyânan ; Nâgan ; Kûrman; Krikalan ; Dêvadattan ; Dhananjayan. These are called Dasaváyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these excepting the last, were destroyed
[789] by the fire. The last one flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brâhman sages who, by means of mantrams (magic), forced it down
[782] to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought
[796] that, by making offerings to this (Dhananjayan) leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the Taravâd.

824 The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has
765 been cleaned carefully, and the leaf is fixed in the centre
782 of this prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct
613

[804] * Ærna lanata belonging to the natural order Acanthaceæ.
† Ari Edangâli : about the size of a quart.
‡ A nazhi : about ¾ a pint.

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When the great Rama was constructing the dam across the sea, for his large army to cross over to Lanka (Ceylon) to wage war with the *Asura*, Ravana, and to recover his wife Sita, a small squirrel was found working hard without food. This attracted the notice of the great Rama who took pity on him and gently rubbed him on the back with three fingers as a sign of affection, and the impressions thus left became the black and white lines, which the whole species possessed thereafter.

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It is said that a new lobe grows on to the liver of a tiger every year it lives, and therefore by an examination of that organ, the age of the animal can be accurately determined. [825] [826]

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the water leak out by making holes in the pot as he walks 613
round. On completing the third round he dashes the pot on 764
the ground close to the spot where the head of the dead had been placed. This circling round (*Kumbhapradakshinam*) is said to symbolize that the deceased has had his ablution in the water of the Ganges. Then the chief mourner and others bathe in a tank or river, perform an ablution of water (*Udaka-kriya*) to a piece of *karuka* grass stuck up to represent the spirit of the dead. A small image of the deceased is then made [532]
out of raw rice, and to this image a few grains of rice and gingelly seed are offered. When this has been done, the relatives and the neighbours who have been there depart, taking care to bathe themselves before entering their houses.

The ceremony next in importance is the *Séshakriya* (mak- 765
ing offerings to the deceased's spirit) which begins on the 782
second day after death and continues for seven days, the parti- 613
culars of which are as follows:—All the male members of the family, junior to the deceased, bathe and return home. The eldest of them who has the torn cloth and the piece of iron, together with the others, assemble in the central court-yard of the house, where there has been prepared by their *enangan* Chithayan, some boiled rice, a few gingelly seeds, a few leaves of the *cherula*, some curd, and a small measure of paddy, rice, and turmeric. All these are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp locally made. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger is taken, one end after being knotted, is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This leaf represents the deceased, and the rice and other things are offered to it. The following is the 824
belief concerning the use of the palmyra leaf:—There are in 826
the human body ten humours, *Váyus*, *Prúnan*, *Apánan*, *Sa-* 764
mánan, *Udánan*, *Vyánan*, *Nágan*, *Kúrman*, *Krikalan*, *Déva-* 774
dathan and *Dhananjayan*. There are *Desavayus* or ten airs. When cremation was performed for the first time, all excepting the last were consumed in the fire, while the last flew up and settled on a palmyra leaf. This was discovered by some Brah [789]
man sages, who by means of *mantrams* forced it into the [775]
palmyra leaf. So it is thought that by making offerings to this leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be pacified. 932

The place where the leaf is to be fixed is first cleaned care- 824
fully, and the leaf is then placed in the centre of the prepared 765
613

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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the corpse, has with him the same strip of cloth and the piece of iron, and all assemble in the central courtyard of the house, where there have been placed ready by an enangan some rice which has been half boiled, a few grains of gingelly, a few leaves of the cherūla (*Ærua lanata*), some curds, a smaller measure of paddy, and a smaller measure of raw rice. These are placed in the north-east corner with a lamp of the ordinary Malabar pattern. A piece of palmyra leaf, about a foot or so in length and the width of a finger, is taken, and one end of it is knotted. The knotted end is placed in the ground, and the long end is left sticking up. This represents the deceased. The rice and other things are offered to it. The belief concerning this piece of palmyra leaf is explained thus. There are in the human body ten humours:—Vāyūs, Prānan, Apānan, Samānan, Udānan, Vyānan, Nāgan, Kurman, Krikalan, Dēvadattan, Dhananjayan. These are called Dasavāyu, *i.e.*, ten airs. When cremation was done for the first time, all these, excepting the last, were destroyed by the fire. The last one flew up, and settled on a palmyra leaf. Its existence was discovered by some Brāhman sages, who, by means of mantrams, forced it down to a piece of palmyra leaf on the earth. So it is thought that, by making offerings to this Dhananjayan leaf for seven days, the spirit of the deceased will be mollified, should he have any anger to vent on the living members of the taravād. The place where the piece of leaf is to be fixed has been carefully cleaned, and the leaf is fixed in the centre of the prepared surface. The offerings made to it go direct to the spirit of the deceased, and the peace of the taravād is assured. The men who have bathed and returned have brought with them some grass (karuka pulla), plucked on their way back to the house.

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782
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[826]
[704]

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men; [827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. However, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men..

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

141 *564 *Face.*—Supraciliary arches prominent in two. Face of one distinctly pyramidal; in two others it was rather so. In one the broadest part of the head was immediately behind the ears, low down.

Figure.—Fifteen are noted slight, four as slight to medium, five as medium. Two were marked as powerfully built.

142 302 *564 *Hair.*—An oval patch of hair on the vertex remains; the rest of the head, the face and body are always shaved. A moustache is never worn. The men are always clean shaven except during mourning for a near relative, when the razor is not used for a year. The hair on the vertex is allowed to grow long, and well treated with oil, looks glossy and black, is tied in a knot which hangs over the forehead or to one side of the head at the pleasure of the wearer. As a rule the hair on the head is plentiful and wavy, while in a few it is very thick. About 20 per cent. of those examined had scanty hair on the head. The following facts were recorded:—

142 *564 A man of 50 had a few gray hairs.

A man of 49 had hair distinctly gray: on the face, white when sprouting.

A man of 52 had a few white hairs on the sternum; not on the head.

Baldness is uncommon; and, though old age does not overtake them too early, it has been noted that one man of 40 looked about 60.

[302] Gingelly oil is commonly used for the hair, but its use for the hair is said by some to have certain effects on the body. One man said he used cocoanut oil because, if he used the other, he would get boils all over his body and suffer from headaches. It is usual to oil the head [827] profusely during the month Karkadagam * "in order to cool the body."

Hair on the chest and arms.—As a rule the growth is slight to very slight in 14 out of 25, while in the remaining 11 it is moderate.

On the legs.—In 20 per cent. it was slight; in the rest moderate or thick.

*[564] [302] [305] *Note.*—Men never shave themselves. With the exception of the oval patch on the crown of the head, about 7½ inches long and 5½ inches wide where the hair is allowed to grow long, all hair on the head, face, chest, abdomen, armpits, wrists and about the pubes is shaved by the barber. The back is not shaved, nor the legs: the arms sometimes, but not always. A few do not shave the chest.

* During the rains.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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875 The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say
526 "the body is cool," is the time when, according to
[827] custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises.
[564] At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August
1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a
[553] mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his
name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers
875 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when
526 they are believed to be properly accomplished they are
564 given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things
regulated that no other person was permitted to teach
athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small
[844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only
being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar
women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises
for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his
pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

526

Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sarîravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sarîravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs.

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *taravād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child.

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring.

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1]

Again, in all the groups studied the *taravād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake-

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *taravād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pedhaw*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *iwar*.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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or *bhavanam*, while the man in authority dwells in an *idam*, and the Raja in a *kovilakam* or *kottaram*. A separate name for each *tarawad* or family is peculiar to this coast. 342 564

There are some superstitious beliefs entertained by the Nayars as well as other high caste-men, in the selection of the site for a house and compound, the quality of the soil, the site of the tank, well, cow-shed, and the edifice for the family deity; and as an account of these will be of some ethnographic interest, it is given below:— 342 351 823 [564]

The best site should abound with milky trees full of fruits and flowers; its boundary should be of a quadrangular form, level and smooth with a sloping declivity towards the east, producing a hard sound with a stream running from left to right, of an agreeable odour, fertile, and of an uniform colour, containing a great quantity of soil, producing water when dug to the height of a man's arm raised above his head, and situated in a region of moderate temperature. The ground possessed of qualities directly opposite to those mentioned above is the worst, and that which has a mixed nature is of the middling quality.[1]

The site to be avoided is described in a special manner as follows:—That which has the form of a circle, or a semicircle, or containing three, five or six angles, or resembling a trident or shaped like the back of a fish, the back of an elephant, or a turtle, or the face of a cow, etc., situated opposite to any of the intermediate quarters abounding with human skulls, stones or worms, ant-hills, bones, slimy earth, decayed wood, coals, dilapidated wells, subterraneous pits, fragments of tiles, limestones, ashes, husks of corns and exposed to the wafted effluvia of curds, oil, honey, dead bodies, and fishes; such a spot should be avoided on every account.

In regard to colour and taste, ground with smell like that of ghee and with sweet taste is good for Brahmans; that with the colour and smell of blood and with an astringent taste, for Kshatriyas; that with yellow colour, smell of boiled rice and bitter taste, for Vaisyas: and that with dark colour, smell of toddy and taste of cow-dung, for Sudras. [822] [827]

There is also a test for the selection of a site by lighting a lamp in a hole. A hole measuring one cubit in depth, [372]

1. Ramraz's essay on the architecture of the Hindus, London, pp. 15-23.

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men;
[827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

First birth-day celebration.

on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, "women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
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178 was still undivided commented to me on this change. "In my *taravād*," he said, "I
613 dare not speak before the *kāranavan* without standing and placing my hand before
604 my mouth. But in K. *taravād*, after their partition, I have seen the nephews sitting to play cards with their uncle and passing the cigarette from their mouth to his. When I saw this I knew that relationship means property, and without property there is no relationship."

178 Moreover, the change to elementary family households does not merely entail
594 a shift of the same disciplinary functions from the mother's brother to the father.
152 Nāyar fathers have a tradition of indulgent tenderness toward their children and are
593 loth to discipline them. Even when they are forced to do so, the techniques of discipline differ from those in a traditional *taravād* house. In the intimate atmosphere of the small elementary family household, traditional etiquette is abandoned. Children
[154] learn to obey both parents from love more than from fear. There appears to be a much deeper repression of aggression than in the traditional setting, and correspond-
[769] ingly, many young Nāyars cannot entertain the notion that their parents' ghosts could act punitively toward them. It seems probable that such changes in the modes of handling aggression—affected also by the collapse of the military tradition and the modern legal ban on all forms of physical aggression—may also lie behind the repugnance of modern Nāyars for such other traditional religious forms as blood sacrifice and spirit possession.

178 Also important in the abandonment of ghost cults is, however, an increased tend-
564 ency toward the adoption of Sanskrit rites. This tendency, which has marked all the non-Brahman castes during the past hundred years or so, I would associate with
177 increasing mobility within the caste system and, most recently, with its gradual collapse. For the Nāyars, as for the lower castes, the Brahmans are no longer a group with whom they have fixed status relationships. Instead, the Brahmans are now a reference group whom the Nāyars emulate and with whom they compete in the struggle for high rank and respectability. Some Nāyars who still hold their traditional beliefs in ancestral spirits and deities deliberately "purge" their rites of non-Sanskritic elements in order to gain respectability. Others have changed both rites and beliefs toward a modified form of the Brahmanical religion, even while they are busy repudiating the religious authority of the Brahman. Yet others, whose number is probably
[829] increasing, repudiate both Brahmanical and non-Sanskritic religions in their orthodox forms. Instead, they work out for themselves a more or less agnostic world view with humanitarian ideals, in which ceremonies, if they figure at all, figure only as acts of piety toward respected persons.

178 The cults of alien ghosts are also changing their form and gradually dying out.
769 This change accompanies the gradual collapse of the caste system as a system of ranked occupational groups linked by hereditary service ties. The collapse of the caste system
564 itself results from the growth of the capitalist market economy and the democratization of political institutions. Some Nāyars retain their beliefs in witchcraft and sorcery, but the categories of persons whom they suspect are no longer solely caste
[755] determined. They are as likely to include fellow factory workers or competitors in
[782] government service, irrespective of caste. Professional exorcists of appropriate caste are often no longer available, for many have left their traditional work. So also have many of the low caste families who formerly propitiated ghosts and minor deities associated with village temples or with Nāyar *taravāds*. Since the passing of the Temple Entry

613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāvi* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 586 [564] But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
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left by *12*'s husband for the kingroups of both his wife and his sisters, since both inclined to demand rights on the property left by him to the other party. The marriage of *56* also involved a similar situation for both members of Marayil and Mangayil in order to enjoy the economic activity of *32*.

Traditionally the Nayar tended to marry among particular *tarwad* (not necessarily two), between which friendly relationships, expressed in terms of *enanger*, had been established. Hence many marriages fall into the category of the cross-cousin marriage. However, the above cited cases were obviously meant to solve the ambivalent economic situation arising from the disintegrating stage of the *tarwad* system; and so it was explained to me. The present younger generation strongly avoid cross-cousin marriage, as they think it is not good biologically. However, whether they dislike it or not, after the disintegration of the *tarwad* system the cross-cousin marriage itself is losing its social and economic function.

Matrilineal Elements in the Present Nayar Family

In spite of the final partition of the *tarwad* property, and the establishment of elementary family households which made the *tarwad* functionless, the ideology of the *tarwad* (matrilineal system) still persists in various aspects of the life of the present Nayar.

In the new system, in theory, the husband established an independent house for himself and his wife, freed from both his *tarwad* and her *tarwad*, but it is interesting to observe that the house built by the husband is found near to his wife's *tarwad*, unless his job forced him to leave their birth place. The picture is that of a set of households whose wives are sisters, grouped in a certain area. For instance the husbands of *55* and *66* built their houses very near to that of the C group, which was built by the father of *29*: these three households are very close to each other, across narrow lanes and a garden. The behaviour of these members was described on page 21.

This might give an impression that women tend to attach to their matrilineal members more than men do. However, men also have very close attachments to their sisters, and are always ready to give moral and economic help to them, in spite of living at a greater distance from them. It was the traditional custom to marry a member of a *tarwad* situated in the same local area, since this was certainly convenient for visiting marriage, and also owing to the inter *tarwad* political relationships. Hence husbands and their sisters easily can visit each other, even after residential separation. Such frequent visits among the members of the matrilineal group maintain great familiarity among them. So far as my own observation goes, a man who has considerable income helps his poorer sisters almost in a same way as he does his wife and children. They themselves say they have often trouble about which they should care for more, wife or sister. They told me, that today they were well aware that they should do their best for their wife and children with whom they live, but they also could not help loving and caring for their sisters and sisters' children very much.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathóyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

592 so firmly excluded from participation in its ev-
786 eryday affairs. If this were so we would have
[152] evidence that the Nayars, in spite of their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line, virtual sexual promiscuity within the caste, and minimal recognition of paternity, had an Oedipus Complex [59] which caused men to fear and propitiate the phallic representatives of their fathers, and women to have fantasies about "possession" by paternal phallic symbols. Unfortunately snake worship is now practically extinct; I never saw it, and found present-day informants able to make few associations about it.

592 If the snake-gods were, at least unconsciously,
786 collective "fathers" of the taravad, it is inter-
831 esting that they were represented in an archaic, dream-like form as snakes (pure phallic animal symbols) robbed of their human attributes. This would accord with the fact that Oedipal hostility of the father, which must have been experienced by Nayar children since they slept, and do today, in the mother's room till age four or five and have opportunity to witness parental intercourse, would be repressed before latency and leave its mark only in unconscious phallic fantasies about the father which could be translated into the cultural idiom of beliefs about harmful snake-gods. Such archaic representations contrast with the less distorted ones of male forbears of the taravad.

592 These latter comprise only the spirits of dead
769 karanavans of the property-group, not of men
778 who died without attaining to headship, and very seldom of women. (5) In each house, a room

588 [564] [793] 588 833 178 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 782 787 793 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 [831] [753] [782] [834] Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

588 [783] [964] The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

588 184 595 [965] [783] [851] In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*aswatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

[842] [788]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the traditional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 184 178 776

Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

588 [593] [613]

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

[788]

588 613 564 184 833 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 632).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

588 On the day fixed the couple dressed in cloths given by the girl's father, and the girl was led into the hall by her mother's brother and seated on the plank. The boy was carried in on the shoulders of his mother's brother, borne thrice round and seated to the right of her, her own mother's brother's wife sitting on her left. The girl's father three times asked the astrologer if the auspicious moment had come, after which the bridegroom tied the *tāli*. Aiyappan states that the boy placed the *tāli* round the girl's neck, where it was tied behind by her mother or her father's sister. Iyer reports that in Cochin, the boy stood behind the girl and tied it himself. The couple were given a sweet drink as at a normal marriage. The girl was then secluded for three days with the new loin-cloth which the boy had worn kept always beside her. On the fourth morning, the couple bathed together and were taken to worship [184] at the temple. In South Malabar, though not in Cochin, the loin-cloth was then taken from [586] the girl's room and cut in two, as at the divorce in a Nayar rite. The bridegroom then took a thread of it and, as at a normal divorce, snapped it saying to the girl's brother, 'Here is your [613] sister's *āchāram*.' He departed taking the two pieces of cloth and a few rupees paid by the girl's family. As among Nayars, a whole *taravād* might hold the ceremonies for all its immature girls, separate bridegrooms then being required for each.

184 This ceremony, more clearly than the North Malabar Tiyyar one, is a mock-marriage 588 of the girl to a vicarious husband. It would be less appropriate for the mother's brother's wife or the father's sister to tie the *tāli* in this group, since cross-cousin marriage, though [589] preferential, is not enjoined to the extent which it is in the north. Even so, the mother's brother's wife, perhaps as potential mother-in-law, performs preliminary rites. On the face of things, however, it seems extraordinary that in this group where the marriage bond is strong, fatherhood known within a group of brothers, inheritance patrilineal, and the wife at least partly incorporated into the lineage of her husband, such a rite should be performed at all. It is significant that the Tiyyar *tāli*-tier does not take over the role of ritual father to the woman's children by her later husbands, nor does he in any sense remain a husband to the woman. [765] Unless she is married to him after puberty, neither the girl nor her children observe pollution for his death nor use kinship terms for him. This difference between South Malabar Tiyyars [60] and Nayars befits the difference between Nayar matriliny with its denial of the social aspect of physiological paternity, and the Tiyyar patrilineal lineage system with its emphasis on the [613] legitimacy of children. But why did the Tiyyars perform the rite at all? Since they themselves have no answer to this question, except that it was part of ancient custom, we are driven to look for an explanation in terms of unconscious motivations.

Part V. Interpretation of the *Tāli*-Rite

184 The ceremonies vary in detail but have certain features in common (see Chart I). The 588 rite must in all cases be performed before puberty, and is always a symbolic defloration. This is most clear in the royal lineages, where the bridegroom actually deflowers the girl. 831 Among South Malabar Nayars, the aggressive approach of the bridegroom's party suggests a sexual attack, as does the action of the bridegroom who places his sword across his lap before tying the *tāli* on the bride. When, on the fourth morning, the bridegrooms force open the shut doors of the girls' lineage house, it is clear that they are, as strangers, making an aggressive entry into the *taravād*, i.e. symbolically deflowering its women.

In all the ceremonies other ritual acts make it clear that the rite is a symbolic defloration. The lit wick, arrow, sword, coconut tree, staff, sun, sky, peacock-feathers, the corner-post of the marriage-shed and the bamboo rod stuck in a coconut are readily recognized as phallic symbols recurrent in South Indian ritual; while paddy, rice, coconut inflorescence, rouge-bottle, bell-metal mirror (worshipped in temples as symbol of Bhagavadi), mud pot of water,

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *tarawād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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Tiyyar

pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion.

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'.

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of castration by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tāli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his older kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
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and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psychoanalytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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up in the marriage shed and the rites are conducted before it. Among Nayars it is planted near the sacred corner-post which as we saw is probably a phallic symbol. Among Tiyyars a small branch of the tree is tied to the marriage-pole, thus indicating, perhaps, that Bhagavadi is being 'married' to the divine male tree. The girl is seated upon a plank of the milk-tree. Among Nayars the *tāli*-rite is followed by offerings to appease the angry mother.

Bhagavadi or Devi (generic terms meaning goddess) is equated by Nayars and Tiyyars with Durgha and with Kali or Bhadrakali, fierce puranic goddesses who were created by Siva and are his consorts, though, unlike Parvathi his 'regular' wife, they are not represented as actually married to him. Bhadrakali is a black, hideous-faced demon; she is encircled with snakes, has a garland of skulls, four hands holding weapons, long claws and tusks, a protruding tongue, and a mouth dripping blood. She rides upon a lion. She is said by Nayars to have been born from fire which issued in anger from the third eye of Siva to destroy the sacrifice which Daksha, Siva's father-in-law, had prepared for the other gods to the exclusion of Siva himself. Bhadrakali destroyed the sacrificial objects and beheaded Daksha.

Durgha (who is often not distinguished by Malayalis from Kali) rides on a tiger and has ten hands holding weapons. These were given to her by the gods as emblems of their power, to enable her to kill Mahisasura, a buffalo-demon who had gained control of the worlds of gods and men. Both Durgha and Kali have destroyed, beheaded, dismembered, and eaten many other demons in their wars on behalf of the gods.

Other myths of Bhagavadi temples describe the goddess's devotion to Siva and attacks on demons who opposed him. In the myth of the temple at Cape Comorin, Bhagavadi is a virgin with eight brothers who divided between them the kingdom of Bharatha Kandam. Bhagavadi took the southernmost portion round Cape Comorin. Here she did penance to Siva and, when he promised her a boon, desired to copulate with him. He replied that she must first kill Vanasuran, a demon who, by excessive penance to Siva, had gained control of the earth. Vanasuran heard of Bhagavadi and came to marry her. He found her as a beautiful maiden swinging in her garden. She requested him to bring her the flowers of three kinds of fig tree, but, when he did so, she caused them to disappear.[1] Seeing she would not yield, Vanasuran took his sword and fought the virgin who, appearing in terrible form, pierced him with her own sword and cut off his head with her disc. His body disappeared in a hole in the earth, from which sprang a bathing-pool called *chakkra-theertham* ('disc-water').

Bhagavadi is represented by Nayars and Tiyyars both as a mother and as a virgin. The dead Nayar or Tiyyar virgin can, moreover, herself become a species of Bhagavadi. It was formerly believed that if a girl died before the *tāli* was tied, her jealous and malignant spirit hovered round the earth inflicting misfortune on her *tarawād*. She was called a *Kannichāvu* ('dead virgin'); a shrine must be erected to her and offerings made by her kin. It is this curious equation of the mother and the virgin which leads me to believe that the virgins for whom the *tāli* is tied (and who are associated with Bhagavadi in the rites) are also unconsciously likened to the mother.

I suggest an interpretation of the Bhagavadi myths which subsumes under one theory both the myths and the *tāli*-rite. That Bhagavadi is their chief deity reflects the supreme importance of the mother in the life of the Nayar and Tiyyar man. The myths show repressed hostility to and fear of the mother which, because of the values of the kinship system, cannot be made conscious and expressed openly in social life. That Bhagavadi dismembers and eats the demons reflects the infant's projection upon the mother of his own oral frustrations in the period of suckling (commonly prolonged to the age of three or four, but abruptly terminated if a sibling is born) and his desire to attack and tear to pieces the mother. Bhagavadi's snake ornaments, weapons, projecting tongue, tusks, claws, and lion and tiger

[1] One of the trees was the *Ficus religiosa* (see p. 54).

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vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol. 773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tâli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tâli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son. 588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet. 841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
83 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nâdurari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
78 ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and
182 pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
88 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards
182 higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted'
83 bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their girls to womanhood.

Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
83 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emo-
564 tional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and
423 masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
593 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and perpetuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened
To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-03) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 332-43).

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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is strong or (as we should expect) permits divorce and return to the brother's household; whether her natal kinsmen retain strong rights in a woman throughout her life; and whether the virgin is in any way associated in myth with a phallic mother-goddess.[1]

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[1] The male fear of deflowering a virgin, who may be unconsciously associated with the mother and is thus thought of as the rightful property of a father-figure or of an infant son-figure, appears in the marriage customs of several other South Indian peoples. The patrilineal Tamil Non-Brahmans of Tanjore, who have post-puberty marriage, formerly required the brahman priest who performed their marriage rites to deflower the girl as well. The fact that in these castes the mother's brother is considered the rightful husband of a girl gives further evidence of the belief that a girl should rightly be married by a man of the parental generation. Thurston (1906, pp. 49-50) reports that in the Malayali hill-tribe of Salem (also Tamil) a small boy is married to a mature woman, but the bride's father-in-law and not the husband cohabits with her and begets children on behalf of his son. When the son reaches maturity and his own legal sons are married, he in turn cohabits with their wives and raises children on behalf of his 'sons'. The Vellalas of Coimbatore are said to have a similar custom, in which a boy marries a mature woman, with whom the girl's father-in-law cohabits until the boy is adult. Similarly among the Reddis of Tinnevelly, a boy of five is reported often to be married to a girl of twenty. The girl after marriage cohabits with one of her own kinsmen on the maternal side, frequently her mother's brother, or else with the father of her boy-husband. When the husband grows up, he may in some cases never cohabit with his wife, but instead form a liaison with the wife of some other boy-kinsman. Among the Tamil Vallambans a boy is obliged to marry one or other type of cross-cousin, who may be older than himself. The girl then cohabits with her husband's elder brother, mother's brother or father, and the boy-husband legitimatizes the children when he comes of age. In all these customs we appear to have the reflection of a strong Oedipal conflict which, on the one hand, prevents a man from deflowering and sometimes from cohabiting at all with his wife and causes him to give her to his father or some other father-figure, and, on the other hand, gives such free rein to incestuous desires towards women of the filial generation as to permit men to deprive their social 'sons' of their legal wives. The defloration of a girl by one who is a father-figure to her husband is not, of course, confined to India, but appears for example in the European custom of the *droit du seigneur*. At the initation of a Bánaro girl, her prospective bridegroom's father, being 'ashamed' to do it himself, engaged his sib-friend to deflower the girl (Thurnwald 1916, p. 261).

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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nuts, which are also given to all the persons assembled at the 184
place. After the departure of the guests, the bridegroom re- [431]
tires to the bed room with the bride.

This is an unvarnished account of a *Pudamuri*. Next morning *veetil kettu* or *salkàram* ceremony follows, and the relations of the bridegroom take the bride to the husband's house, where the bride's party are treated to a grand feast ".[1]

The *sambandham* or *Pudamuri* ceremony is not a mar- 585
riage in the legal or sacramental sense of the 564
term. The views of the members of the 184
orthodox community in Malabar, who are the

The orthodox view of this form of marriage.

expounders of the existing customs, are of great ethnographic importance. It is said that the Nambuthiris consort with Nayar females by *sambandham*, and precisely the same ceremony is gone through whether the husband is a Nambuthiri or a Nayar. The Nambuthiris do not look upon it as a marriage. Where a Brahman is a bridegroom, he cannot eat with his Sudra wife, and is therefore unable to join with his wife in the wedding feast. There is no comparison of horoscopes. The [831]
aristocracy of the District of Malabar, the Rajas who are admittedly the heads of the Nayar caste, and the Nambuthiris who are the expounders of religion, opine, that chastity is not one of the duties prescribed for the Nayar community and *slokas* (verses) are quoted to prove this. This view is not held in the Cochin State.

In the Malabar Marriage Commission, one hundred and 586
ninety-seven witnesses admitted the undoubted fact that either party to the union may terminate it at any time from wantonness, caprice or any other reason, and that if the couple joined together by *Pudamuri* were satisfied with one night of hymeneal bliss, there is no legal impediment to prevent their separating without any formality on the following morning. Ninety-one witnesses alleged some formality to be necessary, and that parties should not separate without the approval of their *kàranavans* or of their relatives or of their caste people. There was also a small minority (twenty-one witnesses) who [562]
denied to the women the right of divorce which they accorded to man, assigning as their reason, that, under the Hindu Law, no woman can be independent. This minority would deprive

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 35-37,

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. 175 868

. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise." 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than ● 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

592 His relationship was however remembered, and
582 he was regarded as the ritual father (appan) of
608 the woman's children, in contrast to their genitor or to the step-father who happened currently to be visiting a woman, these latter both being
608 called acchan. Ritual fatherhood meant nothing
764 at all except that at the death of the tali-tier,
602 the woman and all her children must observe death pollution. Death pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin; it was not until recently observed for the genitor or other lovers of the mother. Its observance for the tali-tier shows that even the Nayars, with their extreme emphasis on the matrilineal line and total exclusion of the husband and father from economic, legal or ceremonial rights, recognized the field of kinship to extend beyond the unilineal descent-group, and felt the need to give ceremonial recognition [73] to the concepts of marriage and of paternity, even though they gave none to the individual husband and father.

595 After the tali-rite and shortly before or after
833 puberty, a girl might enter into a number of unions with men of her own subcaste (including, if both wished, the ritual husband of the tali-rite) or of an appropriate higher subcaste. Similarly, a man might cohabit with any number of mistresses from his own or an appropriate lower subcaste. A man usually visited a mistress after supper, and left before breakfast; even today in orthodox matrilocal households men eat with their sisters and mothers and visit or accept food in the conjugal house in the daytime only on special invitation from the wife's karanavan.

595 Traditionally, the visiting lover placed his wea-
833 pons outside the door as a warning to other men that he was within. My informants reported that more recently, until the end of the nineteenth century in some villages, if two lovers of a woman called on the same night the one who came last slept outside on the verandah. Usually the regular lovers of a woman (who might not be from the same lineage) knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

595 It is difficult to decide from the evidence whether this instution of combined polyandrous and polygynous mating can strictly be regarded as "marriage" in any usual sense of the term. Personally, I prefer the word "marriage" for the ritual marriage of talikettukalyanam (which old English speaking Nayars even today state to have been "the real marriage"), because it gave ceremonial recognition, to a stable relationship of perpetual hereditary affinal kinship between lineages in the local group. Moreover, although exclusive sexual rights in the woman were given up at once at the "divorce", the observance of death [74] pollution by the woman and her children indicates that in some sense the relationship was thought to continue for life.

595 However, the evidence suggests that post-
684 puberty liaisons too were perhaps not entirely
551 promiscuous; moreover, the more permanent of them at all events were attended by ceremonial obligations. First, liaisons were strictly limited to men of the appropriate "good" castes; sex unions with men of lower caste were categorically forbidden and for women, punishable

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

564 613 588 of cohabitation; and on the fourth day the bridegroom severs his connection with the girl, symbolising divorce by cutting into two pieces the cloth (called kachai cloth) [184] which she wears. The tearing of the cloth is, however, [586] confined to South Malabar. These are the essentials of the ceremony, an adjunct to which is that, in spite of the [765] divorce, the girl observes death-pollution when her Manavâlan dies. The same Manavâlan may tie the tâli [783] on any number of girls, during the same ceremony or at any other time; and he may be old or young. He is often an elderly holy Brâhman, who receives a small present for his services. The ceremony is always the occasion of feasting and jollification. The girl may remove the tâli if she likes after the fourth day.

588 In some parts of Malabar there is no doubt that the man who performs the rôle of Manavâlan is considered to have some right to the girl, but in such a case it has been already considered that he is a proper man to enter into Sambandham with her. It will be as well to remark here that almost invariably amongst the inferior races, the aboriginals so to speak of Malabar, girls are married [833] (their marriage is consummated) before puberty. The fuss that was made a few years ago (by the shrieking sisterhood) about the age of consent has had no effect there.

613 The tâli-tying ceremony having been performed while 585 the girl is yet a child, the next step in the matter of [588] her alliance with a man is the arrangement of the Sambandham. As the rule nothing more than the consent of the girl and of her guardian, the Kâranavan of the family, is necessary. There is no religious formality. The tâli-tying ceremony dispenses with everything of the kind. There is, however, in some parts a tendency now-a-days "to surround the occasion of first cohabitation with a more or less elaborate ceremonial." It is quite an informal affair, arranged by the Kâranavans of the two families. Many a time a young fellow of 22 or 24, answering my question whether he had contracted Sambandham with any one, replied that the head of his family had not yet arranged a Sambandham for him. The wishes of the contracting parties—for in great measure it is a contract—and of the heads of the families practically settle the matter. Should the parties find they are unsuited, they part. There is no dragging on under a bondage intolerable to both.

585 The following account was given by Mr. Chandu 184 Menon (a Nâyar) to the Commission. He says:—

564 582 421 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 85 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *acchan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [88] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite*. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*. This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. [692] *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. 613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu ammā āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kāranavan* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used by Nayars for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'.

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death.

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage.

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life.

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers.

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiris before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston &

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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Aṣān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*asuatha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage [842] ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were 184 too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the tradi- 178 tional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some 776 Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *kāranavan*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, [613] he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on 613 ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony 564 with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before 184 puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. 833 The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Aṣān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.
[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).
[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.
[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

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with any Nambûdiri Brahman who had the consent of her *kāranavan*. Until recently, polyandry and divorce were said by my Nayar informants to have been even commoner than among Nayars.

In the Zamorin's and the Walluvanād lineages the *tāli* was tied by princes of the more ancient royal lineages of Kodungalur and Beypore. Actual defloration does not seem to have been obligatory in recent times. Kerr's (1811, ch 6) translation of Castaneda, however, states that

> . . . these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel around her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives.

Of the Zamorin's own marriage to a Nayar wife, Hamilton (1727, p. 172), a Scottish trader, wrote in 1723:

> When the Zamorin marries, he must not cohabit with his bride till the Nambourie or chief Priest has enjoyed her, and, if he pleases, may have Three Nights of her Company, because the first Fruits of her nuptials must be an holy Oblation to the God she worships; and some of the nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute; but the common people cannot have that Compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves.

Barbosa (Stanley, 1866, p. 124), writing in a more robust age, 1510, says of the Nayar commoners: 'And from that time forward [i.e. after the *tāli*-rite] the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women.'

The immediate significance of the *tāli*-rite for Nayars of this area, taken in conjunction with their combined polyandry and polygyny, is clear. A Nayar *tavavād* is perpetuated by its women. Hence the extraordinary value set by Nayars on obtaining a sufficiency of husbands and thus of children for their lineage. The *tāli*-rite dramatizes this need of the lineage for male sexual partners who ('like breeding bulls', as a Calicut prince remarked) will fulfil the one role denied to men of the lineage in respect of their sisters and nieces. The bridegroom's role as *enangan* was significant in a caste community in which sex relations were promiscuous. In this rite, through a chosen representative, the local caste group as a whole 'married' the lineage as a whole, and ritually set free the procreative powers of its girls to perpetuate their lineage. The ritual 'divorce' on the fourth day freed the girls from their particular bridegrooms, as the fee which accompanied it freed their lineage from further obligations to these men. If he wished to perpetuate the relationship, the ritual bridegroom must come again in a different role, without prior claims, merely as one of a series of lovers. The 'divorce' foreshadows the jealousy with which Nayar men regard the post-puberty lovers of their sisters: these are prevented from interfering in household matters, and may be dismissed by the brothers in a momentary fit of pique. The separation of the *tāli*-rite (the ritual marriage) from the later *sambandham* unions (initiated without rites) thus underlines the necessity to the lineage of husbands and fathers, while denying to the individual husband and father a legally and socially significant role in relation to his wife and children.

The tying of the *tāli*, in aristocratic lineages, by a Nambûdiri Brahman or other personage of higher caste in place of an *enangan*, fits in with the custom of hypergamous marriage. The higher caste bridegroom's role gives ceremonial recognition to the overlordship of *nāduvaris* over *desavaris*, of kings over *nāduvaris*, and in religious matters, of Nambûdiri Brahmans over all. The higher caste lover had no more rights in his mistress than the Nayar and even fewer obligations to her. At the same time the function in the political and economic systems of these high caste men's roles as ritual and physiological husbands and fathers to members of the castes below them must not be underestimated. Today the old political system has

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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *taravād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

Nayar
Tiyyar

588 182 184 *sambandhom* lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambūdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [533] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 [782] [533] The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother

pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

553
554 Malabar, where it is a creation of the Zamorin.

7. *Awin.*—The word means a teacher. He is also a head-man (*Karayinmél Awán*), who has certain social functions in connection with the marriage and other ceremonies.

8. *Achan.*—The word means father. It is the title of the Palghat Rajas, the ministers of the Calicut and Cochin Rajas (Mángát Achan and Páliyat Achan), and also of several other old Nayar chiefs.

9. *Mannátiyar.*—This is the title of certain aristocratic families in the Chittur Taluk near Palghat. The word is derived from *man*, earth, and *nétiyavar*, earners.

564 582 833 783 Among the high caste Sudras marriage is hypergamous, while the low caste Sudras are endogamous. This is the general rule, though exceptions may sometimes be found. A Nayar is allowed to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself, but his womenkind are prohibited from exercising the same liberty. This is called the *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulomam*[1] from *Anu* with *lómam rómam* the hair, going with the hair or grain. So *Prathilómam* means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nayar woman, consorting with a man of the higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of lower subdivision, clan or caste, she is guilty of *Prathilómam*; and if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted.

Marriage prohibitions.

564 582 783 The rule of *Anulómam* and *Prathilómam* is everywhere observed with great strictness. In many cases, Nambuthiris, Embráns, Póttis and Tamil Brahmans, Kshatriyas and

1. Alliances between the people of North Malabar and South Malabar seem to be extremely rare. It is partly because of the principle of Prathilomam and perhaps partly that the Nayar women cannot cross the Korapuzha which marks the boundary between the two. Nor can the women of the extreme north of North Malabar cross the river between it and South Canara. The reason is said to be that the Kolatheri Raja so commanded owing to the fear that was entertained about their being captured and taken as wives by the Arabs. Similarly, till about fifty years ago the Nayar women from North Travancore and Cochin were prohibited from going beyond Quilon southward. These customs are being overlooked by the educated members of the community and it may almost be said that the custom has begun to die out.

[784] [562] [784]

Further, in the extreme south of South Malabar a high caste bride mates with a low caste bridegroom on the Prathilomam already explained. The husband cannot touch her without pollution, when she is engaged in taking meals. In the case of Nambuthiris, the same custom is in force and they cannot be seen, while engaged in religious ceremonies or taking meals. With the spread of education, official status, wealth, power, and influence, many of these time-honoured customs are fast disappearing.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the wedding dress is torn and given to the *Chithayan* which signifies the dissolution of marriage. In some places this takes place on the morning of the fifth day, and instead of this ceremoney the *táli* tier is given a fee of eight annas and is dismissed with some presents, and in others the cloth is severed into two parts and each part given to the bridegroom and the bride separately in the presence of *enangans* and other friends. Throughout South Malabar, the severing of the cloth on the fourth day is indispensable and is part of the ceremony, while, in this State, it is said that the custom is not now in vogue. The marriage badge is not removed soon after the divorce, but is worn by the girl till the twenty-eighth day. Some remove it on the fourth or the fifth day, while others wear it for a week.

In poor families, where this ceremony cannot be performed on a large scale, the girls are taken to the nearest temple, and the *táli* is tied by the mother with neither feasting nor merriment. In some cases very poor people take their girls before the deity in the *Trikkákkarappan* temple and tie the *táli*, and very often do such people perform the ceremony on the *Onam* day in front of the clay image (*Mahádévar*) placed in their court-yard.

Where the Thirumulpád is the *táli* tier, he goes through the ceremony for a number of girls, and on receipt of the fee for his service to each girl, he departs in peace. If the *táli* tier, whether a Kshatriya or a young man of the *enangu*, wishes to take her as his wife, he is at liberty to do so with the consent of her parents; and in that case he has to celebrate the *sambandham* by giving her presents of cloth.

In South Malabar and the Cochin State, the general belief among the Nayars is, that the bridegroom has a right to marry her if he wills, and the severing of the cloth shows the dissolution of the marriage tie, which gives her the liberty to choose anybody else as her husband. It is also understood that, with the tying of the *táli*, the virginity ceases, and he who brings or takes her to that stage has a right to cohabit with her, which he relinquishes on the fourth day of the *Tálikettu kalyánam*. Further, the woman observes a sort of pollution for fifteen days for the death of the man who tied the *táli*, which proves that he is her husband. In some parts she merely bathes, and even this has been of late given up.

The following is given to be the explanation of the ceremonial:—There is very little difference between the *Tálikettu*

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathóyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue,

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 588 Without going into the elaborate details of the occasion – which are very different, depending on the caste to which the girl belongs – it is enough to mention that its main item is the tying of the *tali* round the child's neck by someone who is, usually, a substitute bridegroom or *manavalan*. He should be of a higher or at least of the same caste, but he can also be an old, venerable person who has already done this, for instance, to the mother; sometimes the father takes the place of the *manavalan*, at others, it is the maternal uncle. That the mother herself should do so, is not unknown, and cases in which a clay figure has taken the place of a live person are on record. It has also become increasingly the custom to tie the *tali* on many girls at the same time (to save expense), and the tendency is to do the ceremony earlier and earlier in the children's lives.

After the man who ties the *tali* has fulfilled his task, he is not entitled to touch the girl. But shades of the times when he perhaps did do so still exist in the practice of his attempting to force the girl's bedchamber door, and of his being pelted by male onlookers belonging to her kin group, which does take place in some of the lower castes. In south Malabar, he is supposed to lie down under the same blanket with the girl for a few moments; among the Ambalavasis, and in some of the sub-castes, he may even spend three nights with her, but under the strict supervision of a chaperon put there to see that he does not touch her. In some cases, a form of divorce ends the ceremony before the *manavalan* is allowed to go. *Tali* tying is universal in Kerala, where it is not [184] limited to the Hindus only, but is also practised by the Moslem Moplas and the Christians.

105 582 588 833 [183] It is interesting to note that the Portuguese traveller of the beginning of the sixteenth century, Duarte Barbosa, mentions that before a Nayar girl can be married, afer the *tali* has been tied on her, she should be deflowered before puberty, by some young man called in specially to do this from outside the caste, "for amongst themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women" (*The Coasts of East Africa and Malabar*, p. 124).

4. LAND-TENURE

105 241 Kerala is an agricultural state and everyone in it is either dependant on the produce of the land or linked to it by serving those who till the soil. The main crops are rice, coconuts, pepper and arecanuts, in that order of importance. Others, less important, are pulses, tapioca, spices such

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 104 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
569 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

hardie as to come into that house. The king's children 595
shall not inherite the kingdom after their father, because [201]
they hold this opinion, that perchance they were not begotten of the king their father, but of some other man, therefore they accept for their king one of the sonnes of the king's sisters, or of some other woman of the blood roiall, for that they be sure that they are of the blood roiall."

In his "New Account of the East Indies, (1727)" 595
Hamilton wrote: "The husbands," of whom, he said, 833
there might be twelve, but no more at one time, "agree very well, for they cohabit with her in their turns, according to their priority of marriage, ten days more or less according as they can fix a term among themselves, and he that cohabits with her maintains her in all things necessary for his time, so that she is plentifully provided for by a constant circulation. When the man that cohabits with her goes into her house he leaves his arms at the door, and none dare remove them or enter the house on pain of death. When she [428]
proves with child, she nominates its father, who takes care of his education after she has suckled it, and brought it to walk or speak, but the children are never heirs to their father's estate, but the father's sister's children are."

Writing in the latter half of the eighteenth century, 595
Grose says * that "it is among the Nairs that principally prevails the strange custom of one wife being common to a number; in which point the great power of custom [152]
is seen from its rarely or never producing any jealousies or quarrels among the co-tenants of the same woman. Their number is not so much limited by any specific

* Travels to the East Indies.

beg some of their relations and friends to marry these daughters, and they do so. It must be said that they have some gold jewel made, which will contain half a ducat of gold, a little shorter than the tag of lace, with a hole in the middle passing through it, and they string it on a thread of white silk; and the mother of the girl stands with her daughter very much dressed out, and entertaining her with music and singing, and a number of people. And this relation or friend of hers comes with much earnestness, and there performs the ceremony of marriage, as though he married her, and they throw a gold chain round the necks of both of them together, and he puts the above mentioned jewel round her neck, which she always has to wear as a sign that she may now do what she pleases. And the bridegroom leaves her and goes away without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation; and, if he is not so, he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it. And from that time forward the mother goes begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women." 588 184 [833]

The tāli-kettu ceremony is referred to by Kerr, who, in his translation of Castaneda, states that "these sisters of the Zamorin, and other kings of Malabar, have handsome allowances to live upon; and, when any of them reaches the age of ten, their kindred send for a young man of the Nāyar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin; after which he hangs a jewel round her neck, which she wears all the rest of her life, as a token that she is now at liberty to dispose of herself to anyone she pleases as long as she lives." 588

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 scent groups may be generally placed in the highest categories and
564 still be connected by a chain of descending unions with such categories
611 as the Sudra. To recall the situation in Ceylon, such groups as the
[171] Karava (Fishers), who are usually seen as a "separate" caste in other parts of the island, are associated with the hierarchy of Vellalar matrilineal descent groups on the eastern littoral. Thus, in the Malabar context, too, a category such as Nayar covers a wide spectrum of
121 ranked descent groups. Gough suggests that apart from the royal
564 matrilineages of the various kingdoms, it is possible to detect five
[613] subcategories of Nayar groups (1961, pp. 308–309): (*a*) Kiriattil and Vellayma Nayar, (*b*) Puratta Charna (Outdoor Retainers) Nayar (but these have subdivisions such as Pariccha Menon (Leaders of the Shield), (*c*) Agatta Charna (Indoor Retainers) Nayar, (*d*) Pallichan Nayar, and (*e*) Sudra Nayar. This is not a hard and fast hierarchy and we are told (p. 309) that "In some districts they ranked in the order given and men of the higher [category] might marry women of the lower [category]; the reverse was in theory forbidden. In other districts the [categories] seem to have disputed for precedence and *not to have regularly intermarried*" (my italics).

121 It is clear that in this system it is possible, for instance, to have
564 at the top a single matrilineage whose men may be connected to a
613 small group of matrilineages who are equals and who marry among themselves. They in turn may be connected with a larger group of matrilineages of a still lower caste, and so on. Furthermore, actual *sambandam* connections may or may not be systematically established between the levels. As long as the principles are clear, it hardly matters what the status-bearing groups are called: in widening circles we have the matrilineage, which may be part of a hypergamous cluster (category), which in turn may be part of a more inclusive "subcaste" or indeed an endogamous caste.

121 Also in the Cochin region, according to Gough (1961, p. 319), hy-
114 pergamy is a custom of the aristocratic matrilineages and is associated
564 with the prestige of unilineal descent, whereas in the levels "below
613 the Nayar temple menials" the categories were endogamous "as is usual in the caste system throughout India."

[833] Why hypergamy at the aristocratic levels? Gough in answer to this
[554] question has taken a curious combination of materialist-psychoanalytic arguments: it is her theory that hypergamy accords with the power structure of the political system and with the special reasons why virgins must be deflowered by powerful men before they are safe for ordinary mortals (see Gough 1955*a* and 1961, *passim*).

Dumont has proposed an important, but very different, answer. He notes rightly that the most powerful and superior Nayar lineage still had hypergamous connections with Brahman who were ritually su-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] [613] [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [783] [623]

were no longer sure of the name of their founding ancestress. The reason for this was that over time, a lineage was formed from the successive divisions of matrilineal households springing from an original matrilineal household. As will be seen later, a matrilineal group occupying one house and jointly owning property divided into its component major segments to form two or more new households at a definite point in its development. Each woman was potentially the ancestress of a distinct segment. However, her segment would in fact become distinct only if she had two or more daughters who themselves lived to bear daughters. If she had only one daughter this woman replaced her in the lineage structure as the ancestress of her segment, and after three or four generations the existence of one or other of these women would be forgotten.

However, although exact genealogical relationships tended to be forgotten after some five to seven generations, the order of segmentation within a lineage was remembered because it was relevant to the reversion of property. If a household died out, its property was divided between those segments of the same order as itself which had sprung from the next larger segment. It is for this reason that I call the clan members of one neighborhood a lineage, for their order of segmentation *was* known and was relevant in this limited context. As far as I am aware, those branches of a clan which left their ancestral neighborhood lost their right to claim property in the village of their origin.

In other ways the order of segmentation was unimportant for the structuring of intra-lineage relationships. It is true that minimal segments of a minor segment which had jointly held property a generation previously, maintained a closer sense of kinship than did more distantly related segments. But segments intermediate between the household and the lineage had no special property, activities, or ceremonies, and their members never met to the exclusion of other lineage kin. Neither were whole intermediate segments mobilized in quarrels between individuals of a lineage. Quarrels were restricted to the households of the disputants and were normally settled through appeal to a popular, unrelated arbitrator. If they became serious they were forcibly settled by the intervention of the neighborhood assembly and of the village headman.

As a part of the clan, the lineage was exogamous, sex relations were prohibited within it, and ritual pollution was observed by its members at a birth or death. Outside the lineage and within the clan it is doubtful whether these rules could be enforced by law. Within

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here; a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

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411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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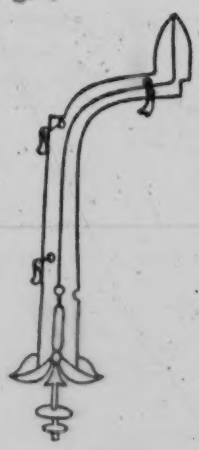

But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tiyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

635 was in Calicut,* and it has always been necessary for the new Zamorin to come to this fort in Calicut in a very formal manner. The residences, the kôvilagams of the various branches of the family, lie far to the eastward. The heir to the Zamorinship must make his formal entry into Calicut, for until he does so he is not, strictly speaking, the Zamorin. There is much obscurity as to details of the ceremonial, and I have not been able to note these satisfactorily, so will state merely so much as is undoubtedly correct. The new Zamorin comes to the bank of the Kallai river adjoining Calicut. There he is asked some questions, and he crosses this river in a *boat*—not over the bridge. Arrived on the Calicut side he must partake of some betel-leaf from a Mâppila man dressed as a (Mâppila) woman, or, as some say, from a Mâppila woman† and he says that he assumes the title of Zamorin and rules until his uncle returns. The betel-leaf, received from a (Muhammadan) Mâppila, which he [783] chews, defiles him. He has lost his status in the caste, and he is supposed to be henceforth celibate. It would seem that this old world ceremony is likely to follow the track along which so much of what is interesting in India is disappearing. The late Zamorin never went through it, and he was therefore never, properly speaking, [613] the Zamorin. He held the title perfunctorily, and he was the kârnavan of the immense property of the family; but he could not go "in procession" as Zamorin.‡ There are three unpleasant concomitants to the ceremony. [834] It costs much money. It involves degradation in caste. It compels chastity.

182 562 611 The other odd custom is not one affecting merely an individual and a few with him, but it is a sexual one, and

* There is now no sign of it, though the site is known.

† Those who say that a woman gives the betel-leaf say, very reasonably, that a Mâppila man would never for any consideration or purpose wear a woman's garb. But, on the other hand, it is said the person is and must be a man, and that he dresses for this occasion only, as a woman.

‡ The Zamorin was in Calicut but once since he became Zamorin on the occasion of his visit to His Excellency the Governor of Madras in 1896, and then infringed custom by coming to Calicut without previously undergoing the ceremony. Owing to a death in the family he was under pollution and therefore unable to undertake the ceremony at that time, so he came by train. These old-fashioned customs, written or unwritten, take no count of trains. For example, the modern pilgrims from Northern India find the train very convenient when they wish to visit Rameshvaram. The penance of a life is reduced to a few days in a train. What would the old sages say! So the Zamorin came by train. But he could not go "in procession" along the road as Zamorin, and was obliged to make his visit as an ordinary grandee.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection. 789 842 [834]

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning. 789 [755] [825]

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man. 754 [791] [564]

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain [115]

588 [564] [793] 588 833 178 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambûdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tâli* to the bridegroom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The nineteen couples were then secluded in the house for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabitation would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is indicated by the saying *Tâli kettiu amma âyi* ('having had the *tâli* tied, a girl becomes a [married] woman').

588 782 787 793 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavadi took place. The participants were a Sûdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappâd*), a Vattekad (oil-monger) Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy, coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.) Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host *kâranaian* that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his insignia were removed.

796 [831] [753] [782] [834] Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must observe sexual continence.

588 [783] [264] The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music. On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand, they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received clothing and foodstuffs from the *kâranaian* and departed for their respective homes.

588 184 595 [765] [783] [851] In Pâlakkara the *tâli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At the last *tâli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides, though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tâli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bridegroom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally observed only for matrilineal kin; not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover and the physiological father. The *tâli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *achchan* (originally

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

000 sexual jealousy of the natal kinsmen (projected on to spirits, gods, and ancestors) aroused by a woman's marital sexuality. The prohibitions on eating meat and condiments are those stipulated for both men and women in all periods of pollution and also in periods of abstention to obtain ritual purity before worshipping a god. Since these foods are believed to induce sexual desire, this prohibition is equated by informants with abstention from sexual intercourse (also enjoined in all periods of pollution or of enhanced ritual purity) and thus is comparable here to the prohibition on seeing a man or other male sexual symbol and of refraining from marital intercourse.

[262] [783] [834]

The practice of a girl's arming herself with a knife or an arrow during menstruation may signify an unconscious desire on the part of women to appropriate and arm themselves with the penis of the prohibited parent, or with any phallic symbol, and thus obviate the dreaded incestuous attack. Since the dread is also unconsciously a desire, this hypothesis is not incompatible with the other, that the knife and arrow are phallic symbols (perhaps paternal) with which the girl, by keeping them beside her, symbolically cohabits in the seclusion period.

On the side of men, the planting of an arrow by the girl's brother near the bathing pool after her first menstruation may be a sign of the brother's unconscious desire to copulate with his sister, or to drive away unwanted parental figures (the mother's brother or the father) whose sexual attack the girl both dreads and unconsciously desires. The same incestuous desire on the part of the brother appears in a South Malabar Nayar rite at the first menstruation, where the brother breaks a sheath containing coconut buds with his knife and counts the buds which roll out as an augur of the number of children his sister will bear.

It seems probable that in general the menstruous woman is unconsciously equated by a man with his mother as a forbidden sexual object; hence the fear of approaching her, based on unconscious fear of castration by the father. This view finds support in the beliefs that a man becomes impotent if he copulates with a menstruous woman, and that, by extension, trees and plants wither and die if she urinates or walks upon them. As is well known, the fear of impotence frequently indicates an unconscious fear of being castrated by the father for a sexual approach to the mother. The particular fear of the menstruous woman may lead back to an infantile belief, common in our own society, that parental intercourse is a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds. The fact that the menstruous woman is armed with a knife or an arrow recalls an allied phantasy common among European infants, of the phallic mother who by intercourse has possessed herself of the father's penis and is thus doubly terrifying since, if one approached her, the penis would attack (castrate) oneself. (Klein 1932, pp. 103, 189–90.)

Why is it deemed necessary for a girl to 'menstruate' and be deflowered (both symbolically) before she has attained puberty and is likely to enter into real sex relations? The first part of my hypothesis is that this rite issues out of the marked horror of incest in these castes, which makes it necessary for the natal kinsmen of a woman to renounce the rights in her mature sexuality before she is in fact mature.

184 613 564 602 [586]

Among the Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars descent is matrilineal and the *ius in genitricem* of a woman remains with her matrilineage headed by her *kāranavan*. This man is usually her mother's brother and later her own elder brother. In all these castes but particularly among South Malabar Nayars, a woman must implicitly obey these kinsmen, sometimes to the extent of divorcing her husband of whom they are overtly jealous. The horror with which these castes regard incest within the lineage, however, makes the etiquette of behaviour between a woman and older men of her lineage formalized to the point of avoidance. She may not sit before them, speak to them except under necessity, nor be alone with one of them. In the royal lineages a prince should not see his mature younger sisters and maternal nieces except on ceremonial occasions.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

When the family becomes unwieldy, or certain members show insubordination, the family property is partitioned equally among *each female line*. That is to say, if there are three sisters in the family, each having daughters and granddaughters, the partition is done in such a way that each of the ancestresses founds a separate family among whom the original property is equally divided. It is best explained by a diagram :—

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[Capital letters stand for women.]

In this case, supposing A, B and C dead, and the eldest male member *d*, being *Karnavan*, the male members, *t*, *k* and others demand partition. The joint property will be divided equally into three parts, each of the groups, in spite of their numerical difference, getting equal shares. Now, in the first group, there are two subdivisions to be made, while, in the third group, the property has to be further divided into three. Group 2 has only one female line, and, therefore, in that line, the property remains intact.

The partition of property does not affect the relationship. The members of a divided family are still called by the classificatory names, and a birth or death in one family creates pollution to the whole stock. Centuries might pass, but they would still remain strictly exogamous groups, and the rights of relationship (such as pollution, etc.) would continue, though in a lesser degree. There are many instances in which, though family partition took place at least a hundred and fifty years ago, the members continue to call each other brothers and sisters, as if they were the nearest blood relations.

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It may be noticed in this connection that a Nāyar young man or woman is not supposed to talk to any relations of the opposite sex in the same family *if they are of almost the same age*. A younger brother can talk to a sister considerably older than himself; but under no conditions may he talk to a younger one, and in orthodox families this restriction is carried so far that if it is known that a brother is standing somewhere near, the sister scrupulously avoids him. It is the custom that after the *Talikettu kalyanam* the brother (own and collateral alike) is not supposed to see, talk to, or be in the same room with his sister. This involves considerable inconvenience, for, if the mother is dead and there is no one of *her generation* living, a man loses all touch with the family, because his sisters and women of that generation may not speak to him, and he may not go near them. In such cases, it is customary

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613 834 593 for young men to go and stay in their wives' houses and visit their own families for business arrangements.

Authority in the family is wielded by the eldest member, who is called *kārnavan*. 613 [421] [584] He has full control of the common property, and manages the income very much as he pleases. He arranges marriages (*sambandhams*) for the boys as well as the girls of the family. He had till lately full power (at least in practice) of alienating anything that belonged to them. His will was undisputed law. This is, perhaps, what is intended to be conveyed by the term *Matri-potestas* in communities of female [604] descent. But it should be remembered that among the Nāyars the autocrat of the family is not the mother, but the mother's brother.

613 421 The power of the *Kārnavan* over the family property has always been, in theory, limited, because the property was supposed to belong to every member of the family jointly. Till lately, however, it was practically impossible to limit the *Kārnavan's* power of mortgaging or even fully alienating it, because when it came to litigation the *Kārnavan* always pleaded that such action as he took was necessary for the welfare of the family, and justified himself by basing his arguments "on the discretionary power" vested in him. However, the old theory has lately been asserted in law that a *Kārnavan* can sell or mortgage the property only with the consent of the other members of the family.

All the moneys owing to the family can be paid only through him. He alone can give permission for the use of what belongs to the family. He can punish all the members of the family, either by depriving them temporarily of their allowance, or by prohibiting them to enter the house. In short, he is virtually the head of a tribe rather than the senior member of a family.

613 604 829 *The Wife of the Kārnavan.*—The wife of the *Kārnavan* has no standing in the family; yet as is but natural, she is supposed to be a dark and sinister force working against the interests of the *Tharawad*. Since she does not belong to the *Tharawad* of her husband she has no interest in its well-being, and it is generally supposed that the *Ammāri* (the wife of the maternal uncle) is interested only in getting as much out of her husband's family for her own children as her influence over her husband allows. All the tales told to children have as the villain the *Ammāvi*, whose position is not only that of the wife of the maternal uncle, but also the mother-in-law of the brother. She is universally considered to be a sort of sinister step-mother.

613 604 But it must be acknowledged that the Nāyar *Kārnavan* loves his sister's children more than his own. The explanation of this apparently unnatural feeling lies in two directions. First, the father is not necessarily of the same caste as the son. [564] Secondly, there is always the possibility of a break in the union. Divorce is not a matter of any difficulty among the Nāyars, both the husband and wife having equal right to announce such a termination of their connection whenever either of [593] the parties desires to do so. This instability of relationship is the principal reason

no need to continue the annual ceremony for that person. 764
This is called ashtagaya srādh. It puts an end to the 613
need for all earthly ceremonial. It is believed that the [769]
collection and careful disposal of the ashes of the dead [775]
gives peace to his spirit, and, what is more important, [787]
the pacified spirit will not thereafter injure the living members of the taravād, cause miscarriage to the women, possess the men (as with an evil spirit), and so on. On 764
the fifteenth day after death is the purificatory ceremony. 613
Until this has been done, any one touched by any 783
member of the taravād should bathe before he enters his house, or partakes of any food. A man of the [564]
Athikurisi clan officiates. He sprinkles milk oil, in which some gingelly seeds have been put, over the persons of those under pollution. This sprinkling, and the bath which follows it, remove the death pollution. The purifier receives a fixed remuneration for his offices [465]
on this occasion, as well as when there is a birth in the taravād. In the case of death of a senior member of a 766
taravād, well-to-do and recognised as of some importance, 613
there is the feast called pinda atiyantaram on the 765
sixteenth day after death, given to the neighbours and 302
friends. With the observance of this feast of pindams there is involved the dīksha, or leaving the entire body unshaved for forty-one days, or for a year. There is no variable limit between forty-one days or a year. The [184]
forty-one-day period is the rule in North Malabar. I have seen many who were under the dīksha for a year. He who lets his hair grow may be a son or nephew of the deceased. One member only of the taravād bears 766
the mark of mourning by his growth of hair. He who 765
is under the dīksha offers half-boiled rice and gingelly 613
seeds to the spirits of the deceased every morning after [782]
his bath, and he is under restriction from women, from [784]
[834]

766 613 765 alcoholic drinks, and from chewing betel, also from tobacco. When the dīksha is observed, the ashes of the [784] dead are not deposited as described already (in the sun-[834] dried vessel) until its last day—the forty-first or a year after death. When it is carried on for a year, there is observed every month a ceremony called bali. It is noteworthy that, in this monthly ceremony and for the conclusion of the dīksha, it is not the thirtieth or three hundred and sixty-fifth day which marks the date for the ceremonies, but it is the day (of the month) of the star which was presiding when the deceased met his death: the returning day on which the star presides.* For the [564] bali, a man of the Elayatu caste officiates. The Elayatus [793] are priests for the Nāyars. They wear the Brāhmin's thread, but they are not Brāhmins. They are not permitted to study the Vēdas, but to the Nāyars they [782] stand in the place of the ordinary purōhit. The officiating Elayatu prepares the rice for the bali, when to the deceased, represented by karuka grass, are offered boiled rice, curds, gingelly seeds, and some other [465] things. The Elayatu should be paid a rupee for his services, which are considered necessary even when the man under dīksha is himself familiar with the [302] required ceremonial. The last day of the dīksha is one of festivity. After the bali, the man under dīksha is shaved. All this over, the only thing to be done for the deceased is the annual srādh or yearly funeral commemorative rite. [825] Rice-balls are made, and given to crows. Clapping of [775] hands announces to these birds that the rice is being thrown for them, and, should they not come at once and eat, it is evident that the spirit is displeased, and the taravād had better look out. The spirits of those who

[805] * All caste Hindus who perform the srādh ceremonies calculate the day of death, not by the day of the month, but by the thithis (day after full or new moon).

796 man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

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121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184] of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
[605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588] unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
[613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
121 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
114 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
613 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
184 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question
[605] of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957*a*).

595 within the chiefdom political control over and
701 within villages was insufficient and feuds were
566 common between adjacent villages and between
184 individual lineages. The Nayars were not organized as a permanent militia of retainers, but merely fought occasionally on [80] behalf of a local chief. Apart from small subcastes of servants round the palaces, they formed an independent caste of cultivators owning their own land and lacking the overlordship of Nambudiri Brahmans and the service of agricultural serfs. Consistent with the absence of a permanent military organization, we find that in the North, Nayar men themselves managed the cultivation of their estates and sometimes actually worked the land, and that here residence was traditionally avunculocal, and polyandry unknown.

835 (3) Traditional Incest Prohibitions and Prefer-
582 ential Marriages

The traditional incest prohibitions were simple. In all castes of Malabar, prohibitions on sex-relations between kin coincide with prohibitions on marriage; this in any case would obviously be so among Nayars who did not distinguish the two and had no concept of adultery. Sex relations were strictly prohibited within the lineage: infringement of this rule was traditionally punishable by death, and during British rule with excommunication. Relations were also prohibited between a woman and two men of the same property-group, as between a man and two women of the same property-group. Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well

582 Sororal polygyny and fraternal polyandry, as well
595 as marriage to the dead spouse's sibling, were
835 thus automatically forbidden. This rule appears to relate to the paramount need to keep minimal the potential rivalries between individuals of the same sex within the group. It was also consistent with the relationship of respect between
585 them. Even today, when ceremonies mark the
602 start of the post-puberty marriage, a man's
595 lineage elders may not attend his marriage ceremonies and feast. He goes to the bride's house with unrelated friends of his own age or with affines, ideally, his sister's husbands. For marriage is a jolly undertaking and only such men may joke together about sexual scandals in the village. But [81] reticence is required in discussing their own marriage, and the respect a woman owes her older kinswomen demands that she interfere in no way in their marital life. Today, a woman treats her father or step-father with affectionate respect of a less formal kind than that accorded to the mother's brother, but she should not touch him after puberty. With her elder sister's husband she observes still greater formality, based on the incest prohibition. The ban on sororal polygyny is particularly comprehensible in view of the fact that Nayar women were traditionally open rivals for the attentions of men: many writers mention this and it is still discernible in villages today. The mutual respect and amity required of women of the same property-group was incompatible with such rivalry.

835 However, the ban on relations with two persons
582 of the same group was less stringent than the

835 rule of lineage exogamy. Even today, cases
582 occur very occasionally in which a man cohabits both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage, or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies. This appears to be because
[611] traditionally, only matrilineal kinsfolk are regarded as kin in the true sense of the word: incest prohibitions outside this range are a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

582 No other unions outside the lineage and within the appropriate caste appear traditionally to have been prohibited. Relations with the father's sister (or rather with the sister of the mother's lover, since paternity was often uncertain) were disfavoured because of generation difference but even today they are not prohibited. Unions were definitely permissible between the Nambudiri son and the Nayar daughter of a Nambudiri eldest son (i.e., between paternal step-siblings); it is [82] not certain whether they were ever permitted between two Nayars known to be paternal step-siblings, but they are not permitted today. Marriage to the brother's daughter and the paternal parallel cousin are still permitted, though they are not preferential marriages between Nayars. Marriage is however preferential between a Nambudiri and his paternal parallel cousin of a matrilineal caste. This is particularly true of unions between aristocratic Nambudiris and royal women, since it perpetuates a bond between two groups both of which are small and highly

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613 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason
687 against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge
627 him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth
[178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals, or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction
613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis-
627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor
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of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

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593 Within the kinship circle, a man's concern for his sisters should come second only to that for his mother. He had greater authority over them, but he owed them similar protection and consideration. If he became their kāranavan, he must manage the property on their behalf and educate their children to the best of his ability. A woman owed her brother domestic services, obedience, and devotion. Brother [581] and sister should, when necessary, subordinate their own marital interests to each other's comfort and welfare.

593 561 The elder sister shared something of the mother's role; the younger sister, that of the sister's daughter. Indeed, as in all relationships within the taravād, the significance of age surpassed that of generation; for when age and generation were discrepant the attitudes appropriate to age overrode those appropriate to generation.

A much older sister might help to bring up a boy in the same manner as the mother's younger sister. As he grew to maturity her attitude combined sharp criticism with maternal solicitude. When both were adult, however, difference of sex became a greater determinant of authority than did difference of age. Although she might continue to speak informally with him or even to upbraid him mildly, the elder sister stood in her brother's presence and received his commands with respect. If he became kāranavan, the younger brother's ultimate legal authority was unquestioned. His sister might, however, remain his trusted counselor for life.

Until her tāli rite a girl played freely with her elder brothers and [588] was affectionately patronized by them. After this time an outer formality was required between them, identical with that preserved toward the sister's daughter. Inwardly the relationship was expected to be more intense, with less authority and more tenderness on the part of the brother, less fear and more devotion on the part of the sister, and today, in speech with others, young childless women often [604] display a simple hero worship for their elder brothers. As a woman's children grew to maturity, her brother's discipline of them might [578] create tensions in the sibling relationship. She should, however, continue to submit willingly to his wishes. A man who was not her kāranavan [586] had no right to dismiss his sister's husband from their home. Nevertheless, a woman who knew that her brother deeply disliked her husband would feel it her duty to reject him.

593 The very formal behavior required between a man and his younger sister is consciously related to incest prohibitions. Sibling incest is 835 in fact very rare and was traditionally punished by death. Enough

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cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law.

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships.

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized

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particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically, with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands. For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, however, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

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opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the tāli for his maternal uncle's daughter or stepdaughter of suitable age.

There were no incest prohibitions with patrilateral kin, although a man was unlikely to marry his father's own sister because of age differences. Marriage to the father's or stepfather's brother or brother's son was neither prohibited nor preferred. Modern informants thought that if a girl was known to be one's father's daughter by another wife, marriage with her would be avoided as indelicate, but it was apparently not prohibited. The children of brothers were not considered related, and provided they belonged to different lineages, they might marry or not as they chose.

Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or stepdaughter. A kāranavan was particularly likely to encourage his nephew to enter marital relations with a daughter of the kāranavan's favorite wife. In this case it was felt that the marital interests of uncle and nephew would be harmonized and the nephew might be less likely to accuse the uncle of infidelity to the taravād if he favored his wife and her children. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is said to have been less favored because it did nothing to smooth the relationships between men of a taravād. It may, also, have been less common because a man had no influence in his son's choice of a wife.

It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage, especially when it is arranged by the senior generation, suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship. Group marriage, by contrast, tends to negate the claims and interests of individual fathers. Today, the fact is that cross-cousin marriage is arranged only with the child of an uncle who has had a long and satisfactory marriage relationship. It is never deliberately arranged as a first marriage, with the child of an uncle's previously divorced wife. Further, although young people agree to arranged cross-cousin marriages, they may and fairly often do later dissolve the marriage if things do not go well. One presumes that similar circumstances existed in the days of group marriage. Many men, presumably, entered marriage relations with cross cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship. It seems quite probable that at other times some men did have an enduring relationship with a particularly

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A man's relationships with his wife's older matrilineal kinswomen were less formally respectful. He might sit with them and exchange village news. They served food to him when he ate in their house and were the persons who usually greeted him first on an evening visit. Although she welcomed them at first out of pride in her daughter's popularity, a woman was likely in time to become jealous of her sons-in-law. If they were tactful they treated her with courtesy and submitted to her whims. 602 [606]

A man tended to avoid his wife's sisters or classificatory sisters who were younger than himself. They treated him with extreme respect similar to that accorded to an older brother, and avoided him as far as possible after they had reached puberty. Incest prohibitions were relevant here: a man was forbidden to have marital relations with two women of the same household, and a woman, with two men from the same household. These prohibitions of course partly served to prevent father-daughter incest. Marriage to a member of a dead or divorced spouse's household was also forbidden. 607 [835] [582]

These rules in general appear to relate to the need to keep minimal potential rivalries between persons of the same sex within the matrilineal household. They were also consistent with the relationship of extreme respect and social distance between the men of a taravād. Tensions between these men were sufficiently acute in any case; they might have been intolerable if two of them had shared a wife. There was also the attitude that sexual relationships should be kept strictly segregated from ties to matrilineal kin. A boy's matrilineal kinsmen were even forbidden to accompany him to his bride's house at the beginning of his first sambandham. Instead he took with him brothers-in-law, unrelated friends, or sometimes a cross-cousin. For marriage was a gay undertaking, a matter of personal pleasure, and only men who stood to each other in a familiar and non-authoritative relationship might have knowledge of each others' marital affairs. 602 578 [834] [581]

Similarly, the ban on marriage to two women of the same property group is understandable in that Nayar women were open rivals for the attentions of men. Many writers mention this and it is still discernible at the present day. Apparently the respect and amity required of women of the same household was incompatible with such rivalry. 602 582

However, the prohibition of relations with two members of the same property group was less stringent than the rule of lineage exogamy. Nambudiri Brahmans are said to have occasionally pressed their attentions on two sisters in spite of their family's reluctance. 835

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835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men [885] tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

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androus and divorce was freely practiced, but a princess probably did not regularly entertain more than one husband at a time. Older Nambudiri Brahman husbands often introduced their own younger kinsmen into the palace; for this reason both matrilateral cross-cousin marriage and paternal parallel-cousin marriage were common in Brahman-royal unions. Princes, chiefs, and high-ranking Nambudiri Brahmans were sometimes polygynous. Their wives, however, were probably seldom polyandrous; for aristocrats seem often to have exercised the power to monopolize the attentions of their favorite Nayar wives. They were therefore more sure of the paternity of their Nayar sons, upon whom they sometimes conferred military or political offices.

In all hypergamous unions the husband observed the normal all-India caste rules of pollution except with regard to sexual intercourse. He might not receive food from his wife's caste and had little communication with her or her children in the daytime. Affinal relationships were correspondingly more restricted than in the retainer castes, for a woman had very little communication with her husband's natal kin; she and her children used no kinship terms for them. If the wife was of lower social as well as ritual rank than the husband she did not visit his natal home. Conversely, princesses do not seem to have demeaned themselves socially by visiting the homes of their ritually higher-ranking husbands. A Nayar wife who was of similar social rank to her Brahman or temple-servant husband might occasionally visit the womenfolk of his home, but she was received in an outbuilding and might not eat with them. Similarly, husbands in hypergamous unions had highly formalized and restricted relationships with the matrilineal kinsmen of their wives. The wives' elder kinsmen were accorded the respect due their age; the husband, that due his superior ritual rank.

Relationships between matrilineal kin among the aristocrats were a sharpened version of those found among retainer Nayars. Between men, the etiquette associated with age rank was highly stereotyped. Among the senior princes who were likely to compete for political office it reached the point of avoidance, a condition facilitated by their separate residences as sthānis. The etiquette of respect was similarly elaborated between men and women. After the age of fifteen a prince might converse with older women of his palace only by appointment and in some public place. He must scrupulously avoid the presence of younger kinswomen from the time of their *tāli* rite. In the potentially larger property groups of the aristocrats these rules of etiquette obviously militated against the expression of aggression between men as well as preventing incestuous relations between the sexes.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

with the mother's brother; emotionally, hostility is more repressed and greater loyalty demanded. Both avuncular and fraternal relationships pivot on the bond of men to their mothers and sisters: common devotion to these women places the men in a position of equivalence rather than of unity, emphasizes loyalty to the *taravâd* rather than interpersonal amity, and points up the rivalry between them. 593 604 182

The suppressed hostility of a boy towards his father with reference to the mother becomes, therefore, among South Malabar Nayars transferred to the mother's brother at the age of four to six. The completeness of this tranference appears in death rites. The younger brother or sister's son of a dead man performs his funeral rites, observes pollution for fifteen days, and, if he is the immediate heir, mourning and sexual abstinence for six months to one year. He thenceforth annually offers cooked food to the spirit, which is represented in the form of a terrible and vengeful animal (*preetham*, the same word as for the hairy spirits who attack menstruous women). No mourning, pollution, or propitiations were traditionally observed for the *genitor*, about whose spirit no beliefs are held. The observance of pollution (without rites) for the mother's *tâli*-tier was the sole acknowledgment of its fathers' roles in the *taravâd*'s perpetuation. The son's unconscious desires remain primarily fixed upon his mother, as appears in his paramount devotion to her in social life and to Bhagavadi in religion. They appear to be secondarily directed to the younger sister and sister's daughter, hence the avoidance and extreme formality demanded in the relationship with them. The rites of first menstruation and pregnancy and the institution of the serpent-gods seem to indicate that unconsciously the mother's brothers and other matrilineal forbears are regarded as *genitores* as well as *patres* and the elder brother as the symbolic spouse of a woman as well as her natural guardian. [083] [065] [069] [083]

Among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the transference of hostile wishes on the part of the male, and incestuous wishes on the part of the female, from the father to the mother's brother, is less completely carried out. The father is often known throughout his life, when he shares with the mother's brother the role of *pater*. Since legal rights are concentrated with him, the relationship to the mother's brother tends to be more hostile, that to the father, more affectionate. But individual circumstances modify these relationships: a man may align himself alternately with mother's brother and with father according to the financial support each offers him. Death-pollution is observed for both and the vengeful spirits of both are propitiated. As in South Malabar, the primary emotional relationship is always with the mother and the secondary one with the sister, to whose claims those of the wife are subordinated. The etiquette of avoidance and restraint towards the sister and sisters' daughters is identical in north and south. A girl regards her father with greater reverence as her natural guardian, but her behaviour is more stereotyped than among South Malabar Nayars and corresponds more closely with that to the mother's brother. Father-daughter incest is regarded with greater horror than in the south, from which we may surmise that unconscious incestuous desires remain stronger. 593 604 182 184 [835]

On the surface, the South Malabar Tiyyar system with its double unilineal descent and emphasis on the unity of the patrilineal extended family forms a contrast to these matrilineal systems. The father or rather, traditionally, the eldest of the fraternal group of fathers, is head of the family. Sons are brought up under the discipline of all their fathers whom they are expected to regard with equal deference and love. A more regular Oedipus complex appears to develop in this caste. From the age of five to six, a boy must observe reverence to his fathers comparable to that of a Nayar boy to his mother's brothers. He addresses them with deference, and avoids them out of respect. Like a Nayar boy, he is dismissed from intimate contact with the mother about this age, as also with the sisters: they in turn, as he grows older, treat him with deference. The unconscious hostility of the son to his fathers appears in beliefs about 593 182 184

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWII Kerala AWII
Nayar
Tiyyar

between mother and son was the most cherished relationship, while that between brother and sister came second in emotional strength. In all the exogamy of the unilineal group was sternly enjoined, and there was horror of adelphic incest. There was, however, evidently temptation towards it, since women remained under the partial guardianship of their brothers and might (invariably among South Malabar Nayars, occasionally in the other groups) live in the same house with them. 588 593 182

It is a commonplace in Hinduism that a woman is never independent: throughout her life she is under the guardianship of one or more men. At her birth all rights in a woman are vested in the men of her property-group, among Nayars and Tiyyars the *kāranavan* and under him other males of the group, whether matrilineal or patrilineal. These rights include the right to discipline her and, as she becomes old enough, to command her domestic services; they are counterbalanced by the obligation to feed her and protect her from harm. At puberty two new sets of rights are acquired by whoever is her guardian, in her sexuality and in the children she may bear. In the matrilineal castes the *ius in genitricem* is retained by the matrilineal kinsmen. Among South Malabar Tiyyars it is given to a group of brothers of another patrilineal lineage at the post-puberty marriage rite. In all these castes there is, however, uncertainty about the *ius in uxorem*, since the girl is not, as in a patrilineal Tamil caste, given over to the guardianship of one particular husband for the duration of her life. First, all the castes permit divorce and reversion to the brothers' house. Second, among Nayars, though a woman might have several husbands traditionally, she might conceivably have none, if she was divorced or failed to compete with other women. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, because of fraternal polyandry, many women must have remained unmarried. The *tāli*-rite, therefore, appears in one aspect as half a marriage, a ceremony made necessary by the strong incest-taboos in these groups and the uncertain nature of post-puberty marriage. In it the men of her natal group ceremonially give away the sexual rights in a girl. That the bridegroom does not receive permanent rights in his bride, but forsakes her on the fourth morning, points up the negative character of this marriage, as a renunciation of rights by the men of one group without the corresponding acceptance of them by members of another. 593 562 613 182 184 588 [586] 588 182

In all the groups certain ritual acts emphasize this reluctant renunciation by the woman's natal kinsmen. In the matrilineal castes one of her brothers, or her *kāranavan*, carries each girl into the marriage shed, bears her round, and seats her on the plank. This act is significant because after the *tāli*-rite a girl may not be touched by mature men of her lineage: taboos associated with incest prohibitions come into force from this date. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, again, the mother's brother, who after the father has secondary rights of guardianship and who, through matrilineal clan exogamy, is also concerned in the etiquette of incest-taboos, carries the girl to her seat. In the matrilineal castes, the girl's *kāranavan* asks the astrologer if the auspicious time has come, and signals for the *tāli* to be tied. Among South Malabar Tiyyars, as might be expected, the father officiates here. Among South Malabar Nayars, brothers of the girls first welcome the bridegrooms, wash their feet, and receive gifts of clothing in return. The underlying sexual hostility of the lineage's men to these necessary intruders appears on the fourth morning, when boys of the host lineage pelt the bridegrooms with plantain-fruits (recognized as phallic symbols by Nayars) as they enter the house to eat the ceremonial meal with their brides. Among Nayars and South Malabar Tiyyars, the *kāranavan*'s gifts to the bridegrooms when they depart after the 'divorce' signify his gratitude for their act of ceremonially releasing the procreative powers of his lineage's women, while at the same time dismissing them. 588 182 184 613 [835]

We note now that the *tāli* is seldom tied by the man with whom the girl will later cohabit as her husband. Among South Malabar Nayars the *enangan* might, after the 'divorce', approach her again as lover. But his status as ritual bridegroom gave him no prior claims: as the girl's

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a ceremony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the deceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members observed death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers[8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

605 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep
836 quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take
837 vengeance.

AFFINES

602 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical
576 in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized
184 obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her
602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and
592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would
613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In
such households there was a certain authority structure between the
[593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as
[598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman
[607] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a
[604] younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one
613 another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibitions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and
[604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 124 564 177

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

596 might marry a Nambudiri woman and beget
611 children for his family. Nambudiri spinsters,
582 of whom there were many, remained in their natal houses and were maintained by their kinsmen. The eldest son of a Nambudiri family
[595] might however have several Nambudiri wives and also several Nayar concubines. Nambudiri younger sons lived and ate in their natal households, headship of which passed from the eldest son down the line of his brothers and then dropped to the eldest son in the filial generation. In this way the Nambudiri family was prevented from splitting into segments, and was enabled to maintain its position on the ancestral estate over
[597] many generations. If in any generation a family had no son, succession was ensured by the adoption of a daughter's husband or of a man of a family related in the cognatic line.

613 In the royal lineages, since each lineage,
582 though exogamous, regarded itself as a separate
837 caste and admitted no peers, sexual unions were entirely hypergamous. In Cochin and Walluvanad, [373] royal women had liaisons only with Nambudiris of the highest and wealthiest subcastes within the kingdom; royal men, with women of chiefly, village headmen or retainer Nayar lineages. In the Calicut lineage, which came to power later and took time to establish its ritual rank, royal women till the 18th century had liaisons either with Nambudiri men or with men of the ancient royal lineages of tributary kingdoms, who though through conquest were subordinate to the upstart Zamorins, were still regarded by them as of higher ritual rank. Later

613 when they had established themselves as of high
582 ritual rank, and when some of their vassal lin-
837 eages had died out, the Zamorins too looked only to Nambudiri for genitors. Royal men similarly had liaisons with women of the lower matrilineal subcastes, as in the Cochin and Walluvanad kingdoms.

582 Among temples servants, retainer-Nayars
837 and middle class Nayars, the majority of unions took place between individuals of the same subcaste. A small proportion of retainer and middle class Nayar women had liaisons with Nambudiris of the lower subcastes, Embrandiri Brahman priests (who followed the same descent system as Nambudiris) or with royal, chiefly, village headmen or temple servant men. In the Nayar village headmen's lineages, a larger proportion of women had liaisons with men of the chiefly or royal lineages, or with Nambudiris; and in the chiefs' lineages, with royal or Nambudiri men, though in these subcastes too, individuals of the same subcaste but different lineages might have unions with each other. Similarly, a small [38] proportion of men in each Nayar subcaste, down to re tainers, had liaisons with Nayar women of a lower subcaste, down to the rank of middle class Nayars. Chart I shows the mutual ritual ranking and the direction of hypergamous unions between the higher castes of the kingdom. In the temple servant castes, whose occupational allegiance was exclusively with Nambudiris, women had liaisons either with Nambudiris or with men of their own caste. There was no intermarriage either way between temple

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village head-
men, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

582 Hypergamous unions, even more than other
613 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
837 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the
lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most
circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate
in his natal household and was maintained by it;
he visited his mistress after supper and left be-
fore breakfast, after which he took a purifying
bath before re-entering his natal house. He
might not eat in his mistress's household, and
following the morning bath might not touch her
or his children. The only exception to these
[144] residential rules arose in the case of Nambu-
diris who had liaisons with royal women. These
were received as temporary occupants of the
palace and housed in separate buildings at the
expense of the royal lineage, at some distance
from the buildings occupied by the princes and
the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri gen-
itors of Nayar children, however, they [39]
visited their mistresses at night and in the day-
time carried out their ritual duties in private,
attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serv-
ing men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
571 knit together the several castes concerned with
the secular administration and with the religious
law and public rituals of the state. Though not
recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly mem-
bers of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

613 lineages still take pride in the fact that for cen-
837 turies, their lineages have been partly fathered
571 by men of the higher castes of royalty, chiefs, and (particularly) priests. The allegiance of Nayar soldiers to their headmen, of headmen to their chiefs, and of chiefs to the king, was undoubtedly strengthened by this network of sexual ties, as was the unity of the secular and religious hierarchies, which might otherwise have been opposed.

613 IV The Traditional Lineage System of the Nayars

(1) Structure and Functions

[621] In each traditional village, four to six "military" Nayar lineages of one subcaste was present as retainers of the janmi. The retainer lineage commonly had a depth of nine to twelve generations and usually comprised between 12 to 100 members. It was called a taravad, derived from tara, the word for the raised foundation on which a house is built. Taravad can mean both the members of a lineage, living and dead, and the ancestral house from which they sprang: it corresponds to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and place. The members of a taravad are a group, usually of actual and not merely putative matrilineal kin, descended from a common ancestress (whose name may or may not be known), but they describe themselves as a group whose matrilineal forbears once lived in one house. That their lineage should be associated with the house befits the sedentary economy of the Nayars and the importance of their ancestral land. Powerful

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 Again if a Nayar of any rank committed treason
687 against the king, the king might order the execution of all members of his property group. Their land escheated to the royal lineage, but apparently no reprisals were made upon the lineage as a whole.

613 In spite of these laws of the kingdom a tradition did persist that
627 the lineage of an offended Nayar had the moral obligation to avenge him (Logan, 1951, I: 169). Folk songs tell of blood feuds (*kudi-paga*) between lineages which apparently neither king nor chief could always quell, although the blood-feud tradition is not nearly so important as in North Malabar, where political centralization had advanced less far. In the central kingdoms feuds between commoner lineages and between village headmen's lineages could be most easily cut short by the higher authorities. Feuds between district chiefs' lineages were harder to quell and sometimes turned into small wars between districts, in which each chief amassed his feudal following behind him (K. M. Panikkar, 1929: 9). However, even in the twentieth
[178] century under the British legal system, protracted estrangements have sometimes existed between two retainer lineages of the same neighborhood, which would periodically break out in armed assaults between representative individuals or even, occasionally, in murder. In recent years inter-lineage conflicts concerning assault and libel have also often been waged in the urban law courts.

Three institutions existed through which kings and chiefs seem to have tried to handle and curtail inter-lineage aggression. During wartime the problem was presumably less acute because the soldiers were away from their villages fighting large battles under their feudal lords. But wars took place only in the dry season; in the monsoons extensive military operations were impossible. Instead, each wet season saw a period of intensive military training in village gymnasia. Intermittently in this season, champions of lineages, of villages, and of chiefdoms went to joust at chiefly and royal palaces for the entertainment of their lords. Thus, first, these occasions may have helped to canalize intersegmentary conflict in a manner conducive to the royal peace.

Second, if a Nayar assaulted another or insulted his lineage, the offended man might challenge him to a duel. On payment of a fee to the chief, each disputant brought one or several champions from his lineage to fight on his behalf. Each pair fought until one or both was wounded or killed. A duel might be postponed as long as twelve years until the two lineages had trained champions to their satisfaction
613 (Logan, 1951, I: 170). Often it was not fought by the original dis-
627 putants. Duels seem to have been fought mainly to avenge the honor
835
837

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

of matrilineal kinswomen against accusations of incest with a lineage kinsman or of adultery with a low-caste man. Interestingly, these two forms of slander still occasion the bitterest inter-lineage disputes in modern villages.

Third, if a Nayar murdered another of the same rank, his lineage kin had the customary right to carry the corpse into the courtyard of the murderer's property group and burn corpse and house together. The royal and chiefly powers seem to have sanctioned this act as a form of private vengeance while reserving for themselves the right of trial and execution of the murderer.

In the law of the kingdom, therefore, the lineage was not recognized as a unit having legal responsibility for its members' acts. The state vested it with no property and no internal structure of authority. Its members were not required to accept responsibility for one another's crimes and civil offenses nor were they accorded the right of unrestricted vengeance. They were merely *permitted* (probably as a concession to more ancient custom) to support one another in certain restricted situations, provided they acknowledged the superior authority of the kingdom's judicial agents.

I have written of lineages as groups of true matrilineal kin, and so they often were. However, some procedure seems to have been found necessary to adjust the lineage system to the territorial organization. We saw that segments might hive off to other neighborhoods; this must have become more common as sales of landlord and tenant rights increased during the period of European trade. My informants in one Cochin village told me that traditionally, when a lineage segment moved to a new village, its members were adopted as retainers and tenants by the local landlord. They were accepted into the assembly of their new neighborhood and permitted to perform their first tāli rite jointly with some established lineage. Presumably they also took over the enangar of this lineage. In any case my informants thought it would be necessary to obtain the sanction of the chief or, in areas of temple management, of a Brahman legal authority called a Vaidigan, to obtain new enangar ties within a neighborhood. The joint performance of the tāli rite set up a bond of fictitious matrilineal kinship between the old lineage and the incoming segment so that their members had thenceforth to observe exogamy.

This procedure served to provide newcomers with ceremonial and marriage partners and to induct them into the microcosmic political life of the neighborhood. The new members, however, were apparently never completely accepted as "true" matrilineal kin. Thus death and

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

If he wished, a girl's ritual bridegroom might later visit her as one of a series of husbands, but he had no prior claims and was not obliged to do so. The woman in turn owed no obligations to him except that at his death, she and all her children by whatever biological fathers must observe fifteen days of ritual pollution for him. Ritual pollution was otherwise observed only for matrilineal kin. Until modern times it was not observed by a woman and her children for a visiting husband who was not also the woman's ritual husband. In addition, if they knew him, a woman's children called her ritual husband by the Dravidian word *appan*, the term used for the father in the patrilineal castes. Their mother's visiting husbands they called by the Sanskrit term *acchan;* this word means "leader" or "lord" and was also sometimes applied as a title to village headmen and military leaders.

After the tāli rite and shortly before or after puberty, a woman might enter into a number of sexual relationships with men of her local caste group or of an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar might visit a number of wives of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste. Among retainer Nayars, by far the majority of unions were between persons of the same caste. A very few favored women had husbands from the lineages of temple servants, village headmen, chiefs, or royalty, or from houses of Nambudiri Brahmans of relatively low rank. A smaller number of Nayar retainers had wives in the lower-ranking castes of Nayar temple menials, but not in the servant castes of Nayar washermen and barbers, which were endogamous.

It is not certain how many husbands a woman might have at one time; various writers [8] of the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries mention between three and twelve (Logan, 1951, I: 136–137). Others add that women "never refused themselves" to occasional Brahman or Nayar visitors of appropriate rank. It seems probable that each woman had a small number of husbands from her local caste group who, while their relationship lasted, visited her regularly, but that women also received occasional fleeting visits from itinerant Nayars of appropriate rank, perhaps mainly during military operations.

[8] See, for example, Abdu 'r Razzak (1441), Nicolo di Conti (1444), Hieronimo de Santo Stephano (1563), and Cesar Fredericke (1563), in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 22, 1857; Duarte Barbosa (1518) and Joao de Barros (early sixteenth century) in Dames, 1921, II: 124, 241; Ludovico di Varthema (1503–1508), tr. J. W. Jones, 1863; 146; Zein-ud-Deen (1579), tr. Rowlandson, 1833: 63; J. H. van Linschoten (1596) in Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 71: 279; Pietro della Valle (1624), Hakluyt Society Publications Vol. 85: 579; Hamilton (1727), ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 310; Buchanan, 1807, II: 411.

843 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and
595 to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited
431 the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens
595 rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however,
431 their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to
684 have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the
593 granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own
564 caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this
[431] again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obligation. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first
584 husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband
586 who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman
613 or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or
[839] village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some
[564] cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

obligations, some fathers, especially kāranavans, kept their children 593
residing with them for most of their lives and gave them property. A 613
child owed his father obedience and respect. If a man divorced his [431]
wife her children also left him and might see little of him thereafter. [586]
However, they had to observe ritual pollution at his death and his [765]
eldest son took part in his funeral rites along with the chief matrilineal
heir. The eldest son also made annual offerings to his dead father's [769]
spirit. In general the relationship with the father was thought of as
intimate and loving. Children must respect him and a daughter must
not touch him after her puberty. But having no legal authority, the
father was not feared. His role was sharply contrasted with that of
the mother's brother. Uncles were said to teach by scolding and [604]
punishment; fathers, by persuasion and laughter.

The father's kin had privileges and obligations at life-crisis rites— 613
most of which took place in the individual's taravād house—and were 796
feasted and made gifts at the ceremonies of first pregnancy, naming,
first rice feeding, tāli tying, marriage, first menstruation, and death. 553
At the naming ceremony, when a baby was one month old, the father's
mother chose the name, the father's father conferred it, and the father
presented the child with a gold waistband. The kāranavan fulfilled
these roles in Central Kerala.

A person was forbidden to marry his father's sibling or paternal 582
parallel cousin of the father's property group. Affectionate respect was 602
the proper attitude toward all the father's older kin. The paternal
grandmother played with a child but did not idolize him as she did 603
her daughter's child, for he was not of her taravād. Unless he was also
a child's kāranavan, the paternal grandfather was a distant kinsman
who had little to do with his grandchild. The mother's father, on the
other hand, usually doted on his grandchild and was a cherished
companion.

Male cross cousins had a joking relationship and were often close 605
companions. Their relationship might be tinged with hostility con-
cerning the property of their respective father and mother's brother. [578]
Sometimes, at least in the nineteenth century, they quarreled openly
over the inheritance and became enemies thereafter. Male and female
cross cousins had a joking relationship with implicit sexual privileges
if the girl was younger than the man. A boy who returned to his [582]
taravād at puberty often married his matrilateral cross cousin there-
after. Even if she married someone else he might sleep with her [836]
illicitly before or after the marriage. Elders were either ignorant or [837]

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

605 836 837 oblivious of these affairs. If the husband found out he might keep quiet or might divorce his wife, but he would not be likely to take vengeance.

AFFINES

602 576 184 The etiquette of behavior between affines was practically identical in North and Central Kerala, but in the North they had recognized obligations.

During her marriage a woman became partly integrated into her 602 husband's property group. Her husband could request her to cook and 592 do limited domestic work for any of his matrilineal kin. She would 613 do so regularly if she lived in an avunculocal extended family. In such households there was a certain authority structure between the [593] wives of matrilineally related men, based on the relative age of the husbands. The oldest woman directed the group and the younger ones should obey her. Matters went most smoothly when a woman was the mother of her husband's niece-in-law. Older women in avunculocal households did not, however, have the unequivocal authority over junior wives which is found in the patrilocal extended families of the higher patrilineal castes of India. They would never beat a girl and usually courted her affection. If the young wife was dissatisfied she might urge her husband to move to a separate house, go home for long periods, or even seek a divorce.

In strict avunculocal residence the kāranavan's wife had domestic authority, keeping the keys of storerooms and directing the younger wives. However, if any woman born into the taravād returned to live in it she could demand the internal management of the home as [598] a right. The relations between a woman and her husband's sisters and nieces were thus often strained. Soon after such a natal kinswoman [607] returned to her home in this way, the kāranavan would try to move his wife into a separate building to avoid feminine disputes. However, a [604] younger wife often lived for several years in the same house with her husband's widowed mother and was expected to obey her with good grace.

602 A woman and her husband's older matrilineal kinsmen avoided one another—except on ceremonial occasions—because of incest prohibi- 613 tions. She was accorded meticulous respect by her husband's younger matrilineal kin, who usually feared and resented her influence over her husband. Gruesome proverbs told of the tortures which men and women would like to inflict on the wives of their elder brothers and [604] uncles, and it was said that "If the uncle's wife and nephews sit down peaceably together, *nux vomica* and bitter gourds will turn to honey."

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

582
*[544] endogamous Attikkurissi clan of the Nâyars, who look upon it as the most fitting union.

MARRIAGE.

58 "The haughty nobles and the vulgar race
Never must join the conjugal embrace."
The Lusiad.

[656] The common assertion that there is no such thing as marriage amongst the Nâyars, so easily accepted in belief that the Government has been persuaded into a commission to examine the question and to pass an edict entitled "The Malabar Marriage Bill" (which happily fell dead, and is extremely unlikely to effect the customs of the Nâyars and others following the Marumakkattâyam law of inheritance), reminds one of the weary disquisition by people who are dull enough to try and prove that Shakespeare's plays were not written by Shakespeare, but by another fellow of the same name. No events of life being so realistic to man as marriage and death (to the individual, to the tribe, to the people) shallowness rather than sturdy hardihood of racial character is perhaps indicated when we find any downright change in the ceremonial of marriage, even though it be but some ephemeral divagation and not properly speaking radical change.

175 Buchanan, writing in 1800, tells us that Nâyar girls
585 are married before 10, so that they may not be deflowered
[582] by nature, but the husband never afterwards cohabits with his wife. It would not be decent. He allows her
[837] this and that, and she lives in her mother's house where she may admit a lover of her own or of a higher caste; the lover giving her a small present; never a large one, which would indicate that she was influenced by mercenary motives. He says the young people vie with each
837 other for favour of the other sex, but that, should a Nâyar
175 man have intimacy with a Tîyan (a lower caste) woman,
564 he is put to death and the woman is sold to the Mâppilas! In the case of the *chère amie* being a slave—presumably of the Cheruman or cognate tribes—both are put to death.
[626] If this be true, there were forcible means used in those days for preventing intermixture of the people of the higher and lower castes. Buchanan tells us also that in North Malabar, where as a rule the lady lives in his home, the Nâyar or Nambûtiri lover may put her to death, should she be guilty of infidelity; and he may send her home whenever he pleases.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

custom is one which makes for improvement of the race, 793
bound up as it is with the Marumakkattâyam system, 564
which, guided by the anulômam principle, has fewer hindrances in the way of natural selection than perhaps any other marital custom throughout the world.

The divine commands of Srí Parasu Râma, the 793
imputed originator of the Marumakkattâyam system 564
which is followed by 70 per cent. of the people of 773
Malabar, are supposed to be contained in the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam, a work in Sanskrit verse, written on the ordinary Malabar grantham (palm-leaf book). It purports to be a monologue "addressed by the Rishi Garga to Yudhishthira the eldest of the Pândus." Chapter XLIX relates "how certain celestial damsels were brought from Indra's world by Parasu Râma to satisfy the sexual cravings of the Kêralam Brâhmans, and it relates how Parasu Râma at Vishabhadri (Trichûr), pronounced his commandment to the women (not being of the Brâhman caste) to satisfy the desires of Brâhmans, enjoining on them to put off chastity and the cloth which covered their breasts, and declaring that promiscuous intercourse with three or four men in common was void of the least taint of sin." Unfortunately no scholar has given his opinion as to the time when this was written. Most likely it is not very ancient, and may be attributed to device of the Nambûtiris. But it is respected as authoritative. "One of the foremost Nambûtiris in Malabar in respect of wealth, rank, sanctity and learning," in common with the rest of his clan, relied absolutely on it, and informed the Commission: "The Smiriti says the Sûdras' appointed path to heaven is serving the Brâhmans." "The practice of Brâhmans . . . . . having sexual intercourse with servile (Sûdra) women is in accordance with the Sástras." "If 564
a Brâhman wished to have sexual intercourse with a 837
Sûdra's wife, the Sûdra would be bound to gratify the wish." "A Sûdra cannot be sure of the true parentage of the children born of his wife. Hence the Sûdras cannot follow Makkattâyam"—inheritance in the male line. The Zamorin Maharajah Bahadur informed the Commission that "according to Parasu Râma . . . . chastity should not be observed by non-Brâhman females." Again, the "Ettan Tamburan," one of the senior members of the Zamorin's family, a learned Sanscrit scholar said: "It has been ordained by Parasu Râma that in Kêrala, Marumakkatâyam women need not be chaste;" and he quoted a sloka in proof that there

564 should be no such thing as chastity excepting amongst
837 the Brâhman women. And the Kolatûr Vâriyâr, a great personage: "A woman is not forbidden from consorting with more than one man. For the Marumakkatâyam people, who reckon their descent in the female line, there is no objection to any cohabitation which does not contaminate the female element."

581 The opinions which have been quoted are those of persons of the highest position, principals of the oldest families, and give expression to the old-fashioned Malabar custom which they would be the last to condemn. But it must not be imagined that the goddess Lubricity reigns supreme in Malabar. It seems perhaps to have been indicated that she does. Such is, however, not the case. It has been said by one whose long acquaintance with Malabar gives him what we may call admitted right to express authoritative opinion, that, "nowhere else is the marriage tie more jealously guarded, and its breaches more savagely avenged." We shall know more of the subject presently, when we have done with all that pertains to formal union between the sexes. As a matter of fact lubricity has no more followers in Malabar than elsewhere.

585 The ceremonies surrounding marriage and death seem
764 to be those in which human feelings are deepest, and consequently in these, more than in any others, we see
182 relics of a long gone past; much of the ceremonial being now apparently meaningless, and handed on after the manner of all ceremonial, for no obvious purpose, long after the original signification has been forgotten. Amongst all races of the world it is the same. These form perhaps—for the ceremonies connected with death are interwoven with primitive religious ideas—the closest links between our earlier ancestors and ourselves. The institution marriage itself is not easily liable to change or even modification, and thus it is, perhaps, that it, the product of a byegone age, is not always suited to the wants of the age in which it is found. It is rarely up to date. It is invariably blended with superstitions and restraints which people believe they believe; and the relations between the sexes are rarely natural, *i.e.*, rarely free from restraints which are souvenirs of the past, and which are resented in the present. Of course amongst primitive peoples changes in respect of marital connexions, as also in respect of death ceremonies, are imperceptible. They must be very small indeed in even an immense period; and in their case there is not that

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
NAYARS

595*

I would have liked to have returned to this household and to have got more information about its inmates; I would also have found it useful to discover other Nayar homes in which the traces of polyandry were still as fresh as in this one. Alas, war broke out within a few days and I was inexorably drawn away as related in Appendix I.

I had to wait more than ten years before I again visited a Nayar household reputed to be polyandrous. It was in Palappuram, in the Walluvanad taluk, on the 23rd of November 1949, where I went to a house called Valathandath. Its inhabitants belonged to the Sudra Nayar sub-caste, and the *karanavan* whom I met, an old man, bore the name of Shekaranayar. His sister, Chimdevi, also aged, lived with him, she sat in a corner of one of the rooms, her breasts bare in the old fashioned way. She had been polyandrous too, I heard, although I was unable to discover the number and names of the husbands that she had had. Offspring consisted of two daughters and a son, the three of them living in the family house.

The eldest daughter, called Parbhatiama, had a little girl, Shandakumari. When I asked who the father was, she smiled and said that she did not know. Immediately intrigued, I asked again and why. The answer, which was not too difficult to obtain, was that she had two husbands, one "with the military" in Madras, and the other a Nayar agriculturist. Which of the two was the father, my interpreters said they could not find out for nobody knew. I was struck by the fact that this Nayar woman had a soldier as one of her husbands; it was reminiscent of the ancient classical pattern in which polyandry in her caste was reputed to exist because of the military commitments of the men.

The younger daughter, Kunyimaluama, posed for a photograph with her brother, Krishnayar (Fig. 8); she was also accompanied by a young man called Balanayar of the Velathadeth *tarawad*, who was, I heard, her paramour but not her husband. [837]

In view of the really determined opposition of the Nayar community in Kerala towards allowing me to find out more about their marital customs, I abstained from making further enquiries into the subject. Consequently I was forced to content myself with the meagre results obtained, and, apart from the information gathered from the Musad and mentioned above (see p. 174), I steered clear of the Nayars. To have acted otherwise under the circumstances might well have compromised my entire research work in Kerala and have led, I am afraid, to my having to abandon it without gaining any further data, even concerning the other polyandrous castes and sub-castes. 595* 114

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married. 595* 837 ●

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well. 595* 578 152

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union. 851 564 428

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collectively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu- 595* 851

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 849
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 600

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

427 Munsifs and District Judges with summary jurisdiction in the matter." The provisions in the regulation apply only to "Kanam
423 tenants who, by themselves or through their predecessors in interest, have uninterruptedly held the holding for a period of not less than thirty years prior to the coming into force of this Regulation," and provide some restrictions on the part of the landlord in matters of renewal of kanam holdings, and ejection of kanam tenants; and dispense altogether with the right of *Melkanam*. The Puravaka janmis in Watakancheri number 54, of whom a few are Nambudri Brahmans, the others being of various castes. The Nambudris are the big landlords.

423 These janmis also are in some cases the custodians of "devaswoms" (literally "wealth of the gods"), lands belonging to the local temples; these are treated by them just like their janmam lands, but they keep separate accounts for the same. The Sirkar also manages devaswom lands and there is a department in the State which manages the affairs of the temples and the property belonging to them.

Of the total number of landowners (about 150), only 34 with an area of 194·44 acres cultivate their own lands. The rest sublet.

Of the non-cultivating landowners a few are big janmis like the Nambudri Brahmans and the Paliath Atchan. The Nambudri Brahmans pursue no occupation but that of living in strict conformity with the duties of a Brahman. They study the Vedas and live a pious and cleanly life. Western civilization and ideas have not
[428] penetrated to them. They maintain the joint-property system in which the whole property descends to the eldest male member.
[837] Only the eldest male is allowed to enter into legal marriage, but he can marry two or three women; the rest keep Nayar females as their mistresses.*

The "Paliath Atchan" possesses much land in the State. The head of the family lives in a place near Cranganore. He manages his estates through departments and officials like the Sirkar. He is the biggest landlord in the State, and a powerful hereditary chief.

The small landowners who do not cultivate their lands pursue occupations like retail trade, Government service, law, etc. These generally sublet their lands to tenants who own no lands and try to exact from these latter as much rent as possible. There are also agricultural workers who neither own nor rent land; the caste of "Cherumas" belongs to this class. Also a few of the low
[465] castes, the Mappilas and in some cases the Christians,—male and female—engage themselves in such work. They are low paid. Formerly these wages were in kind, but money wages have begun to prevail; but for harvesting work wages are invariably paid in kind, the worker receiving one para of paddy for every six gathered in.

The rents of paddy lands are paid in kind.

243 *Agriculture.*—Paddy is grown on all the wet lands. Out of the seasons, the cultivators also grow to a small extent such grains as gram and peas in the paddy lands. Area under paddy—653·24 acres.

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* [This phrase must not be understood to mean that such Nayar women are maintained in any way by their Nambudri paramours. They depend on their own family property, which descends in the female line. The children of Nambudri Brahmans and Nayar women are reckoned Nayars, and are members of the joint family of the mother, and entitled to maintenance from that family property.—Ed.]

31: Slater S-5 (1916-1917) 1918 AW1 India
Kerala AW11

582 *Marriage customs.*—The custom of marriage before puberty is prevalent among Hindus, excepting Nambudris and Nayars. The
837 Nambudris or Malabar Brahmans can give their daughters in marriage at any time they like or not marry them at all. Only the eldest male member of a Nambudri family can marry in his own caste. All the other sons keep Nayar women as mistresses. The eldest member can marry more than one wife, but many women of necessity have to remain unmarried.

[428] The case of Nayars is entirely different. They follow a different system of inheritance, i.e., descent through the female.
[586] The result of this system is that the female is at full liberty to choose or to divorce husbands as she likes. The man also has the same liberty. As a consequence of the different systems of inheritance their marriage custom is also different. Before puberty some person closely connected with the family ties the sacred string round the neck of the girl. This custom is purely formal and does not make them husband and wife. Nowadays this formal business is done by the mother of the girl at the temple in the presence of God. After puberty the man who really wants to marry the girl (he must be of the same caste or some one belonging to a higher caste, preferably a Nambudri) comes and performs the real marriage. This real marriage is binding only so long as he and she will. Divorce can be had at any time by a mere word. The woman can marry again. The death of the man does not make
[585] the woman a widow. There is no widowhood for Nayar woman. In fact there is no marriage among the Nayars. What actually happens is that somebody comes and lives with a woman for a time, then leaves, and both live with others. The only restriction is that two men cannot live with one woman at the same time, but one man can cohabit with any number of women at the same time. The children
[428] born of such unions inherit the property of the uncle since the descent is by the female line. Nowadays there is a strong opinion against this system and the descent from father to son is advocated by the educated few, and the proposed regulations in Cochin are attempts to make marriage binding and permanent and dissoluble only under certain circumstances, widows being still allowed to remarry.

With regard to all other Hindus, marriage before puberty pre-
[587] vails. But among the lower classes widow-marriage is allowable, money for a bridegroom is not demanded, and even polyandry is
[595] prevalent among certain sections of the Tiyyas. But only brothers can share a wife. A brother can marry his widowed sister-in-law. *Divorce* is allowed in cases of serious infidelity but divorced men and women can marry again.

562 *The purdah system* is followed by the Nambudri women alone in Malabar. They cannot see men. Whenever they come out they hold a big native kind of umbrella to hide their faces and come to the temple, etc. The ideas about the purdah system among them are changing nowadays and the abandonment of the system is hoped for in a few years. The Nambudris are also advocating changes in their marriage customs.

428 The property of a Nambudri or Nayar family cannot be divided among the family sons. The eldest has the right to manage the property and enjoy the profits. The other members of the family have a right for maintenance only. When the eldest dies the next to him in age comes to the position. Inthe case of a Nambudri

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 109 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

836 Thandans. With the latter, a lot of men were known for their proclivi-
564 ties of this sort, and they were nearly as bad as the Moplas, I was told.
177 The latter were very much addicted to sodomy, but then it was part of their culture, and had been acquired with Islam from the Arabs.

833 There was no impotence or frigidity in Kerala, not with any caste, I
564 heard. People were far from "cold" and passion, rather, was the rule. I was given a long description of the consummate art with which the higher castes indulged in amorous pleasures and assured that the lower castes had only learned from them. It seemed, however, that the Thandans could never hope to excel in these matters, especially the women who were still far from being the "angels" which those of their superiors undoubtedly were.

674 Asked about crime, neurosis, and insanity, my interpreters said that, to their knowledge, there was little of these in the area. As only recently, since my arrival in Shoranur, a Thandan woman had assassinated her husband, I remarked on the circumstance and asked them how they reconciled it to their statement. They replied that it was an exceptional event, and that for a long time previously, nothing of the sort had hap-
[181] pened. People, on the whole, were docile and not aggressive. They did not even indulge in poisoning, which occurred quite frequently in other
158 parts of the country. Again, insanity seemed to be restricted to the
755 Moplas, who, apart from occasionally running amok as is well known, had members of their community frequently tied up in a mosque or to iron stakes, in the hope that they could thus be cured.

D. POLYANDRY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN KERALA

177 Unquestionably, polyandry no longer thrives as it did in Kerala and
[595] research into what changes have brought about this situation over the last two hundred years cannot fail to be of interest. I myself, having returned to the area after an absence of ten years, was able to notice many alterations, although these were not sufficient to warrant any
[114] specific consideration. Dr A. Aiyappan, Superintendent, Government Museum, Madras, has made a particular study of the Irava community, and in his publications on this subject, and on the more special aspect of polyandry in other castes of Malabar, has shown what factors are involved and how foreign contact has undermined the old culture and is bringing a new one into existence. Readers are referred to his books
[127] and articles listed in the Bibliography. I give here a brief outline of his

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual 561 occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran 461 errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighbor- [422] ing groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped [613] them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

Raman Menon, however, records a legend of a mother's brother who deliberately betrayed a nephew, whom he hated, to the vengeance of a lineage currently feuding with his own.[6] The nephew was to have been killed by his enemies on the following day. But in the night his mother prayed for the return of her son's elder brother who was absent in a distant land. The lineage ghosts miraculously brought home the brother in time to save his junior's life. It must be remembered, moreover, that the belief that the deceased himself would become a lineage ghost capable of wreaking vengeance probably formed a sanction against intralineage murder.

Women are excluded from the ancestral shrine during their pollutions and may not enter it on the day of propitiations. The former prohibition is related to the whole concept of bad sacredness associated with emissions of the body, which prevents women from touching or eating with others or entering any sacred place during their pollutions. That women should be totally excluded from the shrine on days of propitiation seems also to relate to the general position of women in the society. As in most of the higher Hindu castes, women traditionally played a very minor role in economic production, for the work of production was done by the lower castes. A few women were scholars, and a few were even trained in arms, but the Nāyars' occupation as soldiers in general tended to exclude women from work outside the home. The bearing of children was by far the chief value of women. Correspondingly, women were subordinates in the legal sphere. They were throughout life under the legal guardianship of men, might not take part in public deliberations, and might not act as witnesses in the village court. The legal subordination of women may have been partly connected with their comparative lack of value in economic production, and perhaps partly, with the great moral authority they derived from childbearing—for female procreation was very highly valued and male envy of these functions was overt. The cult of lineage ghosts supports the correct operation of male legal authority within the *taravād*. The exclusion of women from participation in it, and their exclusion from the shrine on days when their procreative functions were most apparent, perhaps expresses in a formal manner the notion that the power which women derived from these functions was polar and even antipathetic to the legal and economic power of men.

Although the lineage ghosts had only subsidiary judicial functions, their cult served in several ways indirectly to maintain right relationships within the *taravād*. First, a *kāranavan* who respected and correctly propitiated his own forebears provided a role model of piety for his juniors in their relations with living elders. Second, the ghosts, as we have seen, provided some sanctions against a *kāranavan's* ill treatment of his wards. Levy,[7] in connection with the Chinese ancestor cult, has pointed out the importance of having supernatural agents to whom a human authority owes deference, in social units where the authority is not chosen by his subordinates and cannot easily be manipulated or removed by them. For the authority's good behavior toward his subordinates then becomes a part of his sanctioned duty toward his own supernatural authorities. In the Chinese cult, which in this respect resembles the Brahman, the head of a family must care for his patrilineal descendants because it is part of his duty to the ancestors to provide happy and prosperous offspring. For these, by their own later ancestral offerings, will save the forebears' spirits, and his own, from suffering in the life after death. In the Nāyar case, the *kāranavan* must keep his *taravād* in good order because if he does not do so the lineage ghosts may inflict suffering on all, including himself.

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity; but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

has been explained to me in this way. The Nâyar woman observes pollution for three days during menstruation. While in her period she may not eat or drink with any other member of the Taravâd, and at the end of it, that is on the fourth day, she must be purified. Purification is known as "mâttu" (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the *Mannan* or Vannan caste (whose *métier* it is to wash for the Nâyars and Nambûtiris), but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tîyan caste, giving her, after her bath, *one of her own* clean cloths to wear (which is called mattu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child birth, or menstruation *must* be removed by "mâttu." There is no avoiding it.* Until it is done, and it *must* be done on the fourth day, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences. How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks vengeance on a Taravâd by preventing the right person giving "mâttu" to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal inflict deeper injury. Now the Nâyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of "mâttu." My informant here tells me that the Vannan caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nâyar women cannot go where these are not to be found; and that "mâttu" must be done by one of that caste. But this is not the rule. I know from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranâd for instance, where the Nâyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tîyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction has other roots than those involved in "mâttu." It does not account for the superstition against crossing water which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. As bearing on this point I may mention that the Nâyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river-backwater and come into the town.

The Zamorin is the over-lord of the Akattu Chârna clan, and with the decline of his power and influence, it may be that the women of it have latterly taken more liberty than was formerly possible.

* More will be said on this point when we come to describe the Tîyans.

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411 called nândakam smeared with white (probably sandal-wood) paste. The shape of this sword is given in the illustration. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle.

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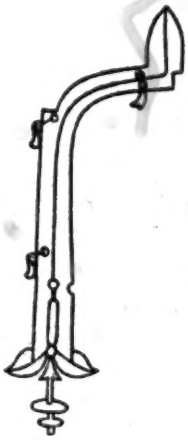

But just before the procession begins there is something for the Tîyans to do. Four men of this caste, having with them Pûkkalasams (flower-kalasams) and five having with them Jannakalasams (?) run along the west, north, and east, sides of the temple (outside the enclosure) shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack which is presently given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each man receives five edangâlis of rice from the temple and a small piece of the flesh of the goat to be sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a women in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tîyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under vow. In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tîyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each women completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the contents of the plate into the

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Tiyyar

[North Malabar]

Polyandry is forbidden

polygyny more common than among Nayars. Symmetrical cross-cousin marriage is encouraged, the mother's brother's son being the rightful husband of a girl. Divorce, however, appears to be much more common than among Nayars and the domestic group less stable, especially in poor families. 595 582 586

For the post-puberty marriage ceremony the bridegroom comes with his parents and elders to the house of the bride. This contrasts with Nayar marriage, where the youth is accompanied by age-mates, the father and maternal uncles being prohibited from attending. This difference reflects the fact that despite virilocal residence and the comparative infrequency of divorce, North Malabar Nayar marriage is theoretically, as in the south, a contract between individuals as sexual partners and not between lineages. Moreover, the absence of the maternal uncles reflects the sexual jealousy between proximal generations in a Nayar lineage. Among Tiyyars, marriage is primarily a contract between families, a domestic arrangement for procuring food and bringing up children, as well as a sexual tie. The bridegroom's father and *kāranavan* jointly give gold to the goldsmith who makes earrings for the bride and places them in the tops of her ears. These rings are the mark of a married woman and are removed at divorce or death. 585 581 [301] [606]

The feast at the bride's house is paid for jointly by the two parties. After it is over, the bridegroom's *kāranavan* pays a bride-price in *panams* (old-fashioned Malayali coins) to the *kāranavan* of the bride. This sum is called *kānam*, the word used for the sum paid by a Nayar or Tiyyar tenant to his landlord at the start of a period of tenure, nowadays fixed at twelve years. The interest on the *kānam* sum is then set off against the annual rent, and returned to the tenant if the property is returned at the end of the stipulated period. The Tiyyar marriage is thus, as Aiyappan (1944, p. 91) says, 'in theory a temporary depositing of a girl by her natural guardian amidst another group from whom a security is received and also an undertaking to take care of her'. The bride's party in return pay a dowry of jewellery and vessels. The bridegroom presents one loin-cloth to the bride and another to her mother. The couple are blessed by elders and depart to the bridegroom's house. 585 583 [613] [427] [581]

The Tiyyar marriage, therefore, is better defined legally than the Nayar. The *kānam* sum (which is of nominal value, in Kottayam fixed at 13½ *panams* or 3 to 5 rupees[1] and paid in the old coins long after their use as currency died out) is, it seems, a symbolic purchase of the husband's *ius in uxorem*. While this persists, he must maintain his wife. Should he lose it by the wife's adultery, his *kānam* sum is returned and his wife goes home with her dowry. In theory, he does not acquire *ius in genitricem* in his wife: this, as in all matrilineal societies, remains with her natal kin. Similarly, the father need not by law maintain his children, though he often does so in fact. These may at any time be returned to their *kāranavan*.

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. Since the Tiyyar *tāli*-rite died out about twenty years ago, it has been better described in previous literature than by my own informants. I therefore summarize Anantha Krishna Iyer's (1909–12, I, p. 288), Thurston & Rangachari's (1909, VII, pp. 77–9) and Aiyappan's (1944, pp. 159–62) accounts, and then add that of my informants. 588 [178] [127]

The rite must be performed before puberty, on pain of disgrace to the girl's family, and, in ancient times, excommunication from caste. The day was fixed by the astrologer and the ceremony held in the girl's matrilineal ancestral house. The girl was taken to the middle room of the house and secluded for three days as if she had menstruated. Like a menstruous woman, she must abstain from meat and condiments and must not see a tree, a plant, a man, a crow, a dog, or a cat. On the fourth day she bathed in the local pool. At the pool, her brother planted an arrow with its point up, to drive away evil spirits. After bathing, the girl cut a [841]

[1] Thurston & Rangachari report that the north Malabar *kānam* sum is 41 *panams*; Aiyappan, however, places it between 8 and 20 *panams*. In Kottayam the bridegroom's mother's brother gives 11½ *panams* to the bride's mother's brother and 2 *panams* to her mother's brother's wife.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

[881]

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kama Devan, always beside her.

[841]
[789]
841

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

[833]

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *tarawād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

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To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

Nayar
Tiyyar

and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 [588] [793] [852] [764]

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *tarawādd*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

564 182

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *tarawādd* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

vehicles, indicate that she is a phallic mother, the 'mother with a penis' who is a common phantasy for European children too. It is well known that in the unconscious minds of Europeans, the phallic mother usually and perhaps always represents the mother armed with the father's penis, which she has acquired in an act of sadistic intercourse. The infant's fear of approaching her sexually thus becomes a fear of being attacked and castrated by the angry penis of the father which the mother has taken as her weapon. In the myths the demon may in each case be interpreted as a son-figure, for in each case he acquires power as a devotee who does penance to Siva, the father-god in the Tamil and Malayalam countries. The son attacks the mother sexually, but she is pre-armed by Siva or by the other gods with their weapons. In some myths she uses their phallic symbol, the sword (a common castration symbol), to behead the demon-son. In the myth of Vanasuran she pierces the demon with the sword and then kills him with her disc. I associate being killed by means of this circular weapon with being castrated by the vagina in intercourse, and the disappearance into the hole with annihilation by being swallowed up in the mother's body, a phantasy which we see too in the fear of being eaten by the mother. Behind this fear may lie an unconscious desire to return to the womb. This interpretation is likely because bathing in the *chakkra-theertham* at Cape Comerin is a means of becoming pure from sin, and purificatory bathing, a common rebirth symbol.

773 776 182 831

I suggest that the fear of deflowering a virgin issues from this association of her with the phallic mother since, like the mother, she is still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen and defended by their sexual organs, which (in phantasy) they or she may use to castrate or attack an aggressor. We saw how, in the Nayar rite, the lineage men in fact attack the bridegroom with 'phallic' missiles (plantain fruits) and how the ritual play with swords suggests a sexual attack and defence.

A further reason why the *tāli* must be tied before puberty may be that the menstruous woman is particularly closely associated with the mother, menstrual blood (see the blood-dripping mouth of Bhadrakali) recalling the infantile phantasy of parental intercourse as a sadistic attack by the father in which the mother is wounded and bleeds, but castrates him and acquires the penis. A virgin who had menstruated but was still in the possession of her lineage kinsmen would thus be too terrifying a creature to deflower. This may be why a woman who matured before the *tāli* was tied (i.e. before she was symbolically deflowered and removed from the sexual protection of her kinsmen) was considered irrevocably polluting, a creature to be driven from caste and with whom it would be madness to cohabit. It was therefore desirable to make her attain puberty fictitiously in advance by the mock menstruation ceremony, and then actually or symbolically to deflower her before she was in fact mature. Even so, the bridegroom must be a polluted low caste person, whose ritual purity could not be further endangered, or a father-figure to the society at large, or a small boy whose act appears innocuous, or a woman on behalf of her son.

588 841 182 831

My association of the menstruous woman with the phallic, blood-dripping divine mother rests on the fact that, like the goddess, she is 'sacred' and may not be approached; that she is armed with a knife to ward off evil spirits; and that she is credited with the power to make men impotent (castrate them) if they foolhardily copulate with her. It must be noticed too that the obscene songs sung by the washermen at a Nayar or a Tiyyar girl's first menstruation are sung on another occasion, namely the annual Bharani festival to the Bhadrakali of Kodungalur temple in Cochin. In this festival the temple, normally closed to the 'polluting' castes below Nayars, is for seven days flung open to them and deliberately polluted. On the day previous to Bharani, Nayar and low caste pilgrims, drunk with toddy, armed with long staffs, and carrying live cocks, flock in thousands to the temple from all parts of Malabar. On the road they sing obscene songs to the goddess and revile in filthy language women whom they meet.

841 773 831 182 796 831 78 [533]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

773 778 825 [776] thereon. The early colonists, on a second venture, finding the land occupied, commenced a war against the Nágas, but Parasurama acting as arbitrator, decided in favour of the early colonists, and ordered that they should set apart a corner of every compound as an abode of the serpent gods. He further ordained that these allotted places were to remain virgin-ground, untouched by the blade of the knife or the prong of the fork, while the under-wood and the creepers were to be allowed to grow in wild profusion, and to such the name 778 *kávu* (grove) was given. In it are generally planted several 771 825 stone idols of serpents placed on a stone-basement called *chitrakúdam*, the whole being held sacred and reserved by a low wall round it to prevent cattle or children straying into [782] that space. The propitiation of serpents is deemed essential [753] to the prosperity and well-being of every house-holder, and periodical offerings are made to them, while the neglect of [776] these is considered to cause leprosy, sterility, or ophthalmia, among the members of the family. These serpents are therefore regarded as tutelary deities of the family, and the gods along with the shrines are conveyed with the property and frequently specified in deeds of transfer.

793 795 778 825 [782] The high priest of the serpent cult is the Pámbu Mékkát Nambuthiri, who lives in a house full of cobras which are said to be harmless to his family. Whenever an image of a serpent from a grove has to be removed from one place to another, he is sent for on the belief that he alone can do it after due propitiation and offerings, and any tree that is cut down for this removal must be sent to the local temple to be used as fuel. [564] The serpent grove should not be polluted by a member of the [841] low caste, or by a woman during her menses; and when it is [783] so polluted or otherwise spoiled, a member of the family of the Nambuthiri priest has to be informed. He gazes into a [787] vessel filled with oil, points out the evil and suggests the remedy. 771 778 825 The ninth asterism in every month is specially selected for snake worship in Nayar families, when offerings of milk and water are made to them. It is said that the approach of a [841] woman during her menses will cause serpents to vacate the [782] grove because of the impurity, and Pulluvans are required to sing songs and perform certain ceremonies to cause them to [532] re-enter the shrines. Images of these serpents are sometimes

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll

105 563 [1995] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [1984] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [1984] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [765] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

000 Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

*595 114 his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

*595 At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the [853] household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also [962] looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the [841] woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus [983] gradually come to know the children better and to influence their up- [855] bringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is how- [562] ever always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
484
564

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

841 menstruation. While in her period, she may not eat or
783 drink with any other member of the taravād, and on the
[613] fourth day she must be purified. Purification is known as māttu (change), and it is effected by the washerwoman, who, in some parts of South Malabar, is of the Mannān or Vannān caste, whose *métier* is to wash for the Nāyars and Nambūtiris, but who is, as a rule, the washerwoman of the Tīyan caste, giving her, after her bath, one of her own cloths to wear (māttu, change of raiment) instead of the soiled cloth, which she takes away to wash. Pollution, which may come through a death in the family, through child-birth, or menstruation, must be removed by māttu. Until it is done, the woman is out of caste. It must be done in the right way at the right moment, under pain of the most unpleasant social consequences.
[689] How that the influential rural local magnate wreaks
[613] vengeance on a taravād by preventing the right person giving māttu to the women is well known in Malabar. He could not, with all the sections of the Penal Code at his disposal, inflict greater injury. Now the Nāyar woman is said to feel compelled to remain in Malabar, or within her own part of it, in order to be within reach of māttu. My informant tells me that, the Vannān caste being peculiar to Malabar, the Nāyar women cannot go where these are not to be found, and that māttu must be done by one of that caste. But I know, from my own observation in the most truly conservative localities, in Kurumbranād for example, where the Nāyar has a relative superiority, that the washerman is as a rule a Tīyan; and I cannot but think that the interdiction
223 has other roots than those involved in māttu. It does
784 not account for the superstition against crossing water,
562 which has its counterparts elsewhere in the world. The origin of the interdiction to cross the river southwards

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4,5 (no date) 1909
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

principal oil-man; and it is the duty of this caste to present the Kurumbranād Rāja with oil on the occasion of his formal installation. The fifth group consists of the three kulams, Mannangazhi, Paramchela, and Pallikara Nāyars, all observing fifteen days' pollution. A member of the first-named class has to place an āmanapalaga (the traditional seat of Nambūdiris and other high castes) for the Kurumbranād Rāja to sit on at the time of his installation, while a member of the second has to present him with a cloth on the same occasion. The sixth group consists of four kiriyams named Patam, Tulu, Manan, and Ottu respectively, and has the collective name of Rāvāri. The seventh group consists of six kulams, Kandōn, Kannankōdan, Kotta, Karumba, Kundakollavan, and Panakādan Nāyars. All observe fifteen days' pollution, and the women of these six kulams have certain duties to perform in connection with the purification of women of the Vengalat, Pattillat, and Orakatteri kulams. Besides these seven groups, there are a few other classes without internal sub-divisions. One such class is known as Pāppini Nāyar. A woman of this class takes the part of the Brāhmini woman (Nambissan) at the tāli-kettu kalyanam of girls belonging to the kulams included in the third group. Another class called Pālattavan takes the place of the Attikurissi Nāyar at the funeral ceremonies of the same three kulams."

In illustration of the custom of polyandry among the Nāyars of Malabar in by-gone days, the following extracts may be quoted. "On the continent of India," it is recorded in Ellis' edition of the Kural, "polyandry is still said to be practiced in Orissa, and among particular tribes in other parts. In Malayālam, as is well known, the vision of Plato in his ideal republic is more completely

man receives five edangālis of rice from the temple, and
[465] a small piece of the flesh of the goat which is sacrificed later. These nine men eat only once a day during the
[834] festival; they do no work, remaining quietly at home
[841] unless when at the temple; they cannot approach any one of caste lower than their own; they cannot cohabit with women; and they cannot see a woman in menstruation during these days. A crowd of Tiyans join more or less in this, rushing about and barking like dogs, making a hideous noise. They too have kalasams, and, when they are tired of rushing and barking, they drink the arrack in them. These men are always under a vow.
[782] In doing what they do, they fulfil their vow for the benefit they have already received from the goddess—
796 cure from sickness as a rule. To the west of the
564 temple is a circular pit—it was called the fire-pit, but there was no fire in it—and this pit all the Tiyan women of the neighbourhood circumambulate, passing from west round by north, three times, holding on the head a pewter plate, on which are a little rice, bits of plantain leaves and cocoanut, and a burning wick. As each woman completes her third round, she stands for a moment at the western side, facing east, and throws the
[782] contents of the plate into the pit. She then goes to the western gate of the enclosure, and puts down her plate for an instant while she makes profound salaam to the
796 goddess ere going away. Now the procession starts
776 out from the temple, issuing from the northern gate,
788 and for a moment confronts a being so strange that he demands description. Of the many familiar demons of the Malayālis, the two most intimate are Kuttichchāttan and Gulikan, who are supposed to have assisted Kāli (who is scarcely the Kāli of Brāhmanism) in overcoming the Āsura, and on the occasion of this festival these

613 794 inflicting or witholding sickness and all types of misfortune to the lineage, and, to ward off these, was propitiated with offerings of cooked food annually and in special emergencies on the advice of the astrologer as diviner. In particular, she[1] [842] had power to bless with fertility women of the lineage, and so was worshipped before a prepuberty marriage rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl.

[778] Though not jointly owned by the lineage but rather by that branch of it which inherited the gardens on which they stood, the oldest ancestral house of the lineage, from which its forbears sprang, the original ancestor shrine in this house, and the sacred snake-grove in its [48] garden, were regarded with reverence by all lineage-members and stood as symbols of their unity. These are discussed below in connection with rites relating to the property-group.

613 608 621 (3) Fission and adoption in the Lineage

Since lineages were usually groups of actual and not putative matrilineal kin, it was inevitable that (since the birthrate is not uniform throughout a population) while some might remain stable in numbers over generations, others would expand greatly, and others would decrease and become in danger of extinction. When great growth in numbers in a lineage took place, some segments appear even traditionally to have hived off to other villages occupied by their own subcaste where kanam paddy lands and janmam garden lands were available. Such a segment, on moving to a new village, was adopted as retainers

1 [the dharma devi, or lineage goddess --- Analyst]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

formal recognition that the bereaved lineage, freed from its death pollution, had been received back into the normal social life of the caste.

Lineage members were also united in worship of their lineage goddess or *dharma devi* ("goddess of moral law"). This goddess, named differently in different lineages, was a species of the common Nayar goddess Bhagavadi. Her idol was housed in a small shrine near the oldest ancestral house or sometimes in the courtyard of the village temple. She was believed capable of inflicting or withholding sickness and all types of misfortune. To ward them off, members propitiated her with offerings of cooked food every year. The astrologer might also advise an emergency propitiation. She had the power to bless women of the lineage with fertility. On this account she was worshipped before a tāli rite and also at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl. In a somewhat vague sense, moreover, lineage members appear to have felt themselves collectively responsible to the goddess for sins or ritual lapses on the part of one of them. It was believed that if any member failed to observe the religious laws of caste, to perform household duties correctly, or to revere the goddess, she might bring sickness or misfortune upon the lineage as a whole.

In spite of this sense of collective moral responsibility, the evidence is unclear as to whether the lineage as a whole was held legally responsible for any of its member's acts. It is true that the enangar were the legal representatives of the local caste unit in its relations with the lineage. This inter-lineage relationship was hereditary and obligatory. It could not be entered into or permanently broken without the consent of the assembly and the chief of the district. If, moreover, an individual infringed a religious law of the caste, it was the duty of his lineage's enangar to summon a caste assembly to judge and punish the offense. Crimes, which were also sins, against caste law included incest within the lineage; dining or sex relations with prohibited lower-caste persons; failure to perform the marriage rite of a girl before she reached puberty; failure to observe pollution at the birth or death of a lineage member or (on the part of an individual woman) during menstruation; failure to pay dues in kind to the Nayar temple of the neighborhood. On being apprized of an offense, the assembly's first recourse was temporarily to ostracize the offender's household from the caste community. Ostracism meant that the offenders might not enter the temple, bathe in public bathing pools, enter the houses of other Nayars, employ the village servant

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613 of the group, maintaining its accounts in her own hands and counsel-
592 ing the kāranavan on his transactions with outsiders. When the oldest woman was the kāranavan's own or classificatory younger sister or sister's daughter her role was unequivocally subordinate and a formal division of duties was common.

613 *Rites of the Property Group* The property group jointly invited en-
592 angar households to the ceremonies of name giving, first rice feed-
796 ing, first menstruation, and death. The lineage as a whole held the tāli rite in its oldest house. However, expenses were divided between the property groups and food was cooked separately in their homes.
613 Similarly, at a death the whole lineage observed pollution and at-
592 tended the cremation, the gathering of bones on the seventh day, and
764 the purification and feasting on the fifteenth and sixteenth days. But men and women of the deceased's own property group offered cooked rice to the spirit in their courtyard each day during the pollution period. The rites of chief mourner were performed by the junior man considered most closely related to the deceased—her eldest son in the case of a woman, and the man immediately junior to him in the property group in the case of a man.

613 The propitiation of cobra gods and of dead matrilineal forebears
592 also united the group's members. The cobra deities (*nāgas*) could
776 inflict or avert sickness in general but were especially believed re-
842 sponsible for the fertility or barrenness[7] of taravād women. If a
782 woman failed to conceive, a performance was held at which men and
787 women of a wandering caste called Pulluvar played instruments and
[153] sang songs to entice the cobras to appear. A group of women of the taravād, who had purified themselves by sex continence and fasting for several days, then became possessed by the snake gods. They performed a wild dance, bowing and swaying in a circle and sweeping their hair along the ground. In this condition they might speak with the voices of the gods and announce whatever propitiations were necessary to appease them. Sometimes one or more of the women fell into a trance.

776 It seems reasonable to suppose that the snake gods were worshipped
842 as phallic symbols. They were definitely not regarded as the spirits of dead matrilineal forebears, yet were capable of withholding fertility or of causing women to conceive. Perhaps, therefore, they symbolized the procreative powers of past genitors of the property group, who

[7] Snake gods inflicted barrenness; the lineage goddess inflicted miscarriages and sickness in childbirth.

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had been so essential to its perpetuation, yet so firmly excluded from its everyday affairs.

Within each Nayar house one room was devoted to the spirits of dead kāranavans. It contained a number of small wooden stools on which spirits were believed to come and sit. The ancestor shrine of the lineage's oldest house contained many stools placed there in turn for the kāranavans of past generations, reaching back to the foundation of the lineage. A newer house would contain only the stools of kāranavans of that house. Offerings of cooked food were made before each stool by the living kāranavan, in the presence of all members, twice a year. The kāranavans' spirits were vindictive rather than protective. They were prone to punish the taravād with sickness or financial loss if any of its members failed in details of ritual performance, in care of the property, or in piety toward matrilineal kin. I have suggested elsewhere (Gough, 1958) that the cult of dead matrilineal forebears served as a focus for aggressive impulses which had their origin in relationships with living matrilineal elders. At the same time it united the living in fear and reverence of the dead and reaffirmed the moral laws of the taravād. It also acted as a sanction against a kāranavan's own exploitation of his juniors, since the maintenance of right relations with junior kinsmen formed part of his pious duty to his forebears.

The Splitting of Property Groups Genealogies and property documents reveal that during the nineteenth century the property groups of retainer Nayars divided at a particular point in their development. This occurred when the property group comprised two or more discrete segments descended from sisters, each segment containing an adult male capable of becoming kāranavan of his branch. For a segment to be "discrete," its founding ancestress, whether herself living or dead, must not have a mother, brothers, or mother's brothers alive. Separation before this point was not possibly because the division of property was stirpital. Individual men, the managers of property, could not separate themselves from their own mothers or sisters. A man could therefore never be a member of a different property group from that of his own mother's mother's brother, mother's brother, or brother. Division could take place only between groups headed by men from different minimal segments (parallel cousins, a man and his classificatory mother's brother, etc.), who were no longer held together by submission to a common mother's brother, grandmother, or great-uncle.

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own daughters and grandchildren, but sisters "stood in" for one another in caring for their children and contributed their work in a manner conducive to the general welfare.

Between sisters, especially own sisters, there was deep personal affection as well as loyalty to the sibling group and to the taravād. Sisters were also rivals, often squabbling over jewelry, clothing, and favors. Both rivalry and affection were most intense between sisters close in age.

Most women died in their ancestral homes among their siblings and children. Only a woman whose forebears and brothers were all dead might move away from her sisters into a separate property group headed by her son as kāranavan. Even so, sisters often lived to experience covert disputes between their children, who looked forward to the day when they would separate into new branch taravāds. In the last resort sisters would support their own children in quarrels, although they tried not to become involved in such disputes but to preserve their mutual amity.

MARRIAGE

The taravād was obviously of very great strength as an economic and legal corporation. Correspondingly, marriage was the slenderest of ties.

Every ten or twelve years, the immature girls of one generation within a lineage were ritually married on the same day by men drawn from their enangar lineages. Before the ceremony the girls were secluded for three days and caused to observe ritual prohibitions as if they had menstruated. (The actual rite of tying the tāli or gold ornament around the bride's neck is the central rite of "normal" marriage among most of the patrilineal castes of South India.) After the tāli rite, each couple was secluded for three days in a room of the ancestral house. Their seclusion clearly marked a ceremonial if not an actual defloration, and travelers' accounts of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries indicate that the brides were actually deflowered at this time (Stanley, 1865: 24; Kerr, 1811: chap. 6; Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 174). During the seclusion period, rites were performed to the goddess Bhagavadi to enhance the girls' fertility. On the fourth morning each couple took a purifying bath and ate a meal together. In Calicut and Walluvanad, although apparently not in Cochin, each bridegroom then tore in two the lower cloth worn by the girl in the period of seclusion. He kept one half and handed the other to the girl. Their personal obligations ended, the bridegrooms left the household.

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595 monial recognition through the performance of death pollution, but that was strictly all.

842 Nayars did, however, understand and attach significance to the physiological role of the male in procreation. They expected a child [829] to resemble his genitor and to be unusually intelligent if his father were a Brahman or a Nayar aristocrat. A man is said to have been 593 especially fond of a child whom he knew with reasonable certainty to be his own. He would make small gifts to him, play with him on visits, and offer him friendly counsel as he grew older. However, a man had no right to interfere in any way in his child's training, and [586] the child had no customary obligations to him. If he ended his relationship with the mother he had no further contact with the child.

Children addressed all their mothers' husbands as acchan, adding [601] the caste title in the case of a father of higher caste. Both boys and [564] girls stood in the father's presence and accorded him respect, but without the extreme submissiveness due to an older matrilineal kinsman. In spite of the Malayāli adage "No Nayar knows his father," it seems probable that almost every Nayar regarded some particular man as his genitor; but his relationship with this man might be anything from a permanent, warm attachment to almost total lack of recognition. Certainly differences of paternity created no institutionalized divisions within a sibling group.

602 No rights or obligations existed between an individual and his patrilateral kin. These relationships, when they existed, were a matter of individual friendliness or of polite etiquette. A person might visit his or her father's taravād as long as the father's marriage to the mother endured, especially if the father lived close by. How- [595] ever, although marriage has been monogamous for the past seventy to eighty years, I found in one Cochin village in 1949 that only 48 per cent of sibling groups containing children under fifteen had any contact with their father's matrilineal kin. In the other cases patrilateral relationships were suspended because the father lived at a distance, because he had divorced the mother, or because his kinswomen had quarreled with the mother.

[601] In what follows, the term "father" refers to any husband of the mother in the sambandham relationship, and the term "patrilateral kin," to the matrilineal kin of such a man.

Patrilateral kin of the father's generation or older were accorded [605] friendly respect. Cross cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact with one another. If their families remained friendly, cross cousins of

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

4: Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AWll Kerala AWll
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to lineage ghosts who were junior to them in age. The living of the *taravād* themselves make offerings to them and do them obeisance, whereas the ghosts of hostile serfs are especially polluting and malevolent and can be propitiated only by persons of their own caste.

Even so, the ghost of such a lower caste person who is honored for heroism by the *taravād* of his masters may, if he died violently, be feared as an alien ghost by other *taravāds*. In Kottayam in the eighteenth century, for example, there lived a certain Nāyar village headman who had as his servant a man of the Tiyyar caste of cultivators. During the invasions of Malabar by the Mysorean Muslim general, Tippu Sultan, in the 1780's, the Nāyar's *taravād* was threatened with conquest and forcible conversion to Islam. Having sent the women and children of his house into hiding, the *kāranavan* prayed before his lineage's patron goddess until the Muslims were at his gates. He then persuaded his Tiyyar servant to kill him, being unwilling to face the disgrace of circumcision at the hands of the Muslims. Having slain his master, the servant hid himself in an outhouse of the *taravād*. In the night he went forth and attacked the Muslims single-handed, killing several of them to avenge his master, before he was himself put to death. The ghost of this servant is now propitiated along with the lineage ghosts of his master's *taravād*. It is also, however, propitiated as an alien ghost by several other *taravāds* in the neighborhood.

Occasionally, malevolent alien ghosts are those of Nāyars who died violently, often in expiation of some crime. They may have committed suicide after being outcaste for contravention of religious laws, or in the case of a woman, may have been killed by their matrilineal kinsmen after cohabiting with low caste men. A woman called Kadangōtt Makkam, also of Kottayam, became a ghost in this way. According to legend, she was suspected by her sister-in-law of having sexual relations with an Oilmonger. Her brothers banished her from the *taravād*. She was agonized at the thought of leaving her children, and drowned them in the *taravād's* well. Her *kāranavan* and brothers were then obliged to stab her to death—the customary penalty for fornication outside the caste, and perhaps, also, for murder within the *taravād*. She became an alien ghost particularly liable to prevent women from bearing children, and is established in the gardens of several local *taravāds*.

Such alien ghosts, although Nāyar, are also propitiated by an officiant of the lower caste. The propitiant is usually from some caste which specializes in exorcism and counter-magic, such as Mannāns (washermen), Kanisans (astrologers, who in any case diagnose the misfortune and advise the propitiation) or Pānans (umbrella-makers, exorcists and agricultural workers). The mode of propitiation is the same as in the case of a low caste ghost.

Finally, an alien ghost is occasionally that of a Brahman who died violently. Brahman ghosts, or Brahmarākṣas, unlike all other ghosts, must be propitiated with vegetarian offerings by a Brahman priest hired for the purpose. But Brahman priests, unlike low caste officiants, never enter a state of voluntary possession by ghosts. Religious possession is particularly a low caste institution. It is not practiced by Brahmans, and when found among Nāyars, it is practiced by young men, women, and other persons who lack secular power. Brahmans do not need to become possessed by their ghosts and deities, for they have the power to demand whatever offerings and fees they require. Low caste propitiants need the authority of a supernatural agent in order to make demands on their high caste masters.

5: Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AW11 Kerala AW11
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of particular impor- 842
tance is the ritual conducted in the case of barren women who 755
seek divine intercession of the serpent gods. The afflicted 782
couple come on a Sunday morning to the snake temple 776
after a purificatory bath and after putting on new garments. They request the priest to conduct a propitiatory *puja* and offer flour to the deity. Thereafter, a bronze plate on which the name of the person is carved is placed inverted at a spot. After a year when they have been blessed with a child, they repair to the temple once more to offer thanks for the boon granted. The child is helped to lift the bronze plate and under it a small serpent is observed signifying that all is well. In the event of there being no snake underneath, [763] it is taken as a bad omen predicting the death of the child. If even after ten years no child is born to the couple, the unretrieved bronze plate is discarded, on the presumption that the deity has not seen fit to grant the wishes of the devotees.

There is also a class of pious people who have through their 755
devotion to, and worship of, the snake deity, acquired the art of 759
curing victims of snake-bite. They are called *sarpa vaidyas* and cases of snake-bite are brought to them for treatment. The man chants certain magical formulae and tears a betel leaf in front of a pot of milk. The serpent is supposed to come out of hiding and to withdraw the venom, thus effecting a gradual cure.

But modern trends are contrariwise, and a gradual decline 178
is discernible in the ritual of snake worship in a large majority 771
of households which have snake shrines. Less emphasis is paid to the traditional worship of the serpent, and what little propitiation is done is more or less symbolic. Makeshift arrangements are often made, and worship by proxy is offered by the priest, in the absence of the family members, who merely pay a fixed sum to the priest for his labours, and thereby absolve themselves of the guilt of neglecting the snake gods.

Apart from simplification of the ritual of snake worship, [778] yet another symptom of the decay of the cult appears to be the reduced importance that is given to the upkeep of the existing snake shrines. Many erstwhile sacred shrines are in a dilapidated condition. Perhaps in future, snake worship itself might become a thing of the past.

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[2] Wilson & Maclagan : *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of Punjab & N. W. F. P.*, 149. 113
[3] Gurdon : *The Khasis*, 98-102.
[4] Dubois & Beauchamps : *Hindu Manners, Customs and Ceremonies*, 641.
[5] Hodson : *The Naikhels*, 110.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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The *Santâna gôpâlam* yantram. As a whole, it represents Sri Krishna. The letters in it (there are 101) put together in a certain way form a mantram. It is used by barren women so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter which is then eaten. When the latter method is adopted it is repeated on 41 successive days, during which the woman as well as the Panikkar may not have sexual connection.

The *Sri Sûkra* yantram is another used by childless men and women in order to obtain offspring. The others are prophylactic against evil spirits (chiefly), to defeat enemies, to succeed in all undertakings and prevent loss of property by theft, to win over the good feeling of others, and so on. The *Sudarsana* yantram not only relieves sickness, but when drawn in 5 colours on the ground and worshipped while repeating a mantram (too long to quote) wards off the evil influence caused through black magic! Another, the *Navva* yantram, drawn in ashes of cowdung on a new cloth which is then tied round the waist, relieves a women in labour. Yet another, the *Asvârûdha* yantram (Asva, horse; ârûḍha, to climb) would also be useful to some people, as a person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback; and he may make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure sick cattle. In some the letters or syllables form a distinct mantram, while in others each has its own mystic meaning.

Let me hasten to assure any one desirous of applying one of these charms to himself that they are entirely inoperative unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite which is the secret of the Panikkar.

Magic—The Evil Eye.—One day as I reached my camp in the Kôttayam taluk, North Malabar, my ears were assailed by the din of incessant drumming hard by. In the evening I was able to see and converse with the drummer, Châtu by name, aged 23, by caste Malayan. The Malayans are hereditary professional magicians, few in number, inferior in the social scale. They are not the only magicians. We have seen already (Bulletin, Volume III, No. 1, page 50) that some of the Nambûtiri Brahmans practise magic; but to the Malayan the Nâyar appears as often as to any other kind of mantram-man.

Châtu was delightfully communicative. He had been putting away the effects of the evil eye from one of his clientèle;—hence the din. In effect he said: certain

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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engaged in prayer and meditation for seven years. His 773
devotion so pleased Surya, the sun god, that he appeared 791
before him in human form and handed him a grandah, 776
which is to this day the greatest work on magic in [553]
existence. The kind attention of the sun god accounts for the prefix "Sûrya" to the family name.

Now well equipped, he made war on the Yakshis and Gandharvas, and compelled the Yakshi who had devoured his father to appear before him. She begged for mercy, offering to serve him faithfully. But he would have none of her and made her enter the sacrificial fire, and she was consumed. Then her Gandharva lover turned up, most inconveniently, and cursed the Brahman magician to suffer death on the forty-first following day. It was now the magician's turn to beg for mercy, and the Gandharva, more merciful than the Brahman had been to the Yakshi, extended it to him. On one condition, however, that on the forty-first day he would worship at the Alangât Tiruvalore temple in expiation. Naturally, he went to fulfil it, and preparatory to worshipping, descended into the temple tank to bathe. All at once he was seized with delirium and raved like a maniac, biting the wooden beams of the bathing shed. He died after enduring frightful agonies. The marks of his teeth are to be seen to this day! Moral—Don't meddle with magic.

Another famous magician was by caste a Ravuthan (a class of Tamil Muhammadans of which there are a few on the west coast) who died about 30 years ago. The story is that having been turned out of his father's house, he was in sad plight, when, awaking from sleep under a tree, a white-bearded Rishi * confronted him and presented him with a grandha of magic, which he put to such good use that he died a very wealthy man. Here are two authenticated stories from the families of 791
Nâyars of good position whom he assisted in each case. 789

(1) A Nâyar lady, having lost several children in 842●
infancy, sought the magician. He came to her house, and asked for a common mud pot, a fowl, some rice and some pepper. With what formality is not said, but the fowl (alive?), the rice and the pepper were put into the pot, which was buried in the ground under the lady's cot. Every day, she ate some of the rice and pepper, and in due time produced a daughter who is now living.

(2) Nearly every young Nâyar woman wears a talis- 791
man, protective against evil spirits. The Ravuthan 789
[776]

* It is rather comical, a Rishi appearing to a Muhammadan! Again the queer mixture of religious ideas.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AWll Kerala AWll
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588 184 431 Rangachari (1909, V, p. 320), reports that in Travancore, the 'leading villager' gave his consent and received gifts from the bridegroom 'as if to recompense him'. This recalls the statement of one informant of Pālakkara, who said he had heard a rumour that in ancient days, the Asān of the village had the right to deflower retainer-Nayar women, a right which he might forgo on payment of a sum of money.[1]

588 824 831 The *tāli* is, as Thurston & Rangachari observe, shaped like a leaf of the *Ficus religiosa* (pipal) tree (*asuwtha*). This tree is worshipped by Nayars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil Brahmans as an embodiment of the Sanskrit god Vishnu. It is said to symbolize male creative power, the female tree with which it is associated being the *veppu* or margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*).[2] In the Tamil country, the two trees are frequently planted together in a mock-marriage ceremony, so that the creeping stems of the margosa may twine round the pipal tree like the [842] arms of a faithful wife round her husband. Among Nayars, Tiyyars, Nambūdiris, and Tamil [788] Brahmans, barren women are counselled to march a hundred and eight times round the ficus tree to obtain children. We are therefore probably justified in regarding the *tāli* as a phallic symbol, presented to the bride as a sign 'that she may now do what she pleases'.[3]

588 Innes (1908, p. 174) and Krishna Menon (1894) reports that, traditionally, the bridegroom's party approached the house flourishing weapons and shouting a war-cry. Later, before tying the *tāli*, the bridegroom laid his sword across his lap, and the girl took an arrow 588 and a mirror in her hand. Mateer (1883) says that in Travancore, if the family were too poor to perform the ceremonies, the girl's mother might tie her *tāli* before a sword or a 184 clay idol representing Kāma Devan, the Hindu god of passion.[4] Similarly, since the tradi- 178 tional ceremony died out, many Pālakkara mothers take their immature daughters to some Brahmanical temple dedicated to Vishnu (the god of marital and domestic prosperity) and 776 themselves tie the *tāli* before the god.

588 Fawcett (1901, pp. 229–32) observes that the girl's brother carried her into the marriage hall from the house, bore her three times round it, and seated her to the left of the bridegroom; [593] Innes (1908, p. 174) remarks that she might be carried there either by her brother or her *Adranarun*. On the fourth day, after their bath, the couple returned to the girl's ancestral house to find its doors shut against them. The bridegroom must force open the doors before he [613] could take his seat with his bride in the kitchen where they ate a meal together. Alternatively, he might enter the house last in the procession, when boys of the girl's lineage pelted him with plantain fruits, which he must ward off with his shield.

According to Innes (*ibid.* p. 173), before the rite the girl was secluded for three days [788] and nights in an inner room of the house, with a brass hand-mirror in her right hand, an arrow in her left, and the eight auspicious objects before her. On the second morning she went to the bathing pool, on the bank of which she must, after bathing, jump thrice over a brass vessel of water with an unhusked coconut on top, overturning both at the third time.

588 I turn to the rite in the royal lineages. In the Cochin lineage, which prides itself on 613 ancient, 'true' Kshattriya descent, the rite took the form of a Brahmanical marriage ceremony 564 with Sanskrit *mantras* from the Grihya Sutras. It was performed separately for each girl before 184 puberty by a Nambūdiri, who must actually deflower the girl on the night of the ceremonies. 833 The bridegroom received a fee and departed after four days. The girl might then cohabit

[1] Dr Aiyappan (1932) similarly reports that the Asān in some areas deflowered Nayar women at a ceremonial initiation.

[2] For a discussion of the symbolic significance of this tree see Dubois (1906, p. 652).

[3] My interpretation of the *tāli* as a phallic symbol is the more likely in that among Tamil Smartha Brahmans of Tanjore, the marriage *tāli* bears engraved upon it a *lingam*, the phallic emblem of Siva.

[4] This modern rite recalls the ceremonial marriage of the Devadasis (temple-dancers and prostitutes) in the Tamil country, in which the dedicated girl's *tāli* is tied by the temple priest before the god of the temple, or, if a girl fails to become dedicated to a god before puberty, by her mother in the presence of a sword. The 'marriage' is followed after puberty by the nuptials, at which a wealthy high caste man of the neighbourhood passes the night with the girl as the first of her lovers.

Nayar
Tiyyar

588 182 184 sambandham lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambûdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which [842] to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman [533] of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night [789] to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 782 533 The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangar* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

595 564 [184] responsibility to support their wives and children from their family property. Whether it was introduced by the Nambuthiris, it is difficult to believe; and it is to be noted, that it was prevailing to a considerable extent in North Malabar, among whom and other low castes their influence was less than in South Malabar and the Cochin State.

83 564 The *Smriti*[1] says, "the Sudras' appointed path to Heaven is serving the Brahmans". "The practice of Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas, having sexual intercourse with the servile women is in accordance with the *sástrás*. If a Brahman wish to have sexual intercourse with a Sudra wife, the Sudra is bound to gratify the wish. A Sudra cannot be sure of the true parentage of his children". Again, before the Malabar Marriage Commission, the Zamorin Maharaja Bahadur, Ettan Thampuran Avergal, a learned Sanskrit scholar, Kolattúr Váriar and other respectable witnesses unanimously deposed, that, in Kerala, a non-Brahman or *marumakkathâyam* woman need not be chaste, and she is not forbidden to consort with more than one man. To such teachings of the learned and influential leaders [178] of the orthodox community, the Nayars of these days will no longer submit.

595 70 Another important theory connects the practice with the military organisation of the Nayar community. Montaigue was evidently of opinion, that it was introduced, because the Nayar leaders looked upon an army of bachelors as the most effective instrument in war.[2] The subjection of the males of 835 a whole race from the earliest youth to the decline of manhood must therefore have been the cause of the fugitive connection and promiscuous intercourse.

European writers, such as Baron Avebury, Meyr, Mc. Linan, and others, have arrived at the conclusion, that the system of 595 inheritance now prevalent among the Nayars must have originated from a type of polyandry resembling free love. In [591] ancient times, the rule was that the wife should remain in [592] her own house and be visited by her husband, and that the eldest female was at the head of the house, which was afterwards transferred to the eldest male. The part of man in the [842] function of generation passed as of secondary importance or as

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 17.
2. Essays of Michael Montaigue.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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[842]

impossible to determine. It was under the influence of the tangible fact of maternity, that the notions of race, family and inheritance were elaborated and developed. Against this is the fact, that the jungle tribes and very low castes have a regular system of marriage and a kind of paternal inheritance.

Sir Henry Mayne maintains that the origin of society in patriarchal lines, is that polyandry and kinship through females are of temporary duration, liable to be brought about at any stage in the progress of society by peculiar circumstances under which it may be placed. If this were true, the popular belief that Nambuthiris brought it about to accommodate their domestic habits is easily proved.

Letourneau says that there is no warrant to consider this form of conjugal union as having been general, but that it is in exceptional form brought about by necessity in a good number of gross societies. This view to some extent is shared by Herbert Spencer who says that polyandry is one form of marital relations or arrangements independently originating in the earliest societies by successive limitations of promiscuity. Lastly, the opinion is unanimous that the Nayars and other *marumakkathâyis* are Dravidians and that polyandry and its accompanying incidents prevailed in Southern India among the non-Aryan tribes. There is strong reason to think, that the *tâli* tying ceremony, the prohibition of sexual union outside the caste, and the doctrine of *Anulomam* and *Pathilomam* were orginally introduced by Nambuthiri Brahmans as restrictions on promiscuities. Thus, so different are the views of anthropologists on this subject, that it still remains an unsettled problem in the ethnology of Kerala. As has been already said, the custom of polyandry is dead. The women of the upper and middle classes are monogamous, and marriage in practice amply satisfies the definition of Lord Penzance in Hyde v. Hyde, namely, "the voluntary union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all other".

595

Polygamy.

There is nothing which prevents a man from entering into conjugal relations with more than one woman at a time; nevertheless, it is seldom practised. Indeed, when a man feels happy and contented with his own wife, very seldom has he any inclination to form *sambandham* with another for the sake of novelty unless forced by the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

Sivagothrakûr (worshippers or followers of Siva), would seem to indicate that they reverence Siva more than Vishnu.

A Nayar tarawad or marumakkathayam family.

"No people" says Elie Reclus, "have more fully appreciated the maternal family, nor developed it more logically than the Nayars, despite the accumulated obstacles thrown in its way by a race admirably intelligent and moreover victorious."[1] The *tarawad* or *marumakkathayam* family consists in theory of all persons who can trace their descent in the female line from a single ancestress. In its simplest form it is one which consists of mother and her children, living together with their maternal uncle, that is the mother's brother, as *kâranavan* or the senior male member of the family. In its complex form it consists of a mother and all her children, both male and female, all her grand children by her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side,—in short, all the relatives of the woman on the female side, however distant their relationship, living together in the same block of buildings, dining together in the same hall and enjoying all the property in common. No descendant through the male line can be a member of such a family. There are at present instances of families containing a hundred or more members who live in one or more buildings situated in a large compound and who are the descendants of one woman separated perhaps by generations of descent, and yet able to trace their common descent from one ancestress.

In such a family the woman senior to others in age was originally mistress or head of the family, and she reigned or governed. Her eldest daughter was prime minister in the family, and through her all orders were transmitted to her little world. The son recognised the priority of the mother before whom he did not even venture to seat himself, unless she had given him permission. The brother obeyed the elder sister, and respected the younger ones. In fact, the affection between brother and sister was a feeling that endured, while conjugal love was but a passing sentiment. The wives of brothers and sons held but a secondary position in the family. The Nayars loved their families more than anything else in the world, and made it the end of their existence. Like all Hindus they held reprehensible the man who

1. Primitive folk, page 159.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things 592 has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured 178 customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. 592 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large num- 613 ber of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 847
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave [553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the [588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony [881] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to [843] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem- [769] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar [765] also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the [783] fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides [885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

WOMAN-DAUGHTER

593 A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's [868] intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and [864] physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household re- [769] sponsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was ex- [843] pected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, how- [606] ever, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she [586] had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious [578] mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

A husband normally visited his wife after eating supper in his natal home, and left before breakfast. Even today in many orthodox Nayar homes men eat regularly in their taravāds and accept food in their wives' homes only on special invitation from their wives' kāranavans. Traditionally a husband placed his weapons outside his wife's door as a sign to other men that he was within. My informants in a Cochin village reported that, within living memory in the late nineteenth century, if two husbands called on the same night the one who came last might sleep outside on the veranda. Usually a woman's regular husbands knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns. 595 [201]

The relationship with the visiting husband was called *sambandham* (Sanskrit, "joining together"). At the start of a girl's first sambandham her husband came to her house privately at night, sometimes with a few friends of his own age. In the presence of the girl's kin he presented her with a white cloth of the kind worn as a skirt. The occasion was not marked by feasting. Later husbands might or might not present the cloth. A transient visitor is said to have left a gold coin beneath the woman's pillow, and a regular husband might do the same on the first night of his union. 585 595

While his relationship lasted, a regular husband was expected to make gifts to his wife at the three main festivals of the year. Vishu, in April, was the Malayalam New Year; Onam, in September, was a harvest festival; Tiruvadira, in December, was a women's festival to Kama Devan, the god of passion. The gifts were of bathing oil, bananas, wafer biscuits, and betel leaves and areca nuts for chewing. In some areas a husband also gave a loin cloth of superior quality at Onam. The gifts were prepared by women of the husband's taravād, and he should present them in person to each of his wives on the festival day. If a husband failed to make these gifts it was a tacit sign that he had ended the relationship. It should be noted that the gifts, trivial in value, were gifts of courtship and were in no sense maintenance. Bathing oil is a feminine toilet requisite; wafer biscuits are delicacies served at feasts; and the giving of chewing materials between a man and a woman is everywhere in South India associated with courtship or with the first night of marriage. A husband had no obligation at all to maintain his wife, for she received her food, shelter, and regular clothing from her taravād. 595 431 [796] [776] [613] [586] [302] [262] [276] [584] [585]

The only other obligations of a husband came at the birth of a child. When a woman became pregnant it was necessary for one or more men of appropriate caste to acknowledge possible biological 843 595 431

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

843 595 431 paternity. This they did by making gifts to the woman herself and to the midwife immediately after the birth. Any man who had visited the woman in the appropriate time period was required to make these gifts. If a man refused, he could be called upon by the caste assembly to fulfill his obligation. The gifts comprised two new lower cloths for the mother and one cloth and a quantity of paddy as payment to the Nayar woman barber who attended at the de-
843 595 431 684 livery. Again, these gifts were clearly legal and ceremonial tokens rather than objects of substantial economic value. Legally, however, their transfer was of the utmost significance. For if no man would consent to make the delivery payments, the woman was assumed to have had sex relations with a man of lower caste or with a Muslim or a Christian. Her caste assembly would temporarily excommunicate her taravād until she and her child had been driven out by their kāranavan and the woman's funeral rites had been performed. The woman, presumably with her child, might be executed by her matrilineal kinsmen or allowed to become a slave of the district chief or the king. If the woman and her lover were publicly exposed even before the birth of the child, both might be put to death.

595 593 564 A woman had no obligations to her husbands other than the granting of sexual privileges. Nayar husbands of the woman's own caste occasionally dined in her household but this was a favor and not a right. Nayar households sometimes provided uncooked food and a separate building for Brahman or chiefly husbands, but this
[431] again seems to have been a matter of courtesy rather than of obligation. Husbands of higher caste made the same gifts to their wives as did Nayar husbands.

595 584 586 613 [839] [564] In the nineteenth century her kāranavan selected a woman's first husband, and he may have done so at earlier periods. Until the 1930's many kāranavans also retained the right to dismiss a husband who displeased them. It seems improbable, however, that a woman or her kāranavan would ever refuse the visits of a Brahman, chief, or village headman of powerful standing in the community. In some cases also a husband of higher caste seems to have monopolized the favors of a Nayar woman, a privilege not accorded to men of her own caste. K. Kannan Nair reported (1908: 186) that until a century previously local chiefs sometimes compelled a woman to receive as husbands those of her enangar who wished to marry her. In general, however, women seem to have been free to reject particular men, and both men and women to terminate liaisons without formality.

000 In all possible respects attempts seem to have been made to reduce

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

kāranavan's death, his adopted successor was too young to manage the property. This passed temporarily into the management of a man from still another branch of the same lineage. When the true claimant came of age he disputed his guardian's management. After a bitter lawsuit the guardian was deposed in a British court. He continued to live on the *taravād*'s land and to harass his young successor. When the guardian died, the young *kāranavan* in his anger failed to arrange for the cremation rites until several days had passed and the corpse had decomposed. The ghost of this proxy *kāranavan* has harrassed his successors ever since, causing many of them to die of diabetes. The present members regard this condition as a decomposition of the body during life. The ghost's anger is so great that propitiations do not wholly avert its vengeance, although special offerings temporarily delay the progress of the disease.

The misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts include many forms of sickness, mental disorder, female barrenness and miscarriages, all of which are attributed to actual bodily possession by a ghost. Financial loss, crop failure and the deaths of babies or cows may also result from the ghosts' displeasure. I could find no very clear distinction between the misfortunes inflicted by lineage ghosts and those brought about by the patron goddess, by malevolent alien ghosts, or by the witchcraft or sorcery of enemies. Indeed it is obvious that the Nāyars themselves do not clearly restrict particular misfortunes to particular agents. For on the occasion of a misfortune, the *kāranavan* must often consult the village astrologer (Kanisan) who makes calculations to discover the responsible agent. He then instructs the *kāranavan* how to carry out its propitiation or to accomplish its control.

However, my information suggests that some misfortunes may be more likely to be attributed to some agents than to others. Miscarriages, for example, seem to be often attributed to ancestresses, to female alien ghosts, or to the patron goddess. Barrenness is often attributed to the snake gods of the *taravād*, who are believed to guard the fertility of its women. These misfortunes seem to be less often attributed to male ghosts, although some instances are known. Perhaps most important, however, circumstances immediately preceding the misfortune may help to determine the agent. If a forebear has died recently, or if a *taravād* has failed to propitiate its lineage ghosts or patron goddess, the *kāranavan* may not even trouble to consult the astrologer, or the astrologer may merely corroborate his suspicions. Similarly, if a man has an enemy with whom he has recently quarreled and then himself falls ill with fever, he is like to assume that the enemy has engaged the services of a witch or sorcerer against him. In small villages whose population is stable, moreover, the astrologer makes it his business to know the affairs of his clients and thus to diagnose appropriate causes for their misfortunes.

Sociological analysis. A satisfactory analysis of the functions of lineage ghosts must take into account those of other supernatural agents and of secular authorities. Among the Nāyars, supernatural agents have played only a minor role in punishing offences against men, as distinct from those against themselves. This is undoubtedly because human authorities of various kinds had strong judicial functions, deriving from their incorporation in a kingdom. In the last analysis their authority was backed by the military power of the king or chief. Among Nāyars, civil disputes were tried by village headman or district chief. Certain major crimes against the kingdom's religious laws were tried in the Raja's court. They included the killing of a cow or a Brahman or fornication with lower caste persons. The killing or assault of a Nāyar

5:Mehra E-5 (no date) 1956 AW11 Kerala AW11
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778 hoods are placed in the shrine, and no insect or rat or other
771 animal is killed in the consecrated spot. Even broken bits of snake images are worshipped and they are set up in a row. No image or snake-stone is permitted to fall down, as that is considered to be inauspicious. On the inner surface of the hood of the snake is carved a seated female figure.

825 These sacred snakes are supposed to be different from the
771 ordinary serpents. They are given the status of benign family
776 deities and are presumed to possess strange powers and the attribute of gods. They are revered and they deign to live only under ceremonially pure conditions and surroundings, accepting only vegetarian offerings and abhorring animal
[782] sacrifice. In contrast mention may be made of the Thlen of the Khasis which demands human blood as offering. In the event
825 however of their abode being polluted, e. g., by a menstruating
783 woman, the serpents are angered, and unless propitiated may
782 cause disease or harm to the offender. The sacred serpent
776 called *sarpam* is supposed to be small, about 6 to 18 inches
[841] in length and is golden in colour. It is highly poisonous but ordinarily does not do any harm. If properly propitiated it guards the family and brings good luck and prosperity;
[753] but if neglected, insulted, or otherwise uncared for, it causes skin disease, leprosy or loss of sight. Such a punishment is visited on the offender or on his near relatives. As a
[784] consequence certain taboos are attached to the shrines and no
[841] menstruating or pregnant woman may come within six yards
[843] of the shrine, nor should anyone enter it without taking a bath.

796 The actual worship or *puja* is conducted either once or
782 twice a year. The priest cooks rice in milk and adds pieces of ripe plantain to it, with a few flowering heads of the sacred *tulsi* plant dropped in towards the end. The offering is cooked on a special oven near the *sarpa kavu* in a bell-metal vessel. Thereafter, the priest pours some water over the snake idols to ceremonially bathe them and places a bunch of areca-nut palm in efflorescence on the head of the image in a diagonal fashion. The idol is then anointed with turmeric powder and basil leaves and flower petals are

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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595 it certainly did not long ago. Polyandry exists amongst other castes, as we shall see by and by.

58 We must now leave the subject of marriage, which, simple though it is, is like most simple things extremely 611 difficult to describe. The marital relation of the Nâyar is a very natural and simple affair; yet it is the *point d'appuis* of that system of inheritance through women which was once much more common than it is now.

Let us hope it will remain unchanged, and that the Nâyar will be able to say always (in his own tongue), with more regard for concrete truth than poetic insight "Das ewig' weibliche ziet uns hinan."

BIRTH: ANTE-NATAL AND AFTER CEREMONIES.

843 The following very interesting note on the ceremonies connected with birth, those preceding it as well as those following it, has been very kindly given by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nâyar; so I quote his own words:—

"A Nâyar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [564] month of pregnancy, she (at least, among the well-to-do [184] class) bathes, and worships in the temple, every morning; and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter over which holy *mantrams* have been said by the temple priest or by Nambûtiris. This is generally done till delivery.

843 "*Puli-kuti.*—Another and even more important cere- 613 mony during pregnancy is the *puli-kuti* (lit., drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by the rich and poor alike, on a particular day in [787] the ninth month. The day, nay, even the very hour is fixed by the local astrologer. The ceremony begins by [824] the planting of a twig of the *ampasham* tree, on the morning of the day of the ceremony, in the principal courtyard *(natu-muttom)* of the *Taravâd.* At the appointed hour or *muhurtam*, the pregnant woman, after having bathed and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (*vatakini* or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastwards. The *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife,' whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the courtyard and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right-hand ring finger. Holding a

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan* caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

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564 582 421 Among Nambūdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambūdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambūdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambūdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 [833] [431] [843] [851] [431] In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 851 601 564 [613] With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown. Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her children.

613 588 [881] *The Nayar* Tāli-*Rite.* Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam.* This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambūdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 621 564 [692] 613 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar. Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollutions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly. They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

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Tiyyar

This partial avoidance between a woman and her older natal kinsmen begins after the *tāli*-rite, when she receives the title *amma* (lit. 'mother'). In the rite, it seems, the girl is fictitiously made mature by the mock menstrual seclusion – before she is in danger of actually becoming mature; her sexuality is then given away by her natal kinsmen to a vicarious husband outside her lineage. For this is the one right in her forbidden to her natal kinsmen; the rest – her domestic services and procreative power – remain theirs throughout her life. Even among North Malabar Nayars and Tiyyars, with their virilocal residence, the brother may call home his sister and her children and require her to divorce her husband. He must, moreover, maintain her if she is divorced, and her children have the right to return to the mother's brother's house as his heirs. 613 602 588 182 184

The unconscious desire for adelphic incest in these matrilineal castes appears in other rites. I have mentioned the rites performed by the brother of a girl at her first menstruation among South Malabar Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars. Later, when the South Malabar Nayar woman was in the fifth or seventh month of her pregnancy, she was formerly seated before her brother who poured tamarind juice into her mouth from the point of the *tarawād*'s ancestral sword. It was believed that he thus conveyed strength (*sakthi*, a generalized form of energy believed to reside *par excellence* in semen) and also martial valour, into the body of the first-born child. This seems a clear instance of the brother's unconscious wish to impregnate his sister himself, as well as an explicit recognition that, in matriliny, the mother's brother has the rights of a *pater* in the child. 182 184 593 613 843 827 822

Among South Malabar Tiyyars the tamarind-juice is given by the pregnant woman's brother to her husband, and by the husband's sister to his wife. This rite is more in keeping with a patrilineal system in which the husband has primary procreative rights in his wife. At the same time, it seems likely that the rite reflects the brother's unconscious desire to pass his 'strength' to his sister and her child, through the husband, and the sister's desire to contribute to the making of the child, and thus usurp the role of her brother's wife. The rite is beautifully in keeping with double unilineal descent, in which brothers and sisters retain strong interest and rights in each others' offspring. 607

The unconscious fear, and underlying it, an unconscious desire, of women for sexual attack from a male parental figure (the father in this case) probably appears also in the South Malabar Tiyyar rites which precede the tamarind-drinking. These are to drive out evil spirits who may attack the child in the womb. The woman sits at night before a group of washermen (Mannans) who invoke the spirit in song, and perform devil-dancing in weird masks. By morning, the more susceptible of the women present, overcome by the spirit, may go into fits. Finally a live cock is held against the woman's forehead, and rice thrown over her head. If she has a fit, the cock is beheaded and its blood offered to the evil spirit. The rites are paid for by the woman's father. In view of what is known of the beliefs concerning incubi in western societies (Jones 1931, ch. 3), it seems probable that these rites issue from the unconscious female fear of being attacked sexually by the father, and the recognition of the father's unconscious desire to kill the child in his daughter's womb. The Mannan devil-dancers (who sometimes consciously impersonate the dead ancestors of a propitiating Tiyyar lineage) may be interpreted to represent the woman's lineage forbears and thus, collectively, her father.[1] 184 843 789 182 564 787 782

Again, in all the groups studied the *tarawād* is believed to be guarded by a group of snake- 000

[1] This interpretation is practically certain in view of the almost identical ceremony carried out one year after the death of a South Malabar Tiyyar. It is believed that before this the spirit is earth-bound and cannot be invoked to pass to heaven. On the night fixed, small girls of the *tarawād* sit before Mannan and Panan devil-dancers who, as in the pregnancy ceremonies, wear weird masks and sing to invoke the spirit. Late at night one of the girls may become possessed by it and talk like the deceased, and give commands to the family about its future conduct. After this ceremony the spirit is freed from its bonds to the earth (see Thurston and Rangachari 1909, VII, p. 91). Since the possession of the girls by an ancestral spirit here is of the same kind as in the pregnancy rites and both types of spirit are called *pedhan*, there seems little doubt that the evil spirit who attacks is also ancestral and thus an *imar*.

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595 175 the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it [609] must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. [114] Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, 174 whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes 538 minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu,
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to 174 be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking 613 of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the [787] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few [593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

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Nayar

pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

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are allowed greater freedom in the choice as well as in the divorce of husbands (*sambandhakárans*), and the females in the family do not interfere in their freedom so long as it does not produce any domestic scandal. The orthodox view is that, as the woman is not independent, she seldom thinks of relinquishing the husband. Arbitrary divorce is thus discouraged, and adultery is a grave social offence. A wife, who is disputatious, who steals her husband's property, who favours another than her husband, who converses with strangers, who is gluttonous, who enters strange houses, should be put away even though she may have born ten sons. Litigation between two families and disagreement between a husband and wife are also the causes. Social stigma follows the adulterer, and the adulteress loses her status in society.

Pulikudi.

A Nayar woman has to observe certain ceremonies during her first pregnancy. First during and after the seventh month of pregnancy, she bathes and worships the deity in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal, a small quantity of butter, over which holy *mantrams* have been recited by the temple priest or by Nambuthiris. This is done generally till delivery. *Pulikudi* (tamarind juice drinking) is an indispensable ceremony performed for every pregnant woman, by the rich and poor alike, on an auspicious day, in the ninth month of pregnancy. An auspicious day, nay, even the very hour, is fixed by the astrologer. The ceremony opens by the planting of a twig of the *ambázha* tree (Spondias mangifera) on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the inner court-yard (*nadumittam*) or the northern wing of the house. At the appointed hour (*muhúrtam*), the pregnant woman, after having been bathed and properly attired, is conducted to the northern block of the house (*vatikkini*) where she is seated facing eastwards. The *Ammáyi* or the uncle's wife, whose presence on the occasion is essential, goes to the court-yard, and plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to the brother, or uncle, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his right hand ring-finger. Holding a country knife (*pisánkatti*) in his left hand, with its point towards the north, he pours the tamarind juice over his knife with his right hand three times

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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks
[602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation offi-
ciates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked
[824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains
placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to
[574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremo-
[787] ny is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and
friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil
over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the
left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a
male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she
is placed in a reclining position on a low
Childbirth. wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back suppor-
ted by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom*
is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar
woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the
higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out
so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on
her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often
she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by
[564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the
barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some
places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.
846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the
mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannithi* (a
woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the
purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a
man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid
mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*)
with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank
or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant
pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as
[184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it
certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South
Malabar and Travancore.

846 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to
852 purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some
rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and
its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

has been explained to me as emanating from a command 823
of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs 784
having come to the country about Calicut, there was a 562
chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection [776]
that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the [843]
Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the 564
Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corre- [613]
sponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a com- 564
plete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its 634
nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail ; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country [644]
between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In

In a recent account of a Nāyar wedding in high life 585
in Travancore, the host is said to have distributed flowers, 177
attar, etc., to all his Hindu guests, while the European, Eurasian, and other Christian guests, partook of cake and wine, and other refreshments, in a separate tent. The Chief Secretary to Government proposed the toast of the bride and bridegroom.

The following note on Nāyar pregnancy ceremonies 843
was supplied to Mr. Fawcett by Mr. U. Balakrishnan Nāyar. "A woman has to observe certain ceremonies during pregnancy. First, during and after the seventh [264]
month, she (at least among the well-to-do classes) bathes, and worships in the temple every morning, and eats before her morning meal a small quantity of butter, over which mantrams (consecrated formulæ) have been said by the temple priest, or by Nambūtiris. This is generally done till delivery. Another, and even more important ceremony, is the puli-kuti (drinking tamarind juice). This is an indispensable ceremony, performed by rich and poor alike, on a particular day in the ninth month. The day and hour are fixed by the local astrologer. [787]
The ceremony begins with the planting of a twig of the ampasham tree on the morning of the day of the ceremony in the principal courtyard (natu-muttam) of the taravād. At the appointed hour or muhūrtam, the pregnant woman, after having bathed, and properly attired, is conducted to a particular portion of the house (vatakini or northern wing), where she is seated, facing eastward. The ammayi, or uncle's wife, whose presence [604]
on the occasion is necessary, goes to the courtyard, and, plucking a few leaves of the planted twig, squeezes a few drops of its juice into a cup. This she hands over to 843
the brother, if any, of the pregnant woman. It is necessary that the brother should wear a gold ring on his 593

843
593 right ring finger. Holding a country knife (pissan kathi) in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over the knife with his right hand three times, and it dribbles down the knife [602] into the woman's mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. 843 After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, the woman is asked to pick out one of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in [574] her womb. The ceremony winds up with a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family." In connection with pregnancy ceremonies, Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar writes that "the puli-kuti ceremony is performed at the seventh, or sometimes the ninth month. The husband has to contribute the rice, cocoanut, and plantains, and present seven vessels containing sweetmeats. In the absence of a brother, a Mārān pours the juice into the mouth of the woman." It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that "the puli-kudi ceremony consists in administering to the woman with child a few pills of tamarind and other acid substances. The pills are placed at the end of a knife-blade, and pushed into the mouth of the woman by means of a gold ring. [593] The ceremony, which in a way corresponds to the [604] pumsavana of the Brāhmans, is performed either by a brother or uncle of the woman, and, in the absence of both, by the husband himself. Unlike Brāhmans, the ceremony is performed only at the time of the first pregnancy." In the eighth month, a ceremony, called garbha veli uzhiyal, is performed by the Kaniyan (astrologer) to remove the effects of the evil eye.

The ceremonies observed in connection with pregnancy are described as follows in the Gazetteer of

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Malabar. "The first regular ceremony performed 843
during pregnancy is known as pulikudi or drinking tamarind, which corresponds to the Pumsavanam of the Brāhmans. But there are other observances of less importance, which commonly, if not invariably, precede this, and may be considered as corresponding to the Garbharakshana (embryo or womb protection) ceremony sometimes performed by Brāhmans, though not one of the obligatory sacraments. Sometimes the [778]
pregnant woman is made to consume daily a little ghee (clarified butter), which has been consecrated by a Nambūdiri with appropriate mantrams. Sometimes [793]
exorcists of the lower castes, such as Pānans, are [789]
called in, and perform a ceremony called Balikkala, in which they draw magic patterns on the ground, into [534]
which the girl throws lighted wicks, and sing rude songs to avert from the unborn babe the unwelcome attentions of evil spirits, accompanying them on a small drum called tudi, or with bell-metal cymbals. The ceremony [782]
concludes with the sacrifice of a cock, if the woman is badly affected by the singing. The pulikudi is variously performed in the fifth, seventh, or ninth month. An [787]
auspicious hour has to be selected by the village astrologer for this as for most ceremonies. A branch [824]
of a tamarind tree should be plucked by the pregnant [415]
woman's brother, who should go to the tree with a kindi (bell-metal vessel) of water, followed by an Enangatti * [354]
carrying a hanging lamp with five wicks (tukkuvilakku), and, before plucking it, perform three pradakshinams round it. In the room in which the ceremony is to be

* An Enangan or Inangan is a man of the same caste and sub-division or marriage group. It is usually translated "kinsman," but is at once wider and narrower in its connotation. My Enangans are all who can marry the same people that I can. An Enangatti is a female member of an Enangan's family.

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843 performed, usually the vadakkini, there is arranged a mat, the usual lamp (nilavilakku) with five wicks, and a para measure of rice (niracchaveppu), also the materials necessary for the performance of Ganapathi pūja (worship of the god Ganēsa), consisting of plantains, brown sugar, leaves of the sacred basil or tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), sandal paste, and the eight spices called [593] ashtagantham. The woman's brother performs Ganapathi pūja, and then gives some of the tamarind leaves to the Enangatti, who expresses their juice, and mixes it with [824] that of four other plants.* The mixture is boiled with [602] a little rice, and the brother takes a little of it in a jack (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) leaf folded like a spoon, and lets it run down the blade of a knife into his sister's mouth. He does this three times. Then the mixture is administered in the same manner by some woman of the husband's family, and then by an Ammāyi (wife of [574] one of the members of the girl's tarwad). The branch is then planted in the nadumittam, and feasting brings the ceremony to a close. The above description was obtained from an Urali Nāyar of Calicut taluk. In other localities and castes, the details vary considerably. [564] Sometimes the mixture is simply poured into the woman's mouth, instead of being dripped off a knife. Some castes use a small spoon of gold or silver instead 184 of the jack leaves. In South Malabar there is not as 843 a rule any procession to the tamarind tree. Among 564 Agathu Charna Nāyars of South Malabar, the ceremony takes place in the nadumittam, whither the tamarind branch is brought by a Tiyan. The girl carries a valkannadi or bell-metal mirror, a charakkōl or arrow, and a pisankatti (knife). An Enangatti pours some oil

[137] * The aimpuli or "five tamarinds" are *Tamarindus indica*, *Garcinia Cambogia*, *Spondias mangifera*, *Bauhinia racemosa*, and *Hibiscus hirtus*.

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on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, "women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

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exponents. Marriages at all levels between the religious and secular hierarchies pointed up this interdependence. 564 613

Among the Nayars hypergamy must also have cemented lord-vassal relationships. Older Nayars still take pride in the fact that their lineages have for centuries been fathered by chiefs, royals, and Brahmans. Traditionally, it was for the sake of this generalized filial bond that they were prepared to die in battle and, paradoxically, to deny themselves paternal rights in their own children.

Matrilineal Units of the Nayar Retainer Castes

THE CLAN

The clan was the largest matrilineal unit to which a Nayar commoner belonged. Its members believed themselves descended from a common ancestress, but her name was not normally remembered and the exact genealogical relationships between a clan's subordinate segments were often unknown. Occasionally, all of a clan's known members lived within a single Nayar neighborhood (*tara*). In this case the clan was co-terminous with the next lower order of matrilineal unit, which I call the lineage. More commonly, the clan had a nucleus of members within the neighborhood from which it originally sprang, together with outlying segments whose forebears had moved to other neighborhoods of the chiefdom. Clan affiliations among Nayar retainers do not seem to have extended beyond the chiefdom. 614 [621]

The clan was called a *taravād*, the word also used for the lineage and the matrilineal household unit. "Taravād" is derived from "tara," meaning "mound,"[6] in this case the raised foundation on which a Nayar house was built. Its members derived a sense of unity from the belief that their matrilineal forebears sprang from the same ancestral house, and if the site of this house still existed they retained a sentimental attachment to it. The word "taravād" (befitting for a settled agricultural people) was in fact equivalent to the English "house" in its sense both of ancestry and of place. The clan was usually called by the name of its original ancestral house site. [192] 613 [592] [342]

The clan was exogamous and sex relations within it were forbidden. Those of its members who lived near and met often used kinship terms to address each other. If a death or birth occurred, clan members had to be informed by messenger. Upon receipt of the informa- [834] [601] [203] [764] [844] [783]

[6] Any kind of raised foundation of earth or laterite is called a tara. Tara (meaning "neighborhood") is derived from the large platform of earth round a sacred "milk"-exuding tree (*alstonia scholaris*) located near the Nayar neighborhood temple of Bhagavadi. The neighborhood assembly congregated on this mound. [623]

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614 tion they entered for fifteen days into a condition of ritual pollution.
764 They might not eat with nor touch other Nayars, enter the temple or
844 other houses, bathe in the public bathing pools of their caste, or eat
783 meat or salt. Death pollution, and to a milder degree birth pollution, cut off the clan from participation in the social life of the caste. It isolated the members as a group set apart in a special and dangerous ritual condition, who had to observe taboos for their own and each others' safety. Its observance stressed the kinship connection of clansmen and marked their common concern on the occasion of an increase or decrease in their membership. Only those clansmen living within the neighborhood, however, were obliged to attend a funeral or visit a house of birth. Beyond these observances clansmen had only loosely defined rights of hospitality in each other's homes. As far as I am aware they never assembled as an organized group.

614 In time a clan might divide into two or more clans by the common consent of its members. The decision to separate depended both on geographical distance and on distance of relationship. If a segment of the core unit moved into an adjacent neighborhood its members might maintain clanship with the parent lineage for several hundred years thereafter. If they moved to a distant part of the district (say, fifteen miles away) their grandchildren might sever the connection. Severing clanship was called "cutting the pollution bond." Representatives of the branches met and decided not to inform each other of future deaths in their respective groups. Usually the outlying branch would soon afterward adopt the name of the oldest ancestral house site in its own vicinity as its clan name. Exogamy was theoretically preserved as long as matrilineal ties were remembered—usually, about three generations after the division.

Beyond the neighborhood, clan ties had no legal or economic concomitants and were relatively unimportant, their claims being subordinated to those of lineage, village, neighborhood, district, and kingdom.

THE LINEAGE

613 A lineage comprised those members of a clan living in one Nayar neighborhood, and it operated within the legal and social framework of this unit. As we have noted, the retainer Nayars of a neighborhood were of the same caste. They interdined and intermarried freely and the neighborhood was their unit of caste administration. A neighborhood might comprise the retainer Nayars of one village or of two or three adjacent villages, or occasionally Nayars of only part of a large village (e.g., a royal village) in which more than one caste of

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mal segment of one mother and her children within the property group. Each property group usually had a separate garden name in addition to its lineage name.

Residence Among retainer Nayars of this area a property group usually owned only one homestead and was simultaneously a dwelling group. Occasionally among retainers, however, and more commonly among chiefs and village headmen, a property group which increased in size might build two or more homesteads on its lands. If the houses were adjacent they were usually occupied indiscriminately by members and cooking was done only in one. If the homesteads were some distance apart each might be occupied by a minimal segment of the group. The kāranavan would manage the resources of the whole group but would allocate provisions separately to each household. Separate cooking would be carried on.

Spouses lived separately in their natal units, with the husband visiting the wife. We shall call this type of residence *duolocal*.

A traditional homestead of retainer or village headman's rank centered about a large main building with two stories, separate staircases for men and women, and, in the middle of the building, a small courtyard open to the sky. The house faced east, and was fronted by a spacious veranda, used normally by men of the group and their male visitors. Within, a passage led to the central courtyard, round which rooms opened off on three sides. They included an ancestor shrine; several storerooms containing clothing in boxes, metal vessels, jewelry, weapons, and paddy (unhusked rice) in large wooden chests; one or more rooms for everyday use, each with sleeping mats, a bench, wooden stools and chests, and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room occupied by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. A roofed cloister with pillars ran between the open courtyard and the rooms. Beyond the courtyard to the west was a long, narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it. Behind this lay the back veranda, normally used only by women and children. Upstairs might be four or five bedrooms in which women received their husbands. Men born into the group seldom entered these upstairs rooms and were forbidden to use the women's staircase.

Outside the house in the outer courtyard a separate building served as a granary for paddy. The upstairs of this building was often set aside for the kāranavan's use. Here he slept, was served with food by women of the house, entertained co-villagers, and kept records of the group's economic transactions. If the group was large a second separate building was often reserved to junior men for reading, en-

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593 to the kāranavan. Even in relation to small children they tended to seek the backing of a brother to maintain discipline in the home. Old women who had passed the menopause had the greatest authority. They could move freely about the village, travel alone on pilgrimages, and wield influence over their younger brothers and sons. [562] But even old women in some contexts found themselves united with their juniors as a group of legal minors under the command of a male authority.

Under these circumstances the mutual behavior of women was intimate and informal. Their joint tasks, carried out in the confined space of the kitchen, encouraged this intimacy. Further, as natal kinswomen they were habituated to each other from birth. Unlike a woman and her daughters-in-law in a patrilineal household, their group membership was unitary and they experienced a continuity in major roles and loyalties from birth to death.

593 If she were competent, the oldest woman of the household delegated its tasks, allowing flexibility for seasonal variation and unusual 561 occurrences. Generally, girls who had not reached puberty ran 461 errands between houses, did small outdoor tasks, and played with their younger siblings. The younger married women shared the heavy work of pounding paddy, milking cows, cleaning dishes, and most of the cooking. Old women had pride of place in the kitchen and living room. They supervised cookery, occupied the best seats, and controlled their juniors' consumption of betel leaves, areca nuts, and tobacco from the family box. Elderly mothers took pride in serving their children and grandchildren with food on birthdays. In a large house young married women had considerable leisure and privileges. Through the day they took turns visiting the village bathing pool in couples, an event which gave opportunity for gossip and allowed them to be seen by (although not to converse with) the men of neighbor- [422] ing groups. Old women proudly distributed the taravād's jointly owned jewelry among the young and marriageable women, helped [613] them to apply cosmetics and to dress their hair, and obtained a vicarious satisfaction from their marital conquests. For a few years —until she had several children—a young woman's life was gay and not overburdened with work. Women of childbearing age also had [841] periods of respite from the kitchen. They were secluded in an inner room for three days during menstruation and did no household tasks [844] for ninety days after a birth. In these conditions the division of labor was not strict and the segments descended from women were not segregated in their functions. Women wielded most control over their

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the father's village, if this was different from the mother's. In this way, matrilineal kin might become widely scattered between many villages, while remembering the village from which their matrilineal forebears sprang. 614 564 591

THE SUB-CLAN

This group corresponded to the clan in Central Kerala. It was a segment of the clan whose members seem to have been located within one chiefdom. The structure and functions of this group were identical with those of the clan in Central Kerala, the members observing death and birth pollutions as well as exogamy. 614 [634] [765] [844] [783]

THE LINEAGE

As in Central Kerala, the lineage was that portion of a clan located in one neighborhood (tara). Traditionally there seem to have been about six to ten lineages in one neighborhood, as in Central Kerala. A lineage was internally segmented and segmentation was relevant to the reversion of property. Exogamy, the observance of pollution, and the extension of kinship terms inhered in the lineage. Perhaps because village headship was weaker than in Calicut and each commoner lineage stronger as an organized group of kinsfolk, rites connected with the lineage were more prominent in the North than in the Center (Gough, 1958). There were few or no neighborhood temples of Bhagavadi. Instead, each lineage held a grand annual festival to its own patron Bhagavadi and to minor male deities, in which the lower castes took part. We have mentioned blood feuds between lineages, which indicate that a lineage was, in popular thought, if not in law, considered responsible for its members' physical protection. 613 [783] [346] [796] [776] [629]

Little is known today of the enangar relationship in North Kerala. It did exist, and enangar are said to have attended life-crisis rites and to have had some function in neighborhood caste trials of offenders against religious law. However, enangar did not tie the tālis of immature girls and did not participate in any form of group marriage. Among Nambiars and in most of the aristocratic Nayar lineages a girl's tāli was tied before puberty by some local Nambudiri Brahman. He was often an old man, and he appears to have had no right of cohabitation. The woman and her children did not observe pollution at his death. As far as I can judge the tāli rite in this area was merely an initiation rite which, at least in the nineteenth century, removed the ritual danger of cohabiting with a virgin (Gough, 1955). It also instituted the etiquette associated with incest prohibitions between the girl and her matrilineal kinsmen. 613 588 [765] [783] [835]

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613 tween them also permitted the observance of the type of very formal 576 etiquette that existed in the Central kingdoms.

A peculiarity of strict avunculocal residence is that it separates 591 a woman from both her sons and her daughters after they are married. 593 The sons return to their ancestral estates and the daughters leave with their husbands. The relationships of mother and children were therefore less continuous than in Central Kerala. However, various 591 particular arrangements did often permit women to live with some 582 of their children for a great part of their lives. Cross-cousin marriage was one of these. Matrilateral cross-cousin marriage was the most popular, because by this means the daughter of a kāranavan and his wife could be brought into their dwelling group as the wife of the kāranavan's nephew. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage was also popular but less common.[1] It was less advantageous unless a shift from the normal residential arrangements could be made. This sometimes occurred when a kāranavan succeeded in arranging a marriage between his son and his sister's daughter. The son might then remain on his father's ancestral estate for part of his life in patrilocal residence. Any property which he developed there would pass to his wife's [428] descendants as matrilineal heirs of the estate. In this way a woman [593] might keep one of her sons living with her for a large part of her life.

Women were also commonly reunited with their sons at divorce or 591 widowhood, for they would then return to their taravāds to live. 593 Whatever the circumstances of residence, moreover, a man should place his duties to mother and sisters above those to wife and children. The ideals of devotion and reverence to matrilineal kinswomen were the same as in Central Kerala. Brother and sister were drawn apart by the normal rules of residence but, like mother and son, came together if the sister were divorced or widowed and returned to her taravād. A woman also returned to her taravād for several months at [844] the time of childbirth, for every child had to be born in its own Taravad.

[1] In the Kottayam village already cited, 12 per cent of Nambiar commoner women who had been married had at some time married their father's own or classificatory sister's son; 8 per cent had married their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Cross-cousin marriage is, as everywhere in Kerala, more common among the aristocratic lineages of village headmen and chiefs. Of the women of six village headmen's lineages over a period of five generations, 17 per cent had married their father's own or classificatory sister's son, and 13 per cent their own or classificatory maternal uncle's son. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage is thus more [593] usual in North than in Central Kerala. One reason for this is that fathers in North [584] Kerala more commonly educate and endow their sons. By this means a father acquires the right to a voice in arranging his son's marriage, often to the father's [184] niece.

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585 and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with 684 a man of low caste. 848

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home 593 or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical [591] protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes [264] in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all [844] marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery [613] when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, [431] to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. [595] Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in 586 fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is some- 587 what rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case tradi- [858] tionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences 593 of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born 184 of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same funda- 858 mental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they [613]

country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan* caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

"*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are† served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

"Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

"*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

the couch on which the Nâyar has his oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat.* Lying on her back, her head is raised and the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling, by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste." 844 [352] [564]

DEATH AND SUCCEEDING CEREMONIES.

When the dying person is about to embark for that bourne from which no traveller returns, when the breath is about to leave his body, the members of the household, and all friends who may be present, one by one pour a little water, a few drops from a tiny cup made of a leaf or two of the tulsi plant, into his mouth, holding in the hand a piece of gold or a gold ring; the idea being that the water should touch gold ere it enters the mouth of the person who is dying. If the Taravâd is rich enough to afford it, a small gold coin, (a Râsi fanam, if one can be procured †) is placed in the mouth, and the lips are closed. As soon as death has taken place, the corpse is removed from the cot or bed, and carried to the vatakkini (a room in the northern end of the house) where it is placed on long plantain leaves spread out on the floor; and while it is in this room, whether by day or by night, a lamp is kept burning, and one member of the Taravâd holds the head in his lap and another the feet in the same way; and here the neighbours come to take a farewell look at the dead. 763 613 [823] 764 613 [824] [354]

As the Malayâlis believe that disposal of a corpse by cremation or burial as soon as possible after death is conducive to the happiness of the spirit of the departed, no time is lost in setting about the funeral. The bodies of senior members of a Taravâd, male or female, are burned; those of children under two are buried; so too are the bodies of all persons who have died of cholera or small-pox.‡ When preparations for the funeral have been made, the corpse is removed to the natumuttam or central yard of the house if there is one (there always is [766] [351]

* Every Nâyar, and for the matter of that, every Malayali, has an oil bath about once a week or as often as he can afford. The person is well shampooed with gingelly oil. [515]

† These are now rare.

‡ It is the same amongst the Khonds of Ganjam.

875 The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say
526 "the body is cool," is the time when, according to
[827] custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises.
[564] At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August
1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a
[553] mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his
name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers
875 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when
526 they are believed to be properly accomplished they are
564 given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things
regulated that no other person was permitted to teach
athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small
[844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only
being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar
women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises
for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his
pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

526

Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sariravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger, it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sariravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

595 175 the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nāyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it [169] must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nāyar house. [114] Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatising on Nāyar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that 595 period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, 174 whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes 538 minutely the social life of the Nāyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, redeemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalanchu barthavoru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

595 How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to 174 be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.[1]

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

844 Among the Nāyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

843 The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,[2] or the drinking 613 of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, [564] who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the [187] auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammāci* (the [604] wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few [593] drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

[1] See Note 3, Appendix.

[114] [2] Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nāyars and the Todas," Appendix, Note 2.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the [564] barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste. 846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

Childbirth.

846 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to 852 purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

10:Nakane E-5 (1955-1956) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

613 This psychological pull towards matrilineal kin also applies to the wives.
593 When they decide an important matter they always ask their maternal uncle's
advice, as well as that of their husband. Even the younger generation have great
604 affection for, and a tendency to depend on, the mother's brothers almost in
182 the same way they do their father. Particularly, if the father dies, it is the mother's brother who actually takes the responsibility. (See the case of *57*.

613 I think the function of matrilineal elements found in these relations is largely
supported by the fact that matrilineal members reside near each other, where
591 they can meet almost every day. Indeed the factors which are vital to the
182 destruction of matrilineal coherence are created by those members who established their life with their wife and children in places geographically distant from the land of the Nayar, Kerala, such as New Delhi, Bombay or Calcutta, for example the members of F, K and L in Diagram. In earlier phases of a marriage, a man who has to reside very far away because of his job, usually leaves his wife in her mother's house (as the cases of *91*, *44* and *50*), but when his job becomes permanent and he has children, usually he takes his wife and children to his new place. In the course of time, these members tend to have less and less contact with their matrilineal kin at home, which naturally leads to social and economic distance from the latter.

Thus the dispersion of members in terms of geographical distance affects to the actual function of the matrilineal group. In fact I found that the style of talking about the members of F, K and L sounds considerably different from that used for the members who reside in the same locality. If geographical distance is within Kerala, it is a quite different matter from the case of outside Kerala: for example, a member of a matrilineal group in Ernaklum, resides at
[844] Trivandrum. In such a case, wife certainly comes back to her mother's house for
[796] child birth, and the members come together at important ceremonial occasions of the matrilineal group. Within Kerala, the land of Nayar, such activities are taken for granted in the society.

613 A great geographical dispersion of the members results in the decrease of
the functional members of the matrilineal group centred on the *tarwad*, but on
591 the other hand, this local matrilineal group would increase its size by peripheral
602 members of non-matrilineal descendants: children of the matrilineal male
182 members including their wives. These children stand very close to their father's matrilinineal kin, with whom their father keeps frequent contact. The children feel the matrilineal kin of their father equally important to that of the mother. When all matrilineal members lived in a *tarwad*, the children were aware of the *tarwad* members of their non-resident-father, recognizing them as an important affinal group *(tarwad)*. But I think the degree of familiarity towards these
[594] members greatly differs from that towards the matrilineal kin of the father with whom they live. Today the actual importance of the father who is the authority
182 in the household, brings *his* matrilineal kin much closer to his children.

613 It is very interesting, I found, that in all households, the fathers of which
were the members of Marayil *tarwad*, an enlarged picture of Prabaty Amma,
602 the foundress of the *tarwad*, was placed at the centre of the guest room. Their
353

184

on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782]
juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824]
waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564]
of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764]
lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825]
woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824]
Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828]
superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613]
pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

852
846 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a
564 characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or [844] may not be Mannāns. On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance. [626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kērala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.

852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend. [591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband, [564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape. 613 114

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve (1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles. 613 114 184 [554]

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan. 613 [184] [614]

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children (a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. 591 [844] [171] [851] [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the 601 [602]

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Hair on the arms.—In half the number of subjects it varied from moderate to thick; in the other half it was slight to very slight or (in a few) absent altogether. 142 564*

Hair on the legs.—In more than half it varied from moderately thick to very thick. One was noted as "like a bear." In one individual only it was noted as very slight.

Colour of the skin.—The darkest (one only) was between 42 and 43 (Broca's colour types). Two others were nearly as dark. The fairest was 44. Two others were nearly as fair. The average is between these extremes.

Colour of the eyes.—The darkest was No. 1 (Broca's colour types). The lightest between 2 and 3. Rather more than half were 2 or shades of 2, generally lighter, while nearly one-half were No. 1.

Ornaments.—As a rule the ordinary earrings are worn. A section of the clan calling themselves Ellenkiria (or Elleng Kiria—tender Kiria?) wear no earrings, though their ears are pierced. Some members of this section told me they never wore earrings, while others said they could wear them as a rule, but they could not wear them when they went to the Kôvilakam (palace) of the Zamorin. 301 564* [304]

The right nostril of one man was slit vertically as if for insertion of a jewel. His mother miscarried in her first pregnancy, so, according to custom, he, the child of her second pregnancy, had had his nose slit. [304] [845]

Another wore a silver bangle. He had had a wound on his arm which was long in healing, so made a vow to the God at Tirupati (North Arcot District) that, if his arm was healed, he would give up the bangle at the Tirupati temple. He intended to *send* the bangle by a messenger, any one going to Tirupati, when his arm was quite healed: then only would he fulfil his vow. If this illustrates how a vow *may* be fulfilled,—he had not vowed to go *himself* and give the bangle up, only to *give* the bangle which was meanwhile convenient as an ornament,—the man's ideas about the God at Tirupati illustrate the confused ideas as to the personality and attributes of the Gods of Modern Hinduism which obtain in Malabar. He thought it was Baghavati whose shrine was the object of pilgrimage to Tirupati, but was not at all sure; indeed he was not sure whether it was a God or a Goddess. It is scarcely necessary to say that the God at Tirupati is a form of Vishnu. [782] [771] [182]

Other individuals wore ornaments, thus—

(1) Gold ring on ring-finger of the left hand. Earrings with red stone. Amulet against the evil eye. [779]

country knife *(pissan kathi)* in his left hand, which he directs towards the mouth, he pours the tamarind juice over this knife with his right hand three times, which dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked to pick one out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet she happens to select is supposed to declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and friends of the family.

"*After Ceremonies.*—At delivery, women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In some localities, this duty is performed by *Vêla* caste women. Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths washed and presented her by a *Vannatti* or woman of the Vannan * caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Atikkurissi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*pancha gavya*), with gingelly seeds. Then the woman takes a plunge-bath and sits on the ground, near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water out of the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. (I am not aware if this practice is universal, though it certainly obtains in parts of South Malabar and even in North Travancore.) This done, she again plunges herself in the tank or river, from which she emerges thoroughly purified.

"It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo some rite of purification. The babe is placed on the naked floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it and takes it in his hands. The superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All members of the *Taravâd* observe pollution for fifteen days immediately following the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

"*First Birthday Celebration.*—The twenty-seventh day after the child's birth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born marks the next important

* Over a great part of Malabar she would, however, be of the Tiyan caste.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
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event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

"*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

"Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

"*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

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Nayar

pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangu* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

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853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by way of support. The child is received by a woman of the [564] barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannáthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some 852 rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

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775 [881] [846] [789] [782] time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings. Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

[787] They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 782 [776] [791] [783] [789] Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machinations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire). A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 346 775 [753] [796] In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons, the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiating priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

[793] [791]

771 225 **Worship of animals and plants.** To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

105 563 [1795] There is a small community of Jews in Cochin, divided into White, Brown, and Black, the last named being the most numerous. Other Kerala residents are foreigners such as Canarese, Tamils, Arabs, and Europeans.

105 564 1783 Untouchability has been made a penal offence by the present Indian Constitution and there is undoubtedly a tendency among the more enlightened in the country to combat its evils and attempt to eradicate it from modern Hindu society. On the other hand, the religious minded (and there are many) maintain that since the Constitution is a secular one and allows full freedom of religious belief and practice, the legislator cannot interfere in questions of caste and untouchability, as these have to do with the religious law and structure of India. The fact is that, today, untouchability is not what it was, but it cannot be said either that it has been done away with altogether. A visitor to Kerala is certainly immediately made aware of this, as many traditional views on what constitutes intercaste pollution and what does not are still very much in evidence. Thus, although a member of the artisan caste, a [1984] Kammalan, perhaps no longer pollutes those above him in the hierarchy, [264] atmospherically, at twenty four feet as he used to do, it is nevertheless unthinkable that he should sit down to a meal of cooked rice with a [463] Nambudri, or even for that matter with a Nayar. The aboriginal Nay- [484] adis who still live off begging and hunting may possibly "come into town" now and not have to keep off the roads for fear of polluting other [1984] castes merely by being seen within a distance of seventy four feet, but they are not for that admitted to a would-be reformed Indian community in which no distinctions of caste, creed and colour are made any longer; in fact, they themselves, probably out of some sort of perverse attachment to their powers of polluting, refuse to be rehabilitated – as has been attempted by the former government of Travancore – and prefer to carry on with their traditional way of life.

It can thus be safely said that pollution of the higher castes by the lower is very much believed in and guarded against, even in Kerala [841] today. Menstruating women, and also those who have given birth, are [846] still considered to be unclean for a period, varying with the people to whom they belong. And the various kin groups, of which every indiv- [614] idual is a member among the Hindus of Kerala, will equally be con- [846] sidered unclean and polluting for a certain amount of days – diminishing [1065] in number in inverse proportion to the height of the caste – after a birth or a death has taken place.

000 Respect towards a superior, towards a god, towards a respected par-

184
on her head, and lets it trickle down two or three hairs 843
to her navel, where it is caught in a plate. Then the 564
girl and her brother, holding hands, dig a hole with the charakkōl and pisankatti, and plant the tamarind branch in the nadumittam, and water it. Then the [782] juice is administered. Until she is confined, the girl [824] waters the tamarind branch, and offers rice, flowers, and lighted wicks to it three times a day. When labour begins, she uproots the branch."

"At delivery," Mr. Balakrishnan Nāyar writes, 844
"women of the barber caste officiate as midwives. In 564
some localities, this is performed by Vēlan caste women. 783
Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and every day the 846
mother wears cloths washed and presented by a woman [564] of the Vannān [or Tīyan] caste. On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pol- [764] lution, a man of the Attikurissi clan sprinkles on the [825] woman a liquid mixture of oil and the five products of the cow (pānchagavya), with gingelly (*Sesamum*) seeds. [824] Then the woman takes a plunge-bath, and sits on the ground near the tank or river. Some woman of the family, with a copper vessel in her hands, takes water from the tank or river, and pours it on the mother's head as many as twenty-one times. This done, she again plunges in the water, from which she emerges thoroughly purified. It may be noted that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new-born babe has also to undergo a rite of purification. It is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it, and takes it in his hands. The [828] superstitious believe that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the taravād observe [613] pollution for fifteen days following the delivery, during

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

852 846 564 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or [844] may not be Mannāns. On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi-Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance. [626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kērala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.

852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend. [591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband, [564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 847
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

000 574 [593] [604] taravād. A woman might also visit for several weeks each year. Brother and younger sister, like a man and his sister's daughter, observed rules of partial avoidance—associated with incest prohibitions—during their periods of co-residence.

591 582 Sisters were always separated upon marriage, for the Nayars of this area, unlike those to the south, forbade the marriage of two brothers to two sisters. They say that such marriages would endanger the unity of the brothers' taravād by introducing into it too strong a 613 contingent from another lineage (Gough, 1952). Sisters were together, 591 however, during childhood in their father's house, and were often reunited in old age when they went back to the taravād. Although [593] they might seldom have stayed there during childhood and early [763] youth, women seem usually to have died in their matrilineal ancestral homes. A woman was often widowed in old age. Alternatively [586] she might elect to leave her husband and return to her taravād and sons when her period of childbearing was ended. In any case a [764] woman's body had to be cremated and her funeral rites performed in the garden of her taravād house.

Women in avunculocal residence were partly maintained by their [431] husbands' taravāds in return for domestic services. Nevertheless, important distributive ties persisted between them and their matrilineal kinsmen. Usually their kāranavan sent quantities of grain and clothing to them and their children twice annually after the harvests as part of their maintenance.

585 MARRIAGE

[582] Following the tāli rite, a girl entered into a marriage relationship (sambandham) with one man at about the age of eleven. The father's sister's son, if of suitable age, was considered the rightful claimant. [686] If the girl did not marry him her kāranavan must pay a token fine to him at the marriage ceremony. The giving of the cloth by the husband which marked the start of a sambandham was carried out with ceremony in the girl's ancestral house and was the occasion for a large feast to relatives of both parties. After the marriage had been consummated in the girl's house the couple were ceremonially conducted to the bridegroom's taravād and the girl was formally received into it by her husband's mother and his kāranavan's wife.

[684] While a marriage endured the husband had exclusive rights in his wife's sexuality. If he detected her in adultery he might by custom [848] kill her lover, cut off the hair of his wife, and send her home after divorce. A woman was not, however, excommunicated from caste

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

585 684 848

and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

593 [591]

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

[264] [844] [613] [431]

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

[595]

586

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

587

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

[858]

593 184 858 [613]

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

591
184 lives in the house with her husband. A point to be noted in this connection is that, when her husband dies, she must leave his house and return to her own at once, before his body is carried out. According to the Kêrala Mâhâtmyam the women in North Malabar (should) live with but one man at a time.

58 We still, after the manner of children, confound words with things, so it is not surprising that the unfortunate Commission arrived at the conclusion that the institution of marriage was and is entirely absent from the Marumakkattâyam system. "The parties do not plight troth, and do not call God to witness their union." And so forth. But with this conclusion, suitable enough to the high-flown moralist or to the restless beings who would regardlessly sweep away the long results of time and improve on the process of natural development, imposing fanciful arrangements of their own, the anthropologist cannot at all agree. The Sambandham, a regularly formed, and certainly not haphazard alliance between a man and a woman, having the full sanction of the community, is marriage in every sense of the word. If the tâli-tying ceremony gave the girl free liberty, we might well suspect that the Sambandham followed a ceremony, [848] not a marriage ceremony. But such is by no means the case, for, should the woman who is unmarried, for whom Sambandham has not been arranged, or whose husband, the man with whom she had had Sambandham, is dead—there is no such thing as widowhood,—bear a child, she is disgraced, much as is the Brâhman widow under the same circumstances.

581 What then is the meaning of the assertions of the
585 exponents of the orthodox view that the woman need not be chaste; and so on? The question is not an easy one to answer, but I think we may say with confidence that this orthodox view has been, in some measure, propounded by the Nambûtiris for their own gratification. [684] I have myself known several tragedies arising out of unfaithfulness, and I believe the old fashioned code of custom admitted the right of the husband to kill his wife's lover if he could, and also to kill his wife. No doubt in a great many cases the pair bound together in Sambandham lead lives ordinarily chaste. I do not, however, think that in actuality such is the rule with either party any more than it is in any other community, and sexual affairs are often treated lightly. With taste and consideration too, Hamilton, who arrived at Calicut in 1702, and spent some twenty odd years on the coast,

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her. 595*

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture. 848 [851] [837]

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State. 548 164

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu religious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, they said, and there was no reason not to want them. 842 849 [562]

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

595 Traditionally, the visiting lover placed his wea-
833 pons outside the door as a warning to other men that he was within. My informants reported that more recently, until the end of the nineteenth century in some villages, if two lovers of a woman called on the same night the one who came last slept outside on the verandah. Usually the regular lovers of a woman (who might not be from the same lineage) knew each other and informally agreed upon their turns.

595 It is difficult to decide from the evidence whether this instution of combined polyandrous and polygynous mating can strictly be regarded as "marriage" in any usual sense of the term. Personally, I prefer the word "marriage" for the ritual marriage of talikettukalyanam (which old English speaking Nayars even today state to have been "the real marriage"), because it gave ceremonial recognition, to a stable relationship of perpetual hereditary affinal kinship between lineages in the local group. Moreover, although exclusive sexual rights in the woman were given up at once at the "divorce", the observance of death [74] pollution by the woman and her children indicates that in some sense the relationship was thought to continue for life.

595 However, the evidence suggests that post-
684 puberty liaisons too were perhaps not entirely
551 promiscuous; moreover, the more permanent of them at all events were attended by ceremonial obligations. First, liaisons were strictly limited to men of the appropriate "good" castes: sex unions with men of lower caste were categorically forbidden and for women, punishable

595 684 689 by immediate death. For this reason it was necessary, when a woman became pregnant, for her to be able to name one or more lovers of appropriate subcaste who might have fathered the child. These men must then acknowledge their responsibility by paying the expenses of delivery (petta chilavu - clothing, rice and vegetables) to the barber-midwife who attended at births. If no appropriate lover came forward to do so, the woman was deemed to have cohabited with a low caste man and was excommunicated. Even today, a girl who becomes pregnant before the (modern) marriage ceremony is easily exculpated if she can name a Nayar or higher caste lover who will pay her deliver expenses. She is then by old custom tacitly regarded as having been married to him, and if he chooses not to visit her again, has little difficulty in finding a second husband. If however no expenses are paid, she is assumed to have had relations with a low caste man, a Christian or a Muslim, and though excommunication is not now effectual, she falls into social disgrace. She is unlikely henceforth to find a Nayar husband, and her household may find difficulty in marrying away other girls of her generation

595 586 In addition to the delivery expenses, a Nayar of the local subcaste group who entered into a relationship with a girl was expected to present her with a loincloth on the first night of visiting her. Thereafter, if he continued to visit her, he must make customary gifts of clothing, [75] bathing- and hair-oil, and vegetables, at Onam, Vishu and Tiruvadhira, (10) the three main

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

754 particular marriage, for the spouses, unable to bear the machinations
613 of their relatives, would often end their relationship.

586 I have called these Nayar institutions "marriage" because they limited and regulated sexual relationships and because they served
581 to legitimize children. The provisions of both the tāli rite and the
588 sambandham were directed toward these ends. The tāli rite was both a legal and a ritual institution. First, it symbolically conferred sexual and procreative powers upon the girl. The mock menstrual seclusion, the rites to the fertility goddess, and the "defloration" all indicate this. Second, it took the sexual rights in a girl away from her matrilineal kinsmen as soon as they had been conferred. This appears in that the
[835] girl and her elder matrilineal kinsmen must observe the rules of etiquette associated with incest prohibitions from the day of the tāli rite. Third, it transferred the sexual (but not the procreative) rights in the girl to a representative of her caste in the person of an enangan. Fourth, however, this man at once renounced his rights in his capacity as an individual, after which they became available to men of the caste, and of appropriate higher castes, as a group. All of this was accomplished in good time *before* the girl actually attained puberty and was capable of entering fruitfully into sexual liaisons. It
[834] was strictly forbidden for a man to have relations with a girl before her tāli rite, and if the rite was not performed before puberty she was expelled from caste.

595 With regard to the sambandham institution, sex relations were not
834 promiscuous. They were forbidden within the lineage, within a certain range of affines (discussed below), and, most categorically,
851 with men of lower caste. It was therefore necessary to have some procedure for legitimizing children, to show that they had been fathered by men standing in the appropriate roles. The legally obligatory payments by husbands at the time of birth accomplished this, and if no one could be found to make the payments, the woman and child were expelled from the caste.

515 It was appropriate that a woman should wear the tāli throughout her life and that she and her children should observe death pollution
[765] for the ritual husband rather than for any particular visiting husbands.
[783] For neither the ritual husband nor the visiting husbands had rights in the woman *as individuals*, nor had the woman or her children individual rights in them. After renouncing his individual rights, how-
[564] ever, the ritual husband remained for life, in relation to this woman, the representative of his caste, which in law had collectively married her and collectively fathered her children.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

As a form of group marriage, the Nayar institutions clearly will not fit the definition of marriage proposed in *Notes and Queries in Anthropology*.[9] It did, however, legitimize children, which seems to me the minimum necessary criterion applicable to all those unions which anthropologists customarily label "marriage." As a new definition of marriage which will cover all the familiar types, the Nayar case, and several other unusual cases which are commonly recognized as marriage, I have suggested the following: "Marriage is a relationship between a woman and one or more other persons which provides that a child born to the woman, under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, shall be accorded full birth-status rights in his society or social stratum" (Gough, 1959: 32).

Nayar men seem always to have chosen wives younger than themselves. A man ranked above his wife, who had to show respect to him. In the presence of her kin she remained standing before him and seldom spoke to him; she would not be seen talking to him in public outside her home. A woman never used her husband's name; she addressed and referred to him by plural honorific pronouns. Hypergamous marriage relationships were even more formal than those between Nayars. Caste rules of pollution prevented the husband from receiving food from his wife's kinsfolk. During the daytime, after taking his purifying bath in the morning, he was forbidden to touch her or any member of her family.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

The most peculiar characteristic of the Central Nayars is that although a form of marriage existed they did not institutionalize the elementary family of one man, one woman, and their children. This group was in no sense a legal, residential, commensal, productive, or distributive unit. An individual man had no legal rights in a particular wife and her children. He did not reside with them, did not eat regularly with them, did not produce with or for them, and he did not customarily distribute goods to his children. A woman had no legal rights in a particular man—only the right that one *or more* men admit paternity of her children. Similarly, a child correctly begotten was assured of legal paternity, but a group of men might fulfill this role and the child had no subsequent claims on any of them. It might perhaps be claimed that the group composed of the tāli tier, his ritual wife, and her children born subsequently received cere-

[9] "Marriage is a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are the legitimate offspring of both parents" (*Notes and Queries*, 1951: 110).

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

[P. 446]

CULTS OF THE DEAD AMONG THE NĀYARS

By E. Kathleen Gough

121 IN this paper I shall attempt both a sociological and a psychological analysis of Nāyar cults of the dead. That is to say, I shall try to relate the role-structure and social functions of the cults to those of legal and economic institutions, and to relate the emotional content of the cults to that of certain relationships among the living.

613 The Nāyars[1] are a high, matrilineal caste of landholders and salaried workers.
564 Some four to seven matrilineal lineages of commoner Nāyars traditionally occupied
101 the high caste area of a village. They served a Nāyar or Nambūdiri Brahman village headman, and had authority over tenants, artisans, and serfs of lower caste. The lineage was exogamous, had a depth of about ten to fifteen generations and was concerned in village government. But the more significant economic unit was a lineage segment (*taravād*), whose members jointly owned property including an ancestral house. The eldest man of this group was its legal guardian (*kāranavan*).

635 Before British rule began in 1792, the Malabar Coast comprised a number of
175 kingdoms. I am concerned with Nāyars of villages in the former Cochin kingdom,
121 in the center of the coast, and with those of villages in the former Kottayam kingdom in the north.

105 In Cochin, the country was relatively flat, fertile, and densely populated. The
184 Nāyars were the professional military caste. For a part of each year they tended to be absent from the village in military training or war. Women remained on their ancestral
[133] estates under the legal guardianship of the *kāranavan* and were maintained by the
[595] work of tenants and serfs. Probably largely as a result of the relatively mobile military occupation of the men, plural marital unions were customary. A woman might have six or eight husbands of her own or a higher subcaste, and a man, any number of
[591] Nāyar wives of his own or a lower subcaste. Residence was duolocal: spouses lived separately in their natal homes and a husband visited his wife in her home at night.
[251] Exact physiological paternity was, clearly, often unknown, and in any case a man had
[594] no rights in nor obligations to his children. Among Nāyars of this area, therefore, contrary to Murdock's generalization,[2] the elementary family was not institutionalized
[114] as a legal, economic or residential unit.

In Kottayam, the terrain was mountainous and jungly, the area more sparsely
[133] populated, and the kingdom less centralized. The Nāyars were cultivating landowners
[591] and only occasional warriors. The hilly and jungly terrain and the sparsity of population made duolocal residence impracticable. In most cases a man took his wife to live in his ancestral household in avunculocal residence, and children were brought up until
[595] adolescence in the houses of their fathers. There was some polygyny, but polyandry was forbidden. Fathers had morally though not legally recognized rights in and

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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Nayar

564 The Kurup, Nambiyâr, Viyyûr, Mânavallan, Vengôlan, Nelliôden, Adungâdi, Kitâvu, Adiôdi, Âmayengolam, all superior clans, belong, properly speaking, to North Malabar. The Kiriyattil, or Kiriyam, said to be derived from the Sanskrit graham, a house (a doubtful derivation) is the highest of all the clans in South Malabar, and is supposed to comprise or correspond with the group of clans just named of North Malabar. In the old days every Nâyar chief had his Chârnavar, or adherents. The Purattu Chârna are the *outside* adherents, or the fighters, and so on, and the Akattu Chârna are *inside* adherents—clerks and domestics. The clan from which the former were drawn is superior to the latter. The Úrâli are said to have been masons; the Pallichans, mancheel* bearers.†

The Vattakkâd clan, whose proper métier is producing gingelly or cocoanut oil with the oil mill, is the lowest of all excepting, I think, the Pallichan. Indeed, in North Malabar, I have frequently been told by Nâyars of the superior clans that they do not admit the Vattakkâd to be Nâyars, and say they have adopted the honorific affix "Nâyar" to their names quite recently. It seems rather [141] odd that this clan, or at any rate one sub-clan of it is almost the tallest and has the finest nasal index, being the only clan whose nasal index is finer than that of the Nambûtiri.

564 Union by marriage, or whatever the function may be called, is permissible between most of the other clans, 582 the rule which was noticed already under "Nambûtiris"‡ by which a woman may never unite herself with her inferior, being always observed. That is, she may unite 564 herself with a man of her own clan or with a man of any superior clan, or with a Nambûtiri, an Embrântiri or any other Brâhman, or with one of the small sects coming between the Brâhmans and the Nâyars, but she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a [264] clan which is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with others of a clan inferior to hers. A man may, and does [851] without restriction. Her children, by an equal in race [613] and not only in mere social standing, but never by one

[493] * A mancheel is a conveyance carried on men's shoulders, more like a hammock *slung* on a pole, with a flat covering over it, than a palankeen. The palankeen is unknown in Malabar.

† There is in the Cochin state a clan, Elâyadan, which is practically equal in status to the Nambûtiri.

‡ Madras Government Museum Bulletin, Vol. III, No. 1.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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who is racially inferior, belong to *her* Taravâd. The 564
children of the inferior mothers are never brought into 851
the Taravâd of the superior fathers. That is, they are
never brought into it to *belong* to it. But they may live 613
there. And where they do so, they cannot enter the Taravâd kitchen or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the Taravâd, under these and other disabilities, but they are never *of* it.

It will be as well to avoid here a possible error that 564
may have arisen from the statement that most of the 582
clans may intermingle. Those of the same clan name may marry. The Nâyars of North Malabar are held to be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the river Korapuzha, 7 miles north of Calicut; so that a woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a man of her own clan name of South Malabar. There will be more to say on the point when we come to "Marriage." A Nâyar woman of North Malabar cannot 564
pass northward beyond the frontier; she cannot pass the 714
hills to the eastward; and she cannot cross the Korapuzha
to the south. It is tabu. To the west is the sea. The 562
women of South Malabar are similarly confined by *custom*, 178
breach of which involves forfeiture of caste. To this 486
rule there is what appears to be an exception, and this exception is now having some slight effect, since of late years the world has come in touch with the Malayâli who now-a-days goes to the University, studies medicine and law in the Presidency town or even in far off England. It is that women of the relatively inferior Akattu Chârna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as regards residence as are those of most of the other clans; so in these days of free communications when Malayâlis travel and frequently reside far from their own country, they often prefer to select wives from this Akatta Chârna clan. This may have some effect on the status of the clan.

But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-a-days Malayâlis who are in the Government service and obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and taken with them their wives who are of clans other than the Akatta Chârna. But this is more new fangled than orthodox. The interdiction to travel, and the possible exception to it in the case of the Akattu Chârna women,

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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The times have changed things a little: a little only because after all the change is on the surface: it is not radical. Now-a-days, when there is a penal code to deal with persons who kill others, the Nâyar cannot keep a concubine of a caste (not a clan) lower than his own without fear of social ex-communication. The killing except perhaps now and then *sub rosâ*, is a thing of the past.

The custom which permits the woman to cohabit with a man, her equal or superior in caste, has been alluded to more than once. I will now make some use of the (Government) Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, published in 1894, which contains much information which is extremely valuable to the anthropologist and the folklorist, and none the worse for being found together with views and opinions with which he cannot agree. One of the points to which the Commission directed special attention was "as to the customs connected with Hindu marriages in Malabar" and the evidence collected respecting these may be accepted as correct, and the delineation of existing custom may be taken as authoritative. Now the custom which permits the man to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than himself prohibits the woman from exercising the same liberty. "This is called the rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam*. Dr. Gundert derives *Anulómam* from *anu* = with + *lómam* = *rómam* = the hair: going with the hair or grain. So *Pratilómam* means "going against the hair or grain." According to this usage a Nâyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) or caste, she is guily of *Pratilómam*; and, if the difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family to prevent the whole family being boycotted."

A corollary of this custom is that a Nambûtiri Brâhman father cannot touch his own children by his Nâyar consort without bathing afterwards to remove the pollution. The children in the Marumakkattâyam family belong, of course, to their mother's family, clan, caste. They are Nâyars, not Nambûtiris; so the Nambûtiri cannot touch them without pollution.

The rule of *Anulómam* and *Pratilómam* appears to be observed with the utmost strictness and thoroughness; one finds it obtaining between members of the same clan inhabiting different parts of the country. Mention of this

564 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more
582 wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons
421 only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had rights to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but
[833] sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover
[431] customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was
[843] obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-
[851] caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been
[431] licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown.
851 Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their
601 lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the
564 house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her
[613] children.

The Nayar Tāli-Rite. Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony
613 shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam*.
588 This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by
[881] her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of
621 villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-
564 operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar*. *Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollu-
[692] tions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly.
613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

588 marriage rite. At the auspicious time, each girl was led in turn by her brother from the house
[564] and seated on the plank. At a sign from the astrologer, the Brahman priest (called Elayad,
[793] a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris who officiate at Nayar funerals) handed the *tāli* to the bride-
588 groom, who tied it round the girl's neck. The fifteen couples were then secluded in the house
833 for the remaining three days and nights of the rites. Informants said that in modern times
178 when lineages were often large, the couples numerous and the girls sometimes infants, cohabita-
tion would be unlikely. It was not, however, forbidden, and appears formerly to have been
required. It is clear that the rite was ritually if not actually a defloration ceremony, as is
indicated by the saying *Tāli kettiu amma āyi* ('having had the *tāli* tied, a girl becomes a
[married] woman').

588 Next morning the party reassembled without the couples, and offerings to Bhagavādi
782 took place. The participants were a Sūdra Nayar oracle (*velichchappād*), a Vattekad (oil-monger)
787 Nayar sacrificial priest, and a Nayar boy who accompanied the oracle, carrying a staff to
793 the top of which was tied a brush of coconut flowers. These officiants perform similarly by
hereditary right at the annual Bhagavadi temple festival. The priest offered rice, paddy,
coconuts, incense, a burning lamp, and toddy before the branch of the milk-tree, following
which he sacrificed a cock and poured out a vessel of red blood-like liquid. The oracle then
donned a waist-band and anklets of bells and took a sickle in his hand. (These symbolize the
power of Bhagavadi: when he dons them it is believed that she enters and possesses the oracle.)
Accompanied by loud music, he leapt wildly in the air, shouting hoarsely and chopping
his forehead with the sickle till blood flowed down. In this frenzy he called out to the host
kāranavan that the goddess was appeased by his offerings. His possession then subsided and his
insignia were removed.

796 Bhagavadi is the Malabar goddess of war, smallpox, and the soil. Her idol, in the Nayar
[831] village temple, is a hollow cylindrical stone, a symbol of the vagina, as the Brahmanical idol
of Siva is the lingam, a symbol of the phallus. Bhagavadi is also worshipped as the oracle's
sickle, as a picture drawn in chalks on the floor, as the milk-tree (*Alstonia scholaris*), and as the
[753] ancestral sword of a Nayar lineage. She is believed to have protected the Nayars in war. She
is fierce and vengeful, her chief power being to inflict smallpox. She is propitiated by similar
[782] rites during smallpox epidemics, on the sixteenth day after a smallpox death, and on the last
[834] night of her annual temple festival, during which she is angry with the villagers who must
observe sexual continence.

The remainder of the second day, and the third day, were devoted to feasting and music.
588 On the fourth morning each couple went to the village bathing pool where, hand-in-hand,
[783] they took a purifying plunge-bath. Then, decked in fine clothes, they returned to the lineage
house. In the kitchen each couple ate a meal from the same loaf. The company was then
[264] fed, but on this day, alone of all days, women ate before men. The bridegrooms received
clothing and foodstuffs from the *kāranavan* and departed for their respective homes.

In Pālakkara the *tāli*-tier might remain with his bride as her first *sambandham* lover. At
588 the last *tāli*-rite two of the nineteen bridegrooms remained in association with their brides,
184 though one abandoned his shortly afterwards. The other seventeen girls formed unions with
other men of the village shortly after puberty. In all *tāli*-rites in this area, however, the 'bride-
595 groom' remained the ritual husband of his 'bride' throughout his life, though he need never
visit her again. At his death, the 'wife', together with her children by whatever physiological
[765] father, must observe fifteen days' pollution. Death pollution was otherwise traditionally
observed only for matrilineal kin: not until recently was it observed for the *sambandham* lover
[783] and the physiological father. The *tāli*-tier of a woman was regarded, moreover, as the ritual
father of her children. If they knew him, the children called this man *appan* (the Tamil word
[851] for 'father', used for the *genitor* by Tiyyars and Christians) as distinct from *acchan* (originally

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

a Sanskrit word meaning 'the noble one') the Malayalam word used for the *genitor* and all lovers of the mother. The *appan* had no obligations to nor rights in a child except that, at his death, the child observed pollution. Nevertheless, Pālakkara informants stressed that the *appan* was a child's 'real father', as the *tāli*-rite was a woman's 'real marriage'. 588 184 595 851

In Walluvanād and Calicut a different custom prevailed. After the final feast, the couples repaired to the marriage shed, where each ritual bridegroom tore in two the loin-cloth which had been worn during the three days of seclusion by his bride, retaining one half and handing the other to the girl. This ritual divorce indicated that the bride, though still in the status of a married woman, was now free to cohabit with whom she wished. She might however still take as lover the bridegroom who had divorced her. In spite of the 'divorce', the bride and her children observed pollution at the death of the bridegroom. In those lineages where the *tāli* was tied by a man of higher sub-caste, no cloth was severed after the rite, but the bridegroom, being an elderly man, was unlikely to cohabit with the girl again. However, she must, with her children, observe pollution at his death. 588 586 184 [065]

At some periods and in some areas of South Malabar and Cochin it seems that the ritual bridegroom was forbidden to enter into *sambandham* with his bride. In 1510 Barbosa stated that the *tāli*-tier was sometimes a 'relation' of the girl, and in this case, when he had tied the *tāli*, he must go away 'without touching her nor more to say to her on account of being her relation'. If, however, he was not a 'relation', 'he may remain with her if he wish it, but he is not bound to do so if he do not desire it' (*ibid.* p. 124). Unfortunately, Barbosa did not define the categories of 'relations' who might tie the *tāli*, but the accounts of all other writers leave no doubt that the ritual bridegroom could never have been a matrilineal kinsman of the girl. It is probable that, the *tāli* being tied either by an *enangan* or by some elderly man of higher sub-caste from which the lineage was wont to draw lovers, the ritual bridegroom might sometimes be a man who had previously had relations with some older woman of the girl's lineage. In this case he would be prohibited from entering into *sambandham* with her by the rule which forbids a man to have relations, serially or concurrently, with two women of the same lineage. 588 184 582 [613] [114]

Buchanan, an East India Company doctor, seems to assume that the *tāli*-tier must deflower the bride, but might never cohabit with her thereafter. In 1800 he wrote of South Malabar Nayars: 'The Nayars marry before they are ten years of age, in order that the girls may not be deflowered by the regular operations of nature; but the husband never thereafter cohabits with his wife. Such a circumstance, indeed, would be considered as very indecent' (Buchanan 1807, p. 411). But Buchanan's account may be untrustworthy, since he later says of North Malabar Nayars: 'The female Nayars, while children, go through the ceremony of marriage, both with Nambouries and Nayars; but here, as well as in the south, the man and wife *never* cohabit' (*ibid.* p. 513; my italics), thus contradicting his earlier statement that the 'bridegroom' must deflower the bride. However, Logan (1887, p. 135), though he does not say whether the *tāli*-tier was expected to deflower the girl, states that in South Malabar the ritual husband might not solicit his 'wife's' favours in after-life. 588 833 114

Since I have not seen the *tāli*-rite, but relied on informants' statements, the above account is necessarily incomplete. I now add details provided by earlier writers. 588 114

For Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, II, pp. 22–9) reports that in privileged families, the Maharaja gave permission for the rite, and the woman's kin made presents to him and to important Nambūdiri's before it could take place. In retainer-lineages where an *enangan* tied the *tāli*, the Asān (military leader and, in modern times, schoolmaster) of the village must be present to give permission, and was paid money and foodstuffs by the woman's *kāranavan*. Similarly, in a Walluvanād village I visited, the *tāli* was tied in the presence of the *desavari*, who received gifts for his consent. N. Subramania Aiyar, quoted by Thurston & 124 588 184 431

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

588 collapsed and the old system of differential land-rights between Nambūdiris and rulers on
564 the one hand and their Nayar tenants on the other has been seriously undermined. Yet even
178 today Nayars remark with pride that their lineage has 'fathers' in the lineages of their former landlords and chiefs, while chiefs and royalty alike revere their Nambūdiri *genitors*, and boast that the blood of these Gods of the earth is running in their veins.

PART II. THE NAYAR *Tali*-RITE IN NORTH MALABAR

131 NORTH MALABAR LIES NORTH OF THE KORA RIVER, being the old kingdoms of Kolattiri,
133 Kurumbrattiri, and Kadattunad. Except for the coast-towns expanded by Europeans, it is
361 sparsely populated and mountainous; part of it is forest. Villages lie separated by hill ranges,
[635 usually as clusters of houses on the hillsides surrounding small wet paddy-flats in the valleys. This contrasts with South Malabar and Cochin, where the coastal plain is wider, paddy-land extensive, and settlement usually continuous between villages.

175 Perhaps because of its difficult environment, North Malabar did not before 1792 approach
631 the degree of political centralization achieved in the central area. The Kolattiri Rajas, it is true, temporarily conquered Kottayam, Kurumbranad, and Kadattunad, but the area was never consolidated as was the Zomorin's kingdom. Within the small kingdoms, *nāduvaris*
[628 fought each other and rebelled against their Rajas, allying themselves with different rulers as suited their needs of the moment. Neighbouring *desavaris* sometimes fought each other within
[627] the *nād*, while within the *desam*, *kudipaga* (lineage-feud) persisted till modern times.

Consistent with this lack of political centralization, high-class Nayars were not divided
564 into sub-castes with administrative and occupational functions. Instead they had exogamous
631 clans, dispersed between many villages. In Kottayam and Kolattunad the bulk of Nayars were Nambiars, independent land-owners owing only nominal allegiance to a chief. *Desavaris*,
613 appointed by the Raja or the *nāduvari*, had administrative powers in their villages but belonged
423 to the same sub-caste as other Nambiars. In most villages the land was divided between the Nayar property-groups as owners, Nayar tenancies being less common than in the south.
[614] *Nāduvari* lineages, however, usually owned the land in the whole village where they lived, employed Nambiar tenants as retainers, and claimed superior caste-rank, calling themselves Samantan Nambiars. Nambūdiri Brahmans are fewer in the north than in the south, especially since the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760s, when many fled to Travancore. Those who remain live as landlords in widely separated villages, with local Nambiar lineages as retainers. The Nayar servant castes are spatially distributed as in the south. The lower polluting castes of manual workers are present in similar proportions, but Tiyyars and their washermen and barbers are matrilineal in North Malabar, patrilineal in the south.

613 *The Nayar Kinship System.* North Malabar Nayars, though trained in arms in the private
[701 gymnasia of their lineages, were not recruited as a permanent militia of the kingdom. Instead they cultivated their own lands with the aid of Tiyyar tenants, the serf castes being absent over
[566 most of the area. It seems largely because of this difference of occupation, North Malabar Nayars are virilocal: a wife moves on marriage to the ancestral house of her husband, and
591 remains with him with rare exceptions till his death. Her children are brought up by their father and commonly return to their own lineage at puberty. A boy then begins to manage
613 his *tarawād* property under the direction of his *kāranavan*, while a girl is shortly afterwards
594 married, from the lineage house, by common consent of her *kāranavan* and her father, often to
[582] the *kāranavan*'s son or to a maternal nephew of the father.

Divorce is permitted, but is rarer than in the south. Polygyny is rare, polyandry even
586 traditionally forbidden. A cuckolded husband formerly cut off the hair of his wife and returned
595 her to her lineage. The *genitor* has customary rights in and obligations to his children. In
684
851

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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In addition to maintaining his wife he is expected but not strictly obliged to maintain his children till puberty, though both wife and children may claim maintenance from their lineage as well. Paternal kin are known and accorded kinship terms within a range of three to five generations. Marriage is prohibited between the children of brothers. The *enangar* relationship formerly existed between lineages of the same local group: individual *enangar* represented the group to the lineage at funerals and kept watch over its observance of caste laws. In most rites, however, patrilateral kin and affines filled the the roles filled by *enangar* in South Malabar. 594 613 851 601 582 613

The post-puberty *sambandham* is initiated with ceremonies and feasting, the central rite being the handing of a loin-cloth by the man to the woman in the presence of his age-mates and her kin. After consummation in the bride's house, the couple go to the husband's house where they are ceremonially received by elders. Children must be born in the mother's ancestral house, but paternal kin assert their claims in rites shortly after the birth. Physiological paternity is, of course, seldom in doubt, and sibling-groups refer to themselves proudly as 'the children of such-and-such' [their father's] lineage', for whose members they commonly exhibit greater affection, though less loyalty, than they do for matrilineal kinsmen. 585 851

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite*. Though the North Malabar *sambandham* was a 'real' marriage, the pre-puberty *tāli* rite was conducted as in the south. Unfortunately, I lack details of this rite either from the literature or from informants. Among Nambiars of Kottayam the ceremonies lasted four days and were conducted in a marriage shed, the areca-palm corner-post and the branch of the milk-tree being planted ceremonially as in the south. A temple-servant woman drew a chalk pattern to represent Bhagavadi and made offerings of rice, paddy, and coconuts before it. Before the *tāli* was tied on the first day, men of the temple drummers' caste of Marars,[1] who here rank below Nayars and at their funerals direct offerings to the spirit, placed gold bangles on the upper arms of the 'brides' and addressed them for the first time as *amma* ('mother', or 'married lady'). After the rite, the Marars received the bangles as payment. At a sign from the astrologer, a Nambūdiri Brahman tied the *tāli* for each girl. The couples were secluded for three days and the 'marriage' ended with a ceremonial bath on the fourth day. Unless (as was rare in this area) the Nambūdiri wished to visit the girl as her regular husband after puberty, he might not cohabit with her again. The *tāli*-tier was not called *appan* by the children, nor was he regarded as their ritual father. Children even traditionally observed death pollution not for this ritual bridegroom of the mother but for the *genitor*, at whose funeral rites they played a part only second in importance to the deceased's younger brothers and sisters' children. Informants did not think that the 'bride' observed pollution for her *tāli*-tier's death; she did, however, traditionally observe pollution for her *sambandham* husband unless divorced before his death. 588 [564] [301] [851] [765] [783]

In Samantan Nambiar *nāduvari* lineages, as among Nambiars, the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri. *Sambandham* unions sometimes took place between *nāduvari* lineages of equal rank; more commonly, as in the south, *nāduvari* men married Nambiar women and Samantan Nambiar women married royal or Nambūdiri men. In the ancient Kshattriya lineages of Kottayam and Kurumbranad the *tāli* was tied by a Nambūdiri, and women of these lineages later had Nambūdiris as husbands, the princes marrying 'down' with women of chiefly or village headmen's lineages. The Kolattiri lineage, which is less ancient and not acknowledged to be 'truly' Kshattriya, is said to have been a branch of the Travancore royal lineage which moved its site long ago. Kolattiri women had the *tāli* tied by men of a caste called Koil Tamburans, ancient Kshattriya families of Travancore who had been conquered by the Travancore Maharajas, and some of whom were brought to North Malabar by the Kolattiri 588 613 [564]

[1] In South Malabar Marars are a temple-servant caste of drummers ranking slightly above Nayars. Nayar funeral rites are conducted by the lower Nayar sub-caste of Attikurissi (Chidigans in Cochin). In North Malabar, Marars rank below Nayars, and conduct Nayar funeral rites, there being no separate subcaste of funeral priests in the north.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Tiyyar
[South Malabar and Cochin]

presence of *enangar*. The young children of a divorced woman might return with her to her brother's house, but had the right to go back before puberty to their fathers' house. 586

In this system the husbands obtain both sexual and procreative rights in their wife, her children becoming members of their patrilineal group. The wife herself does not, however, as among Brahmans, become wholly incorporated as a member of her husband's lineage. A sonless widow whose husband left no brothers had no rights to property or maintenance by his family; she must return to her brother's house. She could not, as among Brahmans, adopt on behalf of her husband or temporarily manage his property in the absence of adult kinsmen. Though her children belong to the husband's group, the wife appears as in North Malabar to be only temporarily 'leased' by the husbands, on payments of the *kānam* sum, for her sexual and domestic services. 595 613 851 [589] [581]

Moreover, though a woman cannot inherit property in her natal *taravād*, the bond between brother and sister remains strong. The eldest brother is early regarded as the guardian of his sisters, who observe partial avoidance and respect to him much as in a Nayar *taravād*. It is significant that at divorce, a woman is returned to her brother, not to her father or the headman of her patrilineal group. At the death of a married woman, her brothers and their children observe pollution in their own dwelling-group, assembling at the deceased's conjugal house on the sixteenth day for final rites to the spirit. At the death of a man, his sisters' sons have pollution, assemble at his house, and in the sixteen days of mourning perform offerings to the spirit immediately after the deceased's sons, and before his younger brothers and paternal grandchildren. At the death of a man, his sisters and daughters make offerings to an image of the deceased on the fourteenth day, but the widow herself (unlike the Brahman widow) takes no part in death rites. This shows the strong tie persisting between a married woman and her natal group, and the comparative lack of integration into the group of the women who marry its men. The former existence of exogamous matrilineal clans underlines this persistence of the bond between women and their natal kinsfolk, especially their brothers.[1] 593 613 428 586 593 765 [782] 593

The Tiyyar Tāli-*Rite*. A girl's *tāli* was tied before puberty by a boy, usually a small child, of some local *taravād*, affinal or unrelated, into which the girl might marry. My informants in Cochin and Walluvanād could not remember the details of the rite, which has died out in the last twenty years. They knew that it must be done before puberty, and that the *tāli*-tier sometimes married the girl after puberty by the usual ceremonies. 588

According to Thurston & Rangachari (1909, VII, pp. 80–1), who describe the rite in Chavakkad, between Calicut and Cochin, Anantha Krishna Iyer (1909–12, I, pp. 285–7) who describes it for Cochin, and Aiyappan (1944, pp. 159–60) for the whole central area, the horoscopes were compared as for a marriage. The artisans provided an arrow and a brass mirror which the girl carried in her hand, a plank of the milk-tree, the rouge-bottle which figures in the eight auspicious objects, and a staff carried by the bridegroom. The local *Pānan* (a low caste of sorcerers and menial workers) brought a peacock-feather umbrella for the girl and a 'war umbrella' for the boy. A week in advance, the carpenter planted the south-east corner-post of the shed at an auspicious moment. For three days before the rites, the girl was secluded as if she had menstruated. On the day before the rites, she was taken to worship the sun, and was seated in the marriage-hall on a plank with a lit lamp, a vessel of water, rice, plantain-fruits, and a coconut before her. Her mother's brother's wife parted her hair and placed a gold coin on her crown, and the Tandan's wife (like the barber in North Malabar) anointed this three times with oil, here poured from a leaf of the *jak* tree. The girl took a ceremonial bath and was secluded in the house with a casket, a bell-metal mirror, and a sword on a stool beside her. [787] [564]

[1] The tie between sisters is also close. They and their children observe pollution for each others' deaths, and the sororate (forbidden among Nayars and North Malabar Tiyyars) sometimes confirms the status of the mother's sister as a proxy mother. [587]

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

the fourth day this mock marriage is dissolved by cutting to pieces the cloth which was given to them the first day. 588

The *Kalyanam* days are the gayest in the family, and when it is over women keep on saying, "Ah, it takes another twelve years for this to come."

What is the significance of this custom? It must be said to start with that it has no significance in these days. At least, for the last seventy-five years it has been merely a meaningless ceremony, a survival of a peculiar system of marriage. The tendency in these days has been to abolish it, though the movement to do so has not gained much influence, except in the higher families. 194 182 588

The significance of this custom in ancient days seems to have been this. It is necessary to say that a system of sexual relationship, the laxity of which made it in many cases indistinguishable from promiscuity, seems to have been prevalent among the Nāyars, even as late as the eighteenth century. The literature of the time abounds in allusions as to how fickle ladies jilted their husbands and married others. A child was supposed to be legitimate as long as a man was willing to meet the expenses of child delivery, and that phrase still survives as a form of reproach against a father who does not treat his son well. A chorus of foreign, as well as Indian evidence, however, proves that sexual relations in the higher families were of a more or less permanent character, and were generally monogamous. [851] [595]

The *Talikettu* ceremony was, under these conditions, the actual and religious marriage. After that custom the girl was allowed to choose her own suitor, and when such a suitor, who was her husband, dies, she does not mourn his death, or become a widow, while, when the man who actually tied the *Tali* dies she undergoes certain formalities of mourning. Also the man who tied the *Tali*, though he never sees the girl again, is called "little father" by all the members of the family. All these go to prove that the actual marriage ceremony was the *Talikettu*. It must be remembered that *Tali* (an ornament round the neck) is a symbol of marriage for all Hindus, and among Brahmins all over India the *Tali* round the neck is only broken when the husband dies. If this, then, was the real marriage, what was the actual position occupied by the priest or warrior who tied the *Tali*? The fact that he is conducted to the house after the ceremony seems to point to at least a latent conjugal right. It is quite conceivable that in the days of child marriage this ceremony implied perhaps more than a theoretical right, though, during at least the last hundred years, nothing more than the form has been observed. In this connection it is well to remember a like ceremony performed with great festivities among the *Deva-Dasis* or the "Temple-girls" in other parts of India. They also have a form of marriage which lasts for four days. On each day the girl puts on the dress of the women of different communities, and sits in a big hall, where are gathered together all the women of her local community. This ceremony, it seems, must precede before the girl devotes her life to "temple service." Since the Nāyar women, in olden days, do not seem to have had any settled form of marriage, and were free to [765] [171]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
A Wll Kerala A Wll
Nayar

562 *marumakkathâyam* of its one great merit, *viz.*, that in sexual matters it places the man and the woman on terms of equality [851] giving equal freedom to both. With practical unanimity, the witnesses admitted that the man may turn away the woman, and that under the *marumakkathâyam* law, he is in no way responsible for the maintenance of the children whom he has begotten upon her. Further, the person that begot a child in a *marumakkathâyam* female was originally regarded as a casual visitor and the sexual relation depended for his continuance on mutual consent.[1]

585 The views expressed above are those of the landed aristo-
556 cracy, and the rulers who were admittedly of the Nayar caste,
564 as also those of the somewhat selfish class of the Nambuthiris,
581 of Malabar, who, to gratify their selfish ends, quote chapter and verse of their own creation in support of the existing custom and teachings, which the Nayars of these days will never submit to. All or nearly all of them cling to one wife for life, and with them *sambandham* is the real marriage, *de facto* and *de jure*. This is the real state of affairs in the States of Cochin and Travancore as well as in British Malabar.
581 The present and growing tendency in all cases, in which, a man, whether a Nambuthiri or a Nayar, consorts with a Nayar woman, is to look upon her as the true wife, and the children of such unions are looked upon as theirs and duly provided for, so far as their means permit. The statement is to a certain extent confirmed by Mr. Logan, who was the Collector of Malabar for many years and thus had ample opportunities of knowing a great deal of Malabar and its people. He says, "this part of Malabar has, in the hands of unenquiring commentators, brought much undeserved obloquy on the morality of the people. The fact, at any rate, of recent years, is that, although the theory of the law sanctions freedom in these relations, conjugal fidelity is very general. Nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit, informal, more rigidly observed or respected, nowhere is it more jealously guarded or its neglect more savagely avenged. Their very looseness of the law makes the individual observances closer, for people have been watchful over the things they are most liable to lose. The absence of a ceremonial has encouraged the popular impression, but a ceremonial,

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, pages 38 to 44.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

613 592 [842] deliberately refused to be a father and deprived himself of the sweet cares involved by the rearing of the children, they were indignant with a girl who refused to be a mother, and those who had not reproduced their species were considered to be subject to 613 terrible punishments in the next world. The old order of things 592 has given place to the new. Many of the old time-honoured 178 customs have already disappeared or begun to disappear. The senior woman is no longer the head of the family, and she has given place to the eldest male member who is known as *kâranavan*. 592 In a joint family which contains a large or fairly a large num- 613 ber of females and males, the former with their children occupy the main building or buildings and the latter live apart in another edifice close to and separated from them. Each of the married women has a room or two; and here her husband visits her. The old women and others occupy the common [851] portion of the house. The boys under age live with their mother under whose care they always are, and the father as a casual visitor does not generally concern himself with the [591] rearing of children. These, after coming of age, join the the adult members, and if they can afford it, live in houses of their own with their wives and children. Where the domestic environments are favourable and the influence of the *kâranavan* (as the father in a patriarchal family) and other senior member prevails, the junior members seldom go wrong. In some cases where such influences do not exist, their conduct 592 is not always satisfactory. The habits of the members are 613 generally regular, and the usual time of rising throughout the 512 year is early dawn. After rising, the males either go to their daily routine, or wait for their morning light meal which they partake after bathing and after worshipping the deity [264] in the local temple. The women attend to their children, look to the domestic minor work, bathe and prepare the break- [515] fast. Great attention is paid to their personal cleanliness. As water is near at hand, men, women, and children take a great pleasure in bathing, which, besides being conducive to cleanliness, is also considered purificatory and curative. [264] Their substantial dinner is, as a rule, a little before midday, [574] and the rest of the day is occupied by the women and others either in the perusal of religious books or in the playing of some indoor game, while visits in the afternoon are also indulged in.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

association. That was why Shankara and they themselves later had 595*
sought and obtained wives of their own; mainly because the women "did not look after them", "did not satisfy them sexually". In principle, a common wife should not refuse herself to any one of her husbands, Panju said, but as in all things, excuses and evasions were easy to find, and the result was that the arrangement did not always work out satisfactorily for some. Nowadays, women had becomes most immoral, the 837
informant complained; they were not at all chaste and had numerous extra-marital relations, in defiance of what was expected of them in the homes into which they had been married.

From here we were led to discuss jealousy. Did it exist among them? 595*
And if it did, how did they control it to make polyandry function? I 578
was assured, of course, that it existed; had I not noticed how many 152
polyandrous households were breaking up because of quarrelling? Their members quarrelled because there was rivalry among the men, jealousy of each other and a desire to be the sole possessor of the common wife. Panju agreed that, although there was no jealousy between himself and Narayana, both of them being liked equally by Nani who distributed her favours evenly to both of them, there had been much strife and unpleasantness in the days when they were married to Kuniyama with their elder brothers (they were too young for that in their first union with Devaki). That was why they had wanted a wife to themselves and obtained Nani from their maternal uncle. They got on with each other and liked working together, hence there was no jealousy between them and their polyandrous marriage functioned well.

Thandans are, as we have seen, *makkathayam*, and because of this 851
the status of the children is perfectly clear: they are legally the offspring 564
of their fathers and take their family name while inheriting the property 428
from them at their death. They are also, of course, their mother's legal sons and daughters, but they do not carry on her lineage nor inherit from her brother as they would do, for instance, in a north Malabar Tiya *marumakkathayam* union.

With regard to paternity, the children belong to all the fathers collec- 595*
tively, and not to any particular one of them. They are never assigned 851
to the elder father, as is sometimes the case with polyandrous peoples in other parts of the world. I asked both Panju and Nani if they knew who was the father of their different sons, and both of them told me that they "did not care" and that they had "no preference". I insisted that they could perhaps try to remember what had happened and who was the woman's partner at the probable date of conception, to calcu-

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

late the time back from the moment of birth; but they only laughed at my insistance and said that they could not. Obviously, the right thing to do was not to make any distinction, to accept the children as collectively theirs, without individual claims on them.

This is the public attitude which self-respecting polyandrous people must apparently take. Privately, things can be quite different, and from the information which I gathered from Panju and Nani, it is obvious that human nature reasserts itself even in this situation, in spite of cultural interdictions. Asked confidentially if he had any preference for one of his four boys, Panju replied that he believed that the two elder ones, Kumaran and Madhavan, were his because they were "more fond" of him than of Narayana. To emphasize this belief, he added that outside people thought that Sridaran and Raghavan resembled their younger father, while the other two were physically more like him. I heard, later, that Nani, in private, never in front of her husbands or even before the other children, would say to Kumaran: "Go on, be a man like your *achan* (father, the name given to Panju). He is a fine fellow whom you should take after!" There seemed to be no doubt that, behind the scenes and the facade which had to be maintained socially in this polyandrous society, a great amount of preference and distinction was shown for the individual, would-be, "real" father.

Panju claimed that he looked after the children more than his brother because he had more affection for them than Narayana. Here again, he seemed to be claiming a preferred position that could not fail to strike me. I asked him what names the children used for their fathers, and he gave me not only those for himself and his co-husband, but also (without my asking) for Raman and Sankara, who were considered to be uncles (fathers' brothers) because they were not part of the polyandrous household. Raman was called *wariachan*, "big father"; Sankara, *wawuachan*, "sickly father", because he had some kind of chronic stomach ailment (this reminded me of the "opium-eating father" in Ceylon, see p. 149); Panju, *achan*, "father"; and Narayana, *kutiachan* or "small father". In other words, even those brothers of the fathers who were no longer fathers in parental status were called "father", a classificatory term which obviously had no other reality after the break-up of the old association of all the brothers married to a common wife.

If a family has no issue, adoption of a child is possible, the latter then having exactly the same status as if it were one's own. The child has, however, to be legally registered with the authorities if it is to be an heir. Cases of such adoptions are extremely rare; my informants

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

This no doubt acted as a strong incentive for women not to create a 595*
situation which might lead to such unpleasantness, and contributed greatly in forcing the wife to conform to the rules of polyandry in what concerned her.

Were there any illegitimate children in the Thandan community, and 848
what was their fate if there were? I was assured that they would be considered bastards and outcast. It was also said that the man responsible for them might be forced to support them on complaint of the woman to the Collector. This was the only information that I was able to elicit concerning such cases, Panju declining any knowledge of them. The interpreter made it clear, however, that he was only thinking of the case of an unmarried mother. Should she have a child in wedlock from [851]
someone other than her husbands, it would be very difficult to prove [837]
adultery and the child would certainly be considered legitimate and that of the husbands. It was up to them to decide what they would do with their unfaithful spouse, should they be able to prove her misconduct. Actually, there were no illegitimate children to speak of in the area, my interpreter assured me. An unmarried girl expecting a child would most certainly find a young man or young men to take her to wife, and apart from gossip, nothing serious would come of it. He knew of a few cases like this, he told me, but he preferred not to give me further details, nor let me see them. He had mentioned a woman who had complained to the authorities in such a case, since this had actually happened recently. It was, however, a modern development which did not conform to the traditional patterns of Kerala Thandan culture.

I enquired also about prostitution, and was told that this did exist to 548
some extent in the Thandan caste and in other, higher castes. The last war, with its influx of soldiers from outside, was held responsible for this state of affairs, but also the presence of European planters and administrators. There was little venereal disease, although the authority 164
upon which I was told this was not definitive. It did not seem to me very convincing, coming as it did just after the statement concerning the causes of prostitution in the State.

Birth control was not practised since it was contrary to Hindu reli- 842
gious convictions. Abortions were rare, and it could be seen that the 847
population was increasing steadily and unchecked. There was no female infanticide, and both my informant and my interpreter seemed surprised that I should ask if there were. Women were highly valued in Kerala, [562]
they said, and there was no reason not to want them.

Feeling that I would obtain more detailed information concerning the 000

564 or with one of the small sects coming between the Brāhmans and the Nāyars. But she cannot under any circumstances unite herself with a man of a clan, which [264] is inferior to hers. Nor can she eat with those of a clan inferior to her; a man may, and does without restriction. 564 Her children by an equal in race and not only in mere 651 social standing, but never those by one who is racially 613 inferior, belong to her taravād.* The children of the inferior mothers are never brought into the taravād of the superior fathers, *i.e.*, they are never brought into it to belong to it, but they may live there. And, where they do so, they cannot enter the taravād kitchen, or touch the women while they are eating. Nor are they allowed to touch their father's corpse. They may live in the taravād under these and other disabilities, but 557 are never of it. The custom, which permits a man 564 to cohabit with a woman lower in the social scale than 831 himself, and prohibits a woman from exercising the same liberty, is called the rule of anulōmam and pratilōmam. Dr. Gundert derives anulōmam from anu, with lōmam (rōmam), hair, or going with the hair or grain. So pratilōmam means going against the hair or grain. According to this usage, a Nāyar woman, consorting with a man of a higher caste, follows the hair, purifies the blood, and raises the progeny in social estimation. 558 By cohabitation with a man of a lower division (clan) 564 or caste, she is guilty of pratilōmam, and, if the 831 difference of caste were admittedly great, she would be turned out of her family, to prevent the whole 564 family being boycotted. A corollary of this custom 851 is that a Nambūtiri Brāhman father cannot touch his 783 own children by his Nāyar consort without bathing

* Tarwād or taravād, a marumakkathayam family, consisting of all the descendants in the female line of one common female ancestor.

afterwards to remove pollution. The children in the 564
marumakkatayam family belong, of course, to their 851
mother's family, clan, and caste. They are Nāyars, not 783
Nambūtiris. The Nāyars of North Malabar are held to
be superior all along the line, clan for clan, to those 564
of South Malabar, which is divided from the north by the
river Korapuzha, seven miles north of Calicut, so that a
woman of North Malabar would not unite herself to a
man of her own clan name of South Malabar. A Nāyar
woman of North Malabar cannot pass northward beyond
the frontier; she cannot pass the hills to the eastward; [484]
and she cannot cross the Korapuzha to the south. It is [784]
tabu. The women of South Malabar are similarly con- [562]
fined by custom, breach of which involves forfeiture of
caste. To this rule there is an exception, and of late 564
years the world has come in touch with the Malayāli, 562
who nowadays goes to the University, studies medicine 178
and law in the Presidency town (Madras), or even in far 484
off England. Women of the relatively inferior Akattu
Charna clan are not under quite the same restrictions as
regards residence as are those of most of the other clans;
so, in these days of free communications, when Malayālis
travel, and frequently reside far from their own country,
they often prefer to select wives from this Akattu Charna
clan. But the old order changeth everywhere, and now-
adays Malayālis who are in the Government service, and
obliged to reside far away from Malabar, and a few who
have taken up their abode in the Presidency town, have
wrenched themselves free of the bonds of custom, and
taken with them their wives who are of clans other than
the Akattu Charna. The interdiction to travel, and the
possible exception to it in the case of Akattu Charna
women, has been explained to me in this way. The 841
Nāyar woman observes pollution for three days during 783
484
564

595 law as by a kind of tacit convention, it scarcely ever happening that it exceeds six or seven. The woman, however, is under no obligation to admit above a single attachment, though not less respected for using her [201] privilege to its utmost extent. If one of the husbands happens to come to the house when she is employed with another, he knows that circumstance by certain signals left at the door that his turn is not come, and 564 departs very resignedly." Writing about the same time, 595 Sonnerat * says that "these Brahmans do not marry, but have the privilege of enjoying all the Nairesses. [648] This privilege the Portuguese who were esteemed as a great caste, obtained and preserved, till their drunkenness and debauchery betrayed them into a commerce with all sorts of women. The following right is established by the customs of the country. [851] A woman without shame may abandon herself to all men who are not of an [604] inferior caste to her own, because the children (notwithstanding what Mr. de Voltaire says) do not belong to the father, but to the mother's brother; they become his legitimate heirs at their birth, even of the crown if he is king." In his 'Voyages and Travels', Kerr writes as follows. † "By the laws of their country these Nayres cannot marry, so that no one has any certain or acknowledged son or father; all their children being born of mistresses, with each of whom three or four Nayres cohabit by agreement among themselves. Each one of this cofraternity dwells a day in his turn with the joint mistress, counting from noon of one day to the same time of the next, after which he departs, and another

* Voyage to the East Indies, 1774 and 1781.

† R. Kerr. General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, 1811, History of the Discovery and Conquest of India by the Portuguese between the years 1497 and 1525, from the original Portuguese of Herman Lopes de Castaneda.

comes for the like time. Thus they spend their time 595
without the care or trouble of wives and children, yet 564
maintain their mistresses well according to their rank. Any one may forsake his mistress at his pleasure; and, in like manner, the mistress may refuse admittance to any one of her lovers when she pleases. These mistresses are all gentlewomen of the Nayre caste, and the Nayres, besides being prohibited from marrying, must not attach themselves to any woman of a different rank. Consider- [851]
ing that there are always several men attached to one [604]
woman, the Nayres never look upon any of the children born of their mistresses as belonging to them, however strong a resemblance may subsist, and all inheritances among the Nayres go to their brothers, or the sons of their sisters, born of the same mothers, all relationship being counted only by female consanguinity and descent. This strange law prohibiting marriage was established that they might have neither wives nor children on whom to fix their love and attachment; and that, being free from all family cares, they might more willingly devote themselves entirely to warlike service." The [578]
term son of ten fathers is used as a term of abuse among Nāyars to this day.* Tīpū Sultān is said to have issued the following proclamation to the Nāyars, on the occasion of his visit to Calicut in 1788. "And, [648]
since it is a practice with you for one woman to associate with ten men, and you leave your mothers and sisters unconstrained in their obscene practices, and are thence all born in adultery, and are more shameless in your connections than the beasts of the field; I hereby require you to forsake these sinful practices, and live like the rest of mankind." †

* Wigram, Malabar Law and Custom, Ed. 1900.

† T. A. Kalyanakrishna Aiyar, Malabar Quart. Review, II, 1903.

practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan 595
say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now [851] be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar [581] marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli- 588
tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of [184] this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the [881] ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

NORTH NAYAR

Anthropological investigations in Malabar have usually gone straight to the most spectacular cases: the matrilineal Nayar *taravad* of Cochin and Travancore. This tendency, though understandable, is hardly justified, since the matrilineal *taravad* achieves its greatest elaboration among the aristocratic ranks of the ruling families and can hardly be accepted as a typical feature of the landscape. 613 114

It should be clear that today there is great variation in practice among the Nayar groups in Malabar, not only from the aristocrats to the low-caste menials (who like to call themselves Nayar) but also within the same Nayar "subcastes." In an illuminating passage, Karve (1953), for example, notes how many individual Nayar feel that they should lay the foundations for a new *taravad* in their sister's name as soon as they can afford to do so, for a named matrilineal *taravad* is clearly an important aspect of status for Nayar men. Gough (1952*a*) has used a historical model to deal with the variations. She argues, in effect, that the past was orderly and the present is confused. Theory and practice were harmonious in the past but are now breaking down. The tempo of new developments, political, economic, social, can hardly be denied, but we can suggest that the past idealized by Gough may well have been as diverse (in terms of the structure of matrilineal *taravad*) as the present. It is likely that there always were nascent, medium-sized, and fully developed *taravad* based on the same principles. 613 114 184 [554]

We shall examine the aristocratic Nayar lineages in a moment. In North Malabar, the *taravad* is significantly different from the region around the Cochin kingdoms. In the North, there was apparently less political centralization and a relatively limited development of subcategories of Nayar castes with special duties. Most of the Nayar were called Nambiar and were small landowners who lived in villages. They recognized dispersed matrilineal clans, and the property group in the locality was regarded as a segment of such a clan. 613 [184] [614]

At marriage the girl moved to the household of her husband, but she returned temporarily to her natal household to bear her children (a custom still followed among the Sinhalese). The children when grown went to their MB; the males stayed with the MB as members of matri-lines and the females were married off from that house. 591 [844] [171] [851] [613]

Here, clearly, are the complex claims on the sister and her children. I need hardly point out that all aspects of the general structure are to be seen in their organization. First, the usual Dravidian terminology was used for reference (Schneider and Gough, 1961, p. 404). A clear distinction was made between the categories for reference and the 601 [602]

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

121 a consistent terminology of reference—which is important in South
601 India and Ceylon—but since the language and indeed all the rest of
114 the terms themselves are identical to those of North Malabar, the lack
[184 of terms precisely for cross-cousins may be significant. The matter is
605] all the more curious since such terms as, for example, *maru mahan* (son "by marriage"!)[9] which Ego uses for ZS in the same *taravad* and which reciprocates with MB (*mama*) also carry the implication "son-in-law" and "father-in-law."

121 However we may wish to interpret this intriguing lacuna (could it
582 be an aspect of Nambudiri–Nayar hypergamy?), it appears that there
605 is, first, a prohibition on sexual and marital connections with parallel
114 cousins and also a "preference" for cross-cousin marriage. Both rules
[834] are clearly present, though they do not carry the categorical implication which is attached to them elsewhere.

Gough's account of this matter is not very clear. She notes first (1961, p. 365): "Bilateral cross-cousin marriage was freely permitted, with some preference for marriage to the mother's brother's daughter or step-daughter." A little further on she notes the "preference" in passing: "It may seem strange that preferred cross-cousin marriage should have existed side by side with group marriage, for cross-cousin marriage . . . suggests an interest in prolonging the ties brought about both by paternity and by matrilineal kinship."

114 It seems to me that even in her most recent publication Gough is
121 trying to minimize the role of paternity among the Nayar when the
582 facts are palpably otherwise. She notes, "Many men, presumably,
851 entered marriage relations with cross-cousins only incidentally—often, presumably, without being fully aware of the blood relationship" (1961, p. 365)—a presumption which seems extremely unlikely even in the Malabar conditions she describes.

121 We should perhaps stress that Gough's data suggest much closer
114 similarities to a South Indian pattern than her theoretical framework
605 permits. Consider the customary relations between cross-cousins: "Cross-cousins of the same sex and caste had a familiar, mildly joking relationship if they maintained contact . . . cross-cousins of the opposite sex might talk to each other with rather more freedom than to
[588 unrelated persons. In his role of enangan a boy sometimes tied the
613] tali for his maternal uncle's daughter . . ." (1961, pp. 364–365).

121 We should note this last sentence particularly: the role of *enangan*
114 as a cross-cousin and hence a perpetual affine on the Dravidian pattern
613 is a new development in the work of Gough. It confirms our impres-
184 sion that even in Cochin where the *taravad* reaches its greatest devel-
[605 opment, a version of the general structure is still visible. The question of "perpetual affinity" has been discussed extensively by Dumont

[9] See the discussions of *maru* by Karve (1953, p. 213) and by Dumont (1957a).

4: Yalman E-4,5 (1954-1956) 1971 AX4 Sinhalese
Kerala AW11

perior but politically inferior to the royal lineages. This would indicate that the arguments emanating from the power structure are of limited value. Nor does the psychoanalytic argument carry conviction (see Yalman, 1963). 121 114 564 613

Dumont further suggests that the Nayar position has significant cultural affinities to certain practices of the Basavi. Among the Basavi, a girl is given in marriage to a god. She may then be approached by all kinds of men, and the children she may bear belong to her own family. Thus by virtue of her marriage to a god, her children are freed from the constraints of the rule of patrilineal descent and follow matrilineal descent. In the same fashion, Dumont thinks the girls of aristocratic matrilineages are married to Nambudiri Brahman, who are referred to as "Gods of the Earth."

Dumont's point is worth making, for it shows the element of piety involved in these customs which have been severely misunderstood in India and elsewhere. The man of the matrilineage sacrifices his own children (who belong to others) in order to give his sister to a god and keep her children.

This may indeed be one of the cultural dimensions of hypergamy in this region, but the system is so clearly and effectively associated with the fundamental structural principles of matrilineal descent groups in a caste context that the specific cultural features (piety, etc.) do not need to be treated as a necessary part of the picture. A similar set of structural circumstances gives rise to an essentially similar picture in Ceylon. 121 564 613 [171]

The general principles of status differentiation in Cochin have been subsumed under the following ideal formula by Karve (1953, p. 269): [851]

Nambudiri m.	marries	Nambudiri f.	Children	become	Nambudiri
Nambudiri m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	Kshatriya
Ksatriya m.	=	Ksatriya f.	Children	=	non-Kshatriya [*sic.*]
Nambudiri m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 1
Ksatriya m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 2
Nayar m.	=	Nayar f.	Children	=	Nayar, status 3

It is quite clear that we find the matrilineal *taravad* in its most impressive development as a corporation precisely at the highest levels of society. At the other end of the scale we have only the desire for prestige:

The Tharvad is always named after an ancestress and referred to as the Tharvad of so and so (woman). If a man does not belong to a Tharvad he is not respected and I was told by an officer in a mill that though he was well educated and a salaried man he had not the requisite social position as

852

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Nayar

/Data on the Tali-tying ceremony performed for the pre-pubescent Nayar girl, will be found in category 588./

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

"*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended, of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are† served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

"Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

"*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar
Tiyyar

and the five products of the cow. This ends their pollution and also the prohibition on using oil for cooking and bathing during the pollution period. The ability of a low caste man to purify a family from pollution (when in other contexts he is less pure than they) is an anomalous situation common in South India which has not so far been explained in sociological terms. It is paralleled by the fact that the washerman's purifying cloth is used by a woman to bathe in after menstruation; the washerman must also supply a similar purifying cloth for Nayars and Tiyyars to stand on when they are being purified by cow's excrements from the pollution of death. In some contexts, the Nayars recognize this anomaly, and thus employ two priests for death-rites, the lower caste funeral priest for ties during pollution, and the Elayad, a low sub-caste of Nambūdiris ranking above Nayars, to purify them and instruct them in final rites to the spirit. The Elayad also consecrates the South Malabar Nayar *tāli*, so that the Tiyyar barber may be compared to him as a functionary in the *tāli*-rite. In addition, the barber acts as a priest in Tiyyar family shrines in North Malabar dedicated to Bhagavadi and to ancestors. Finally, as barber, he performs the ceremonial hair-cutting of a Tiyyar boy at the age of three, and the ceremonial shaving of a Tiyyar man at a funeral and before other ritual occasions, including the *tāli*-rite of his nieces and daughters.

564 783 [841] [793] 564 588 793 852 [764] 564 182

I suggest that the barber, both as a polluting 'younger' person and as a holy one who can conduct Tiyyar ceremonies and purify them from pollution, is both a son-surrogate and a father-surrogate for Tiyyars. His association in death-ceremonies with the spirits of Tiyyar leads me to suspect that he is identified with the ancestors, who, in psycho-analytic terms, collectively represent the father.[1] In this role the barber would resemble the washerman, his 'twin' in the caste-hierarchy, who in masked dances impersonates the dead ancestors and local heroes of both Nayars and Tiyyars in North Malabar and of Tiyyars in the south, and, while possessed by them, declares their will to the *taravād*. We have seen that the washerman, like the barber, may be viewed as a proxy bridegroom to the Tiyyar or Nayar girl in the puberty rites where he instructs her to perform offerings to the lamp as a phallic symbol and sings lewd songs to enhance her fertility.

564 588 182

The barber is also, however (because of hypergamous Tiyyar-barber marriages), a son-figure, and in general caste-terms a junior to the Tiyyar. In this role his ability to act as a kind of bridegroom at the *tāli*-rite reminds us of the practice of South Malabar Tiyyars, who select a small boy of an affine *taravād* as proxy bridegroom in the rite. Until about the age of eight, a boy may touch mature women of his own or another lineage. The fact that the small bridegroom is carried into the marriage-shed in the arms of his maternal uncle renders harmless his 'marriage' to the bride: he is a child, brought by a father-figure who adjures him to perform the rite. This fits my hypothesis that the immature girl in these castes is unconsciously likened to the mother: only a father-figure, an infant, or some generalized 'polluted' yet 'holy' figure may approach her with impunity.

564 588 182

My hypothesis that the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother as a forbidden sexual object rests partly on the fact that in these rites the girl is brought into association with Bhagavadi, the mother-goddess of Nayars and Tiyyars. A branch of her milk-tree is set

588 831 182 776 [326] [564]

[1] A psychoanalyst might probably see in the barber's other roles that of father-surrogate. Hair-cutting and shaving are in many parts of the world likened to castration or to a weakening of sexual power. Among Tiyyars they are ceremonially performed for boys at the age of three to five, and for men immediately after a death in the family. The ceremonial head-shaving of a boy (like the ceremonial ear-boring by the goldsmith, another low-caste functionary) is believed to reduce his *sakthi* (strength) and render him immune to the evil eye of the envious or to attacks from ghosts. It is possible to argue that the rite is a symbolic castration, performed to protect the child, in phantasy, from the danger of real castration at the hands of his jealous father, whose form is projected in the evil eye and in ghosts who attack small children. After a death, the ritual shaving of the heir is part of a complex of rites to ward off the vengeful anger of the spirit. It goes along with abstention from intercourse and from sexually stimulating foods, and the carrying of a knife (phallic talisman?) by the heir to ward off the murderous attack of the spirit. I associate head-shaving, like sexual abstinence, with symbolic castration of the mourner to avert the castrating and murderous wrath of the deceased whom, in his unconscious mind, the mourner himself has murdered.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
301 called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
789 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

8:Panikkar I-4, 5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll Nayar

themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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843 The juice dribbles down the knife into her mouth, and she drinks [602] it. In the absence of a brother, some other near relation officiates. After she has swallowed the tamarind juice, she is asked [824] to pick one grain out of several packets of different grains placed before her. The grain in the packet is supposed to [574] declare the sex of the child in her womb. The whole ceremony is wound up by a sumptuous feast to all the relatives and [787] friends of the family. The *enangan's* wife at the time pours oil over the head of the pregnant woman. If the oil flows on the left side, it predicts the birth of a female; if on the right side, a male.

844 When a Nayar woman is about to become a mother, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (*kattódom*), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The *kattódom* is very like, if not identical with, the couch on which the Nayar woman has her oil bath. The surface of it is sloping, the higher end being where the head is laid, and it is scooped out so as to suit the curvatures of the body lying flat. Lying on her back, the thighs are stretched wide apart. Very often she holds in each hand a rope suspended from the ceiling by [564] way of support. The child is received by a woman of the barber caste, who generally officiates as midwife, and in some places this duty is performed by a woman of the Vélan caste.

Childbirth.

846 Pollution is observed for fifteen days, and on every day, the mother wears cloths, washed and presented her by *Vannóthi* (a woman of the washerman caste). On the fifteenth day is the purificatory ceremony. As in the case of death pollution, a man of the Athikurussi clan sprinkles on the woman a liquid mixture of oil, and the five products of the cow (*panchagavyam*) with gingelly seeds. Then the woman dips herself in a tank or river or sits on the ground near the bank, and a maid servant pours on her head the water from a vessel as many as [184] twenty-one times. This practice is not universal, though it certainly obtains in the State and in some parts of South Malabar and Travancore.

846 852 It may be noticed that, before the mother proceeds to purify herself, the new born baby has also to undergo some rite of purification. The baby is placed on the bare floor, and its father or uncle sprinkles a few drops of cold water on it

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852 ●
approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853
puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613]
chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayūr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782]
is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice- [553]
giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorūn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852
hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846
Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564
Attikurissi or Mārayan caste among Nāyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386]
are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824]
the Mārayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with
powdered charcoal.

852 846 564 powdered charcoal. During this and other periods, a characteristic service called māttu (change) has to be rendered by people of the Mannān caste to Nāyars, and to other castes by their proper washermen, who may or [844] may not be Mannāns. On the day of birth, the Mannātti brings a clean tūni (cloth) of her own, and a mundu (cloth), which she places in the yard, in which she finds the accustomed perquisites of grain set out, and a lamp. An Attikurissi Nāyar woman takes the clean clothes, and the Mannātti removes those previously worn by the mother. Every subsequent day during the pollution period, the Mannātti brings a change of raiment, but it is only on the 7th and 15th days that any ceremonial is observed, and that the Attikurissi woman is required. On those days, a Mannān man attends with the Mannātti. He makes three pradakshinams round the clean clothes, the lamp, and the niracchaveppu, and scatters a little of the grain forming the latter on the ground near it, with an obeisance, before the Attikurissi woman takes the clothes indoors. This rite of māttu has far reaching importance. [626] It affords a weapon, by means of which the local tyrant can readily coerce his neighbours, whom he can subject to the disabilities of excommunication by forbidding the washerman to render them this service; while it contributes in no small degree to the reluctance of Malayāli women to leave Kērala, since it is essential that the māttu should be furnished by the appropriate caste and no other.

852 "On the twenty-eighth day (including the day of birth) comes the Pālu-kudi (milk-drinking) ceremony, at which some women of the father's family must attend. [591] Amongst castes in which the wife lives with the husband, [564] the ceremony takes place in the husband's house, to which the wife and child return for the first time on this day. The usual lamp, niracchaveppu and kindi of water,

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

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613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the
[576] Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
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613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [195] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons. [858]

[853] [863] [869] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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613 event. On this day, the *Kârnavan* of the family gives to
553 the child a spoonful or two of milk, mixed with sugar
[574] and slices of plantain. Then he names the child and calls it in the ear by the name* three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are necessarily met by the father of the child.

853 "*Chôrûn or First Meal of Rice.*—As is usual with the
852 Nâyar every event is introduced by a ceremonial. The
613 first meal of rice partaken by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth; the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain, known as *kunnan*, used for this purpose. The staple food of the Malayali, rice, is given the child, for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is attended,
[787] of course, with some ceremonial. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day; and at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain-leaf is spread in front of it and a lighted brass lamp, placed near. On the leaf are † served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. Then the *Kâranavan* or the father, ceremoniously approaches and sits down facing the child. First, he puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, chillies and salt; then some rice; and lastly a little sugar.

[301] "Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially for the '*bandhus*,' such as the *Ammâyi* or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The *chôrûnû* or rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvâyûr being a favourite one for this purpose.

844 "*Child-birth—Position during.*—When a Nâyar woman
352 is about to be delivered of a child, she is placed in a reclining position on a low wooden couch (Kottotam), her back supported by a companion, generally an old woman. The kottotam is very like, if not identical with,

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* In some places, the child is named only in the sixth month on the chôrûn day.

† In some places, all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast are also served.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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pregnant woman, taking a sword, generally kept for this purpose, and holding it in the left hand points it to her mouth. The juice is then poured on it in such a way as to fall by drops into her open mouth. After this, one of the women of the *enangar* group smears the body and head of the pregnant woman with coco-nut oil and takes her to the tank. She is also required to choose one from a collection of different grains, and it is believed you can say from the choice what the sex of the child is going to be.

The significance of the ceremony seems to be twofold. First, it is the official notification to the allied families as well as to the local village groups of the fact that a woman is lawfully pregnant in the house. The intervention of the *Ammāri* or the mother's brother's wife is supposed to show that everything is as it ought to be. It is, therefore, in the first place merely a social announcement. Secondly, the actual ceremony with the sword is supposed to have the effect of making the child a warrior, and it is believed to impart the virtues of bravery, manliness and honest dealing. It is, therefore, in the classification of Van Genepp, a rite direct, sympathetic, automatic and positive. The tamarind juice is believed to create sensitiveness and honour. It is a "contagionist" rite. Whenever a man shows cowardice, the question that is asked as a mark of contempt is: "Were you not born after *Pulicudi?*" or "did not your mother drink the tamarand juice?"

After the *Pulicudi* there are many prohibitions which a pregnant woman has to respect. Of this the most important is the absolute sexual tabu which dates from the *Pulicudi* to forty days after the childbirth. Other tabus are mainly connected with food and are mostly "contagionist" positively or negatively. Thus the woman is not supposed to take very warm food, as it might scorch the head of the child; she is not supposed to eat much hot food (chilis, pepper, etc.), because it might put out the eyes of the child. There are no definite rules about these, but every mother in her desire to do the child no possible harm keeps herself away from all doubtful matter.

After the birth of the child there is a mild pollution (as compared to the strong untouchable pollution caused by death) in the family. This pollution does not carry any disabilities except the prohibition to enter any sacred precincts. On the fifteenth day there is a purificatory ceremony, but there are no festivities or celebrations connected with it.

The mother and the child are accommodated in a special room which no man may enter. Unmarried girls, unless they are little children, are also not allowed to go near. The child, of course, can be seen by all after the cutting and burying of the umbilical cord. It is handed round to the father and other interested relations. No kind of food except the mother's milk is given to it, and, if the mother died at the birth of the child, it is generally given the milk of some relations or even of outsiders who have children of almost the same age. The person whose milk the child thus drinks, though she be an outsider, is considered equal to its own mother, and her children are considered the same as own brothers. There is a story of a Nāyar

853 king who as a child lost his mother and was therefore fed on the milk of an attendant
846 woman, refusing to punish her son after repeated acts of treason on the ground that
608 an ocean of milk flowed between them which a drop of blood would pollute for ever.

852 On the twenty-eighth day the child undergoes two ceremonies. The first is
called *Erupathettu Kettuka*, or the "Tying of the twenty-eighth day." Before that
301 day the child is not allowed to wear any ornaments. On the twenty-eighth day a
789 silver or gold belt, or a mere cord with an ornament in the shape of a heart or a laurel leaf at the front, is tied to the waist of the child. The laurel leaf was most certainly meant as a charm in ancient days, while now it is nothing more than an ornament. The waist-belt occasionally has attached to it amulets made sacred by the repetition of *mantrams* or magical formulæ over it. Such amulets are worn for the purpose of preventing disease and keeping the child safe from the demons and other evil spirits.[1]

553 After this comes the name-giving ceremony. The astrologer announces the star
787 under which the child is born and presents the horoscope. Then he mentions the initial letters of the names. Each star has generally two or three letters, and the whole of Sanskrit and Malayalam can be drawn upon for the names of deities beginning with those letters. The choice is really very wide, even with the most difficult initial letters.

852 The child is not supposed to be carried out of its mother's family till the sixth
602 month. Then, on an auspicious day it is taken to the father's house (if the father
431 is a Nāyar) by the mother, with some tokens of respect to the father's sister. These
[824] presents generally are tobacco leaves (always a mark of respect among the Nāyars), betel, etc. The father's family generally gives a certain sum of money for the expenses of the coming ceremony.

852 These proceedings are preliminary to the ceremony of *Choru Koda*, or the giving
262 of rice. For the first six months the child is given only the cooked flour of dried plantain fruits. Rice, which is the chief food of the Nāyars, is strictly prohibited
[123] before the *Choru Koda*. As a boy of fourteen or fifteen, I have many times officiated
[613] in this ceremony, on one occasion as a member of the father's family and on others as a member of the maternal *Tharawad*. What is done is that the child is taken to the temple by its mother, accompanied by some women of the *Enangu* group, together with a male representative from the father's house (if the father is a Nāyar) and
[782] one from the mother's own family. There is an offering to the god of the temple
[783] in the form of rice cooked with milk and sugar, and all the party, after purifying

[241] [1] The question of origins is very difficult, yet we cannot pass without noticing the idea
[114] that the loin cords are the beginnings of dress. Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his well-known book on *The Elements of Folk Psychology*, has shown conclusively that it has no reference to the development of clothing, but is entirely magical in its purpose (pp. 86–87). The prevalent custom among the Nāyars supports this view. The custom can be understood only in relation to the general beliefs about cord-magic and the efficacy of amulets attached to waistbands.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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and takes it in his hands. The belief is, that the temperament of the child is determined by that of the person who thus sprinkles the water. All the members of the *tarawád* observes pollution for fifteen days immediately after the delivery, during which period they are prohibited from entering temples and holy places.

First birth-day celebration.

The twenty-seventh day after the childbirth or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, is an important day, on which the *káranavan* of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with sugar and slices of plantain fruits reduced to a kind of pulp. Then he names the child calling it in the ear by name, three times. In some places the naming ceremony takes place in the sixth month on the *Chórúnu* day, *i. e.*, on the day of feeding. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relations, the expenses of which are met by the *káranavan* of the *tarawád*. The child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it the flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery. There is a particular variety of plantain known as *kunnan* used for this purpose. Well-to-do parents in these days give Mellin's food. The staple food, which is rice, is given to the child for the first time, generally during the sixth month, and is, of course, attended with some ceremony. Necessarily, the astrologer fixes the day, and at the auspicious hour, the child is bathed and adorned (which is the duty of the father), is brought and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a bright brass lamp is placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice, generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity, some tamarind, salt, chillies and sugar. Then the *káranavan* or the father ceremoniously sits down facing the child. First he puts into the mouth of the child, a mixture of tamarind, chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward, the ordinary food of the child is rice. The ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed in some famous temple, that at Guruvayur being a favourite one for this purpose. A few annas is given to the priest, who gives a small quantity of the food offered to the deity, with which the child is fed.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Kammalans

union with Kurumba. They were not the only ones following the custom in the family, as their sister, Paru, now dead, had also had two husbands, the brothers Aiyappan and Narayan of the Vetukatukundu *tarawad*. She had died in childbirth, when her little boy was born; the child died too. Nilu, their youngest sister, had also died giving birth to a boy, her first-born, who did not survive either. Of what Narayani, the next youngest sister, had died, was not clear, but it had been after she had given birth to a little girl who was still alive. Of their children, the eldest, a boy called Kunju, and his sister, the eldest but one and bearing the name of Kunji, had married a brother and sister of a neighbouring *tarawad* called Putanparekil; there had been no marriage between cross-cousins. They did, however, say that this was the best form of union, as the Thandans had said. The genealogy of the family is given in Table 11. 595 601 [582]

I have described how, previously, we went into the other compound, where the Tiyas of 1939 used to live, to question the family of blacksmiths about their polyandry. This sub-caste of the Kammalans is called *Karuwan* or *Perinkollan* and they, too, are not a wealthy class. These lived only a few years from the Thatan household just described, and their dwelling was very similar to the other. The yard of the thatched house had blacksmith's instruments lying about it, which showed at once who lived there. 595* 564 326 [351]

We met and interviewed a man called Ittenam, aged fifty five, whose brother, Poreyn, with whom he used to share a common wife, Paru, was now dead. He was a widower, and lived with his sons, Raman and Kunyuni, twenty two and twenty years old, who were present at our talk. Their common wife, Nani, twenty, was also there, a little baby boy on her hip, and the two other women with her were her sister-in-law, Narayani, twenty four, who was the wife of both her brothers and also the sister of her two husbands, and Kunji, the thirty six year old elder sister of Narayani, Raman and Kunyuni. A picture of her is given in Fig. 12; she was here on a visit, as her household was elsewhere. All the women, except Kunji, were bare-breasted, and, when they were not suckling the babies on their hips, milk ran down onto their abdomens from their naked breasts. Itteenam's elder sister, Unuli, was alive, aged sixty one, but she was married and had her home elsewhere with her husband, Narayan. 595* 601 [853]

When I made the genealogy of this household, I found that its name was Mudrikkelparampil. The *tarawad* was similarly named and was exogamous together with the *kiriyam*, as was to be expected. *Makka-* [614]

[Text continues on p. 197]

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Manans
Panans

first moved to Mangode village, where Kali came from, for eleven years. 595*
Today they were living at Managhat, where Erechen had found it easier 601
to get work.

As Kunji, my aged informant, was getting tired, we now took on Krishnan, son of the late Krishnan by his second wife, Kunji (the repeti- [115]
tion of the same names in a family in Kerala is very confusing). He [551]
helped us to check all this material and to correct some inaccuracies which had crept in. I noticed that in some cases it was impossible to 614
obtain the name of the *tarawad*, and that the name of the village would 564
be given instead. There were, however, no *kalarikels* with the Manans, I was told. The patrilineal clans were exogamous, as were also the [582]
matrilineal *kiriyams* of these people, although they were not very well known and practically neglected in present-day marriages. Inheritance [428]
was *makkathayam*, as expected, but I could get no confirmation of the reported four endogamous subdivisions described in the *Gazeteer of the Malabar and Anjengo Districts*, p. 130 (see Bibliography).

This Manan family was living on ground belonging to a Nambudri 564
Brahmin *janmi* called Mangala Mana C.M.C. Narayana Nambudripad, 427
but they did not pay him any rent. They were there more as his em- 465
ployees and, in exchange for dwelling space, rendered him the invaluable services which he needed from them as washermen and barbers.

In the afternoon of the same day of the 25th of November, 1949, 564
upon which I had visited a Thandan household (see above, p. 189), I 791
went to Palappuram to see the family of a *Panan* (exorcist and leaf [293]
umbrella maker).

They lived in a poor but neat and cleanly house, situated in a rather 595*
thickly overgrown grove of the usual Kerala vegetation. On the veran- [342]
dah of the modest building of dried cow-dung and mud, a bare breasted woman, Sita, aged forty five, and three boys awaited us. She received us nicely and spoke quite readily. She seemed resigned to her poverty and conditions and only complained to us that she was not able to give the boys more and proper food.

She told us that she lived with the surviving husband of a once poly- 595*
androus union, in which she had been married when she was eighteen 601
to two brothers, Panju, who had died two years after the wedding, at twenty one, and Korappan, her present forty four year old husband. She had had a daughter, Kunji, within the first year of her marriage, and four boys afterwards with Korappan. All the children, including the twenty six year old eldest girl, were unmarried; she was still breast-
feeding the youngest, two and a half year old Kumaran. This, as I 853

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Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 [868] [126] Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 614 [428] Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the village. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house *595 [829] was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our 564 959 971 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.

[Text continues on P. 214]

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

*595 his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, 114 if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

When I discussed the point with one of the interpreters, he told me that in some polyandrous households that he knew, the husband who did not wish to be disturbed when he was with the common wife would leave his clothes lying about in the neighbouring room or on the verandah as a signal to his brothers. An old Thandan woman confirmed this one day when I met her at Shoranur, where she had come to be interviewed by my wife. She added, however, that there was no fast and firm system and that such things varied "from village to village". It could also be said, I suppose, that they differ from household to household. On the whole, however, there does not seem to be a more developed system of signalling in Kerala than anywhere else.

*595 At home, the obligations of the men consist in making a living for the family in whatever profession or occupation they are engaged. Panju and Narayana cultivate the fields and gather the harvest, often assisting their elder brothers or being helped by them. The wife takes on the [853] household chores, such as cooking and keeping the house clean; she also [462] looks after the children as long as she is suckling them, which may be, in common with other Asiatic mothers, for a very long period – two or [841] three years. The fathers will start attending to their offspring when the [983] woman is isolated during the polluting period of her menses, and thus [855] gradually come to know the children better and to influence their upbringing. Dominance at home is determined solely by the personality of one of the fathers, and does not follow seniority in age. It is how- [562] ever always a man who is the head of the household, the woman being treated here, as elsewhere among other polyandrous peoples, as the property of the husbands.

Does the woman enjoy living in polyandry and what are her conjugal obligations towards her mates? I put this question to Panju as I had to others whom I had interviewed in other communities. He was of the opinion that it all depends on how she feels towards the men. Devaki and Kuniyama, while being good wives to Mayadi in the first case, and to Raman in the second, had been bad ones to the younger men of the

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.)

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them.

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog.

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there.

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani

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Panans

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Fig. 15. Sita of the *Panan* Villarkaden household, Kundilpadam *tarawad*. At her breast, Kumaran, then Chami and Narayana.

[P. 238-F]

846 which they are prohibited from entering temples and
[613] holy places." It is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar
[844] that the first act done, when a male child is born, is to
[828] beat the earth with a cocoanut leaf, and, if the issue is a female, to grind some turmeric in a mortar, with the object, it is said, of removing the child's fear.

553 In connection with post-natal ceremonies, Mr. Bala-
[846] krishnan Nāyar writes further that "the twenty-seventh
[821] day after the child's birth, or the first recurring day of the star under which it was born, marks the next impor-
[613] tant event. On this day, the Karanavan of the family gives to the child a spoonful or two of milk mixed with
[574] sugar and slices of plantain. Then he names the child, and calls it in the ear by the name three times. This is followed by a feast to all friends and relatives, the expenses of which are met by the father of the child.
852 With the Nāyar, every event is introduced by a cere-
853 monial. The first meal of rice (chorūn) partaken of by the child forms no exception to the rule. It must be remembered that the child is not fed on rice for some time after birth, the practice being to give it flour of dried plantain boiled with jaggery (crude sugar). There is a particular variety of plantain, called kunnan, used for this purpose. Rice is given to the child for the first
[787] time generally during the sixth month. The astrologer fixes the day, and, at the auspicious hour, the child, bathed and adorned with ornaments (which it is the duty of the father to provide) is brought, and laid on a plank. A plantain leaf is spread in front of it, and a lighted brass lamp placed near. On the leaf are served a small quantity of cooked rice—generally a portion of the rice offered to some temple divinity—some tamarind, salt, chillies, and sugar. [In some places all the curries, etc., prepared for the attendant feast, are also served.]

Then the Karanavan, or the father, ceremoniously 852 approaches, and sits down facing the child. First he 853 puts in the mouth of the child a mixture of the tamarind, [613] chillies and salt, then some rice, and lastly a little sugar. Thenceforward the ordinary food of the child is rice. It is usual on this occasion for relatives (and especially the bandhus, such as the ammayi, or 'uncle's wife') to adorn the child with gold bangles, rings and other ornaments. The rice-giving ceremony is, in some cases, preferably performed at some famous temple, that at Guruvayûr being a favourite one for this purpose." It [782] is noted by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar that the rice-[553] giving ceremony is usually performed by taking the child to a neighbouring temple, and feeding it with the meal offered to the deity as nivadiyam. In some places, the child is named on the chorûn day.

Of ceremonies which take place in infancy and child- 852 hood, the following account is given in the Gazetteer of 846 Malabar. "On the fifth day after birth, a woman of the 564 Attikurissi or Mârayan caste among Nâyars, or of the barber caste in the lower classes, is called in, and purifies the mother, the other women of the household, and the room in which the child was born, by lustration with milk and gingelly oil, using karuga (*Cynodon Dactylon*) as a sprinkler. Her perquisites are the usual niracchaveppu (1 edangazhi of paddy and 1 nazhi of uncooked rice) placed together with a lamp of five wicks in the room to be cleansed, and a small sum in cash. A similar purification ceremony on the 15th day concludes the pollution period. In some cases, milk and cow's urine [386] are sprinkled over the woman, and, after she has bathed, [824] the Mârayan or Attikurissi waves over her and the child two vessels, one containing water stained red with turmeric and lime, and one water blackened with powdered charcoal.

are set forth with a plate, if possible of silver, containing 852
milk, honey, and bits of a sort of plantain called kunnan, together with three jack leaves folded to serve as spoons. The mother brings the child newly bathed, and places it 852
in his Karnavan's lap. The goldsmith is in attendance 613
with a string of five beads (mani or kuzhal) made of the [326]
panchaloham or five metals, gold, silver, iron, copper [823]
and lead, which the father ties round the baby's waist. The Karnavan, or the mother, then administers a spoonful of the contents of the plate to the child with each of the jack leaves in turn. The father's sister, or other [853]
female relative, also administers some, and the Karnavan then whispers the child's name thrice in its right ear.

"The name is not publicly announced till the Chōr- 553
unnu or Annaprāsanam (rice giving), which takes place [787]
generally in the sixth month, and must be performed at an auspicious moment prescribed by an astrologer. The paraphernalia required are, besides the five-wicked lamp, some plantain leaves on which are served rice and four kinds of curry called kalan, olan, avil, and ericchakari, some pappadams (wafers of flour and other ingredients), plantains and sweetmeats called uppēri (plantains fried in cocoanut oil). The mother brings the child newly 553
bathed, and wearing a cloth for the first time, and places 613
it in the Karnavan's lap. The father then ties round the child's neck a gold ring, known as muhurta mothiram (auspicious moment ring), and the relatives present give the child other ornaments of gold or silver according to their means, usually a nūl or neck-thread adorned with one or more pendants, an arannal or girdle, a pair of bangles, and a pair of anklets. The Karnavan then, [782]
after an oblation to Ganapathi, gives the child some of the curry, and whispers its name in its right ear three times. He then carries the child to a cocoanut tree

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Thandans

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11

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Fig. 17. An aboriginal Parayan woman with her child, in the Zamorin's colony at Chunangad, south Malabar.

[P 238-H]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

cases are known in modern times however to show that the temptation was real. The reasons for the partial avoidance between men and younger women of the taravād apparently lie in the descent system. Brothers, in common with other men of the taravād, owned the procreative rights in a woman. They shared property and a home with her and were jointly the guardians of her children. With all these shared interests a strong devotion to her was axiomatic and inevitable. Yet brothers must forswear completely the sexual rights in their sister and surrender these to other men. Their formalized, partial avoidance of their younger kinswoman facilitated their continued devotion, side by side with the sexual prohibition. At the same time it completely segregated their interests in her from those of her husbands and thus made tolerable the relationships between brothers-in-law.

Life histories and the behavior of small children suggest that a man's near-conscious attraction toward his sister is a displacement of his earlier and more intense Oedipal attachment to his mother. The latter is apparently repressed at about the age of five, together with similar motives toward other older matrilineal kinswomen. It is uncertain whether Nayar boys developed Oedipal hostility toward their mothers' husbands in early childhood. Perhaps they did, for a child shared his mother's sleeping room until the age of three or four and must have witnessed parental sexual relations. If Oedipal rivalry did develop, much of the hostility seems to have been displaced toward the mother's brothers as they became the significant authorities in the child's world. There is in any case a realistic basis in the mother's brother's hard discipline for aggressive motives toward him. Mythology and religious rites suggest that these two forbidden motives—aggression toward older matrilineal kinsmen and desire for union with matrilineal kinswomen—remained powerful throughout a man's life. It is therefore easy to see why observance of the rules of formal etiquette toward older men and toward younger women of the taravād represented, for a Nayar, the essence of familial piety. The rules counteracted his deepest unsocialized impulses and made possible the harmonious coöperation of the matrilineal group. It is reasonable also to conclude that tensions arising within this natal group must have been eased by the fact that aggression and sexuality, sternly prohibited within the lineage, were encouraged outside it in warfare, organized dueling, and very free sexual relationships.

A man's hidden concern for his sister's sexuality seems to have found an approved outlet in the jealousy with which he was expected to guard her from any taint of contact with low-caste men. Organized

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

593 184 858 [613] will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may receive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 613 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could [764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu- [783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 613 184 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some resemblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate [783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

855 613 593 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them. A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād [867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The [868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. 593 613 In return he could ask his children to do small tasks, could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was [584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not [431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thavidans

his presence there to the others. I enquired from my informant, Panju, if this were still done. As in the case of other polyandrous people whom I had questioned on this point, he laughed heartily at the idea and said that he had never heard of anything like it. According to him, it was usually the woman who decided with whom she should spend the night; the others then stayed out on the verandah or in another room. Even in the older generation, he did not think that anything remotely resembling the leaving of a knife at the door was ever done.

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12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

Feeling That
124 I would obtain more detailed information concerning the children from Nani than from Panju or his brother, Narayana, I proposed one day to interrogate her rather than her husbands. After some initial difficulties, the principal one being that men did not like to let her out of their sight, I did, nevertheless, manage to interview her in the yard of the Appayl Wattakkeh household. Even then, I could see that Panju was uneasy about it. I noticed that all the time he was apparently playing with his favourite son, Kumaran, he cast suspicious and displeased glances in our direction, and attempted to overhear what one of the intrepreters was saying. The other volunteered to help, and took to talking with Panju during these interviews, in order to entertain him and keep him occupied elsewhere. But this was never entirely successful and it was obvious that Panju fundamentally disapproved of my speaking to his wife directly instead of through his or Narayana's intermediary.

I have already remarked how much more pleasant and rewarding I had found it to question the women of Kerala rather than their menfolk. Nani was no exception, and she proved to be much more intelligent and willing in her answers than Panju ever was. Perhaps an explanation of her husband's distaste for my speaking directly to her is to be found in this: he vaguely feared that she would tell me things which she "ought not to", and which he confusedly thought wrong to let me have. Narayana was the same, and although he, too, pretended to play with young Sridaran, it was only an excuse, I think, to remain in the courtyard, to watch us and try and overhear what was being said.

862 Nani was still suckling the two year old Raghavan, her last child. I asked her when and how she would wean it, and she answered that she would do so when she would be two months pregnant again. She [278] would then apply *nux vomica* to her breast nipples and the bitter taste would make the child stop wanting her milk. She said that she obtained the product in the bazaar as a pharmaceutical drug, not as a natural product of the country. Some children were not put off by this method, she added, and for Kumaran she had had to put chicken dung on her nipples and tell him what it was that he was about to eat. In other cases, some mothers beat their children till they stop suckling, but Nani did not like to do this, although she knew that others did.

291 Loin cloths were not put on children until they were in their third [855] year. Before that they were allowed to run about naked. In Nani's opinion, they began to realise that there was a difference of sex only [864] when they were five. (This appeared to me to be somewhat in contradiction with the fact that children received their first clothes two years

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

The Panikkars dabble also in magic. In Plates XVI, XVII are figured four yantrams, selected from a number in my possession as representative, presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver or copper plate (a yantram written on gold is the most effective), and worn on the person. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylindrical case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, or round the neck.

No. I. Aksharamâla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless; but it gives life to all others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

No. II. Sûlini.—For protection against sorcery, or devils. This is to invoke the goddess and secure her aid. The ceremony brings a blessing to the receiver of the charm.

No. III. Mâha Sûlini.—To be used to prevent all kinds of harm through devils, chief of whom is Pulatini—he who eats infants. May be used also as protective against enemies. Women wear it to avert miscarriage. The letter in the middle, Hûm Mâha Sûlini. That in the rim is Om.

No. IV. Kâla Bhâiravi.—Represents the goddess. The goddess must be pleased *first* by worship. No sacrifice, which is rather odd, as this terrible goddess is generally represented in Southern India as loving blood. The letters do not form any mantram. Each letter has life in itself. Prevents all harm from enemies, and attack by devils.

Other yantrams to be used in much the same way as these are:—

The *Ganapati* yantram. To increase knowledge. To put away fear and shyness.

The *Sarasvati* yantram. To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

The *Panchakshari* yantram, a square containing 81 smaller squares, in each a mystic letter; the whole representing Siva. For persons on whom medicines have no effect. Also against evil spirits. A person out of whom an evil spirit has been driven is perfectly safe ever after with this carried on his person.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Thandans

earlier, but I give the information here as it was recorded by me at the time from the informant's statement.) 291 864

In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them. 853

Diapers made of cotton cloth in which the child was wrapped were used for the first year and a half. Then the baby was taught the rudiments of sanitation and shown where and how to go. The mother was almost exclusively in charge of teaching the child this, but sometimes in exceptional circumstances (when she was in the polluting period of her menses), the father, the one most fond of the children, would take the task upon himself. Should the baby forget itself or disobey what it had been told, it would be beaten with a twig over the buttocks or threatened that it would be carried away by a madman or a cat or a dog. 863 [854] [861]

Children slept together on the same mat on the floor of the house until the age of twelve. Aggression between them was quite marked at an early age, and Nani had already told me how the infants with teeth treated her when feeding. A new-born child caused the development of much jealousy among the elder children and they bit and scratched at this time even more than usual. Sridaran was the worst in this way of the four children she had had, and he was still the most aggressive of them all. He often threatened to drive his mother out onto the road and back to the house from whence she came, and accompanied his threats with kicks. He never dared, however, to say such things to his fathers, and showed a marked preference for Narayana, corresponding in this to what Panju had told me about presumed physiological paternity. He seemed to resent any interference from his elder father, especially when the latter insisted on his going to school. He had been known to refuse point blank to go there. 865 [513]

Raghavan, although very young and quieter now, was pretty bad, too, in the way that he fought, bit and scratched his mother. He was late in walking and talking and had really only just learned to do these things. Madhavan spoke very early, earlier than all of them; at the age of five months, he could already make himself understood with words. Nani [856]

702 military leader (Asan) appointed by the chief.
[857] Each desam had its gymnasium (kalari) into which all retainer-Nayar boys were inducted at the age of seven. Their training in gymnastics and swordsmanship lasted nine years, after which they received their arms at the hand of the king
701 and were accorded the title of Nayar. After this age every able-bodied Nayar man was perpetually in military training until he reached the age of retirement or until he was obliged to succeed to the headship of his matrilineal property-group
[541] and retire to manage its lands. In peacetime, mock fights were organized between Nayars of adjacent villages or of adjacent nads, and jousting was conducted at the court for the entertain-
726 ment of the royal family. In war, the Nayars
[714] fought naked: their arms were the sword, bow, lance and the bow and arrow, though gunpowder was also used, at least by the more important Rajas. Battles between enemy kingdoms appear to have been stylized. Not more than 10,000 men were commonly brought into the field at one time, and severe loss of life was prevented by the employment of Nambudiri emissaries who, if fighting became intense, entered the battle field and arbitrated between its leaders. [32] If however the king or a chief were slain, his subjects must fight to the death until their honour was avenged by the slaughter of a corresponding leader on the enemy side. The aim of such
721 battles appears to have been solely to gain control over the military power of nads of adjacent kingdoms, together with certain payments of tribute by conquered chieftains, and also to gain

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 592 174 It seems probable that the property groups of retainer Nayars divided somewhat earlier in their development during the nineteenth century than during the period of native rule. The reason for this is that during British rule Nayar men, having no other compulsory work, considered themselves old enough to become kāranavans by the age of thirty to forty, provided their appropriate elders were dead. In the traditional period, presumably, a man would be in arms until at least the age of fifty and would be unlikely to press for kāranavanship before that age.

613 592 161 174 [175] Further differences in the patterns of division of property groups must have arisen from the marked increase in population during British rule. This is not documented until after the 1870's but from genealogies it appears to have begun between four and five generations ago. The increase would mean that more women, and a higher proportion of women, would have had enough living children to become the founders of discrete lineage segments during their lives or shortly after their deaths. Thus property groups in the nineteenth century would divide not only at an earlier point in their structural development but also more frequently than was the case during native rule.

613 592 174 423 The absolute size of traditional property groups was limited by the amount of land available to each. It can be roughly gauged by the size of the houses they left behind. It seems unlikely that a traditional retainer property group would contain more than twenty-five to thirty people, or fewer than six.

Interpersonal Kinship Relationships

121 I describe the relationships between kinsfolk as these have existed in the recent past in the most "traditional" households, making reference to earlier periods when this is possible.

WOMAN-SON

593 The relationship of mother and son was the strongest in the system in the sense of mutual obligation and the expectation of mutual love. A man should place the needs of his mother above those of all other kin. A woman should show equal concern for her children of both [858] sexes, but it was expected that her primary attachment would be to her sons.

[853] [863] [867] A woman's obligations to both daughters and sons in their early childhood included breast feeding to the age of two or three, care, especially in sickness, and instruction in cleanliness and in the manners and morals of their caste.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

603 took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It
[869] was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles'
[861] displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to
[858] maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

604 A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' chil-
429 dren, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was respon-
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86 in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

604 Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural mat-
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[613] their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior
[769] generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

[576] The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
North Kerala Nayar

and her children were not illegitimate unless she had relations with a man of low caste.

A woman normally lived with her husband in his ancestral home or in a separate house on his ancestral land. He then owed her physical protection and at least a part of her food and clothing, in return for limited domestic services. Occasionally a man might choose to visit his wife in her ancestral home if she lived nearby. In this case he might work on her ancestral land or bring periodic provisions of grain and clothing to her and her children. He would eat sometimes in his ancestral house and sometimes in the house of his wife. In all marriages a husband was obliged to pay the full expenses of delivery when his wife bore a child in her ancestral home and, additionally, to supply grain and other food to her throughout the six months which she spent in her taravād at this time.

A woman owed respect and obedience to her husband. He had the right to scold or even to beat her if she disregarded his wishes. Polygyny was permitted and was fairly common among village headmen, chiefs, and royalty. The polygynous husband usually provided separate houses for his wives on his ancestral estate.

Theoretically, either party might divorce the other at will, but in fact it was usually the husband who initiated a divorce. We do not know how common divorce was in the traditional period. At present it is rare in wealthy landowning lineages, although it probably takes place rather more frequently than among aristocratic Mappillas of North Kerala. It is more usual among the poorer Nambiar commoners, although probably less frequent than among the poorer Tiyyars of this area.

Widows might remarry freely by traditional law. Today it is somewhat rare for a widow to remarry if she has children under the age of three or four; we do not know whether this was the case traditionally. A widow who does remarry almost invariably leaves her children by the first marriage behind in her taravād, in the care of her mother or some other older natal kinswomen. Such children may visit their mother in their stepfather's house but they have no customary rights of maintenance there, and it is considered that their own taravād is the correct place for them to live.

Thus in North Kerala, by contrast with Central Kerala, differences of paternity may create structural divisions among the children born of one mother. All are of the same taravād and share the same fundamental birth-status rights, but if their fathers were different they

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
591 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never
613 polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction
593 in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
613 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

ners and morals of their caste. She might discipline them with slaps 593
and scolding but was usually indulgent. She taught her children to [861]
look to her brother as their authority, and might either report their
conduct to him or (more commonly) try to shield them from his cor- [604]
rection. A woman's duties to her adult son were to assist in cooking for him, to serve him with food along with other men before she and other women had eaten, and to assist in care of the house. She should offer him counsel and comfort, respecting his wishes but attempting to dissuade him from wrong. Her own moral conduct in the village [626]
was a part of her duty to her children. If she infringed the religious laws her shame fell also on them and they were the most likely persons to be visited with supernatural vengeance. A woman should accept the suggestions of her adult son with regard to her conduct. If he became her kāranavan she theoretically owed him obedience in law.

A child should respect his mother's teaching, although strict obedience to her was not demanded before the age of five or six. Throughout her life he should revere her, remembering that he owed to her his membership of his taravād and all the birth-status rights of his caste. For her sake he should maintain right relations with his matrilineal kinsfolk, submitting to his male elders and protecting his sisters and their children. A man should protect his mother from slander or physical harm. When he entered the village after an absence he must go first to greet her. While he stayed there he should live in his natal house and make himself available to his mother's requests. He should not incur her jealousy by visiting a wife for long periods in the daytime, or by eating frequently in the house of a wife or of friends. In all things he should place his mother's comfort and the interests of the taravād above his private concerns. In her old age he [769]
must offer comfort and companionship to his mother and after death must perform funeral rites and make annual offerings on behalf of her soul. Neglect of the mother by an adult son was the height of [776]
impiety. The lineage goddess was believed to inflict sickness on an [753]
impious son.

The etiquette of behavior between mother and adult son required 593
mutual respect and a certain restraint on both sides. Each stood when 576
the other entered the room, although they might later sit together and converse informally. They discussed questions of property and the affairs of the taravād in serious confidence, but undignified gossip and talk touching on sexual matters were prohibited between them.

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The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

604 to the mother's husband in their earliest years, there seems no doubt
613 that a great part of their hostility to male elders became focused on
561 the mother's brothers by about the age of five, and that much of it
578 remained conscious. Thus occasional stories are told today of nephews who poisoned or stabbed their mothers' brothers and it is often remarked that kāranavans are "hated" and that "their position is not safe." Such tales of violence are regarded as shocking, but they do not arouse the horror with which a Hindu of the patrilineal castes would receive a story of patricide.

604 Relationships with the mother's mother's brothers were less intense
561 and rivalrous than with the mother's brothers. Until the age of three
578 or four a small boy might be a playful visitor to the room of the great-uncle who was his kāranavan. Often, this elder died while he was still small, so that the boy retained only affectionate memories of him. Otherwise he learned to behave with even greater formality to this elder than to his mother's brothers. He saw the great-uncle less often, however, and was seldom directly punished by him, so that the relationship tended to remain one of distant geniality.

604 MAN-SISTER'S DAUGHTER

As the head of her taravād a kāranavan owed his sister's daughter maintenance, shelter, and legal and physical protection. At her tāli rite and during her subsequent marriage relationships, only the sexual rights in a woman were lost to her taravād. All other rights, in her procreative powers and domestic services, remained vested in her taravād, represented by its kāranavan. He could command her obedience in the performance of household and minor agricultural work.
[429] He automatically became the full legal guardian of children born to
[684] her legitimately. If she seriously infringed the religious laws of her caste, for example, by having sex relations with a man of lower caste, it was his duty to expel her from the taravād and his right (very occasionally exercised) to put her to death by the sword.

604 In the nineteenth century, when monogamy gradually became cus-
584 tomary, a kāranavan arranged the marriage of his sister's daughter.
595 In earlier periods Nayar women seem to have exercised considerable
178 freedom to select or reject their husbands. A woman might not, however, oppose her kāranavan's right to dismiss an unwelcome husband.

604 All the mother's brothers of a woman had the right to command her domestic services and to discipline her in minor ways. As in the case of a boy, they might play with her until she reached the age of three or four, after which they became somewhat feared authorities.
[861] A man might occasionally beat his sister's daughter, until the age of

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

seven or eight, but he would not inflict heavy punishment unless he was sure of the child's grandmother's and her kāranavan's support. After she had undergone the tāli rite a man was forbidden to touch any junior woman of his taravād. His relationship with his sister's daughter thereafter became very distant. In accordance with rules associated with incest prohibitions, he might not be alone in a room with her and would scrupulously avoid suspicion of intimacy. He would absent himself when her husband entered the house, remaining on the outer veranda, in the separate men's building, or in the house of his wife. A woman must remain standing and remove her upper clothing when her mother's brother entered her presence. She must not speak first to him, must not laugh in his presence, and must respond with extreme submissiveness to his requests. When possible a man would communicate advice to his sister's daughter through some kinswoman senior to both of them. Thus, except to serve him with food, a woman had little direct intercourse with her mother's brothers.

Modern Nayars admit freely that the partial avoidance between men of the taravād, on the one hand, and that between men and women junior to them in the taravād, on the other, have quite different foundations. The former is a defense against aggression, the latter against desire. Nayars partially avoid their younger sisters and nieces, it is admitted, because otherwise they might be tempted to commit incest with them. As things are, in speaking with others, men often express a respectful tenderness toward their sisters' daughters and a pride in their qualities. Because of the difference of sex, and therefore of ambitions and interests, there is much less potential conflict here than in the relationship with the sister's son. By an orthodox kāranavan in particular, its young women are seen as the fine flower of his taravād. Whatever may be his more selfish inner feelings, he expresses gladness when there are many of them to perpetuate his matrilineal group. For their sakes and for the sake of the heirs they may bring him, he welcomes their husbands to his home. When the latter are aristocrats of higher caste, his pride seems the more easily to outweigh any potential hostility toward them.

In orthodox homes today, women's attitudes to their mothers' brothers seem to be variously compounded of fear and admiration. A woman fears her uncle's anger and may resent his harshness toward her brothers and sons. If, however, he manages her household with equity and if his reputation stands high in his neighborhood, he may become a distant hero in her eyes.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949)1963 AWll Kerala AWll
Thandans

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In spite of a child being fed at the breast very late, the habit of sucking a jump or a finger existed in Kerala as much as it does with us. Nani said that mothers did try to stop it, telling the child that it is bad, and threatening punishment should it persist. There were no substitutes given, such as rubber teats, and the habit was the natural derivative of breast suckling. When the children had teeth, they used them freely when feeding, and also pulled and scratched the breast with their hands. Boys and girls behaved similarly in this respect and she could notice no difference due to sex between them.

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WOMAN-DAUGHTER

A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household responsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was expected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, however, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

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864 Boys were much worse when it came to early masturbation. This began at the age of two with them, and they seemed to delight in playing with themselves when sitting in the sand or dust. Nani told her [595] own children that they must not do this, because it would make them sick, and it was always her and not Panju or Narayana who dealt with this matter. She noticed too, that her little boys, when suckling, would sometimes get an erection, whereupon she would beat their fingers away from themselves with a small twig. She had threatened them with castration, too, but she complained that this did not seem to have the slightest effect on them.

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Upon another day, while persevering in my attempts to find out about the early development of Thandan children living in polyandry, I asked if Nani had noticed a period of calm in which the children ceased masturbating and seemed no longer to take any interest in sexual matters. She took this seriously and replied yes, that she had noticed such a lull. Between the ages of four and thirteen, they were very quiet, with only brief, temporary interruptions. At the end of this time, boys and girls

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were definitely separated from each other, but they were already themselves shy in each other's presence, and tended to keep apart. I was surprised to hear the informant mention so long a period of latency, beginning too so early, but of course, what she said should not be taken too literally, there being a strong possibility that she was either mistaken or that she was giving me the information which she thought I would like to hear. She was also the sole source of what I learned in these matters, and I did not have an opportunity to check up on what I heard with any other woman. Still, I find what she told me to be worth mentioning, because it may be that, after all, children in Kerala do have a relatively longer period of latency than was to be expected in such a community. 864

I enquired about pre-nuptial sexual relations, but the informants, Nani and Panju, assured me that no such things existed. On the contraty, they said, virginity was very highly praised, not only in a girl but also in a boy. Here again, I have my doubts as to the accuracy of this reply, suspecting a knowledge of European ideals in such matters, especially those of the Victorian era. Since much that is British in India today still reflects this period, this may have influenced them to give me such an answer. It was added, however, that other, higher castes, such as Nayars, had no such prejudices, and because of this I have wondered if the information did not take the form that it did out of a desire to praise Thandans and show them up in a favourable light in comparison with Nayars. It was probably a combination of both that prompted them to take this attitude: they wanted to make out that their caste conformed to European standards in what concerned pre-marital sexual relations and was therefore superior to that of the Nayars, their immediate rivals. 836 124 564 [177]

I enquired privately, one day, what was the position adopted in coitus by this community. I was told that, contrary to what happened in higher castes where the man lay below the woman, with Thandans the man was always above. The contrary "was not favourable to the procreation of warriors", a strange remark I thought, considering that it was the Nayars who, in olden days, constituted the martial class. I had already heard about this particular way in which some castes in Malabar were reputed to have sexual intercourse, when I was working with the Todas in the Nilgiris during the summer of 1949. I will be giving an account of it in the chapter about these people. 833 564

The only point which my interpreter was willing to concede to the higher castes was that they were less inclined to homosexuality than the 838 564 177

4:Gough E-5 (1947-1949, 1952)1958 AW11 Kerala AW11
Nayar

787 astrologer, who, however, normally leaves his patient to guess which of his enemies
754 has injured him. Public accusations of witchcraft and sorcery are theoretically not
564 permitted, although Nāyars have been known to take the law into their own hands and inflict beatings on Pānans and Parayans whom they believed to have attacked them
755 through witchcraft. Normally, sickness resulting from possession by a ghost or demon
754 as a result of witchcraft or sorcery is counteracted by exorcism. Local specialists of
564 the castes of washermen, astrologers or umbrellamakers are hired to attend at the
787 patient's house. There they make sacrifices to patron spirits whom they themselves control. Later, they voluntarily become possessed by these spirits and perform frenzied dances in hideous masks before the patient, calling upon the alien malevolent spirit to leave him. The patient usually goes into a hysterical fit, after which the sickness may subside. Exorcism by masked dancing of this kind is known as *kōlam tullal*. Any form of rites or spells to control ghosts or minor deities, whether evil or beneficent, is covered by the general term *mantravādam*.

Analysis

769 The analysis of beliefs and practices centering about alien ghosts involves the
182 following questions: 1) Why are alien ghosts appropriate objects of fear? 2) How do these fears fit into the general pattern of Nāyar handling of aggression? 3) What psychic and social functions are fulfilled by the institutions surrounding alien ghosts? The answers to these questions will relate the alien ghost patterns to the functioning of the local community and its subgroups, and to the expressive needs of individuals.

769 *Alien ghosts as objects of fear.* Alien ghosts are individuals who suffered unusual or
152 premature death. People expect them to be especially malevolent. This expectation is based on their presumed envy of the living, and in some instances on the fact that,
182 having found death through violence and hatred, they can be expected to continue to be violent and hateful. Hence they are appropriate targets of fear.

Alien ghosts are the focus of more violent fears and hatreds than are the ghosts of matrilineal forebears, for they can be even more capricious and wantonly punitive. As we have seen, Nāyars do express a limited amount of aggression against lineage
[865] ghosts, and I have suggested that this is because their aggression training is not so strict as to prevent them from acknowledging to themselves some degree of hostility toward living matrilineal elders. Their projected aggression toward lineage ghosts, however, is constrained—like their aggression toward living elders. These ghosts, although punitive, are more protective than alien ghosts.

Alien ghosts are congenial objects for more violent aggression and fear, precisely because they *are* alien. They are securely outside the individual's most significant set
[564] of personal relations—those of the lineage. Even Brahmans, whose aggression training is so severe that they are unable to acknowledge hostility between themselves and their own ancestral ghosts, express fear and hatred of alien ghosts.

I assume that the fear and hostility which is directed at alien ghosts really has its source elsewhere. My reason for this assumption is that, although the fact that they died unnaturally provides a plausible reason why alien ghosts should be thought of as generally hostile, there is in most cases no ostensible reason in the individual's own personal relationships to alien ghosts which would account for their being chosen as the targets of hatred and fear. Presumably, if we follow psychoanalytic theory, the ultimate sources of these fears lie in familial relationships. This would seem reasonable

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3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
[783] cooking arrangements. Husband and wife observed rules of ritual pollution as in hypergamous marriages in the Central kingdoms.

855 THE FATHER AND HIS KIN

613 The kāranavan held ultimate legal control over all his juniors, but their fathers had limited customary rights in and obligations to them.
593 A man was expected to care for his children in his home until they reached puberty or married. Although their own taravād had a legal obligation to maintain them in food and clothing, the father's taravād
[867] customarily supplied their day-to-day needs as a matter of pride. The
[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
593 could exercise domestic discipline while they stayed with him, and
613 could expect kindness and occasional help from them when he was
[584] old. His consent had to be sought for his children's marriages and he often arranged the marriage of his daughter, although he could not
[431] override her kāranavan's wishes. Over and above their customary

592 [64] Every woman is thus the potential founder
571 of a property-group, and often, after her brothers have in turn been karanavans and are dead, she lives to see her segment's property divided from that of her sisters, and her son or even daughter's son established as head of her group. However, some women do not of course become founders of groups, either because they have no children or because they have only daughters who themselves become founders in their own right when their sons are old enough. Again, a group of brothers with no sisters was traditionally unlikely to form a separate group, since they would have no women to perpetuate their group(or for that matter, to cook for them). They would be likely to remain volunatrily attached to a parallel segment, succeeding, along with their classificatory brothers, to karanavanship as they became in turn oldest member of the group. Alternatively they might split away and adopt one or more girls from collateral segments to perpetuate their separate group.

In all cases of partition, division of the property was stirpital: equal shares accrued to segments of the same order which were descended from sisters. The segment which contained the old karanavan at the time of partition usually retained the ancestral house.

592(d) Kinship Relations within the Group
602 The karanavan was traditionally unequivocal
868 head of the group. He managed the property, built new houses, repaired the old, leased land from the janmi, and controlled [65] the labour

592 of serfs. He could command all other members,
602 male or female, and children were trained to
868 obey him with reverence. He[1] had the rights of
a pater over small children: till puberty he was
responsible for having them educated in Malaya-
lam reading and writing, must discipline them
like a father in patriliny, and might beat them
if they disobeyed. Even today in orthodox
[593] houses, the father of a child has no share at all
in the karanavan's rights of pater: he may not
interfere in education or discipline or question
the karanavan's right to dispose of a child's
career and services.

As their legal guardian, the karanavan must traditionally pass on to young men the martial traditions, swords and other weapons of the taravad. He must educate them also in the management of lands and serfs and the cultivation of gardens. Even today in villages, every Nayar has expert knowledge of paddy and garden cultivation and the planning of household architecture. Such information is learned with great care from the karanavan and younger brothers of the mother, all of whom play a part in the child's education after the age of four to five. In spite of interpersonal rivalry between men, Nayars show great loyalty to the group as a whole, pride in the military skill, dignity and financial integrity of their karanavans of past ages, and eagerness to identify with their mothers' brothers and eventually take their place as leaders of the property-group. This pride in the offices and public status of the group is of course most marked in royal lineages, [66] but

1 [the Karanavan --- Analyst]

592 602 868 it occurs in subcastes as low as washermen, funeral priests and barbers, among whom all tasks are traditionally learnt from the mother's brothers. The handing on of skills in the matri-
592 602 828 lineal line goes along with the traditional belief that men of a taravad resemble each other in character, as indeed they often do. Some groups are characterized as bold, and fearless in fighting; others as cautious with money; others as good arbitrators in disputes, friendly to all men; [827] others as unusually intelligent. Individuals are also expected to resemble their fathers (as well as their mothers) physiologically, for the Nayars are not ignorant of the male role in procreation; but character, which they prize greatly, is rightly thought to be transmitted from men to their sisters' sons.

592 602 671 It seems probable that the karanavan's powers were limited by the codification of law which came about during British rule. It is not certain whether he could traditionally alienate land without the consent of other adults of the group. During British rule he could not. British law also permitted appeal to the court by junior members for the removal of a karanavan who could be shown guilty of gross mismanagement. He could then be set aside on a pension in favour of the next younger man. An inefficient karanavan could moreover be forced by court order to maintain accounts of his income and expenditure; since 1933 in Malabar District and 1938 in Cochin all karanavans are legally obliged to do this and to make available their accounts for inspection by junior members [67] once a year. However,

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

613 in Malayalam and some became famous poets during the sixteenth
868 and later centuries. A Nayar received his arms from his feudal lord
[212] —a village headman, a district chief, or a prince—at the age of sixteen. From this time until, perhaps, late middle age, he seems to have
[702] spent periods of each year away from his village attending military
[726] exercises in the larger towns or fighting in the continual wars against the North Malabar chiefdoms, Walluvanad, or Palghat, or between Cochin and Calicut themselves. Evidently Nayars also spent long periods in their villages, at least in the monsoon seasons, for they policed the villages, arranged village festivals, were bailiffs on the landlord's domain, and paid regular visits to local wives. Nayar youths were also obliged to attend with their seniors and fulfill ceremonial obligations
[182] at the life-crisis rites of the landlord family. The rites were of course
[439] conducted in a grand manner and served as a focus for the collection and redistribution of perishable goods throughout the village.

613 Nayar youths also did some cultivation of vegetables and spices in
868 the gardens of their taravāds. Every youth received a rigorous train-
ing in cultivation methods, land management, the keeping of accounts,
241 and the construction of houses, either directly from his kāranavan or, more usually, from the brothers of his own mother. However, there was no clear-cut allocation of differential authority and economic roles among the junior men of a taravād in this area. This was evidently not necessary because the bulk of the work was done by tenants and serfs, whose management could be most easily controlled by a single experienced man. It was enough that a young Nayar should learn *how* to manage and to cultivate so that he might one day replace his kāranavan. Their military duties were obviously the important ones for junior
[701] Nayars. It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about how they were organized in the army, or even if they fought in lineage groups under the leadership of their mothers' brothers. All we know is that they were for the most part recruited in lineages, with the members of one lineage serving the same feudal lord.

613 The division of labor between the sexes was less rigid than in most
462 Hindu castes, but was well demarcated in daily life. Girls played with boys, attended the village school, and even received training in the
[588] gymnasium, until they underwent the tāli rite, usually at about the age of eleven. After this they were segregated from the men of their lineage and concentrated their time on domestic tasks. For most purposes the group of matrilineally related women formed a single work unit under the informal authority of the oldest (or oldest competent) woman. She gave out produce for cooking and allotted to each woman

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

WOMAN-DAUGHTER

993 A woman was her daughter's immediate mentor and moral authority throughout her life. Whereas a son entered the company of men and boys after about the age of seven, a daughter returned to her mother's [868] intimate care after the tāli rite. From her mother and from older women of the taravād a girl learned cookery, household and child care, manners, morals, and minor agricultural work. As her daughters came of age a woman took personal pride in their dress, jewelry, and [864] physical attractions. It is said that formerly mothers and other matrilineally related women instructed girls in the arts of love. A woman should spend her life in her mother's household, and she should obey her, taking over from her more and more of the household re- [769] sponsibilities. She should defend her mother in disputes with other women, offer her companionship in old age, and perform funeral and anniversary rites for her soul after her death.

A daughter replaced her mother in the social structure and was ex- [843] pected to resemble her in character, as indeed she often did. A woman's constant care for her daughter's welfare became particularly prominent during the latter's pregnancy and parturition, when the mother must be at hand to offer counsel, good food, and medicines. So long as they respected her and did not encroach on her authority, she should welcome her daughters' husbands with cordiality. If, how- [606] ever, a husband's conduct gravely displeased his mother-in-law, she [586] had the right to ask her daughter to reject him. A dutiful daughter would usually do so; if she refused, the mother might place her case before the kāranavan and request that the husband be dismissed.

Behavior between mother and daughter was usually informal, and they had few secrets from one another. In the privacy of their home and in the absence of men, matrilineally related women of today discuss their affairs and their neighbors freely, sometimes with hilarious [578] mimicry. Mother and daughter were expected to have occasional quarrels. Indeed, there was often a deep undercurrent of rivalry between them which might break out into acrimonious mutual scolding. A daughter should bear patiently her mother's reprimands, but even though she struck her mother in anger her bad conduct would be forgiven more readily than the neglect of a son. A mother would also often try to shield her daughters from anger on the part of the kāranavan, of the mother's own brothers, or even of her sons. Mother and daughters usually maintained unity in disputes with other segments of the taravād, and it was axiomatic that mother and daughters stand united in disputes with other households.

3:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AWll Kerala AWll
North Kerala Nayar

593 will have had different life experiences. One set of siblings may re-
184 ceive property from their father in which their maternal half-siblings
858 have no legal rights. Each set of full siblings will have important
[613] relationships with its own paternal kin. In many respects, therefore, children of the same mother by different fathers have a relationship more comparable to that of the children of two sisters than to that which obtains between full siblings. However, the ties between maternal half-siblings are much stronger than those between paternal half-siblings, who have only a slight relationship. At best, it may be comparable to that between paternal parallel cousins; at worst it may be one of open hostility.

768 A woman's claims on her husband's taravād ceased absolutely with
613 his death. As in Central Kerala, a widow was ceremonially conducted out of her husband's house immediately after the death and could
[764] not enter it thereafter. Husband and wife did not observe death pollu-
[783] tion and did not take part in each other's funeral rites.

591 Hypergamous marriages in aristocratic lineages bore some re-
613 semblance to those in Central Kerala, although they were never polyandrous. Brahman husbands of royal or chiefly women lived
184 matrilocally at the expense of the palace as in Central Kerala. Royal and chiefly men, however, brought their lower-ranking wives to live on their estates in avunculocal residence. The wife and her children occupied a separate house or else a wing of the palace with separate
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[868] father was expected to train his small children in manners and morals, to see that they were taught to write, and to give his sons instruction in cultivation. In return he could ask his children to do small tasks,
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9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

174 not borne out either by any Sanskrit authority or Dravidian traditions;[1] but certain legends refer to conflicts between them and the Hindu colonists of later times, and these are said to have been led by Parasurama, and the Nagas from Pätäla whom they found in possession of the country.[2] The latter were not forced to divide the spoil with the Kshatriyas or warriors who elsewhere counterbalanced the power of the Brahmans, and obliged them to keep up a continual struggle in which victory alternated with defeat. These internecine dissensions gave the indigenous element a chance to recover itself by degrees, and finally gave birth to a military aristocracy called the Nayars.[3]

701 The Nayars of ancient times formed the chief militia in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore, and their valour and other fighting qualities evoked the admiration of foreigners, and inspired even the restless Portuguese poet Cameons, who described them in the following apt lines:—

The military character of the Nayars.

> Poliar the labouring clans were named;
> By the proud Nayars the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandished in the right;
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight.

175 One of the earliest accounts of the Nayars is found in the 701 writings of Duarte Barbosa, who described them as men of noble descent, who had to be armed as knights by the king or lord with whom they lived, and who could not call themselves Nayars until they had been so equipped as to bear arms. They were generally sent to school at the age of seven to learn all [868] manner of athletic feats and to enable them to use their [147] weapons.[4] Their sinews and joints were so stretched and anointed with the *oyle sesamus* by skillful fellows called "Panicars," who were captains in war, that they became very light and nimble; and could "wind and twine their bodies" as if they had no bones. They cast themselves backwards and forwards, high and low, to the astonishment of the beholders, and the delight in their weapon was so great that they

1. Grammar of the Dravidian Languages, Introduction, page 107.
2. The Sun and the Serpent, page 107.
3. Primitive Folk, page 107.
4. A description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar by Duarte Barbosa, page 128—129.

12:Peter E-5 (1939, 1949) 1963 AW11 Kerala AW11
Panans

853 could see, was obviously a way of circumventing the difficulty of adequate nourishment, something to which a great majority of the mothers in the vast multitudes of Asia habitually resort.

*595 Father Korappan was away working, and he had taken twelve year
[868] old Krishna with him as an apprentice, so I was not able to photograph
[126] the whole family. But I obtained a picture of Sita with Kumaran at her breast and Chami and Narayan sitting next to her, which I give here in Fig. 15. The genealogy is in Table 18.

564 Where *tarawads* were not known, Sita gave me the name of the vil-
614 lage. From what she told me, the clans were patrilineal, inheritance
[428] was *makkathayam*, and exogamy was the rule, also in the *kiriyams*. Her husband's matrilineal descent group was called Walleananad. The house
*595 was leased as a *kudiyiruppu* for which they paid a yearly rent of twelve
[429] annas to the *janmi*, Eranur Mana Narayan Nambudripad. They had been fifteen years at this place, and had come from about a furlong away where they used to reside before. This awakened my curiosity, and I enquired how this had happened.

Sita told me that her husbands originally lived in the other house, because it was the *tarawad's* headquarters. The name Kundilpadam which it bore meant "low field", and Vellarkaden which was the name of their present house, was just the appellation by which their new dwelling was known. Her husbands' father was the youngest of a pair of brothers, and they had both taken wives to themselves and had not lived in polyandry. Their offspring, her husbands and their father's elder brother's children, had continued to live together, and they, Panju and Korappan, had married first, twenty seven years ago. Then, twelve years later, the cousins had also got married, and, in order to make place for them, Sita and her surviving husband, Korappan, being the junior members, had moved away to another residence, the one where they lived at present.

[601] I made the genealogy of the neighbouring household as the informant gave it to me. It is shown here in Table 19. Two brothers, Panju and Raman, respectively aged forty six and forty, lived polyandrously with a common wife called Cherona, thirty three years old. They had four children, of whom none were married, since they were still too young.

361 On the 21st of November, 1949, I went to Palarmanpalam, a cluster of houses on the road between Ottappalam and the Lakkidi railway station, about a mile before the latter is reached. The object of our
564 visit was to see a *Pulluvan* household, that is of herbalists and *nag* snake
750 worshippers, a sub-caste associated to the artisans.
771

[Text continues on p. 214]

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Nayar

land-owning class. The large admixture of Aryan blood 173
combined with the physical peculiarities of the country 564
would go far to explain the very marked difference between the Nāyar of the present day and what may be considered the corresponding Dravidian races in the rest of the Presidency.*

In connection with the former position of the Nāyars 175
as protectors of the State, it is noted by Mr. Logan † that 564
"in Johnston's 'Relations of the most famous Kingdom 701
in the world' (1611), there occurs the following quaintly written account of this protector guild. 'It is strange to see how ready the Souldiour of this country is at his Weapons: they are all gentile men, and tearmed Naires. At seven Years of Age they are put to School to learn [868] ●
the Use of their Weapons, where, to make them nimble and active, their Sinnewes and Joints are stretched by skilful Fellows, and annointed with the Oyle Sesamus [gingelly: *Sesamum indicum*]: By this annointing they become so light and nimble that they will winde and turn their Bodies as if they had no Bones, casting them forward, backward, high and low, even to the Astonishment of the Beholders. Their continual Delight is in their [186]
Weapon, perswading themselves that no Nation goeth beyond them in Skill and Dexterity.' And. Jonathan Duncan, who visited Malabar more than once as one of the Commissioners from Bengal in 1792–93, and afterwards as Governor of Bombay, after quoting the following lines from Mickle's Camoens, Book VII—

> 'Poliar the labouring lower clans are named:
> By the proud Nayrs the noble rank is claimed;
> The toils of culture and of art they scorn:
> The shining faulchion brandish'd in the right—
> Their left arm wields the target in the fight'—

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Manual of the Malabar district.

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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175 company of Nāyars for the honour of the Valluvanad
643 Rāja. And probably the frantic fanatical rush of the
762 Māppillas on British bayonets, which is not even yet
796 a thing of the past, is the latest development of this ancient custom of the Nāyars. The martial spirit of
181 the Nāyars in these piping times of peace has quite died out for want of exercise. The Nāyar is more and
[224] more becoming a family man. Comparatively few of them now-a-days even engage in hunting." According
175 to an inscription of the King Kulōttunga I (A.D. 1083-
648 84), he conquered Kudamalai-Nadu, *i.e.*, the western hill
181 country (Malabar), whose warriors, the ancestors of the
703 Nāyars of the present day, perished to the last man in defending their independence.*

175 The following description of the Nāyars at the
564 beginning of the sixteenth century is given by Duarte
701 Barbosa.† "The Nairs are the gentry, and have no
[411] other duty than to carry on war, and they continually carry their arms with them, which are swords, bows, arrows, bucklers, and lances. They all live with the kings, and some of them with other lords, relations of the kings, and lords of the country, and with the salaried governors, and with one another. They are very smart men, and much taken up with their nobility. . . . These Nairs, besides being all of noble descent, have to be armed as knights by the hand of a king or lord with whom they live, and until they have been so equipped they cannot bear arms nor call themselves Nairs. . . .
175 In general, when they are seven years of age, they are
● 868 immediately sent to school to learn all manner of feats of agility and gymnastics for the use of their weapons.

* E. Hultzsch, South-Indian Inscriptions, III, 2, 1203.

† Description of the Coasts of East Africa and Malabar. Translation. Hakluyt Society, 1866.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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First they learn to dance and then to tumble, and for that purpose they render supple all their limbs from their childhood, so that they can bend them in any direction. 175 868

. . . These Nairs live outside the towns separate from other people on their estates which are fenced in. When they go anywhere, they shout to the peasants, that they may get out of the way where they have to pass; and the peasants do so, and, if they did not do it, the Nairs might kill them without penalty. And, if a peasant were by misfortune to touch a Nair lady, her relations would immediately kill her, and likewise the man that touched her and all his relations. This, they say, is done to avoid all opportunity of mixing the blood with that of the peasants. . . . These are very clean and well-dressed women, and they hold it in great honour to know how to please men. They have a belief amongst them that the woman who dies a virgin does not go to paradise." 175 564 683 175 564 831

Writing in the eighteenth century, Hamilton states * that "it was an ancient custom for the Samorin (Zamorin) to reign but twelve years, and no longer. If he died before his term was expired, it saved him a troublesome ceremony of cutting his own throat on a public scaffold erected for that purpose. He first made a feast for all his nobility and gentry, who were very numerous. After the feast he saluted his guests, went on the scaffold, and very neatly cut his own throat in the view of the assembly. His body was, a little while after, burned with great pomp and ceremony, and the grandees elected a new Samorin. Whether that custom was a religious or a civil ceremony I know not, but it is now laid aside, and a new custom is followed by the modern Samorin, that a jubilee is 175 643 762 175 178 643 796

* New Account of the East Indies, 1744.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

603 took upon herself much of the moral training of her grandchildren. It
[869] was chiefly from the grandmother that children learned religious mythology and stories from their taravād's history. If she was the oldest woman of the house and if her son was kāranavan, a woman of strong personality might virtually direct the household, protecting the grandchildren both from their mother's indulgence and from their uncles' displeasure. She seldom inflicted corporal punishment but was obeyed
[861] by young children more readily than the mother. As they grew to maturity a woman tended to show indulgent pride in her grandsons
[858] as the pillars of her old age. By contrast she might show jealousy of her granddaughters and be a harsher judge of their manners and morals than was their mother.

MAN-SISTER'S SON

604 A kāranavan had special rights in and obligations to his sisters' chil-
429 dren, some of which have been detailed. As their legal guardian he exercised the rights and obligations which normally accrue to the legal father in the higher patrilineal castes of India. He was respon-
604 sible for his nephews' training in the laws and morality of their caste,
86 in literacy, in agricultural work, and in military skills. Much of this training he often dispensed in person either before or after he became kāranavan. He was responsible for maintaining the junior men of his taravād and for guarding and, if possible, augmenting the ancestral property on their behalf. In turn they owed him obedience, loyalty, and submissive respect. A kāranavan might inflict a beating on a disobedient nephew under about the age of sixteen or might order a younger brother to do this on his behalf.

604 Relationships with all mother's brothers within the property group were modeled on that with the kāranavan. A man owed all of them respect and obedience within the framework of the kāranavan's jurisdiction. Often a boy's junior mother's brothers were absent from the taravād. When they were home the mother's own brothers took a special interest in him. They might play with him indulgently until he was about the age of three. After this he learned to respect them, to be quiet in their presence, and to fear his mother's report of his ill conduct to them. As he grew older it was usually from his mother's own brothers that a boy received detailed training in agricultural mat-
[561] ters and it was they who most frequently chastised him. Throughout
[613] their lives a man owed obedience and loyalty to all men of senior
[769] generation in his taravād, and after their deaths, regular offerings in propitiation of their spirits.

[576] The etiquette of behavior between a man and his mother's brothers

595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

562 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship [871] and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best [875] Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

595 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars.
562 But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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are also indulged in. In these days of modern civilization, when schools for boys and girls have increased in the State, many take advantage of the instruction imparted in them, so that when the latter become adults, they profitably spend their leisure hours in reading religious and other books. Towards the evening they go to the temple for worshipping and go round it several times, which, though hygienic in its origin, is considered of religious importance. They return home, and their supper is generally before eight o'clock; after this they retire to their rooms, each married woman occupying her separate room or set of rooms. They lie on mats or beds spread on the floor or on the latter placed on cots with which the rooms are neatly furnished. Such in brief is the family life and organisation of well-to-do families of the Nayars. In poor families in which the members subsist by hard work, the daily routine of life considerably differs from those described above.

Mention has already been made of the *kāranavan*, who is the manager of all affairs in the Nayar family. He is legally responsible for the proper management of the joint property, for the education of the junior members and for everything conducive to the general welfare and happiness of every member of the family. It must be remembered that the family property is joint property and that no member can claim that any portion of it belongs to him or to her, nor can any individual member claim a separate possession or enjoyment of any portion. The ground-work of the system is, that the family property is held in trust for the support of the females and their descendants in the female line. The property is impartible and the family is indissoluble except with the consent of all its members. When, in course of time, the family becomes too unwieldy to be governed and managed by one man, the circumstances and natural forces bring about a division of the family into various distinct sections or families. These separate families keep up the original traditions of their common descent, but have no legal right to the property of one another. The members of the family and their descendants in the female line, thus separated by partition from the main stock, form a *tāvazhi* (*ta*=mother, *vazhi*=line, *i. e.*, mother's line). They live in a separate building and own that portion of the joint property which is theirs in the partition, and which is managed

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India urban participation rate, in case of rural participation rate, the difference is almost 8 per cent. 162 464

11.12 As a general rule the difference between rural and urban participation rates is about 6 to 7 per cent. In Kerala, however, this difference narrows down to 1.3 per cent. This is primarily due to an abnormally low rural participation rate, the causes for which are analyzed below. [369]

11.13 It was mentioned earlier that the population of Kerala has a very high proportion of females and that this is particularly marked in the working age group. Since the proportion of females taking part in economic activity is generally less than that of males, this difference being particularly marked in Kerala (Table 57), it naturally tends to pull down the participation rates.

11.14 The participation rate in the lower ranges of age is very much influenced by the proportion of school-going children. It is well known that the standards of primary education in Kerala are the highest in the whole of India. About 18 per cent of population attends schools and colleges against only 8.31 per cent in the whole of India. This is an important factor in reducing the rural participation rate. [871]

11.15 The size of working force is also a function of the opportunities available for work. The agricultural sector of Kerala is highly over-populated, the size of average holdings being only 1.5 acres (all-India 7.5 acres). Moreover, due to the predominance of perennial crops, cropping pattern in Kerala is much less labour-intensive than in the other parts of India.[1] That the agricultural sector of Kerala is comparatively less labour-absorbing is confirmed by the very low participation rate in the agricultural sector of Kerala in comparison to the non-agricultural sector. (Table 57). These are some of the factors limiting the scope for gainful employment in the rural areas. [423]

Past Trend

11.16 The table below gives an indication of the trend of the general participation rate as indicated from the last three Census operations: 161 162 464

TREND IN PARTICIPATION RATE—1931, 1941 AND 1951

	Population Density	*Participation Rates** (In per cent)	*Total Population* (In lakhs)
1931	634	48.0	95.2
1941	737	36.6	110.37
1951	905	36.1	135.6

*These figures have to be used with reservations since the concepts in successive Censuses were different. However, suitable modifications have been made to make them broadly comparable.

N.B.: Population density and population figures are for Kerala, while participation rate figures are only for Travancore-Cochin.

[1] Chapter on Agriculture and Plantations.

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464 some of the concepts used. Working force has already been defined as comprising all those persons who take part in gainful economic activity. Labour force, on the other hand, includes all those members of the population who are already engaged in gainful activity and those who are willing to take up work, generally at the current level of wages. The difference between labour force and the working force gives the magnitude of those who are unemployed and are actively seeking work.

464 128 11.24 Although these concepts are quite clear, according to definitions, their application in the context of a backward economy like that of Kerala is fraught with difficulties, which are by now quite well known. The seasonal and non-institutionalized nature of economic activity over a wide sphere of the economy creates problems in the way of precise quantification of unemployment. Statistical accuracy of the figures discussed below is naturally subject to these limitations.

464 659 11.25 The main source of information on this subject is the survey of unemployment for Travancore-Cochin and Malabar region carried out by the Statistics Department of the State. The survey was carried out in 1954-55 for the Travancore-Cochin region and in 1956-57 for Malabar. In the absence of figures for the same year, the combined results for the two different years are taken, by and large, to be representative of the situation as it existed during 1955-56.

162 464 11.26 Table 60 gives the combined results of the two surveys. According to concepts used in the survey, the total population has been divided into eight activity groups given in column 1 of Table 60. Persons falling in category 4, 6, 7, that is, (*i*) those having regular employment (*ii*) casual workers and (*iii*) the people in search of employment, make up the labour force. Category (7) includes the unemployed persons. The under-employed section of the population is covered by category (6), i.e., the casual workers.

11.27 According to this survey, labour force as a proportion of total population comes to 32.5 per cent (all-India : 42.2%[1]). The difference between labour force—population ratio as worked out from this survey and that revealed by the NSS for all-India is primarily due to a difference in the concepts used. The Unemployment Survey of Kerala does not include those below 15 years in the labour force. This assumption is quite justified in the case of a State like Kerala where most of the children [871] go to school. In 1955-56, 14.1 lakh children were registered on the rolls of primary schools. These form about 22 per cent of all the children below 15 years of age. Roughly the same proportion of children below 15 years belong to the labour force in the whole of India (according to the NSS Report). It may, therefore, be concluded that there are only stray cases of children below 15 years belonging to the labour force in Kerala.

11.28 Another way of working out the ratio between the labour force and the total population in the State is to calculate the working force on the basis of Census data and to add to it the number of unemployed persons as obtained from the Unemployment Survey in Kerala. On the basis of the participation rate of 33.5 per cent, working force during 1956 comes out to 50.3 lakh persons[2]. The number of

[113] [1] National Sample Survey : *Report on Employment and Unemployment.*

[2] The manner of working out the working force for 1956 is explained in Appendix 1 to Chapter 1.

[See p. 311, category 116 -- Analyst]

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162 approximations can be made regarding the number of persons unemployed in rural
464 and urban areas.
369 11.33 There is reason to believe that the high incidence of open unemployment in Kerala is primarily due to high rural unemployment. The two basic reasons for this premise, viz., the very small size of holdings and predominance of perennial crops have already been explained. This conclusion is also corroborated by evidence from some other sources. During 1956 the number of unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges was 38,988 persons.[1] A majority of those registering themselves with the Employment Exchanges generally come from the urban areas. It is believed that roughly 25 per cent[2] of the unemployed persons get themselves registered with the Employment Exchanges in India. In Kerala, the standard of literacy being very high, it may be assumed that a higher proportion (40%) of the unemployed get themselves registered. On this basis the total number of unemployed persons in urban areas would be about 0.95 lakhs. Out of the total unemployed population of 6.6 lakhs, about 5.65 lakhs must, therefore, be residents of rural areas. On the basis of these calculations, rural-urban distribution of the unemployed and the labour force for 1956 is given in the table below:

DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT IN RURAL AND URBAN AREAS

(In Million)

	Rural	*Urban*	*Total*
1. Population	12.9 (86%)	2.10 (14.0%)	15 0 (100%)
2. Working Force	4.34	.68	5.02
3. Unemployed	0.565	.095	.66
4. Unemployed as Percentage of Population	0.44	.45	.44
5. Labour Force (2+3)	4.905	.775	5.68
6. Labour Force as Percentage of Population	3.80	3.69	3.786

11.34 It may thus be seen that unlike the rest of India the percentage of unemployed population in rural areas is not markedly less than that in the urban areas. In both areas it works out to about 4.5 per cent.

Educational Standards of the Unemployed

162 11.35 Analysis of educational attainments of the unemployed population can be
464 helpful in throwing light on the qualitative aspects of the unemployed. The impression one generally gets about Kerala is that unemployment is more severe among
871 the educated persons. The results of the Kerala Unemployment Survey do not exactly bear out this contention. Only 6.8 per cent of those unemployed had been educated upto school leaving (SSLC) standard. The extent of technical education was even lower, only 2.5 per cent of the unemployed having received any form of
[212] technical education. It would thus appear that although a fairly large proportion of the unemployed may be literate, not many of them are educated, if ESLC is taken to be the minimum requirement for being defined as an educated person.

[1] *Basic Statistics—Kerala*, published by the State Department of Statistics.
[2] *NSS—Preliminary Report on Urban Unemployment* Sept. 1953.

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3. THE PEOPLE

161 The new State is one of the most densely populated in the whole of [212] India, as well as one in which the percentage of literacy is highest. Unfortunately no current statistics are available, as Kerala is of very recent creation, but some idea can be gained from the fact that in the Ponani taluk of the former district of Malabar, according to the Madras Government Statistical Atlas, 1935, there were 626,500 inhabitants, or 1,471 per square mile. The rate of increase of the population is also very rapid: about 11% every ten years. The percentage of education is [871] highest in Travancore, Cochin. In 1951, 53.8% were reported literate [212] (*Census of India*, Vol. xii).

114 The people of Kerala are a very complex collection and it would be hopeless to attempt to give a full and detailed description of them. The reader is referred to those works on the subject which have already been published, the titles of some of which can be found in the Bibliography. 105 In order to understand, however, the extraordinary way in which Kerala 564 society is partitioned into a number of individual groups, and how each of these has its own particular customs and ways, as for instance polyandry, it is essential to give a general idea of the different castes and subcastes which compose the population, with a brief outline of their social organization and professional occupations.

Rather naturally, as is to be expected from the mythological version of the origins of the country mentioned above, the summit of the hierarchy is occupied by the *Nambudri Brahmin*. As W. Logan very aptly puts it in his *Malabar* (Madras, 1887): "His person is holy; his directions command, his movements are a procession; his meals nectar; he is the holiest of human beings, the representative of God on earth." (p. 127). There are eight subdivisions to the caste, some more holy than others, by reason of the occupations which they pursue. Other Brahmins in Malabar, who have come from outside and are thus somewhat looked down upon, are the Pattars, Embrandiris, Tamil and Konkani Brahmins.

[463] Below this exalted strata of Kerala society come the *Ambalavasis* or [565] temple attendants, of whom there exist roughly nine subdivisions. With them are to be classed the self-styled *Kshattriyas* and the *Samantans*, from whose ranks are drawn the flower of the former military aristocracy. The Malayalam maharajas and rajas all belong to this class, as does the family of the Zamorin of Calicut.

In immediate succession are the *Nayars*, Sudras by caste, descendants of those easterners whom Parasu Raman brought in for the protection

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but then this influence made itself felt rather by conversions and personal dealings than by any direct, government action, as now.

Transport, which in Kerala had always been difficult, was also greatly changed. Modern facilities, such as good roads, ferries, bridges; later, motor cars, railways, engine-driven ships, boats and launches; and finally, aeroplanes, have put thousands of boatmen and cartmen out of work and have not only brought formerly isolated and inaccessible parts of the country into contact with the rest, but have also made important centres become within easy and rapid reach of each other. As in other parts of the world where it is impossible for race distinctions to be observed in a system of general transport, caste is overlooked in public transport in Kerala, and this fact has greatly contributed to breaking down traditional socio-religious pre-occupations in such matters.

With the institution of a regular method of dispensing justice through courts, caste was dealt a further blow; the European masters of India refused to treat individuals otherwise than as equals before the law. The judiciary personnel was recruited from all sections of the population, regardless of caste or creed. This measure, together with the new way in which government servants were enlisted, gave the more enlightened castes of Nayars and Tiyas their chance. The present eminence in public affairs which these two communities have attained is in a large measure due to the opportunities thus thrown open to them.

Education, of course, also had a lot to do with it. Instead of the old kind in which village teachers taught native lore and traditions in an unchanging, ageless fashion, European-type schools were opened and modern means of education became available to all who wished to take advantage of them. These methods may be criticised today, since independance in 1947, as being un-Indian and useless in the context of the national culture, but the fact remains that they brought great changes in the outlook of the people, especially among the middle classes, who have indisputably benefitted from them.

Liberal, learned professions began to be followed by many to whom such careers were not open before, and again, regardless of caste distinctions, lawyers, doctors and teachers appeared in large numbers in Kerala. Many of them soon travelled to other parts of India, where their reputation as able and knowledgeable practitioners has never ceased to grow. A large part of the Government of India's New Delhi office personnel is made up of men from Kerala, in both high and subordinate positions, especially Nayars, so much so, indeed, that the fact has become the subject of a standing joke.

553
613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shântikâran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pûja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambûdri, or another Nâyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the
[576] Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kâthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pâla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

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Savings are not invested in industrial undertakings, there being 454
no openings for the same.

On the question of rural indebtedness, its causes and extent, 426
much can be written. There has been, I am told, an enormous increase in indebtedness among all classes. Nearly 75 per cent are in debt, especially so the poor agriculturists. The great proportion of small landholders and agricultural workers, the want of diversity of industry and occupation, the rise in the price of commodities, the high usurious interest which a few take for money advanced, the substitution of money for kind in taxes, the high cost of education, lower and higher, to which Brahmans resort now-a-days, the high value which people set on Government service, however small the pay, all these are working, some generally and others in particular cases, to cause and perpetuate rural indebtedness. Co-operative credit societies could do much to help the people out of it. I may also mention that litigation is also responsible. For every paltry difference resort is had to the [691] Munsif's or the Magistrate's Court, as there are no other means of settling such differences. There are nearly twenty-five vakils or pleaders in the Munsif's Court alone who cast nets to earn something by favouring the litigious spirit. Among the Brahmans the 'dowry system' is working some mischief. Every girl has to [582] be given in marriage before her twelfth year and the bridegroom demands a good round sum. Social reformers condemn the system. A redeeming feature of it, viz., that that sum is a substan- [871] tial help to the bridegroom's costly higher English education is not wholly to be forgotten; and no Brahman stops his education until thrown out by the University or money ceases to be forthcoming.

The proportion of debtors who have liberated themselves from debt may be estimated at nearly a fourth.

Communal village life is unknown in the 'village.' The 621
Brahmans in the 'town' try to revive a 'Samooham' (gathering) but with no success so far. There is no communal property. Separate individual life is the order. The local Muhammadans and Christians keep up a kind of unity within their 'castes' because of their religion and Church. The Hindu temples in the village are managed by the State Government. For every slight improvement 653
in the village the people have to approach the Government. For example, the local tank has been in ruins for the last three or four years; the Government of course helps the people, but the tank is not yet repaired because of official delay and when it is actually done, as was done once a few years back, the contractor earns a good round sum as profit and the work is not properly carried out.

Temples and festivals.—The annual religious festival in the local 796
temple at Watakanchery town which lasts for five days is conducted by the Government. Rs. 128 and 128 paras of paddy (24 cwt.) are spent; a contractor bids for the sum and he conducts the festival.

The people of the village themselves conduct an annual religious festival at a temple nearly three miles to the north by collecting subscriptions. They spend nearly Rs. 300 on the occasion. It is pleasant to witness a procession in Malabar. So many elephants are ornamented and made to stand in array. The number of elephants depends upon the depth of the purse. Drum-beaters

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562 women can speak to other caste people, male or female, without breach of decorum. Purdah is observed among the Nambudri Brahman women.

312 Every house contains a well from which water is taken for drinking and domestic purposes. Water is specially good in the village since the ground forms a good filter. Wells are generally not very deep. Few people boil the water before drinking. Generally a raised mound is erected round the well to keep bad water out; nevertheless, during the rainy season water from the compounds runs to the wells with the result that the wells get extremely muddy, but the water is used without compunction by the people. Tank water is used only for bathing.

•871 *Education.*—There are only three schools in the whole village, one for boys which has this year (1916) been raised to a high school, a Church school for Christian boys, and a vernacular school for girls up to the primary standard. The high school is a spacious building recently constructed at a cost of nearly Rs. 20,000. There is a prescribed code of study, and pupils are prepared for the School Final Examination which is conducted by the State. Brahman girls never attend the school after the age of 12. But all of them learn now to read and write the vernacular which is Malayalam in these parts, though the language the Brahmans use in their houses is Tamil, with an intonation markedly changed from the Tamil in the eastern parts. I subjoin below the strength of the respective classes in the high school and the girls' primary school. The Church school is maintained by the Christians in their church for their exclusive use. It is classed as a primary school.

Sirkar High School, Watakancheri.

	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Form IV	17	7	3	...	1	28
,, III (*a*)... ...	9	7	3	...	2	21
,, ,, (*b*) ...	10	9	3	...	3	25
,, II (*a*)... ...	13	11	1	...	3	28
,, ,, (*b*)	8	17	12	...	2	39
,, I (*a*)	11	7	4	...	2	24
,, ,, (*b*)	10	9	3	...	2	24
Standard IV (*a*)	7	10	4	1	2	24
,, ,, (*b*)	10	7	5	...	1	23
,, III (*a*)	10	20	6	1	1	38
,, ,, (*b*)	16	12	6	3	2	39
,, II (*a*)	6	10	9	...	6	31
,, ,, (*b*)	7	15	7	...	3	32
,, I (*a*)	16	16	2	...	3	37
,, ,, (*b*) ..	11	11	6	2	4	34
Infants (*a*)	9	13	8	4	6	40
,, (*b*) .	9	18	6	1	6	40
Total ...	179	189	88	12	49	527

Note.—The Muhammadans are very backward in point of education. So too the lower castes of Hindus.

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Sirkar Girls' Primary Vernacular School.

871

—	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Standard IV	1	10	2	...	...	13
" III	10	3	2	..	5	20
" II (a)	14	6	1	...	1	22
" (b)	7	6	1	...	10	24
" I (a)	15	10	6	...	3	34
" (b)	2	19	2	...	13	36
Total ...	49	54	14	...	32	149

Nearly 75 per cent of the adults know how to read and write the vernacular, but those who know how to read and write English may be about 2 per cent. There are no pandits worth the name, nor specially educated persons, except the Nambudri Brahmans who study Sanskrit and the Vedas, but they are extremely exclusive and never mix with any people high or low. Their manners and customs would form an interesting study by themselves. [191]

The number of boys (of girls there is not one single instance) who have advanced to more advanced schools elsewhere are only a few. What with the poverty of the people and what with the rigour of the examinations only a few, perhaps fifty, in the place have been able to reach the Matriculation standard, and of these only 7 have been able to graduate, of whom two are B.L.'s. One is studying for medicine as an Hospital Assistant.

The school expenses are usually met by the students' fathers, and in the case of Nayars, uncles. But a father's purse, as I pointed out already, is not very deep. Of the seven graduates mentioned only three were able, with difficulty, to meet the high costs of modern education. The remaining four were assisted by their wives' dowries or by their fathers-in-law.

The choice of career for a candidate who has passed his Matriculation or Secondary School-leaving Certificate is very limited. Most of them engage themselves in the Government service for salaries sometimes as low as Rs. 9 per mensem, but more often Rs. 12 or Rs. 15 to start with, as clerks, teachers in the lower standards, etc. No one sees any other opening so sure and so lasting. In my judgment the modern literary education which stops with the Secondary School-leaving Certificate is not of much use. The student's energy is damped when he enters the world with his Secondary School-leaving Certificate, at least that is my experience in my village. But it is good perhaps that education is becoming less and less useful as an opening to lucrative employment; but the authorities also, in my humble opinion, should change the character of education or so modify it as to make it less literary and more technical, so that an anxious father may not look forward in vain to his son getting into some employment however mean or undignified. [873]

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873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for
217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

538 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth*, *ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

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the brother or son, in the case of a Nayar the sister's son succeeds. 428
The Travancore and Cochin royal families and the Zamorin family descend in the female line.

Water-supply.—Drinking water is supplied by the wells. Every 312
house has one. The sinking of wells is easy here since the soil is loose and there is no rock and the height above the sea level is not much. Wealthy people build the well with granite, others leave it with mud banks. The labourers dig their wells themselves as it involves only two days' work. The wells never dry up. There are three public wells and two temple wells besides. Indeed the scarcity of water is not felt at all. But for bathing purposes the water in the tank is bad, and some people use well-water for the same. The quality of the well-water is fairly good.

Education.—There are seven schools of which one is a secondary 871
school managed by the Taluk Board, one is a Government Girls' School and the other five are elementary schools, one being Muhammadan. There are 680 boys and 185 girls in attendance.

The education imparted is fairly satisfactory, special stress being laid on the vernacular. According to the educational curriculum prescribed by the Director, the geography of the district, a little Indian History, a good training in the vernacular, a little Arithmetic, and the beginning of English by teaching the alphabet and small words, are all taught in the school.

Eighty per cent of the men and fifteen per cent of the women [212]
can read and write the vernacular; about two per cent can read [191]
and write English, and somewhat fewer speak it.

Forty boys have left the village and had a college course, and there is one girl matriculate.

About 20 boys after undergoing a little commercial training at Calicut have gone to Bombay and other commercial centres for employment.

It may here be mentioned that emigration to Ceylon is frequent. 167
Emigrants return after three or four years, and remain in the village for one year, and again go to Ceylon. Nearly 150 have gone within recent years.

The only library in the village is the secondary school library 217
which contains nearly 200 books, all juvenile. Five or six private
persons possess some books. Some are lawyers and their books 517
are connected with law. Others have only novels. Nobody takes study seriously. Nobody is interested in Science as a subject. This lack of enthusiasm for knowledge makes the Indian less original and less artistic. I know nobody in my village who has designed new arts or invented anything at all. This lack is everywhere visible in India and seen even among students who do not care to know anything more than those things which are prescribed for the examination. This fundamental weakness must be shamefully confessed, but there are signs of change in the right direction.

Village administration.—The head of the village is the *adhigari* 622
or the village munsif. He is the representative of the King-Emperor. He collects the revenue, looks after the affairs of the village, has the jurisdiction over minor civil and criminal cases, controls the roads, Government lands and trees and other public places—in fact he represents every function, in a greater or lesser degree, of the King-Emperor, and is the guardian of the public peace. He must

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Peringode.

Ages of dead.	Number according to age.	Fever.	Swelling.	Tuberculosis.	Diarrhœa.	Dyspepsia.	Hysteria.	Skin blotches.	Other causes.
Lifeless birth	4	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Below 1	9	...	1	...	4	...	3	1	...
Between 1 and 10 ...	5	...	1	...	...	3	1	...	...
" 10 " 20 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 20 " 30 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
" 30 " 40 ..	4	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	1
" 40 " 50 ...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
" 50 " 60 ...	2	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...
" 60 " 80 ...	5	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	4
Total ...	30	...	3	4	6	3	4	1	5

Mathur.

Ages of dead.	Number of dead according to ages.	Dysentery.	Diarrhœa.	Hysteria.	Tuberculosis.	Rheumatism.
Below 1	2	...	1	1	...	...
Between 30 and 40	1	...	...	...	1	...
" 50 " 60	3	1	1	...	...	1
" 60 " above ...	5	...	5	...	...	...
Total ...	11	1	7	1	1	1

871 *Education.*—There is one elementary school in the amsam, but it is situated in Peringode desam. It is maintained by a wealthy jenmi of Peringode, who is not an enlightened man. It was started two years ago. It has a good building and sufficient accommodation for the children now on the roll. There were a large number at the commencement of the school when there were enthusiastic teachers who knew the value of education. But they were dispensed with as they soon got into the bad books of the jenmi by their independent attitude. Since then there has been a regular decline in attendance. The maximum limit reached was 210. But now the number on the roll is 103—84 boys and 19 girls. The school is now under weak hands and highly mismanaged. The masters are not efficient and their methods of teaching antiquated. They are themselves people whose knowledge is highly limited. Reading and writing the vernacular, simple rules of arithmetic, and geography are taught.

212 Five per cent of the adults are able to read the vernacular; four
191 per cent to write it. There are only two people able to read, write and speak English, two brothers.

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556 own most of the cultivable land in the village. This family draws an income of rather more than 10,000 paras of paddy from the village, husking it in the village and using it to feed a vast household of Nambudri priests and students, and maintain a choultry. It employs a Sanskrit pandit, whose time, as the demand for Sanskrit teaching diminishes, is partly taken up with the recital to the young students of Puranic stories to which the unseen ladies of the household listen eagerly.

312 *Water-supply.*—The water-supply is abundant and is obtained from deep wells and tanks. Water from deep wells alone is used for drinking purposes. Owing to the rocky nature of the subsoil some wells are dry in summer. Each house has one or more wells; it costs about Rs. 20 to bore an ordinary deep well. The quality of well water is excellent and is an asset to the village. All people [515] bathe every day in tanks, sometimes both in the morning and evening, especially Brahmans. The villagers are personally very clean and tidy.

871 *Education.*—One elementary school, started (very recently) and managed by the philanthropic Nambudri landlord of the place, gives free instruction to boys and girls of all castes up to the fifth standard. The school has two tiled buildings, one having an area of 72 by 20 feet, inside, and a verandah of the same length which is 9 feet broad, and the other having an area of 15 by 18 feet. Both are well ventilated and well situated and have a good appearance. There is a small flower garden in front. The school is provided with the necessary furniture, maps, and pictures, and is as far as it goes one of the best equipped of such schools. It teaches reading, writing and arithmetic, music, drawing and gardening. About the practical, as distinct from the cultural value of this education, one must say (like the Scotchman) "I have my doots." There are now no less than 5 "qualified" teachers; how one wishes that "qualified" meant much more than it does mean in educational language! They are so ill-paid (Rs. 7 to 15 per month) that it is hopeless to expect more capable men to be forthcoming or to take real interest in the work of the school. As it is, I know that at least one master is interested in the work. One hundred and twenty-six boys and 42 girls, I am informed, attend the school more or less regularly. These are drawn from all classes, except the very lowest like Cherumas and Paraiyas. The vast majority however are caste Hindus—all the girls are—and come from the Nayar and Brahman families. One could wish for greater regularity in their attendance. But they complain of having work to do at home, in assisting their parents, or they are sometimes too hungry to attend school. They are as a rule too poor to buy their own books or slates and these have to be provided by the school. Numerous prizes of books, slates, etc., are given by liberal villagers and the manager every year, to encourage the pupils to persist and to attract others. The school is steadily growing.

The average duration of school life is about four years. Many students leave before that period owing to the necessity of working 871 for their livelihood.

212 About 18 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular. This

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includes hardly any females. Some 12 per cent can write the vernacular. Nearly one per cent can talk and read and write English. There are some ten pandits or others who have made a special study of grammar, logic and rhetoric, medicine, astronomy and astrology, all according to Sanskrit works. Two are able Sanskrit scholars, both Brahmans. All the Brahman scholars—some four in all—are well versed in Vedic lore. But no one cares nowadays for such learning, and in consequence their scholarship is miserably inadequately rewarded. They have given up the idea of bringing up their sons in their own fashion and instead send them to English schools. There is one boy in Madras in the Presidency College and some eight others in colleges in Calicut and Palghat, reading in the High School or college classes. 871 [212]

Most of the Brahman boys proceed to advanced schools; there are about ten such now. No Brahman girls proceed to higher schools. But with the advent of an elementary school in the village, they attend that. Formerly they learnt at home or in pial schools with boys. Social difficulties stand in the way of their advanced study. Non-Brahman boys also now go in small numbers to advanced schools. They number not more than a dozen, and none of them has reached a high standard.

One or two of the more advanced students get scholarships covering the school fees; all of them manage with great difficulty to defray their expenses, by borrowing money at high rates of interest, by starting what are called "Kuris," i.e., loans which are paid back by instalments; by selling any property they possess, etc. There is no one in the village who can easily maintain his son at school. Fathers, however, spend their all on their sons' education, hoping that they will get remunerative employment afterwards. [426]

A few boys from the village who have passed through secondary schools have obtained small jobs; none has a good situation. Poorly paid schoolmasters, railway employees and clerks make up the list of the small number of such persons—not more than a dozen. It is more and more difficult for persons who have not got high educational qualifications to get suitable employment. Boys of the village who have received a secondary education and cannot proceed further complain of getting no satisfactory work and having to stay at home or return to their old occupations, which they have very likely neglected and forgotten during their school life. So farmers complain that such education is no good to their sons and we can say nothing in reply, unless we can guarantee situations for the educated. "What is the use of all this fine education," they ask, "if it does not procure a living and makes the boys unfit for what work they know? We would much rather keep them at home to stick to that work and earn a living." How can one urge the cultural and other benefits of education in the face of this practical argument? The quality and kind of education must be improved, made more practical and a better preparation for life.

There are some private libraries of Sanskrit books and palm-leaf manuscripts with the pandits numbering perhaps some 500 in all. The school has a little library where magazines (in the vernacular) and books (English and vernacular) to the number of about 100 are kept. Some of the more advanced students—there are only two or three—have small libraries of English books, 217

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 AW11 Kerala AW11
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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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Nayar

fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police, and the village watchmen (*kávalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

872 youngster got a mastery of the letters. Then he was taught to read and write short sentences on cadjan leaves (*Ola Ezhutal*). He was made to commit to memory short verses, and lessons in arithmetic were added to his curriculum. Thus the youngster acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in about two years, and was thereafter recommended to an advanced course of studies, which consisted of a study of Sanskrit, the perusal of the *Purânas*, and also arithmetic sufficient to enable him to calculate the position of planets and help him in the casting of horoscopes. Girls also were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were encouraged in the reading of the *Purânas*. Such in brief was the course of instruction imparted in these small institutions.

872 The schools were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture, while the boys sat on small mats or on the floor, which was covered with sand for purposes of writing. The teacher had a raised seat from which he supervised and listened to the loud recitations of the lessons set on the previous evenings. The boys went to him, one by one, repeated their lesson, and received another written by him on the palm leaf, which was to be learnt during the day. The school hours were generally from seven to ten in the morning and again from two to five in the afternoon. During the latter hours, the budding scholars were instructed in the reading of the Ramayana and other *Puranas*; and before the end of the lessons for the day, the boys were made to repeat with one voice, some mathematical formula. At home, the boys revised their work and recited the names of Gods and short verses as prayers to them. They had no work for about 12 days in the month, besides the usual Hindu holidays. Twice during the month, when the fortnightly holidays commenced, *i. e.*, on *Dwâdesi* (the 12th day after the full or new moon), the teacher was remunerated by each boy with the payment of an anna or two, and even this was sometimes evaded by the opportune absenting of some pupils. He also received presents of cloth with a rupee or two from some of the richer families to which a few of his pupils belonged. Boys were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; caning was freely resorted to as a mode of correction, and the teacher was often regarded with terror rather than with respect and admiration. Their only books were manuscripts on cadjan leaves; their

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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjál* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

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played. There are also other kinds of plays, which are called *Attakkathas* (plays in which the incidents are represented by dancing and gestures) in Travancore, and *Kathakalis* in Malabar. Many additions to these were made by different scholars in different times, and they now number about fifty-six, most of which are now being acted. Many or all of them possess a high order of literary excellence, and are, year after year, prescribed as vernacular text books for University Examinations.

Personal adornment of the actors.—In the beginning the actors had no regular dress as at present, nor was there any curtain dividing the audience from the stage. The only theatrical property known in those days were figures clumsily drawn upon the bark of the areca palm and attached to the bodies of the actors, while the orchestra consisted only of the *maddalam*, a kind of drum. But innovations were soon introduced, and the first of these were those introduced by the Tirúr or Bettattunad Raja.

It may not be out of place here to give a short sketch of a day's performance as it is to-day. A travelling company, which usually consists of twelve actors, four singers, and four musicians who form an "orchestra with drums (*maddalam* and *chenda*), gongs (*chengalam*) and cymbals (*elathalam*)", is invited and lodged in a house near which they are to give the performance. In the morning they are given gingelly oil for an oil-bath, and are then served with rice, *kanji*, and *pappadam*. This forms their breakfast. After it, they retire to sleep till about four o'clock in the afternoon. At five o'clock they are treated to a sumptuous dinner, and half an hour later begins, by beat of drums and other musical instruments of the company, a formal announcement to the villagers in the neighbourhood that a play is to be performed that night.

The stage is nothing more than a crude wooden structure slightly raised from the ground. The drop curtain consists usually of pieces of cloth sewn together and the figure of a god or an animal drawn thereon. The auditorium consists of mats strewn on the floor for the audience to sit on, while two bell-metal lamps, containing cocoanut-oil and wicks of rolled cotton cloth, are the only means of lighting the theatre. Sometimes to add to the solemnity of the occasion conch shells are

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[357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so
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Sirkar Girls' Primary Vernacular School.

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—	Hindus.			Muhammadans.	Christians.	Total.
	Brahmans.	Nayars.	Other castes.			
Standard IV	1	10	2	...	...	13
" III	10	3	2	..	5	20
" II (a)	14	6	1	...	1	22
" (b)	7	6	1	...	10	24
" I (a)	15	10	6	...	3	34
" (b)	2	19	2	...	13	36
Total ...	49	54	14	...	32	149

Nearly 75 per cent of the adults know how to read and write the vernacular, but those who know how to read and write English may be about 2 per cent. There are no pandits worth the name, nor specially educated persons, except the Nambudri Brahmans who study Sanskrit and the Vedas, but they are extremely exclusive and never mix with any people high or low. Their manners and customs would form an interesting study by themselves. [191]

The number of boys (of girls there is not one single instance) who have advanced to more advanced schools elsewhere are only a few. What with the poverty of the people and what with the rigour of the examinations only a few, perhaps fifty, in the place have been able to reach the Matriculation standard, and of these only 7 have been able to graduate, of whom two are B.L.'s. One is studying for medicine as an Hospital Assistant.

The school expenses are usually met by the students' fathers, and in the case of Nayars, uncles. But a father's purse, as I pointed out already, is not very deep. Of the seven graduates mentioned only three were able, with difficulty, to meet the high costs of modern education. The remaining four were assisted by their wives' dowries or by their fathers-in-law.

The choice of career for a candidate who has passed his Matriculation or Secondary School-leaving Certificate is very limited. Most of them engage themselves in the Government service for salaries sometimes as low as Rs. 9 per mensem, but more often Rs. 12 or Rs. 15 to start with, as clerks, teachers in the lower standards, etc. No one sees any other opening so sure and so lasting. In my judgment the modern literary education which stops with the Secondary School-leaving Certificate is not of much use. The student's energy is damped when he enters the world with his Secondary School-leaving Certificate, at least that is my experience in my village. But it is good perhaps that education is becoming less and less useful as an opening to lucrative employment; but the authorities also, in my humble opinion, should change the character of education or so modify it as to make it less literary and more technical, so that an anxious father may not look forward in vain to his son getting into some employment however mean or undignified. [873]

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873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for
217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

538 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth*, *ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

634 He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim
701 military service from the Nāyars under him. The *Nadu Vazhis* kept a local force varying between five hundred and one thousand men, which they were obliged to put into the field at the command of their Rajah. The *Nadu Vazhis* were kept under control by the Rajah when he was able to do so. But in any case they were
631 bound to fight for him. Below these *Nadu Vazhis* were *Desa Vazhis* (lords of the
701 Manor). They had the right of keeping a *Kalari* or a military academy. In each
[874] village there was one *Desa Vazhi* (sometimes more), who was called master (*Asān*) by the Nāyars. He was their military preceptor in peace time and their leader in war time.

631 The principal business of the *Desa Vazhi* was to train the young men of *Desa*
701 in his *Kalari*. All Nāyar boys after twelve were supposed to attend the *Kalari*
874 and learn boxing, fencing, sword play, military formation, and the ordinary rules of warfare. For such training the *Desa Vazhi* was not paid. After eighteen the boys were not supposed to attend the *Kalari*, but were required to be ready to start for war at a day's notice.

178 The *Kalaris* are still in existence. Even now the Nāyar young men who do not
874 go to English schools get some sort of a training with imitation swords and shields, because swords are prohibited by the Arms Act. In certain families one male member has to be proficient in this art so as to be able to teach the others. The *Kalaris*,
[346] though now visited by people only for the extreme beauty of their architecture, are still used by the Nāyars of the *Desas* as places of worship.

178 On the festival days in the village temple the Nāyars, who have been thus trained,
541 even now hold a review in martial array (*vēla*). In Trivandrum, which is the
701 capital of the Maharajah of Travancore, this feature is very prominent. In other places there are still *Palayanis* (*Pala*=war, *ani*=to get ready). All the Nāyars of the surrounding districts assemble, and the ceremonies which in former days stood for military manœuvres are held with great enthusiasm.

621 The centre of all the martial and, consequently, of the social life of the Nāyars
794 is, therefore, the *Desa*. In each village there is a temple owned by the community.
[346] The temple is generally self-supporting, and occasionally very rich. The temple authorities are appointed by the village. The power is generally vested in the *Pramanis*, or the chief men. In each village there are certain families who have the right of being consulted in all matters connected with it. The head of these
[631] *Pramanis* is the Lord of the Manor.

621 In describing the organization of the village, it is better to take one practical example which is typical. Kavalam is such a village. I shall, therefore, confine
[121] myself to the description of the organization of that village.

[166] The village is supposed to consist of one hundred and fifty houses. This is the traditional number, but at least fifty of these have emigrated. But though they live in other parts of the country they are still considered to belong to this organization. In all the ceremonies that require the sanction of the village the emigrant,

[i.e., The Nadu Vazhi -- Analyst]

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AW11 Kerala AW11 Nayar

unless he has been admitted by certain formalities to the village to which he has emigrated, is considered to belong to his original home.

The village is divided into two *Karas* (or *Amsams*), the northern *Kara* and the southern *Kara*. The division is arbitrary and has no significance. A man from Kavalam belonging to the North or South *Kara* is treated in another village as belonging to the same place.

The *Bhagavati* (goddess) Temple in the village was, before the government took possession of it, owned by *two Karas jointly*.

In each of the *Karas* there are five *Āsāns* or *Pramanis*. They keep *Kalaris* and are honoured and respected by all the Nāyars in the district. No common Nāyar is allowed to sit in their presence, to enter their kitchen, or to call their women without the title of *Kunjamma* (or Ladyship).

The seventy-five families which the *Kara* contains are divided between the five *Āsāns*. Each *Āsān*, therefore, has a general authority over all the families, and special rights over the fifteen families immediately under his control.

In all matters of ceremony the *Āsāns* have to be informed beforehand. Without their presence, no public ceremony of any family is supposed to be valid. All the public functions of the village are done by them. The ceremonies of the temple, for example, are under their control. They are the people who summon the *Karakkars*, or the villagers, to assemble and settle matters of importance. The villagers settle in such assemblies, things relating to the community, such as public festivals, the expenditure of *Karayogam* (common to the village) funds and the behaviour of people who have acted against the customs of the village. If a marriage ceremony had not been properly conducted, it comes before them. If an *Āsān* had not been properly invited, that matter also comes up for consideration. Instances of punishments inflicted by the village on individuals and families were not uncommon till lately. I remember a particular case in which the villagers as a body led by their *Āsān* walked out of the marriage (*Talikettu*) *pandal* because the order of precedence was not kept up. The family of a squire had, during these hard days, become poor, and a rich squire who, in order of precedence, came below him was given a seat of honour. The result was that the whole community walked out as a protest, and the *Kalyanam* had to be held over again to the satisfaction of the poor *Āsān* and his loyal friends.

How strong this organisation is will be seen from the following incident. A gentleman, when coming from Madras, had a Christian friend with him, and his servant who waited for him at Alleppey was eating his food when both of them entered the boat. It is a very rigid custom that no food can be taken in the company, or even in the proximity of any lower caste, and Christians are considered to be such. The result of it was that when they got home the news got abroad that the Nāyar servant had eaten with a Christian in the boat, and the whole village

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others. 533 554 [644]

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar.[1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play. [874]

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *avan*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British [451]

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

the uneven nature of the terrains. Along the coastal strip, inland waterways are the ideal means of transporting lighter commodities.

1.49 It is well known that in standards of literacy Kerala is ahead of all the other States of India. The literate population is 46.2 per cent as compared with 23.7 per cent for the whole of India (1961 Census). Kerala has a very long tradition in imparting education on organized lines. Initiative in the spread of education was first taken by the Christian Missionaries during the middle of the last century. The State followed up by offering grant of aid to the missionary schools, and opening of new Government schools.

1.50 While the State is in the forefront of India in general education, it is hardly so in the sphere of technical education. From the point of view of future industrialization programmes, the emphasis in future will have to undergo a shift in position. During the Second Plan period considerable progress has been made in opening a number of polytechnics and other technical institutions. Their impact, however, will only be felt during the Third Plan period when qualified technicians start coming out from these institutes.

1.51 The State is also fairly high up in the standard of its health services although in some of the indices of health service development it lags behind all-India standards. On the other hand the *ayurvedic* system has had a long established tradition in the State and is popular among the public. Some of the indices showing the relative state of development of medical facilities are given below:

	India (Persons)	*Kerala* (Persons)
One doctor for	7,000	5,200
One nurse for	19,000	16,700
One hospital bed for	1,400	3,125

Regional Disparities

1.52 Although the Infra-structure as a whole is well developed in the State, it is not uniformly so all over the State. Economically, Malabar, which was previously a part of the Madras State, is on a distinctly different plane from the Travancore-Cochin area. Unlike the erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin, Malabar did not receive the benefit of State patronage. At present Malabar is backward compared to Travancore-Cochin in terms of almost all the indicators of economic development. Both the transport and education system are not as well developed in Malabar as in Travancore-Cochin.[1] It lags behind industrially as well. Unemployment also seems to be higher in Malabar. This is corroborated by the much lower participation rate in the case of Malabar.[2] Under these circumstances, economic policy would undoubtedly have to pay due attention to the need for levelling up such wide disparities.

[1] Chapters on "Industries—Structure and Growth" and "Transport". (Nos. 9 and 8)
[2] Chapter on Manpower. (No. 11)

11: India G-4, 5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

3.13 The Sindhi bulls which have been selected for the upgrading work in Kerala are scarce these days, and it may be difficult to procure the required number for the proposed programme. The number of bulls needed would, however, be much smaller under artificial insemination than under natural service. The former programme should, therefore, be preferred to the latter. As the State is well served with roads and has a good and efficient transport system, three or four central semen collecting centres would be needed to cover the entire State provided the product is quickly dispatched and properly stored while in transit. The centres may be located at Trivandrum, Trichur, Calicut and Palghat. Bulls should be provided for natural service in remote and out of the way places. The proposed breeding programme would need buildings, equipment and livestock for artificial insemination centres. These programmes would require an investment of Rs. 8.76 lakhs over the Third and Fourth Plan periods.

Prevention and Control of Diseases

3.14 Prevention of diseases peculiar to livestock and a machinery for their control is a pre-requisite for proper development of animal husbandry. Under the present circumstances, where there is a heavy incidence of disease and high mortality rates, any enterprise in the field of animal husbandry is fraught with high risks ; and farmers are hesitant to hazard investment on any animal husbandry business. The major share of burden will naturally have to be borne by the Government.

3.15 For effective prevention and control of diseases, it is necessary to have an adequate number of well-staffed veterinary dispensaries and hospitals. These institutions should, as far as possible, render free treatment. Under the conditions prevailing in Kerala, it is considered necessary to have at least two veterinary hospitals in every taluk and one dispensary or first-aid clinic in every Panchayat. Measured by this norm, the existing facilities are utterly inadequate. While there are 55 taluks and 892 Panchayats in Kerala, the total number of hospitals and dispensaries,[1] at the end of 1958-59 were only 45 and 69 respectively. (Table 21)[2]

3.16 Two factors are responsible for this situation : (i) shortage of personnel and (ii) paucity of funds. With the opening of the veterinary college at Trichur, the situation may be expected to improve with regard to the personnel, provided adequate funds are made available. The State should try to achieve the above norms by the end of the Fourth Plan. Investment on the proposed 20 additional hospitals and 723 dispensaries would be about Rs. 77.3 lakhs.

POULTRY DEVELOPMENT

3.17 Though Kerala has the best developed commercial poultry industry in the country, conditions under which the birds are reared are far from satisfactory. The birds are not adequately fed, and consequently they resort to scavenging. A good

[1] Includes Stockman's stations and Inspector's stations.

[2] In 1960 the numbers were 63 and 133 respectively.

11: India G-4,5 (1960-1961) 1962 AW11 Kerala AW11

Forest Roads

4.57 Although in respect of overall position regarding forest roads, Kerala is comparatively better off and accessibility is quite good, there are some remote areas for which new roads are required. Opening up of these areas through forest roads would permit tapping of certain pockets of forest resources uptil now lying untapped. Some of these important roads which have been suggested for being taken up during the Third Plan are :

(a) *Roads from Dhon to Palamalai*—to tap the Chenat Nair reserved forests and to make Palamalai a summer resort.

(b) *Extension of the Silent Valley roads to the borders of the Nilgiris district*—to tap the rich resources of the Silent Valley reserved forest and the improvement of its existing natural regeneration.

(c) *Construction of a road from Nelliampathy Parambikulam Tellikkal.* This will make Sungam and Parambikulam Ranges accessible through the Kerala territory only. At present, the State has to depend on the goodwill of the Madras Forest Department for the extraction of forest produces.

The cost of constructing these roads is estimated to be Rs. 50 lakhs.

Training Facilities

4.58 The programme for raising forest plantations can be implemented smoothly only if there is adequately trained personnel to deal with the several technical problems. At present the staff is generally deputed to Forest Colleges at Dehra Dun and Coimbatore for training. These colleges cannot, however, meet the requirements of training lower grade staff. It is, therefore, suggested that in view of the importance of forestry to Kerala, this State should have a separate training institute of its own. This institute, may be located at Peechi.

Resource Survey

4.59 For proper planning of forest-based industries, the exact extent of availability and location of different types of forest resources should be known. In the past, development has been impeded by industries being allotted more areas than was warranted by their capacity. This has thwarted development of other industries which could have utilized the surplus raw material from the forest coupes. These defects can be remedied only if a full inventory of forest resources is available. Uptil now only a survey of bamboo areas has been carried out. During the Third Plan a full resource survey should be carried out.

ESTABLISHMENT REQUIRED FOR THE DEVELOPMENTS PROPOSED

4.60 If the development programmes proposed in this report are to be carried out, strengthening of the Forest Department will be necessary. Appointment of

5.5 The average annual landing of marine (coastal) fish is estimated at 260,000 tons (35% of the all-India output) and the gross value of marine catches at Rs. 6.5 crores. 433* 226

5.6 The catches from coastal waters comprise such commercially important species of fish as Sardines (20%), Prawns (13%), Mackerel (11%), Sharks (5%), Silverbellies (4%), Horse Mackerel (4%), Sole (3%) and Ribbon fish (3%). According to a sample survey conducted by the ICAR in Travancore-Cochin area, about 61 per cent of the total landings are consumed in fresh condition and the remaining part is utilized in various fish-based industries. (An alternative estimate by the State Fisheries Department puts the ratio as fifty-fifty.) [262]

5.7 Dug-out, plank-built canoes and catamarans are the main types of crafts employed for fishing. Dug-out canoes are more popular throughout the State. Boat seines, gill nets, lines and hooks, coast nets and shore seines are the important tackle used in Kerala. Drift nets are used for catching Sardines, Mackerels and Sharks while long lines are sometimes employed for exploiting Horse Mackerels and Shark fisheries. [501] [227]

5.8 During the last decade efforts have been made to introduce mechanized fishing in order to raise the outtusn and improve per capita income of the fishermen. Experiments for mechanizing indigenous boats and introducing suitable new types of mechanized crafts have been carried out in the State with the help of FAO experts and the Indo-Norwegian Project. However, unlike Maharashtra, Kerala has made very little progresss in mechanizing its fishing activity. This is mainly explained by the fact that the indigenous crafts in use in Kerala at present, have been found unsuitable for the installation of engines. Thus, to introduce mechanized boats, new boats have to be designed and constructed. As a result of a number of investigations and trials, a few small mechanized boats, ranging from 20 to 26 feet in length, have been recently introduced in the State. The Indo-Norwegian Project has so far issued 88 mechanized boats to the fishermen who completed training with the project. In addition to these, the State Fisheries Department has also issued 39 mechanized vessels. Of these, 25 have been issued to fishermen; of the rest, some are operated by the Department at training centres for transportation of fish and some still remain idle. 433* 226 177 501 [654]

5.9 In Kerala, as in some other marine States of India, mechanized boats are issued at subsidized rates to fishermen's cooperatives, groups of fishermen and to trainees who have been trained at one of the two Training Centres in the State. The quantum of subsidies is in line with the all-India pattern, that is, 50 per cent of the cost of engine, 25 per cent of the cost of hull and 33⅓ per cent on that of fishing nets and gears.[1] [874] [474] [654]

5.10 The Indo-Norwegian Project is playing an important role in the development of fisheries in Kerala. The project aims at the improvement of socio-economic conditions of the fishermen. The programme envisages an increase in the production of fish as well as the earnings of the fishermen, improved handling and distribution of catches, the promotion of cooperative activities, and better sanitation and living conditions in the fishermen's villages. The project has also undertaken the supply of fish to the interior areas of the State. It provides most of the basic requirements of 433* 226 654

[1] The Indo-Norwegian Project issued nets and gear on 80 per cent and hull and engine on 50 per cent subsidy in the beginning.

will be essential to provide a properly trained and experienced Fisheries Development Officer in overall charge of each Integrated Centre for coordinating its activities.

Training

5.57 At present there are three centres to train fishermen in the State. The training course which extends over six months aims mainly at training the fishermen in the operation, servicing and maintenance of marine engines, making of nets and tackles, improved fishing methods and the fundamentals of navigation.

5.58 These centres are located at Neendakara, Ernakulam, and Beypore. The first two centres can train 20 fishermen each in a batch, and the last can train 15. So far, 272 fishermen have been trained at the Ernakulam and Beypore centres (run by the Fisheries Department), of whom 150 are now actually employed in mechanized fishing. At the Neendakara centre, which is run by the Indo-Norwegian Project, 121 fishermen have undergone training so far.

5.59 The programme suggested for the next 10 years would require a crew of about 6,400. This would involve a huge training programme and entail a heavy burden on the State. Arrangements can at best be made to provide training facilities to about half the number. The rest can receive on-the-job training from the trained fishermen. As about 1,200 trained fishermen would be required by the end of the Third Plan, not only will the capacity of the existing training centres have to be increased but also at least five new centres will have to be established.

5.60 The operation of the proposed medium-sized boats will also require the services of trained skipper-cum-master fisherman. Either a special centre for training skippers should be established in the State, or the facilities at the Government of India Deep-Sea Fishing Stations at Bombay and other places should be expanded. For operating trawlers, the State Government should enlist the collaboration of foreign fishing companies in order to obtain along with the fishing vessels, the services of trained technical personnel. At the same time efforts should also be made to train Indian personnel in the various fields by appointing them as understudies to the foreign technicians or by sending them abroad. The training of Fisheries Development Officers, Marketing Officers and other high level technical staff can be arranged at the Institute of Fisheries Education, which is proposed to be started by the Union Ministry of Food and Agriculture. For training the middle and lower level staff, it is desirable to establish a Fisheries Training Institute in the State.

INVESTMENT AND OUTPUT IMPLICATIONS

5.61 A substantial part of investment will be on mechanization of boat craft and acquisition of trawlers for off-shore fishing. These two items alone will absorb Rs. 6.35 crores out of a total investment of Rs. 10.72 crores.[1] Details of investment on various items are given in Table 27.[2] This does not include expenditure on deve-

[1] The outlay allocated for the Third Plan is Rs. 4.5 crores, which will leave a balance of Rs. 6.75 for the Fourth Plan, if suggestions made in this Report are to be implemented.

[2] [Table 27, appearing on p. 289 of the text, has not been processed -- Ed.]

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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individual basis, but this money seems only to have sufficed for their food and other necessities while on the march or on service in towns. When they were at home in their villages their kāranavan assumed responsibility for each man's customary gifts to his wives in other households.

Within his own household the kāranavan personally allocated their subsistence to its members. Every few weeks he transferred quantities of unhusked rice, vegetables, and other stores from the granary to storerooms inside the house. They were then usually taken over by the eldest woman, who kept keys to the storerooms and chests and allocated daily supplies to the kitchen. In property groups with more than one homestead the kāranavan delivered quantities of paddy, salt, and coconut oil twice annually to each house according to the number of its members. Each house sent a person daily to the ancestral house to bring fresh vegetables, milk, buttermilk, and other perishable foods. In all taravāds the kāranavan controlled purchases from the town. Twice a year—at New Year and at the harvest festival—he distributed clothing to both male and female members.

Virtuous kāranavans were those who managed the daily affairs of the taravād with thrift, justice, and meticulous care, but who, through judicious planning, were able to lavish grand feasts upon caste members, tenants, village servants, and serfs at the major life-crisis rites. An aged kāranavan would enumerate with satisfaction the various feasts at funerals, tāli rites, and first-menstruation ceremonies which he had satisfactorily conducted. Each of the servant castes contributed appropriate goods or services in advance of these feasts, and each Nayar house reciprocated the hospitality when its own life-crisis rites came round. Besides reaffirming in a ceremonial manner the different types of ties between Nayars and between Nayars and the lower castes, the life-crisis ceremonies seem to have stimulated production and provided suitable foci for acts of economic redistribution and reciprocity.

The amounts of time spent by junior men of the taravād on different activities are no longer clearly known. We know however that at the age of seven a boy was inducted into military training in the village gymnasium; this training persists in a few villages, and includes fencing, wrestling, rigorous exercise, and very strenuous massage. Traditionally, Nayars also learned archery from a special caste of village servants (Vil Kurups). For a part of their time they attended a village school run by yet another caste of schoolteachers (Eruttacchans); almost all adult Nayar men and most women were literate

875 526 [827] [564] [553] The month Karkkatakam, when the Malayalis say "the body is cool," is the time when, according to custom, the Nâyar youths practise physical exercises. At Payôli in North Malabar, when I was there in August 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct 'Kurup' to his name it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers 875 of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and when 526 they are believed to be properly accomplished they are 564 given the honorific 'Kurup.' So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amshom (a local area, a small [844] county): and his women folk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nâyar women of the amshom. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He and some of his pupils gave an exhibition of their quality.

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Besides bodily contortions and somersaults (practised in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor) there is play with the following instruments:—"Waṭṭa" (as in the illustration) "cheruvadi," a short stick, and a stick like a quarter staff called a sarîravadi—"stick the length of one's body." The waṭṭa is held in the right hand as a dagger; it is used to stab or strike and, in some ingenious way turn over an opponent. The total length of the waṭṭa is two feet, and of the cheruvadi about three feet. The latter is squared at the ends and is but a short staff.

It is held in the right hand a few inches from the end, and is used for striking and guarding only. The sarîravadi is held at or near one end by one or by both hands; the distance between the hands is altered constantly, and so is the end of the stick, which is grasped now by one now by another end by either hand as occasion may require; sometimes it is grasped in the middle. The performance with these simple things was astonishing. I should say the waṭṭa and the cheruvadi represented swords, or rather that they were used for initiation or practice in swordmanship when the Nâyars were the

6:Fawcett G-5 (ca. 1900)1915
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ASTROLOGY, MAGIC,* WITCHCRAFT.

Astrology.—The ordinary astrologer of Malabar is a man of the Kanisan or Panikkar† caste, a community relatively low in the social scale, therefore carrying pollution to those of the higher caste. A curious position in society for people of a learned profession to occupy. The Panikkar is also, very often, the schoolmaster. He is in request in connection with every social function, religious or other, and of course, at every birth. His astrology, he will tell you, is divided into three parts:

(1) Ganita, which treats of the constellations;
(2) Samkita, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, earthquakes;
(3) Hôra, by which the fate of man is explained.

The Panikkar, who follows in the foot-steps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and of mathematics, and be learned in the Vêdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful and patient. He should look well after his family, and he should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sûryan—the Sun; Chandran—Moon; Chovva—Mars; Bûdhan—Mercury; Vyâzham, or Guru, or Brihaspati—Jupiter; Sukran, or Sani—Venus; Râhu and Kêtu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Âsura who was cut in two by Vishnu.

I here reproduce a diagram made for me by a Panikkar showing the relative positions of the planets on the 7th of April 1895:

Sûryan, Bûdhan.	Sukkran.	Chovva.	Brihaspati.
Râhu.			
			Kêtu.
		Sani.	Chandran.

N.B.—Chandran remains 2½ days in each of the 12 *rasis* or celestial chambers.

* What was said under "Magic and sorcery" when describing Nambûtiri Brahmans, Bulletin, Vol. III, No. I, applies also to the Nâyar.

† This is not to be confounded with the honorific Panikkar affixed to the name of a Nâyar.

595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nāyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more [538] than one husband at a time *seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.*[1] Nāyar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a *system of supplementary spouses*, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the *Enangar* or allied families, which we have [613] noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as [621] cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man [582] whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of *supplementary spouses* such as we have in Australia and other places.

562 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nāyar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nāyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship [871] and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nāyar women, and at the present day the [875] statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

595 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nāyars.
562 But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nāyar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,[2] there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

[1] See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."
[2] Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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fact contained all the rudiments of the State. There was the head-man with his assistants whose duties have been already mentioned. There were also the hereditary village servants (*cheria jenmakkárs*), the village Panchayets or *kúttams*, and the *Kavalai* system of police; and the village watchmen (*kávalkkárs*) with their grain fees, and sacred institutions, with their usual privileges. And finally there were independent Nayar chieftains with their private properties and usual sources of income and taxation.

The village life is simple, delightful, and charming, but it is gradually passing away under the influence of western civilization. It is therefore of some ethnographical interest to preserve an account of it at its period of transition.

The village education may first be taken for treatment. The old village school or pial school masters were called *Ezhuttachans* or *Asáns*, some of whom were maintained by the leading families on small monthly allowances and meals, while others owned schools and lived upon the income derived from the pupils thereof. The education of youths commenced at a very early period, for which an auspicious day, nay, an auspicious hour, generally the *Vijaya Desami* or *Vidyárambham* (beginning of the alphabet) day, the last day of *Desara* in the month of *Kanni* or *Thulám* (September-November) was chosen, when the local *Asán* or any fairly educated man was invited to give the boy his first lesson. In a conspicuous part of the building a bell-metal vessel was placed. On this was spread a thin layer of rice, and on each side of the vessel was placed a bag of rice and paddy, while a lighted lamp was also placed beside it. In front of these sat the infant scholar three or five years of age. The *Asán* or the teacher wrote on the boy's tongue with a gold coin (fanam) the divine invocation *Hari Sree Gana Pata Ye Namah* (Salutation be to Vishnu, Saraswati and Ganapati). The initiation was completed by the teacher holding the boy's ring finger and tracing the letters of the alphabet in the rice in the vessel. The ceremony would then come to an end with a feast to the inmates of the house as well as to friends and relations. After this, he was placed under a teacher who taught him along with others to write the letters of the alphabet on sand. This would go on for a month or two until the

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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872 youngster got a mastery of the letters. Then he was taught to read and write short sentences on cadjan leaves (*Ola Ezhutal*). He was made to commit to memory short verses, and lessons in arithmetic were added to his curriculum. Thus the youngster acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in about two years, and was thereafter recommended to an advanced course of studies, which consisted of a study of Sanskrit, the perusal of the *Purânas*, and also arithmetic sufficient to enable him to calculate the position of planets and help him in the casting of horoscopes. Girls also were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were encouraged in the reading of the *Purânas*. Such in brief was the course of instruction imparted in these small institutions.

872 The schools were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture, 876 while the boys sat on small mats or on the floor, which was 346 covered with sand for purposes of writing. The teacher had a 354 raised seat from which he supervised and listened to the loud recitations of the lessons set on the previous evenings. The boys went to him, one by one, repeated their lesson, and received another written by him on the palm leaf, which was to be learnt during the day. The school hours were generally from seven to ten in the morning and again from two to five in the afternoon. During the latter hours, the budding scholars were instructed in the reading of the Ramayana and other *Purânas*; and before the end of the lessons for the day, the boys were made to repeat with one voice, some mathematical formula. At home, the boys revised their work and recited the names of Gods and short verses as prayers to them. They had no work for about 12 days in the month, besides the usual Hindu holidays. 875 Twice during the month, when the fortnightly holidays commenced, *i. e.*, on *Dwddesi* (the 12th day after the full or new moon), the teacher was remunerated by each boy with the payment of an anna or two, and even this was sometimes evaded by the opportune absenting of some pupils. He also received presents of cloth with a rupee or two from some of the richer families to which a few of his pupils belonged. Boys were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; caning was freely resorted to as a mode of correction, and the teacher was often regarded with terror rather than with respect and admiration. Their only books were manuscripts on cadjan leaves; their

556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his lifetime, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which he was expected to fill. [451] In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

5.4 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

553
613 near the house, round which he makes three pradakshinams, pouring water from a kindi round the foot of the tree as he does so. The procession then returns to the house, and on the way an old woman of the family proclaims the baby's name aloud for the first time in the form of a question, asking it 'Krishnan' (for instance), 'dost thou see the sky?' In some cases, the father simply calls out the name twice.

852 "The Vidyarambham ceremony to celebrate the
871 beginning of the child's education takes place in the fifth
[778] or seventh year. In some places, the child is first taken to the temple, where some water sanctified by mantrams is poured over his head by the Shāntikāran (officiating priest). The ceremony at the house is opened by Ganapathi pūja performed by an Ezhuttacchan, or by a
[782] Nambūdri, or another Nāyar. The Ezhuttacchan writes on the child's tongue with a gold fanam (coin) the invocation to Ganapathi (Hari Sri Ganapathayi nama), or sometimes the fifty-one letters of the Malayalam alphabet, and then grasps the middle finger of the child's right hand, and with it traces the same letters in parched rice. He also gives the child an ola (strip of palm leaf) inscribed with them, and receives in return a small fee
[875] in cash. Next the child thrice touches first the Ezhuttacchan's feet, and then his own forehead with his
[576] right hand, in token of that reverent submission to the teacher, which seems to have been the key-note of the old Hindu system of education.

304 "The Kāthukuttu or ear-boring is performed either at the same time as the Pāla-kudi or the Choulam, or at any time in the fifth or seventh year. The operator, who may be any one possessing the necessary skill, pierces first the right and then the left ear with two gold or silver wires brought by the goldsmith, or with karamullu

13:Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date) 1909
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they might become a prey to these ravenous demons. In short, the Bharani day inaugurates a reign of terror in the locality, lasting for these seven days. Afterwards, all the dirt is removed. The temple is cleansed and sanctified, and again left open to public worship. The pilgrims return, but not in the same manner in which they repaired thither. During the backward journey, no obscene songs or expressions are indulged in. They are to come back quietly and calmly, without any kind of demonstrations. They get back to their respective homes, and distribute the sandals and other pujah substances to their relations and friends who have elected to remain at home; and the year's pilgrimage is brought to a close."

"The month Karkkatakam," Mr. Fawcett writes, "when the Malayālis say the body is cool, is the time when, according to custom, the Nāyar youths practice physical exercises. At Payōli in North Malabar, when I was there in 1895, the local instructor of athletics was a Paravan, a mason by caste. As he had the adjunct Kurup to his name, it took some time to discover the fact. Teachers of his ilk are invariably of the Paravan caste, and, when they are believed to be properly accomplished, they are given the honorific Kurup. So carefully are things regulated that no other person was permitted to teach athletics within the amsham (a local area, a small county), and his womenfolk had privileges, they only being the midwives who could attend on the Nāyar women of the amsham. His fee for a course of exercises for the month was ten rupees. He, and some of his pupils, gave an exhibition of their quality. Besides bodily contortions and somersaults, practiced in a long low-roofed shed having a sandy floor, there is play with the following instruments :—watta ; cheruvadi,

463 and Kshatriya houses and temples, and deal in dairy [357] produce, as well as being engaged in copper-sheet roofing, tile-making, pottery, palanquin-bearing, and so [178] on. But these traditional occupations are fast ceasing 872 under the ferment of a new civilisation. In the matter of education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent position. Almost every Nāyar girl is sent to the village school to learn the three R's, quite as much as a matter of [212] course as the schooling of boys. This constitutes a feature of Malabar life that makes it the most literate country in all India, especially in respect of the female 875 sex. After Rāmanujam Ezhuttachchan developed and enriched the Malayālam language, numerous Asans or village teachers came into existence in different parts of 873 Malabar. After a preliminary study of Malayālam, such as desired higher, *i.e.*, Sanskrit education, got discipled to an Ambalavāsi or a Sastri. Even to-day the estimable desire to study Sanskrit is seen in some Nāyar youths, who have readily availed themselves of the benefit of the local Sanskrit college. In respect of English education, the Nāyars occupy a prominent [658] position. The facility afforded by the Government of Travancore for the study of English is being largely availed of by Nāyars, and it is a matter deserving to be prominently recorded that, in recent years, several Nāyar girls have passed the Matriculation examination of the University of Madras."

212 It is noted, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that "the 181 Nāyars as a class are the best educated and the most advanced of the communities in Malabar (excepting perhaps the Pattar Brāhmans, who are not strictly a Malayālam class), and are intellectually the equals of [464] the Brāhmans of the East Coast. Many of them have risen to the highest posts in Government, and the caste

9:Iyer E-4,5 (ca.1902-1906)1912
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872 youngster got a mastery of the letters. Then he was taught to read and write short sentences on cadjan leaves (*Ola Ezhutal*). He was made to commit to memory short verses, and lessons in arithmetic were added to his curriculum. Thus the youngster acquired a fair knowledge of reading, writing, and arithmetic, in about two years, and was thereafter recommended to an advanced course of studies, which consisted of a study of Sanskrit, the perusal of the *Puranas*, and also arithmetic sufficient to enable him to calculate the position of planets and help him in the casting of horoscopes. Girls also were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and singing, and were encouraged in the reading of the *Puranas*. Such in brief was the course of instruction imparted in these small institutions.

872 The schools were flimsy sheds with little or no furniture, 876 while the boys sat on small mats or on the floor, which was 346 covered with sand for purposes of writing. The teacher had a 352 raised seat from which he supervised and listened to the loud recitations of the lessons set on the previous evenings. The boys went to him, one by one, repeated their lesson, and received another written by him on the palm leaf, which was to be learnt during the day. The school hours were generally from seven to ten in the morning and again from two to five in the afternoon. During the latter hours, the budding scholars were instructed in the reading of the Ramayana and other *Puranas*; and before the end of the lessons for the day, the boys were made to repeat with one voice, some mathematical formula. At home, the boys revised their work and recited the names of Gods and short verses as prayers to them. They had no work for about 12 days in the month, besides the usual Hindu holidays. 875 Twice during the month, when the fortnightly holidays commenced, *i. e.*, on *Dwddesi* (the 12th day after the full or new moon), the teacher was remunerated by each boy with the payment of an anna or two, and even this was sometimes evaded by the opportune absenting of some pupils. He also received presents of cloth with a rupee or two from some of the richer families to which a few of his pupils belonged. Boys were subjected to a rigorous course of discipline; caning was freely resorted to as a mode of correction, and the teacher was often regarded with terror rather than with respect and admiration. Their only books were manuscripts on cadjan leaves; their

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogue never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools.

Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.[1]

Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin.

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting.

The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages.

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life.

Village pastimes.

The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyámkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Uzhinjúl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes.

The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in

1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

613 In a retainer subcaste group, enangar relations
602 usually existed between each lineage and two,
621 three or four others; in the small servant caste local groups, each lineage might have only one or two enangar lineages. Enangar relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that a chain of relationships linked together the whole local group. Thus in a hypothetical kara containing eight retainer lineages, A to H, lineage A might have enangar relations with B, C and D; B, with A, E and F; C with A, G and H; D with A, F and G; E, with B, F and H; F with B, D and E; and G only with D and C. The enangar relationship was one of ceremonial neighbourliness and ritual cooperation. Sexual unions were also, and in some villages are still today, most common between enangar lineages, so that the enangar relationship can also be regarded as one of perpetual affinal kinship between lineages as corporate groups. Representative male and
[881] female members of all enangar lineages must
[765] be present and participate in ceremonies of the
[769] linked lineage at girls' initiations, at the first menstruation ceremonies of a girl, at the sixteenth day ceremonies after a death in the lineage; and at ceremonial offerings to the spirit of a dead matrilineal forbear on the anniversary of the death. These ceremonies could not be carried out without the help of enangar, so that to refuse attendance was a grave offence. If however some member of a lineage broke a caste-law, the enangar, as its hereditary ritual partners, must at once announce a rupture of their ties with the offending lineage and call a

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
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small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead members of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

564 Among Nambûdiris only the eldest son of the patrilineal family might take one or more
582 wives from his caste and beget children for his family. Younger sons might form liaisons
421 only with Nayar women, their children being Nayar by matrilineal descent. Nambûdiri younger sons, like unmarried Nambûdiri women (of whom there were many), had right to maintenance from the ancestral estate but might not divide the property. These customs ensured the stability of the Nambûdiri estate by preventing it from increasing in numbers and splitting into segments.

595 In all the matrilineal castes the husband, whether alone or of a group, had none but
[833] sexual rights in his wife and few economic obligations. Sex-relations were called *sambandham* ('joining together'), and were initiated without religious rites. On his first visit the lover
[431] customarily presented the woman with a loin-cloth before her matrilineal kin. He might also place a sovereign under the pillow before leaving next morning, but neither gift was
[843] obligatory. When a woman became pregnant, she must name one or more men of appropriate sub-caste as possible fathers: this vindicated her from the charge of cohabitation with a low-
[851] caste man. The men named must jointly meet the expenses of her delivery; their payment of this sum to the barber-midwife was a public acknowledgment that the child had been
[431] licitly begotten by a man of correct sub-caste. In addition, her lovers provided a woman with bathing-oil, clothing, and ceremonial gifts of vegetables at the three main festivals of the year. These payments were a sign of their continued association with her. Beyond this, a lover had no obligations to his mistress; either of them might stop cohabitation at will.

595 With polyandrous unions, the physiological fatherhood of a child was often unknown.
851 Even when known, the father had no rights in nor obligations to his children. All the current
601 lovers of the mother were called *achan* (father) but kinship terms were not extended to their lineage-kin. Though he might play with his children, the father might not dispute their *kāranavan*'s authority. In hypergamous unions, the higher caste father might not eat in the
564 house of his mistress, and, after taking a bath in the morning, might not touch her nor her
[613] children.

The Nayar Tāli-*Rite.* Though the first *sambandham* of a girl began without ceremony
613 shortly before or after puberty, she must before puberty go through the *tālikettukalyānam.*
588 This was collectively conducted by the lineage every ten to twelve years for all its immature girls. If a girl matured before the rite was performed, she must theoretically be cast out by
[881] her lineage and banished from her village. In fact, my informants said that in this event, the first menstruation (normally marked by public rites) would be kept secret by the lineage until after the *tāli*-rite could be performed.

The central rite of this ceremony was, as in the ordinary marriage of Tamil patrilineal castes and of the Nambûdiris, the tying of a gold ornament (*tāli*) strung on a thread of white silk, round the neck of the girl by a ritual bridegroom (*manavalan*).

613 In the retainer sub-castes the Nayar lineages of a village, or in some cases of a group of
621 villages, formed a local sub-caste group (*tara*). Each lineage was linked by ties of ritual co-
564 operation to two or more other lineages of the group. These linked lineages were called *enangar. Enangar* relations were reciprocal but not exclusive, so that in a group of eight lineages, lineage A might be *enangar* to B, C, D, and F; B to A, E, and F; C to A, H, and G; E to B, H, and G; F only to A and B; and H to E, D, and C. A chain of *enangar* relationships thus indirectly linked all lineages of the local sub-caste group. *Enangar* lineages must send representatives to ceremonies of the linked lineage, e.g. the termination of birth and death pollu-
[692] tions and the first menstruation of a girl. *Enangar* must also take note of breaches of caste law by members of their linked lineages and report such culprits for trial by the *tara* assembly.
613 They were thus the formal links between a lineage and its assembly: they represented the local sub-caste group (called the *enangu*) to the individual lineages. In ceremonies, they played

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AW11 Kerala AW11
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and coconut symbolize female fertility. The couple's act of eating from the same leaf, and the Tiyyar girl's act of mixing sweet porridge, grinding with a grindstone, and 'cohabiting' with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom, may be interpreted as symbolic intercourse.

In the North Malabar Tiyyar rite the barber as well as the *tāli*-tier appears as a vicarious bridegroom. Before the *tāli* is tied, he uncovers the girl's face and head, an act performed by the bridegroom in many Hindu marriage-rites. He then places coins in her hair and pours on to them coconut water from an *aswatha* leaf. Since this leaf represents Vishnu and male creative power, I regard the pouring of coconut water from it on to the coins as symbolic intercourse.[1] The barber is paid in cloths for his services, much as the ritual bridegroom is paid in South Malabar Nayar and Tiyyar rites.

In all the groups, then, it was necessary for a girl to be, at least symbolically, deflowered before puberty. Next, the girl is secluded for three days before the rite under circumstances almost identical with those of the first menstruation. Like a woman during that period, she might not eat meat, salt, tamarind or chillies, nor see a man, tree, plant, crow, dog, or cat. Among the Tiyyars, Thurston (1906, p. 3) reports that in some areas she kept an arrow, said to be the arrow of Kāma Devan, always beside her.

This seclusion with an arrow looks like symbolic cohabitation with a token bridegroom, as in the South Malabar Tiyyar girl's seclusion with the loin-cloth of the bridegroom *after* the *tāli*-rite. At the same time, it must be noted that among Tiyyars, Nayars, and also some Tamil castes, a woman keeps beside her a knife during menstruation; it is said to ward off attack by evil spirits.

These observances of the first menstruation and of the mock-menstruation before the *tāli*-rite must be seen in the context of a set of beliefs concerning menstruation in general. It is believed that a Nayar or Tiyyar woman is in a dangerous as well as a polluting condition during menstruation, especially the first. It is feared that, if she disregards any of the prohibitions, she may be raped by evil spirits, appearing as hairy animals. This circumstance results in hysterical, dissociated behaviour or in dangerous loss of blood. It is said also that if a man foolhardily copulated with a menstruous woman, he would become impotent. Similarly, if the woman were to urinate at the base of a tree, or walk in a paddy-field, the tree or the paddy would wither and die. If she were to approach a temple or the ancester-shrine of her *taravād*, the temple-god or the ancestors might inflict her with excessive bleeding, or strike her dead.

To interpret these beliefs, I make use of Ernest Jones's (1931, pp. 44, 54, 73) theory that the evil spirits of myths, superstitious beliefs, and daytime phantasies arise from the same unconscious source as those of nightmares, and that the evil shapes seen in nightmares invariably issue from repressed incestuous desires, the fear engendered by which causes the desired object to appear in terrible form. The hairy animal-spirits who may rape a menstruous woman are thus male parent-imagines. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact of the fear of attack from a god or dead *kāranavan*'s spirit (patrilineal among South Malabar Tiyyars, matrilineal in the other groups), should the menstruous woman approach them. Since it causes dangerous bleeding, the attack by a god or an ancestor is evidently sexual, like that by the hairy animals: all therefore probably indicate an unconscious dread of being raped by a male parental figure with, underlying this, a repressed incestuous desire.[2]

The fact that evil spirits attack when the woman breaks the prohibitions (e.g. on seeing a man, or some other animal or plant phallic symbol) may reflect fear of the unconscious

[1] For the sexual significance of anointing in general see Ernest Jones (1931, pp. 207-8). Alternatively we may regard the barber's act as that of a paternal figure who, by anointing her, confers fertility on the girl.

[2] Melanie Klein (1932, p. 307) notes that the European girl at puberty frequently exhibits fear that her father may attack and copulate with her in a sadistic way, either because she has had sadistic masturbation phantasies about her mother or because he wishes to get back the penis she has taken from him.

Nayar
Tiyyar

588 182 184 *sambandham* lover he came in a different role. Among South Malabar Tiyyars the prospective husband might tie the *tāli*. But in this case, too, his roles were kept separate: the post-puberty marriage rites must be gone through if the bridegroom (with his brothers) became permanently married to the girl. In any case the ritual bridegroom was usually a small boy; this is the important point here. Among North Malabar Tiyyars a potential mother-in-law tied the *tāli*, or else the barber woman, though in this ceremony the barber is protagonist in the rites marking the girl's passage to womanhood. In the higher matrilineal castes, and among North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, the rite is performed by an elder of high rank. Among North Malabar Nayars, however, the lower caste Marar drummers (who, like the barber for Tiyyars, conduct Nayar funeral rites) play a role suspiciously like secondary bridegrooms, since they place ornaments on the girl's arms and address her for the first time as a married woman, before the *tāli* is tied.

588 182 833 My hypothesis is that in all these cases the choice of *tāli*-tier indicates, on the part of men of the society, a general, unconscious fear of deflowering women. Barbosa (Stanley tr. 1866, p. 7) gives us a clue to this when he says that even after the *tāli*-rite, Nayar mothers went 'begging some young men to deflower the girl, for among themselves they hold it an unclean thing and almost a disgrace to deflower women'. Castenada (Kerr ed. 1911), similarly reports that in the Zamorin's family the girl's kindred 'send for a young man of the Nayar caste out of the kingdom, and give him presents to induce him to initiate the young virgin, after which he hangs a jewel round her neck. . . .' Even for the Zamorin's sisters, therefore, the 'initiator' 's role was unpopular: he must be induced with gifts to fulfil it. Hamilton (1727, p. 174) notes that the 'Nambourie or chief priest' must deflower the Zamorin's Nayar mistress (presumably at the *tāli*-rite) before the Zamorin could cohabit with her, and that 'some of the Nobles are so complaisant as to allow the Clergy the same Tribute'. That the Nambūdiris' privilege was not one exacted under protest from the Nayars, but willingly accorded, appears from his remark that 'the common people cannot have that compliment paid to them, but are forced to supply the Priest's place themselves'.

182 588 564 881 842 533 789 The unwillingness to deflower a woman is explained on the grounds that it is a 'disgrace' and an 'unclean thing'. Here, evidently, is the clue to why the North Malabar Tiyyar *tāli* was tied by a barber woman, and the rites symbolizing defloration, or perhaps conferring fertility on the woman, performed by a barber man. Tiyyar barbers, like their washermen, pollute Tiyyars and may not ordinarily touch them. Both castes attend at the real first menstruation of a North Malabar Tiyyar girl, where the barber man and barber woman perform ceremonies similar to those of the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. The Tiyyar washerwoman must at all times supply the girl with a lower cloth (*mattu*, 'change') in which to bathe on the fourth morning of menstruation. She supplies this cloth also for the bath after the mock seclusion before the *tāli*-rite. At the real puberty-rites, however, it is the headman of the washerman caste, and not a woman, who hands the clean loin-cloth on the third night to kinswomen of the girl, after singing a song designed to enhance her fertility.

564 881 182 842 782 533 The role of the washerman as a man associated with the fertility of women appears again in the first menstruation ceremony of South Malabar Nayars. Though the Nayar washerman washes ordinary cloths for Nayars, the lower caste, Tiyyar washermen (*Mannan*) provides the clean loin-cloth for bathing after menstruation and child-birth. At the Nayar puberty-rites, after the ceremonial bath on the fourth morning, the eldest washerman stands on the verandah and instructs the girl, who sits before him within the house, to make an offering with rice and coconuts to the sacred household lamp. While the natal kinsmen of the girl hide themselves on the back verandah (a place usually occupied by women) a group of washermen assemble on the front verandah and sing vulgar songs relating to sexual intercourse before the girl and her kinswomen, with a view to enhancing her fertility. At the end, her mother pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949) 1955 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar
Tiyyar

pays the head washerman the cloth which the girl has worn to cover her head and face. 000

It seems that in this offering to the household lamp (as in the Tiyyar girl's offering to the lamp and the marriage-pole in North Malabar, when she is instructed by the barber) the washerman stands as a kind of bridegroom to the girl, as he does also by singing songs to increase her fertility (see Freud 1919, ch. 3; Radcliffe-Brown 1939).[1] In some areas of North Malabar the barber, too, sings songs at the *tāli*-rite to increase the fertility of the girl, but I do not know whether these are obscene. In any case, both barber and washermen stand in a special relation of intimacy to the girl during and immediately after her first menstrual pollution, and the barber has the same role during the mock menstrual seclusion before the *tāli*-rite and at the rites representing ceremonial defloration which follow this seclusion. 881 588 564 533 182

Why, if it is in some circumstances a ritually polluting act, worthy of a low caste man, symbolically to deflower a woman, do the Nayars and Kshattriyas call holy men of higher caste, and the North Malabar Tiyyar barbers, a respected elder of their community, to tie a woman's *tāli*? This becomes intelligible when we remember that ritual purity and pollution are the positive and negative aspects of a condition best described as *sacer*, supernaturally dangerous or valuable, the reverse of the profane.[2] In South India, a host of situations illustrate this dual nature of the 'sacred' as potentially polluting or potentially unusually pure. Thus faeces and urine are normally ritually polluting, yet the dung and urine of the sacred cow (a mother symbol) are eaten or sprinkled to purify oneself of the pollutions of death, of birth or of sin. The virgin, then, in these castes is sacred: it is ritually dangerous to take her virginity. My hypothesis is that this is so because the virgin is unconsciously associated with the mother, as a woman whom it is desirable to approach sexually but who may not be approached, because of the threat of castration or murder by a male parental figure (originally the father and, in the matrilineal castes, the mother's brother). I think that this is so because the virgin is still in the possession of her own jealous natal kinsmen, who own, though they may not use, her sexuality. She is, therefore, feared by men of her own age-group, who feel that it is the place of some father-figure (unconsciously, their own father or mother's brother) to take her virginity. A father-figure common to the whole society is therefore summoned, symbolically (and sometimes actually) to deflower the girl, release her, in respect of her sexuality, from the ownership of her natal kinsmen, and leave her, divorced on the fourth day, as a normal mature woman who 'may now do what she pleases'. 588 783 182 831 588 783 182

In the higher matrilineal castes the bridegroom has all the attributes of a father to the Nayar community. When the *desavar* ties the *tāli*, he is a father-figure to the village as a whole: in some villages he even has the title of *acchan* ('father'). The *nāduvari* is a father-surrogate to the *desavaris*, and the king, to the *nāduvaris*. The Nambudiris are 'fathers' to the whole Nayar and Kshattriya community, being the greatest landowners, the highest in ritual 588 182 564

[1] This impression of the washerman as symbolic bridegroom was strengthened by an incident in Palakkara. Five years previously, a Nayar girl of eleven in a family of newcomers had menstruated before her *tāli* was tied. Fearing neighbourly disapproval, her mother called the low caste washerman (Mannan) to the house and paid him to tie the girl's *tāli*, on the third day while she was still in menstrual pollution. He then brought the loin-cloth for the ceremonial bathing as usual on the fourth day, and performed the normal ceremonies, which were attended without unfavourable comment by other Nayars of the village. The girl's elder sister explained that, having failed to obtain a Nayar 'bridegroom' before the menstruation, or to tie the *tāli* herself before a temple god, the mother acted correctly in calling the washerman during pollution, thus saving her daughter from the danger of ostracism by the caste.

[2] The employment of a kinswoman of the bridegroom to perform all or part of the marriage rites on his behalf is common in the 'real' marriage ceremonies of many Hindu castes. A Tamil Brahman bridegroom only half ties his wife's *tāli*; his sister stands behind the girl to tie the second half of the knot. Among Travancore Tiyyars, the bridegroom's sisters and mother go to the bride's house without him for the real post-puberty marriage, where the sister recites the formulae on his behalf and later brings home the bride. Sociologically, the part played by a man's kinswoman in his marriage reflects, no doubt, their own interest in the marriage and rights in the bride. But in all the instances we may, from a psychological point of view, interpret the bridegroom's withdrawal in favour of a kinswoman as evidence of his fear to marry, a fear originally engendered by his Oedipal wishes and dread of paternal vengeance. Alternatively, the bridegroom's unconscious fear of his older kinsmen's vengeance may be got over in the reverse manner by requiring these elders to absent themselves from the marriage-rite, as in the *sambandham* ceremonies of North Malabar Nayars.

7:Gough E-5 (1947-1949)1955 AW11 Kerala AW11

Nayar
Tiyyar

796 language women whom they meet. At the temple they are received by young Nayar girls who
831 sell to them a mixture of yellow turmeric powder, blessed by *mantras*, and receive in return a
78 volley of sexual abuse. Thousands of cocks are sacrificed in the temple yard by the pilgrims as an offering to Bhagavadi who is believed to drink their blood. Hundreds of Nayar, Tiyyar, and Mannan Bhagavadi oracles from all over Malabar prance wildly in the temple courtyard in their red cloths and waist-bands of bells, madly chopping their foreheads till blood flows copiously. In the evening, at a sign from the *nâdurari* of Kodungalur, the chief of the Mukkuvans (a low fishing caste of the same culture as Tiyyars) begins the work of polluting the actual shrine by rushing up to it and beating the outer wall with his stick. According to Fawcett (1901 p. 245), he formally entered the shrine and defecated on the idol. The crowd of Nayar and low caste men then hurtle, shouting foul abuse, round the shrine, beat on its walls, and fling gold and filth into its interior. The festival ends at dusk when they return quietly home. The next day, the Bharani day itself, the temple is locked and deserted in fear, since it is believed that for seven days following, the foul demon attendants of the goddess are given over to depredations of the shrine and of the idol itself. On the seventh day, its priests reopen the temple, ritually purify it, and restore it to normal high caste worship again.[1]

796 This attack on the goddess by low caste men who may not normally approach her
831 represents, it seems likely, a sexual attack on the mother by son-figures to whom she is norm-
78 ally denied. In it the high caste priests (fathers) vacate the temple; the rules of purity and pollution are reversed; animal sacrifice is indulged in; women and the goddess are insulted
182 in a manner contrary to everyday etiquette; and the Bhagavadi idol formally made the object of an anal attack. The ceremony appears to act out cathartically the incestuous phantasies of Nayar and low caste men towards their mother, and incidentally, in their obscene attack on the Nayar girls, the repressed desires of low caste men towards forbidden women
564 of the higher castes. I suggest that in the singing of obscene songs by the washermen at a
588 Nayar or Tiyyar puberty ceremony, and the use of the barber as a kind of proxy bridegroom
88 at the North Malabar Tiyyar *tâli*-rite, these low caste men act out similar phantasies towards
182 higher-caste mother-figures, as well as providing the higher castes with harmless 'polluted' bridegrooms who perform the necessary but dangerous tasks associated with bringing their
831 girls to womanhood.

Why should the Oedipal fear in these castes be so excessively strong that it is necessary ceremonially to renounce the rights in the sexuality of a natal kinswoman before her puberty,
182 yet at the same time dangerous to be the first to receive these rights? I suggest that this is so
831 because of the great power accorded to elders in these castes, made possible by the joint ownership of property by the lineage-segment under the legal headship of its senior man.
613 These property-arrangements perpetuate, often until middle age, male economic and emo-
564 tional dependence on the parental generation, and enforce the attitudes of reverence and masochistic submission to elders which so characterize the higher Hindu castes. This depend-
423 ence on the parental generation causes male incestuous wishes to remain primarily fixed on the mother, and secondarily on other close natal kinswomen throughout life, and per-
593 petuates the corresponding unconscious fear of male parental vengeance. It is, therefore, in male phantasy, both necessary to give away the sexual rights in natal kinswomen (who are identified with the mother as desirable but forbidden sexual objects) before they are in danger of becoming mature, yet at the same time dangerous to deflower the virgins of other lineages who, being still 'owned' by their own natal kinsmen, are also unconsciously likened

To the mother.

[1] I saw this festival in 1949. For fuller accounts see Thurston & Rangachari, (1909, V, pp. 400-03) and K. P. Padmanabha Menon (1933, IV, pp. 333-43).

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

jars on the moral sense of either the man or the woman. The idea that monogamy necessarily means a higher stage of culture is indeed one of those *a priori* deductions which, though incapable of proof, are still held with dogmatic reverence. Even the curious and very interesting fact that among the Mormons (whose great fault was polygamy, according to those moralists who include monogamy among the Categorical Imperatives), it was the women who fought most strenuously for the maintenance of this custom, which they considered to be their most cherished privilege. It is an indubitable fact that where polygamy exists it is the women who are its chief advocates. The men, on the other hand, consider it a great bother. I have heard many rich men to whom proposals were made for a third or fourth marriage say "sufficient unto me are the evils of one wife." [1] 595 562

On the whole I am inclined to say that women in Malabar among the Nāyars at least enjoy, relatively to women elsewhere in India, greater liberty, with regard to individual conduct, family relationship and social life. This no doubt is due to the influence of matrilineal customs. 562

IV.—THE MARRIAGE CUSTOMS AMONG THE NĀYARS.

The marriage ceremonies of the Nāyars have always been peculiar. Anthropologists who have studied the Nāyars have, on the whole, failed to understand the significance of these customs. In this connection I propose to speak only of three chief points. First, *The Talikettu Kalyanam* (or the matrimonial ceremony of tying the Tali); secondly, the *Sambandham* (or marital relationship); and thirdly, *Polyandry*. 12 [114]

The *Talikettu Kalyanam*[2] is generally performed on a batch of girls of the same matrilineal family. The age of the eldest girl is generally eleven and rarely thirteen. The idea is that this ceremony should take place before the girl attains puberty.[3] But it is not only the children of the same family that can have a *Talikettu* with the others. The daughter of a male member of the family who belongs to an *enangar* clan or who is too poor to be able to afford the costly ceremony of *Talikettu*, can, with the permission of the *village community*, be placed in a separate seat and her *Tali* also may be tied at the same time. 588

When the ceremony could be performed, even when a girl is only six months old, it happens that in a *Talikettu Kalyanam* all the girls below eleven are disposed of at the same time. Therefore it takes at least another twelve years for a new batch

[1] See Lecky, *Democracy and Liberty*, chapter on Mormonism.

[2] The *Tali* is a piece of metal, generally silver or gold, which stands for marriage in all the communities who acknowledge Hinduism.

[3] Among the Nāyars social puberty differs considerably in point of time from physiological puberty. It is a matter of great importance that the former should precede the latter. Any family in which a girl attains her physiological puberty, as evidenced by her first menses, before she had attained her social puberty, is socially outside the pale. [881] [558]

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
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852 themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards 262 which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the [783] male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a [782] little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une 852 sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces 561 compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unes des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, 561 or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birth- [886] day, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* [881] (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of [843] *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After [886] she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a 764 great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs [177] about *Pretrams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that 764 is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with 766 which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform 764 the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as 564

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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The Brahmanical explanation, though palpably inadequate, is, that marriage is a sort of sacrement of which every maiden must partake in order that she may cleanse her own being from the taint of original sin, accomplish the salvation of her father and her ancestors, and bring forth a son to carry on the domestic worship (*Sacra privata*) of her husband's family. The Brahmans who observed this either imposed this principle on the Nayars, or the Nayars borrowed it from them in the belief that it would lead to social distinction.

Looking on this form of marriage in use, they are not regarded as constituting a religious ceremony or a *samskára* or sacrement in the Hindu or European sense of the word. "There is no officiating priest in attendance, there is no formula to be repeated, there is no *vedic*, *puranic* or religious chant or exhortation, and there is no formal benediction. The essential elements of a Brahmanical marriage, *viz.*, taking the bride by the hand or *Pánigrahanam*, the walking of seven steps or *Saptapati*, and the *hómam* or sacrifice to the fire, are not to be found among its details. Therefore the marriage customs among *marumakkathâyam* Hindus have no connection with their religious observances such as exists under ordinary Hindu law though several of the details bear a resemblance to a portion of the marriage ritual of the Nambutiris." [1]

Puberty customs (Thirandukuli).

The *Thirandukuli* is a celebration when a girl reaches the age of maturity. When a girl comes of age, she is lodged in a separate room where a lamp is lit and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass with a handle, called *válkannáti*, literally a looking glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by a *Kurava* (shouts of joy by women). The women of the neighbouring families, and those of friends and relations visit her, and some of them make presents of cloths. On the third day, the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning of the fourth day, the Mannáns or Vélans (washermen) appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and the tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and loins. In the company of maidens she leaves the room and the Vélans entertain the party, who soon move on in procession to a neighbouring tank where she wears the cloth washed by a washerman. Then

1. Malabar Marriage Commission Report, page 87.

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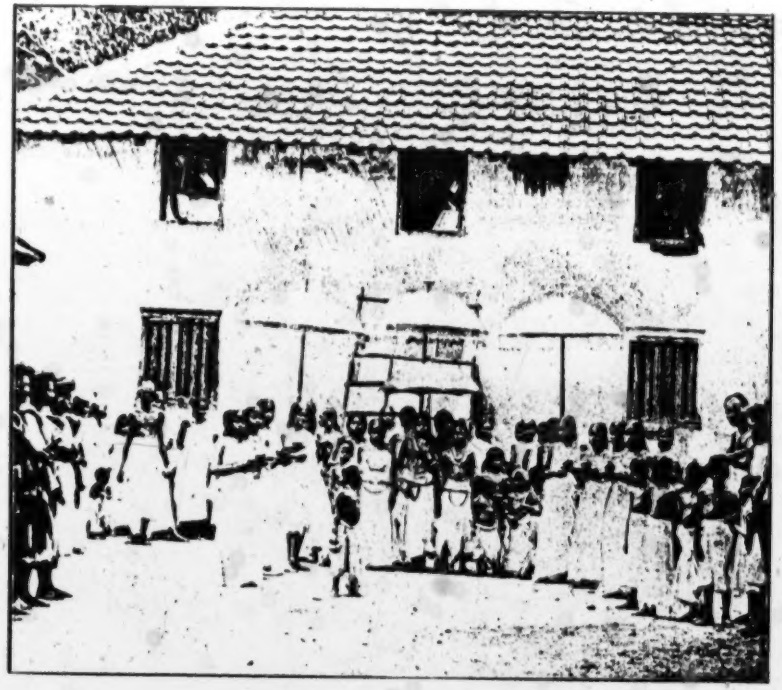

A NAYAR GIRL RETURNING HOME IN PROCESSION AFTER BATH ON THE FOURTH DAY AFTER THE FIRST MENSES.

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[facing p. 29]

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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she bathes with her friends. The same party return home in procession, when the *Brâhmani* entertains the party with her music. In the afternoon, the girl is seated in a pandal put up in front of the house, where the Vélans continue the songs, which are *Puranic*, and the assembled guests who are chiefly the women of the village as also those of their friends and relatives present the washerman, each with a piece of cloth. They are entertained at a sumptuous feast held that day; after which the assembled party break up, taking leave of the host. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house on the fourth day for the bath; whence she returns to her house in procession together with the beating of drum and joyous shouts. In the northern parts of the State, the Vélan's songs are at night, and the performance of the ceremony is compulsory on the fourth day, In the southern Taluks it is often put off to a convenient day, before the completion of which, the girl is prohibited from entering into the kitchen or going to the temple for worship.

Sambandham.

The second or real marriage is the *Sambandham* (the customary union of man and woman), which is the principal word denoting the conjugal relations among the Nayars. It is said that there are seven forms of this marriage prevailing in Malabar, of which only two or three are in vogue in the State. The customs connected with each of the latter differ in different places: nevertheless the main features are the same all over. The best form of *Sambandham* among the Nayars is that between the daughter of a maternal uncle and his nephew; but, as a rule they enjoy very much greater freedom of choice than other classes of people. The parents or friends of the bride or bridegroom make the proposal, and the wishes of the *kâranavans* of the two families are invariably consulted after the examination and agreement of their horoscopes. If the parties agree, an auspicious day is fixed in consultation with the astrologer. A few of the caste-men of the village and the friends of the bridegroom meet together in his house, and they all go in a sort of procession to the bride's house where they are properly welcomed and seated in a conspicuous part of the house. A portion of the *Râmâyanam* or other sacred book, referring to marriage and the happy conjugal life attending it, is then read by the Asân or village school master. Some music is also provided for the entertainment of the assembled guests who

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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775 [881] time. At the period of puberty and after child-birth women are especially liable to the attacks of these aërial beings. [846] Charms and incantations, offerings and sacrifices, are the most [789] requisite to counteract the evils that demons do, and iron [782] rings, iron staffs, and leather shoes, are some of the specifics that help to keep the demons at a distance.

They make their abode chiefly in the palmyra and *pála* [787] trees, but some of them occupy even dwelling houses. Others take the shape of human beings, while yet others possess human beings.

775 Their name is legion, and they exist by the offerings of 782 their votaries and their tormented victims. Against the machinations of these demons, the sorcerers and exorcists bring to [776] bear the influence of their special guardian deities who in turn [791] must be propitiated with offerings before they can be called upon to use their beneficial strength. In the case of the evil [783] spirit of him who has died an unnatural death, a Brahman magician purifies the spirit by means of certain ceremonies called *Tilahóma* (an offering of sesamum seeds to *agni* or fire). [789] A Chendus Nambuthiri presides at such ceremonies and transfers the spirit to an image of gold, silver, or wood which is afterwards placed in a Vishnu temple or enshrined in a small building put up for that purpose, there to rest in peace.

771 In the State, temples are dedicated to various demons, 346 the chief among them being the Avanangáttil Cháttan in 775 Triprayar. The temples dedicated to the small-pox demon [753] correspond to the *Péy Kóvils* or devil temples of the Tamil Districts. In these temples are to be found the instruments [796] and symbols of demon worship, the dancing sticks or wands, the priests' garments, tridents, etc., whilst in others there is nothing save the images of demons. There is also an officiat- [793] ing priest, who is the devil driver and the devil dancer, and [791] who at times even becomes a *Velichapád* inspired to communicate to the votaries, who consult him in times of illness and calamity, the wishes and intentions of that particular demon.

771 To a Hindu all organic life is sacred, and his creed is 825 **Worship of animals and plants.** not to injure any living thing, while among the animals worshipped by him the cow occupies the first place. The cow is *Kámadhénu*, the giver of all things, and hence whenever a cow is approached, it is touched

practice continued till recently. Hamilton and Buchanan say that, among the Nāyars of Malabar, a woman has several husbands, but these are not brothers. These travellers came to Malabar in the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. There is no reason whatever to suppose that they were not just recording what they saw. For I am not quite sure whether, even now, the practice is not lurking in some remote nooks and corners of the country." Lastly, Mr. Wigram writes as follows.* "Polyandry may now be said to be dead, and, although the issue of a Nāyar marriage are still children of their mother rather than of their father, marriage may be defined as a contract based on mutual consent, and dissoluble at will. It has been well said (by Mr. Logan) that nowhere is the marriage tie, albeit informal, more rigidly observed or respected than it is in Malabar: nowhere is it more jealously guarded, or its neglect more savagely avenged."

In connection with the tāli-kattu kalyānam, or tāli-tying marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the details of this ceremony vary in different parts of Malabar, but the ceremony in some form is essential, and must be performed for every Nāyar girl before she attains puberty." For an account of this ceremony, I must resort, to the evidence of Mr. K. R. Krishna Menon before the Malabar Marriage Commission.†

"The tāli-kattu kalyānam is somewhat analogous to what a dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) of other countries (districts) undergoes before she begins her profession. Among royal families, and those of certain Edaprabhus, a Kshatriya, and among the Charna sect a Nedungādi is

* Malabar Law and Custom, 1882.

† Report of the Malabar Marriage Commission, 1894.

A sambandham ceremony at
585 Calicut is recorded by Mr. Fawcett, at which there were
[574] cake and wine for the guests, and a ring for the bride.

In connection with sambandham, Mr. N. Subramani
[184] Aiyar writes from Travancore that "it is known in different localities as gunadosham (union through good or evil), vastradānam or putavakota (giving of cloth), and uzhamporukkal (waiting one's turn). It may be performed without any formal ceremony whatever, and is actually a private transaction confidentially gone through in some families. The bridegroom and his friends assemble at the house of the bride on the appointed night, and, before the assembled guests, the bridegroom presents the bride with a few unbleached cloths. Custom enjoins that four pieces of cloth should be presented, and the occasion is availed of to present cloths to the relatives and servants of the bride also. The girl asks permission of her mother and maternal
[431] uncle, before she receives the cloths. After supper, and the distribution of pān-supāri, the party disperses. Another day is fixed for the consummation ceremony.
[574] On that day the bridegroom, accompanied by a few friends, goes to the bride's house with betel leaves and nuts. After a feast, the friends retire."

It is noted in the Cochin Census Report, 1901, that one name for the sambandham rite is kitakkora, meaning
881 bed-chamber ceremony. In the same report, the following account of a puberty ceremony is given. "The tirandukuli ceremony is practically a public declaration that a girl has reached the age of maturity. When a girl attains puberty, she is seated in a separate room, where a lamp is lit, and a brass pot with a bunch of cocoanut flowers is kept. She has to keep with her a circular plate of brass called vālkannādi, literally a looking-glass with a handle. The event is proclaimed by korava

(shouts of joy by females). The females of the 881
neighbouring houses, and of the families of friends and relatives, visit her. New cloths are presented to the girl by her near relatives. On the third day the villagers, friends and relatives are treated to a luncheon of rice and milk pudding. Early in the morning on the fourth day, the Mannans or Vēlans appear. The girl is anointed with oil, and tender leaves of the cocoanut palm are tied round the head and waist. In the company of maidens [533]
she is brought out of the room, and the Vēlans sing certain songs. Thence the party move on to the tank, where the girl wears a cloth washed by a Vēlan, and takes a bath. After the bath the Vēlans again sing [533]
songs. In the afternoon, the girl is taken out by [574]
the females invited for the occasion to an ornamental [431]
pandal, and the Vēlans, standing at a distance, once more sing. With the usual distribution of pān-supāri, sandal and jasmine flowers, the ceremony closes. In the midst of the song, the female guests of the village, the wives of friends and relatives, and most of the members of the family itself, present each a small cloth to the Vēlans. They are also given a small amount of money, rice, betel leaf, etc. The guests are then entertained at [574]
a feast. In some places, the girl is taken to a separate house for the bath on the fourth day, whence she returns to her house in procession, accompanied by tom-toms and shouting. In the northern tāluks, the Vēlan's song [533]
is in the night, and the performance of the ceremony [184]
on the fourth day is compulsory. In the southern tāluks, it is often put off to some convenient day. Before the completion of this song ceremony, the girl is prohibited from going out of the house or entering temples."

It is provided, by the Malabar Marriage Act, 1896, that, 575
" when a sambandham has been registered in the manner 217
656

602 subcaste assembly to discuss the case and take
613 appropriate action. Until this was done, they
621 might not resume their ties or attend ceremonies of the offending lineage. The enangar thus formally represented the local subcaste group to the individual lineage.

613 Enangar played their most important role at
881 the initiation rites of the girls of a linked lineage.
836 Every ten to twelve years, each lineage held a
581 grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which all immature girls of the lineage were on one day ritually "married" by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called talikettukalyanam (tali-tying marriage) (3) must be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste. Before it took place, elders of the subcaste assembly selected suitable young men of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony, each ritual bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every lineage in the kara, tied a gold ornament (tali) round the neck of his chosen "bride." After this each couple was secluded in a room of the ancestral house for a period of four days and nights during which, if the girl were old enough, cohabitation might take place. At the end of the four days, the couples were again led before the assembled company where each tore in two the loincloth worn by the girl during the period of seclusion. They were then
581 considered ritually divorced and had no further
613 practical obligations to each other. The girls
885 were now regarded as having attained the status of mature women, ready to bear children to perpetuate their lineage.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

613 small neighborhoods, indeed, all the lineages were sometimes enangar
476 to one another, although this seems to have been rare. At least one man and one woman of each of its enangar lineage had to visit a household for the life-crisis rites of its members, at which they gave [553] ceremonial assistance and partook of a feast. These rites included the [588] naming ceremony of a baby, the first rice feeding in the sixth month, [881] the pre-puberty marriage rite of girls, the first menstruation ceremony [843] of a girl, the first pregnancy ceremony of a woman, the offerings to [769] a departed spirit which closed the period of death pollution, and the [765] subsequent offerings each year to the spirits of recently dead mem- [783] bers of a property group on the anniversaries of their deaths. Enangar also gave neighborly help on the day of a cremation and, during the fifteen days of death pollution, provided cooked food for the household of the bereaved.

613 Although whole lineages were linked as enangar to each other, a linked lineage acted as a collectivity only at the pre-puberty marriage
592 rite, at cremations, and on the sixteenth day after a death. For the other life crises, each household of a lineage would invite as enangar partners only one household in each of their linked lineages with whom they had special customary ties. Similarly, the members of a household were not obliged to invite other branches of their own lineage to the minor life crises, although they might do so if they wished.

613 The enangar played their most important role at the pre-puberty
588 marriage rite. Every ten to twelve years each lineage held a grand ceremony in its oldest ancestral house, at which time all immature girls of the lineage of one generation were ritually married by men of enangar groups. This ceremony, called *tālikettukalyānam* ("*tāli*-tying ceremony") had to be performed for each girl before puberty on pain of her excommunication from caste (Gough, 1955). Before it took place, elders of the assembly selected suitable youths of the enangar lineages as ritual bridegrooms for the girls. At the ceremony each bridegroom, in the company of representatives of every household in the neighborhood, tied a gold ornament (tāli) round the neck of his bride. Each couple was then secluded in a room of the ancestral house for three days and nights, during which, if the girl was old enough, sexual relations might take place. On the fourth day the bridegrooms departed. They had no further obligations to their brides
[885] and did not need to visit them again unless they wished. After the tāli rite, however, a girl was regarded as having attained the status of a mature woman, ready to bear children to perpetuate her lineage.

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A Wll Kerala A Wll
Central Kerala Nayar

Shortly before or after puberty she might, following the ceremony, enter without religious rites into sexual liaisons with one or more men of her own or an appropriate higher caste. Similarly, a Nayar man (whether or not he had ever performed the tāli rite) might enter into relationships with any number of women of his own or an appropriate lower Nayar caste.

These marriage customs are further discussed below. Here it is relevant to point only to the role of the *enangan* bridegroom. Since the enangar stood to the lineage as formal representatives of the local caste group, it seems appropriate to interpret the tāli rite as a ceremony of group marriage, in which the caste group as a whole married the immature girls of the lineage as a whole.

The tāli rite was indeed both a religious and a legal transaction between the lineage and the enangu or neighborhood group. If a girl was discovered to have attained puberty before it had been performed, the assembly forced her property group to expel her and to perform her funeral rites, for she was thought to be ritually dangerous to her caste as a whole. For a woman, the tāli which she wore round her neck until death was therefore a sign that she had been ceremonially and legally accepted as a mature woman of her lineage and caste, "cleared" to bear children to perpetuate both groups.

The lineage similarly operated as a unit, and the enangar fulfilled similar roles as formal links with the caste on the occasion of a funeral. All adult males of the lineage who were junior to the deceased attended his cremation, which took place in the southwest corner of the garden of his house. Representative members of all enangar households also came to help with practical tasks and to provide ritual objects for the chief mourner's ceremonies, although they were forbidden to touch or to receive food from the mourners throughout their period of pollution. In the fifteen days after the death only the deceased's household, assisted by their special enangar households, took part in the collection of the bones and ashes and made offerings to the departed spirit. Other lineage members observed death pollution in their homes and were attended by enangar there. On the fifteenth day the lineage reassembled at the house of the dead. After many ceremonies its members were purified by the funeral priest from the pollution of death. On the sixteenth day final offerings were made to the spirit. The deceased's household then held a large feast, which was shared by lineage members and representatives from all houses of the linked lineages. This reception of food by the enangar from the hands of the deceased's matrilineal kinsmen marked a

2:Gough E-4, 5 (1947-1949)1961 A W11 Kerala A W11
Central Kerala Nayar

835 At least during this century, moreover, cases have very occasionally occurred in which a Nayar cohabited both with his wife and with their daughter by the marriage or with his wife and her younger sister. Such affairs are viewed with disgust as evidence of extreme ill-breeding, but they do not merit excommunication or exclusion from public ceremonies, nor are the offenders expected to fall ill through supernatural vengeance. The reason appears to be that traditionally only matrilineal kinsfolk were regarded as kin in the true sense. Incest prohibitions outside this range were apparently a matter of propriety rather than of religious law.

604 A man's wife's sisters' children, like his own children, had an amicable relationship with him of mingled respect and playfulness. [588] After their tāli rite, however, girls were forbidden to touch their "fathers," own or classificatory, and relationships with these men [885] tended to become more grave.

Brothers-in-law had informal relationships. A man would defer to 607 his wife's much older brother and expect some respect from his wife's much younger brother. Brothers-in-law of similar age had a mild joking relationship. They might chew betel leaves, loll, yarn, and gossip together. A man's sisters' husbands sometimes acted as go-betweens in arranging his first sambandham and accompanied him to [578] the house of his wife. But the surface amicability of brothers-in-law often hid very deep hostility related to conflicting claims upon the woman who linked them. This might break out in quarrels or end in mutual avoidance. The wife's brother was also often instrumental in having a man dismissed from the conjugal house.

602 A woman's contacts with her husband's kin were obviously less 574 regular than those of a man. A woman never went to her husband's taravād to visit him for personal reasons but only to pay polite social calls on his kinswomen. When a man or girl began their first sambandham the man's mother and sisters customarily went to bring home his wife a few days after the husband's first visit. Often the wife's sisters would accompany her. They were given a small feast in private and the husband's mother might make a gift of jewelry to the girl before she returned home on the third or fourth day. Thereafter the frequency of feminine visits between the two households depended on the stability of the marriage, the proximity of the houses, and the personal feelings between the members. Neither husband nor wife did any tasks at all in each other's homes. Each remained always an outsider to whom polite behavior was due. Because of incest prohibitions a woman paid extreme respect to her husband's elder matrilineal Kinsmen they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions.

8:Panikkar I-4,5 (no date) 1918 AWll Kerala AWll
Nayar

themselves by bathing in the temple tank, come to the *Darsana* (the aspect towards which the face of the image looks). There the priest brings the offering and the male member from either the father's family or the mother's own family takes a little of it on his pointing finger and gives it to the child. The child is supposed to inherit the qualities of the person who gives it the sacred rice, an idea allied to the superstition concerning godfather and godchild. There is, of course, a feast on the day at the child's house.

"Chaque société générale," says M. Van Gennep, "peut être considéré comme une sorte de maison devisée en chambres et en couloirs. . . . Chez les demi-civilisés ces compartiments sonts soigneusement isolés les unés des autres et pour passer de l'un à l'autre des formalités et des cérémonies sont nécessaires." This idea that in semi-civilised societies stages of life are marked out with great precision so that the passage from one to another necessitates ceremonies or "rites de passage" is applicable only in a very limited sense in the case of the Nāyars. Among them such ceremonies are few and very far between. The male children, after the *Churu Koda*, or the rice-giving ceremony just now described, have only one other ceremony to perform which is called *Sasty-Purty*, or the fullness of sixty years. Between his sixth month and his sixtieth year a male member of the Nāyar Society has no *rites de passage* to pass through. The *Sasty-Purty*, which takes place on his sixtieth birthday, is a sort of jubilee, after which respectable people are supposed to retire from worldly life. It is indeed a *rite de passage*.

Women have naturally more ceremonies than men. Apart from the *Talikettu* (described in the last chapter) a Nāyar woman has to pass through the ceremonies of *Terundu Kuli* (bathing after the first menses) and *Pulicudi* described above. After she has become a mother a woman can be said to be free from all ceremonies till her sixtieth year, when, after a *Sasty-Purty*, she also retires from active life.

The Nāyar funeral ceremonies are of a very complex nature. They show a great deal of Hindu ideas about soul and re-birth mixed with purely Nāyar beliefs about *Pretams*, ghosts, etc., etc. It is important, in this connection, to notice at the very start that the Nāyars make a clear distinction between the ceremonies performed at the death of the eldest member of the family and those at the death of others. The following is the procedure generally adopted at the death of a Nāyar. As soon as a person dies he is bathed and clad in white, and laid on a bed made of long plantain leaves. If it is the eldest male or female member of the family that is dead, then all their relations on the matrilineal side present new cotton cloths, with which the corpse is covered and tied before it is taken to be burnt. Only the eldest members are burnt; others are buried. Apart from the greater importance attached to the death of the eldest members, the ordinary funeral rites are in essentials the same.

The presence of the *Mārān* (a particular caste among the Nāyars who perform the lesser priestly functions) is absolutely necessary on the occasion. He is sent for as

613 become so large that over many generations
608 members of distant segments forgot that they
621 were matrilineal kin, ceased to observe joint pollution, and finally broke the rule of exogamy. One case of this came to my notice in the Cochin village I studied. A man and woman of two lineages which were not enangar, and for some reason unknown to my informants, had never been known to intermarry, entered into a liaison. Certain elders of the village then began to look into the history of the two lineages and to wonder whether long ago, they might have been matrilineal kin or putative matrilineal kin by joint performance of the [50] tali-rite. As they were unable to foist their doubts on to younger members of the village, however, the liaison continued and thus what was probably an ancient tie of lineage exogamy was tacitly broken.

[597] Cases of extinction of a lineage were rare, since if one property group were without women in any generation it was customary to adopt one or more girls from collateral property groups of the same lineage and thus continue to perpetuate all the property-groups. In rare cases of the extinction of a lineage, its jenmam lands eschested to the king for reallocation to another lineage, and its kanam lands to the janmi. Today, the property of a group with no women is divided equally between surviving male members and inherited after their deaths by their wives and children.

613 (4) Succession and Segmentation in the Lineage
● 587 Among retainer Nayars whose lineages owned

613 no political office, the role of oldest man of the
587 lineage was unimportant. His voice was heard respectfully in the village assembly, he might be regarded as an authority on traditional custom, and he was accorded special respect as an arbitrator in village disputes. He had, however, no sanctioned authority within the lineage and could be set politely aside by the heads of its other property-groups in crucial matters affecting joint action by the group. Overall headship in the lineage became important only for desavaris, chiefs and royalty where political office was vested in the oldest man, [51] irrespective of branch. Even here, however, authority inhered chiefly in the political office and could be exercised (in a political sense) only over members of lower subcastes and (in a kinship sense) over members of the office-bearer's own property-group. A king, chief or village headman had no rights to interfere in the management of other property-groups of his own lineage, each of which had its separate karanavan as legal guardian of its members. Indeed in the case of most royal and chiefly lineages, the senior office-bearer had no rights to management even in the property-group into which he was born: he was set apart on a separate landed estate and headship of his property-group passed to the next younger man. The dimension of authority, like that of economic cooperation, was therefore absent from the lineage and inhered instead in the hierarchy of political offices on the one hand, and in individual property-groups on the other.

613 Within each lineage, even today when it may

592 (except for cleaning) only by men of the group
342 and their male visitors. Within, a passage leads to the central courtyard, round which
[352] rooms open off on two or three sides. These include the ancestor-shrine of the group, several store-rooms for clothing, vessels and paddy (stored in carved wooden chests), one or more bed- and [55] sitting-rooms each containing a bedroll, bench, wooden stools and a rope to hang clothes; and a small room used by women during their delivery and menstrual seclusions. Beyond the courtyard to the west is a long narrow dining hall with a large kitchen behind it, and behind this the back verandah occupied only by servants, women and children. Upstairs may be four or five empty bedrooms in which women receive their visiting husbands. Men born into the group seldom enter the upstairs' rooms and may not use the women's staircase.

[427] Outside in the courtyard a separate building
[987] may be devoted to storing paddy paid as rents by the group's tenants. The upstairs of the
[343] building is often set aside for the karanavan's[1] use; here he sleeps, is served with food by women of the house, entertains his friends and keeps records of the group's economic transactions. If the group is large, a second separate building is often reserved for junior men to sleep, read and entertain friends when they are
593 not visiting their wives. In village headmen's
342 and chiefly property-groups whose women often have Nambudiri husbands, a separate building with its own kitchen, granary and Brahman

[1] [Eldest man of the property-group --- Analyst]